

Sudbury Public Schools (SPS)
School Committee Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2017 @ 7:30 p.m.

The Senior Center, 40 Fairbank Rd., Sudbury

Open Session:

Chair Lucie St. George opened the session at 7:30 p.m. Sudbury Cable TV broadcasted the meeting live.

Members Present: Lucie St. George (Chair), Ellen Winer Joachim (Vice Chair), Lisa Kouchakdjian, Christine Hogan, Richard Tinsley

Also Present: Anne Wilson, Superintendent of Schools; Kimberly A. Swain, Assistant Superintendent; Susan Rothermich, Director of Business and Finance; Lisa Kouchakdjian, Acting Recording Secretary, Audrey Swennes, SEA

0:28 RECOGNITIONS: Dr. Wilson recognized Administrative Assistant Day. She extended great appreciation for all of the work they do for making people feel welcome. They work cooperatively with parents. Dr. Wilson thanks Kim Pratt and tech people for designing and implementing a new program for administrative assistants.

1:43 OPEN FORUM: Meredith Gerson, 23 Hilltop Road. Although she supports the override she is concerned about the budget. Referencing Nixon 4th Grade, actual enrollment comes to 76 students for three sections. There is a disparity among the schools. Nixon has 22 more 4th grade students than Haynes. No effort to incorporate this data. Meredith is concerned about the new math program without ability to roll out the program. Meredith states we are setting up students for frustration and failure. New science coach will add to the curriculum. Supporting the override to support the children and choose to work together. Need to improve two-way transparency.

Mary Grace Hennessey, 45 Webster Circle, She is reacting to what is about to happen. Mary Grace wants to learn about how to help. Regarding Mr. Brown, she read a letter from student. Mr. Brown is

a hard working teacher. Talks to students in a non-threatening way and gets them to focus. Mr. Brown motivates students. Mr. Brown helps students focus on work.

Kay Bell, 348 Old Lancaster Road. Speaking to give override a little context. Encourage everyone to participate in Town Meeting on Monday at 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting is the first step. Need to participate in all of it. Kay provided data taken from the census bureau. Most current census information we have. The average state wide median income is \$67,000. Sudbury's median income is \$169,000. Concord's median household income is \$132,000. Lincoln's median income is \$127,000. Per pupil spending from 2014-2015 information is taken from the Department of Education. Massachusetts state average is \$14,900. Sudbury's average is \$14,700 thousand. Lincoln's is \$20,900 thousand. Average teacher salaries: 2014-2015 Sudbury--average \$77,000, Concord—average \$94,000, Lincoln--average \$86,500. Data gives context on why are we concerned about spending money on our schools. Need to maintain the quality of our schools. Need to support teachers and students.

Holly Haycock, 36 Crescent Lane. She just moved here from Arizona. Decision to move was the quality of schools, public schools here are better than private schools in Phoenix. Pride on making sure student will have a good year. Schools here have made it worth moving from Phoenix. Excellent teachers at Nixon. Chose Sudbury for the schools. People move here because of the schools. Cuts will put tremendous pressure on teachers and reflect on what will be taught in the classroom. Larger classes get less attention, lack of support staff. Urge everyone to keep staff at school. Everyone should vote for the override.

Angela Tonis, 4 Marlboro Road. Kids are starting to talk, students looking forward to having a role model as a teacher. Class size is like a number game. Need to look at the make up of the classes. Hard to hear that not going to have the time to have the individuality for the kids.

24:37 Curriculum Update: Kim Swain welcome remarks to the Math Team. Karen Wolfson presenting Mathematics Curriculum Update. District Vision and Theory of Action— Committed to excellence in educating students to be knowledgeable, creative, independent thinkers who are caring, collaborative members of the school and wider communities. There is a connection between content and the learning experience. How do we know students are learning? Ms. Wolfson initially looked at where we are in Sudbury. All students have access to high quality mathematics curriculum, effective teaching and learning. Ms. Wolfson stated that when she got to the District there already was a lot of great stuff going on. No stigma around math, want math to be a joyous experience.

