

Sudbury School Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

Silvia Nerssessian, Chair
Meredith Gerson, Vice Chair
Maggie Helon
Lisa Kouchakdjian
Sarah Troiano

Members Absent:

None

Also Present:

Brad Crozier, Superintendent
Don Sawyer, Director of Business and Finance
Kim Swain, Assistant Superintendent
Gisele Ganz, SEA Representative

Regular Session Meeting

Chair Silvia Nerssessian opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

1. Opening Statement/Executive Session
 - a. Chair Silvia Nerssessian performed a roll call and made an announcement that the session is being recorded, shared live for the public to see and hear and there should be no expected right to privacy, as this is a public forum. Silvia Nerssessian, Meredith Gerson, Sarah Troiano, Maggie Helon, and Lisa Kouchakdjian all affirmed in the positive.
 - b. Silvia Nerssessian motioned to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for EDCO's potential litigation, because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee; and to discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically administrative staff, because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee; and to review and approve minutes from the School Committee executive session meetings of December 7 and December 17, 2020; and to return to Open Session, Lisa Kouchakdjian seconded.
 - i. ROLL CALL VOTE
 1. Meredith Gerson: Aye

2. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 3. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 4. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
 5. Maggie Helon: Aye
- a. VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.

2. Special Matters

a. Return from Executive Session

- i. Chair Silvia Nerssessian noted that the Committee returned from the Executive Session at 7:02 PM. Chair Silvia Nerssessian performed a roll call and made an announcement that the session is being recorded, shared live for the public to see and hear and there should be no expected right to privacy, as this is a public forum. All members affirmed in the positive.

3. Public Comment

a. None

4. Educational Matters

a. METCO Annual Report

- i. Sudbury Public Schools METCO Director Sandra Walters provided the Committee an update on the operations of the METCO program in the District. Ms. Walters was joined by Keyanna Berry Ng and Nyiella Davis, two alumni of the Sudbury Public Schools METCO program. Topics covered included: Ms. Ng's and Ms. Davis's respective experiences in the METCO program and advice they have for students currently enrolled in METCO; a history of the METCO program in Sudbury; a review of current enrollment and demographics; an explanation about the district's new Middle School Mentors of Color program and introductions to the first mentors; and information on supports in place for both students and their families. Ms. Walters also acknowledged the staff, volunteers, and Parent Advisory Board members who help her run the METCO program.
- ii. School Committee questions centered on the possibility and efficacy of host families; what efforts are being taken to outreach to families during the pandemic; a request for information on how the Mentors of Color program will be delivered next year and going forward; and how the change in school start times have impacted METCO students and families.

b. Winter Family Survey Results

- i. Superintendent Brad Crozier led the Committee in a review of the results from the Winter Family survey. This was the second round of feedback the district received from families. For comparison purposes, many of the same questions were asked as in the Fall Survey, but several new questions were asked to better capture the voices of families in the hybrid and remote models.

- ii. Topics from the presentation included: a discussion of the connection between respondents' satisfaction with the way learning is structured for their child/children and their other responses to other questions on the survey; a review of some of the open comments on what is working well, with a note on how well the first remote snow day was handled; a review of some of the open comments on challenges the district still faces; how families are getting more comfortable with COVID-related safety measures, procedures and protocols, compared to how they felt in October; how families are now less concerned about their child's academic growth, and more concerned about social-emotional health; students' positive growth in peer-to-peer relations and relations with adults at school; and if IEP services are appropriate and meeting goals.
 - iii. This item was paused at 8:00 to allow for the scheduled Town Meeting Warrant Articles discussion to begin. The Committee returned to it immediately following the vote on those articles.
 - iv. Topics covered during after the Committee returned to this item included: how families perceived communications with teachers and the district; and what the district is doing to provide more details on COVID cases.
 - v. Comments/questions from the Committee centered on if another survey will be conducted in the spring; if survey results data can be broken down further to see specifically how younger students are being impacted; doing a pre-school/kindergarten specific survey, preferably at the very end of the year; and if Mr. Crozier feels that there is work that can be done to provide additional social-emotional learning supports.
- c. Town Meeting Warrant Articles
- i. To accommodate a scheduled start time, this item was moved up from its previous position on the agenda.
 - ii. Facilities Director Bill Barletta joined the Committee for final a review of the warrant articles and Capital Improvement Requests under its jurisdiction. Mr. Barletta updated the Committee on the Noyes Fire Alarm Replacement project, verifying that the previously established cost is accurate. If funding is approved by the Committee and Town, all work for this project will be done over the summer.
 - iii. Mr. Barletta also explained that the Loring access walkway price was accurately quoted and provided a summary breakdown of the project.
 - 1. Committee questions on this item centered on: what information was recently shared between Mr. Barletta and the consultant for the project, particularly details related to accessibility; what accessibility recommendations were made by the consultant; and funding sources for different parts of this project.
 - iv. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the 2021 Town Meeting Warrant Articles as amended and submitted by the Business Manager and the Chair on behalf of the Committee, Sarah Troiano seconded.