Ms. Wolfson discussed the beliefs of staff for their students. Concerned about deep mathematical framing.

Professional learning opportunities support the curriculum. Math coaches are going to share experiences. Chris Grigsby, a math coach, discussed Dr. Jo Boaler. Dr. Boaler spear-heading a campaign to refute the myth that there is no such thing as a math brain, as long as you apply a growth mindset. If one believes in themselves, anything can happen. When students are doing a math problem, they can make a mistake and brain growth takes place. Mistakes make our brains grow. Implications of Dr. Boaler's work are astounding. Math is more than rote memorization.

Math Coach --Stephanie Russo: Highlighting how coaches and classroom teachers have a growth mindset about their ability to teach. Analogy to Tom Brady as he needs a coach even though he is the greatest player of all time. How can one do things differently to do things better? Students who were afraid of math are now more confident. She wants students to be comfortable and confident in math. We need teachers to be confident in math and encourage the growth mindset.

Kathy Lizotte--math coach at Nixon: Coaches are able to facilitate professional development on number talks. Tool called a Rekenreks, able to get some Rekenreks in the classroom. Takes the strengths in one model and use it with one tool. Students begin to see how numbers relate to one another. Thanked SERF and Loring's PTO for allowing them to purchase Rekenreks in all K-1 classrooms District wide.

Annie Humphrey—math coach at Haynes: School wide impact. Focus on inclusion at Haynes. One scenario presented having a Science Fair outside of the School day. Haynes did the first Haynes STEAM Carnival. Librarian had the idea. The STEAM Carnival took place on March 16th. Partnered with parent volunteers. Differentiated event and cross curricular and ALL students participated. Next step is to share it at other schools. Looking to see how can spread this event across Sudbury.

Ms. Wolfson:

Grade 2 updating in Investigations, 3rd Edition, Grade 3 piloting Eureka Math (Engage NY). A year of tremendous growth, learned what we liked and what didn't like. Discussed what was considered in evaluating a product.

Eureka Weaknesses—developmental appropriateness

What learned—more clear vision of what they want.

Designation of a third product, Ms. Wolfson spoke to teachers in other Districts. Some teachers also learned of this third product--Bridges in Mathematics (2nd edition. Bridges comes from The Math Learning Center. Discussed the components of Bridges in Mathematics. Last unit of each year is a STEM integration unit, putting together mathematics in a STEM situation.

Observing Bridges in Grade 2 in Acton. She also saw the program in Guilford, CT. The District will begin with Bridges product in grades K-5. Will have professional learning opportunities, summer training and professional development throughout the year.

Middle School—In a different place—There is a core product in place in the Middle School. Ms. Wolfson is focusing on transparency at the Middle School. The next step is to create a new syllabus. What are our current practices in the Middle School? What are the opportunities for mastery? Discussed Mindset in Mathematics...all students can be mathematicians. Need to provide students will opportunities to enhance their mathematical experience. Desmos---enhancing mathematics with the tool. Middle School Math Institute with Robert Kaplinsky. How to use problems and ask questions. Students had to figure out how much the 100X100 burger cost. Kaplinsky has open middle problems.

Julie Schoenfeld: Need students to solve authentic problems. Students actually come up with what they need to know to solve a problem. Kaplinsky is all about authentic problem solving. Students share their understanding and see how other students solved the problem. Dr. Jo Boaler—Tells students and lets them know math is visual, it connect visuals together. When we make a connection between numbers and visuals, it's extremely important. Need to keep connecting the math with the visual and then you have brain crossing—extremely important. Always have low floor high ceiling problems.

Instructional core—interaction between student teacher and content. There are high expectations for ALL students in Sudbury.

LVK: Questions regarding challenge and students with IEPs and how the Bridges Program addresses those needs.

Christine: Question regarding supporting needs of teachers at schools and the role of coaches. Ms. Wolfson—Coaches' roles are different at each school. Christine: What plan to unify district: Ms. Wolfson great to have visuals. Christine: How will we know whether Bridges will be successful? Ms. Wolfson will be a multi-year role out. Teachers don't just teach math. 6th Grade next year will be one level. This year in 6th grade there were two levels. 70% in the advanced level. Using the same curriculum. Although it looks like eliminating a level, actual raising the level for all students. Ms. Wolfson says LS is thrilled with the alignment of courses.

Rich—Question whether Bridges is the right program for kids with needs. At what point does technology play a role. Ms. Wolfson, many opportunities in Bridges for technology. Bridges culminates all the great things already out there.

Ellen—Importance of doing the pilots...We found out the other two programs weren't going to work well for us. Ellen—There has been talk in town about why we have been piloting things.

Christine: Which of our neighbor Districts are using Bridges?

Christine asked about numbers of students in 8th grade going to Mathnasium. Numbers regarding how many students getting tutoring is wrong. Ms. Wolfson called Mathnasium and confirmed that the number of students getting tutoring was about half as much. Many districts nationwide using it.

Many districts in Connecticut using Bridges. K-2 in Bedford using it. Acton is also doing a pilot in Bridges.

1:43:52 Superintendent Evaluation Process:

Lucie—Structured evaluation process. Presentation from Dorothy Presser, other pieces are from the Department of Education website. There are specific rubrics to the evaluation. The step by step process is included. Dr. Wilson will present us with the summative evaluative report that we may use to assess Dr. Wilson. Rubric is here and the annotative goals are here. Lucie—We need to be conscience about using the rubric. Evaluations are based upon the goals that School Committee members agreed to last year. Anne will get SC members her report by June 1st. June 9th School Committee members need to get our evaluations to Christine who will compile the evaluations. Christine will get compilation of evaluations to Anne by June 16th. Justin will get School Committee members all copies of evaluations by June 19th. Christine will type up the goals and get it to Anne for distribution to School Committee members. Discussion regarding agreement on how to rate the assessment. LVK—If it is not obvious for the rating, then School Committee agrees to discuss and decide as a group what the rating should be. School Committee members need to pick a box and all agree not to check in between boxes.

2:06:03 Facility Use Fees:

Lucie—Looking at different ways to find monies. We haven't looked at this issue in a long time. Attached Facility Use Fee Comparisons document utilized during the discussion. Ellen—We don't charge for school groups, but they pay for custodians. Christine—Do we charge for fields? Susan R.—We don't do any outdoor charging. Park and Recreation has control of the fields after school.

Susan R.—Big user item is the auditorium. We pay time and a half for custodian. Susan R. we need to look at annually to make sure we don't lose money. Currently appropriating \$65,000 of money from facility use revolving account. Your current revenue is \$30,000. We need to decrease the appropriation or find the money somewhere else. Ellen—If we are renting out the space and causing us to use custodial services, the schools shouldn't be paying the custodial services. Rich—Just the fact that we are providing the service, breaking even isn't the goal. Susan R. —All school districts are in the same place and take into consideration, custodial services, wear and tear on the building. Christine: What user groups are there? There are pages and pages of groups using the facilities. Ellen—SPS budget should be going to the cost of educating our students. Ellen is not advocating to make a profit, but we need to cover costs, including wear and tear, depending upon the user.

Christine—Concerned about SED. Lucie—Said that Christine should not be commenting on SED as she has heard Christine has connections to SED. Christine—Loring was impacted by start time which was put into effect with little communication and Loring families have been adversely affected. Christine

concerned about the families who will be negatively impacted. Ellen—If we don't charge SED a fair amount, other families are subsidizing SED. Ellen, there are some parents that have chosen not to work. Ellen—SPS budget should not be subsidizing SED. Christine—Not asking for other families to subsidize, but asking for numbers for other user groups and how much they are paying as we are not provided that information. Christine asked for fees and how much of the \$35,000 deficit is due to the custodial fees as were not provided those numbers. Christine asked those numbers be provided to see if there is some way to be fair so we are not over-burdening SPS families. Rich—We are charging SED. What is the amount they pay each year? Susan R.—There are many customers and we should not focus on one customer.