1. In discussion after the motion, the Committee clarified that it was voting on all the included articles together in a single motion.
2. ROLL CALL VOTE
 - a. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - b. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 - c. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - d. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
 - e. Maggie Helon: Aye
 - i. **VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.
- d. FY22 Budget Book
 - i. This item followed the conclusion of the second discussion of the Winter Family Survey Results.
 - ii. Mr. Crozier led the Committee in a review of the FY22 Budget Book. This year's Budget Book incorporated feedback from the Committee about last year's edition, including using less professional jargon and adding a "year ahead" section previewing what is in the budget. The Committee will vote on the Budget Book at its next meeting, after which it will be posted to the SPS website for public access. Printed copies will also be made available to members of the Finance Committee and possibly at Town Meeting.
- e. District Reports
 - i. SEA Report
 1. SEA Representative Gisele Ganz thank the Committee and the community for their continued support during these difficult times. Ms. Ganz also informed the Committee that despite the challenges of the pandemic, all educators, support staff included, have continued to make great pedagogical strides. Ms. Ganz proceed to describe the rollout of the new "Unique" curriculum at Curtis Middle School and the continued development of the PARTNER program.
 - ii. Business and Finance Director's Report
 1. Business and Finance Director Don Sawyer reminded the public that the current Year-to-date budget is available in the agenda packet for this meeting.
 2. Mr. Sawyer informed the Committee that, in preparation for Annual Town Meeting in May, he and Superintendent Crozier will be attending the February 10th Finance Committee Meeting. They will present the FY22 Sudbury Public Schools operating budget at that meeting. The warrant articles that were approved at this evening's meeting will also be discussed on the 10th.
 - iii. Assistant Superintendent's Report
 1. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain spoke to the Committee about the District's continued dedication to learning for teaching. In addition to the "Unique" curriculum work mentioned earlier in

the meeting by Ms. Ganz, teachers are doing work on visualizing and verbalizing.

2. Ms. Swain then informed the Committee about several upcoming events. On January 29th, SPS will hold a district-wide professional development day focused on equity and anti-racism. Just before that, on Thursday, January 28th, the district will hold a Social-Emotional Learning night that is open to anyone in the community. A Math Family Night will be held virtually on Thursday, February 4th.

iv. Superintendent's Report

1. Superintendent Brad Crozier began his report by informing the Committee that this year's Kick-Off to K event will be held on Thursday, January 28th.
2. Mr. Crozier also addressed the topic of moving to an all in-person learning model. While the rollout of vaccines is encouraging to Mr. Crozier, the CDC has not yet changed its social distancing guidelines from 6'. Mr. Crozier also cautioned that there would be many logistical complications related to switching to an all-person learning model, and would result in some students switching teachers mid-year. While the administration is considering how to work through these issues, Mr. Crozier made clear that no target date has been set for switching models.

5. Business and Policy Matters

a. Superintendent's Mid-Year Report on Goals and Focus Indicators

- i. The Committee reviewed and discussed Superintendent Crozier's Mid-Year Report on his goals and focus indicators. Within the report, Superintendent Crozier provided information on what has been completed to date as well details about related developments still to come later this year.

b. Future Agenda Items

- i. Chief Nix will join the February 8th meeting; School Committee Self-Assessment.

c. Minutes

- i. The School Committee reviewed and revised minutes from the December 21, 2020 meeting.

1. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the meeting minutes from December 21, 2020, and January 11, 2021, as edited, Sarah Troiano seconded.

a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
- ii. Maggie Helon: Aye
- iii. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
- iv. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye

- v. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - 1. **VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.

Adjournment

- d. Meredith Gerson motioned to adjourn at 9:42 PM, Sarah Troiano seconded.

- i. ROLL CALL VOTE

- 1. Meredith Gerson: Aye
- 2. Maggie Helon: Aye
- 3. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
- 4. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
- 5. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - a. **VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,
Justin Dulak

Documents Reviewed During the January 25, 2021 School Committee Meeting

1. METCO Update Presentation
2. Family Feedback 12_2020: A Presentation to the School Committee, January 25, 2021
3. FY22 Budget Book Draft
4. Sudbury Public Schools Year-to-Date Budget, December 31, 2020
5. Sudbury Public Schools COVID-19 Academic Program Warrant Article
6. Noyes Elementary School Fire Alarm System Replacement Warrant Article
7. Sudbury Public Schools Bus Revolving Fund Warrant Article
8. Sudbury Public Schools Instrumental Music Revolving Fund
9. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Loring Playground Access Walkway
10. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Curtis Boiler #3 Replacement
11. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Paging, CLocks, and Bell Systems
12. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Loring Hot Water Heating Main Circulating Pump Replacement
13. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Kitchen Walk-in Refrigeration Replacement
14. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Haynes Rooftop HVAC Replacements
15. Capital Improvement Budget Request Form: Curtis Rooftop Unit #8 Replacement
16. Mid-Cycle Goals Report-Brad Crozier, FY21
17. Sudbury School Committee Meeting Minutes, December 21, 2020 DRAFT
18. Sudbury School Committee Meeting Minutes, January 11, 2021 DRAFT