LVK—We have the rental fees and presumably we are charging all groups these fees.

Susan—There are groups that are not following the fees. Fees have been waived. Susan did not bring information to the meeting that shows which vendors' fees have been waived.

Discussion ensued regarding the low District fees as related to other neighboring districts.

Susie Kornblum: Director of Sudbury Extended Day. Rent the cafeteria and gym in all five schools. SED pays rent, \$30,000 year in rent. Fees are not waived from SED. Fees have been in place for 20 years. Susan and Susie agree there is value to doing an assessment. SED is a community non-profit. Current budget is negative operating budget. If rental fee increase, they will directly pass onto parents. Parents will have to pay more. Monthly fee to families \$300 month. SED biggest user group. SED vacates space and still pay rent when the PTOs need space. Susie agrees there needs to be a discussion on the fees and potentially raising fees.

Ellen—We cannot favor one group over another. Need to be careful when we look at this.

LVK—Have we ever had a realtor look at what the rate should be per square foot?

Rich—Auditorium and gymnasium are the two facilities most people use. Do we require a custodian?
Susan R. If coming in on a weekend, need a custodian. Each group has to have its own custodian. Need to have someone open the door and clean up.

Ellen—Question about waivers...Susan R. —Reason for Waivers is history. Susan R. —We know how much the custodians are working because we have the time sheets

Christine—States that found Lucie's comments unreasonable as all people at the table have conflicts of interests and pointed to discussion regarding math. CH said if anyone has questions about what they may have heard, they should pick up the phone and call her. Christine said she has personal relationship with people who work at SED but is not personally impacted by the change in fees but sympathizes with the families who send their children there. CH viewed as different from other user groups as they serve only SPS students and currently serve 620 SPS students.

LVK states she believes the issue with ethics and conflicts to derive a financial benefit in some way from a relationship. She stated she does not know what Christine's relationships are but if she is

deriving a monetary gain of some sort that could trigger something. LVK stated if a School Committee member is concerned they have a conflict, it is the onus of the SC members to contact the Ethics Commission.

LVK—Concerned from a liability perspective that entities are using the school facilities without paying a fee. Susan would recommend Jim Kelly has the on line rental package to get it going. School Committee will follow up with Facility Dude (actual name of the software). All buildings and components factored into the system.

Lucie—Will put User Fees on Agenda for May 17th meeting and June 7th meeting.

3:00:20 FY18 School Calendar:

Christine—We shouldn't change anything for next year as it is too late to go to half days on Fridays.

Lucie—LS connected with us and Lincoln has Wednesday half days. We need to weigh in with the staff. They need to be part of the discussion. Bus costs associated with it as well need to be considered.

Christine—Should we do a survey?

Rich—Survey should include vacations? Do we want to have different vacation schedule?

Lucie—Reason we are having half days are PD. Can't go and implement in classroom next day and hard to retain information learned.

Ellen—There has been a lot of work to get SPS and LS aligned with calendars.

LVK—Discussion regarding the School Calendar and long term planning. Important to survey parents and staff regarding their thoughts on the school calendar and changing ILAP days, vacation calendar.

Rich—Do the survey in September. Prepare our school calendar in December.

Christine—Fine with the calendar, but received some requests to get information regarding what specific professional development occurs on ILAP days and communicate with the community.

Ellen—Motion to Approve Calendar, Christine Seconded the motion, 5-0 Motion passes.

3:19:00 Policy Manual Updates (2nd Reading):

Ellen read 2nd reading of the Wellness Policy.

Ellen mentioned that language in red is being removed. Ellen suggested different language "Except in limited circumstances, recess will not be withheld from students for disciplinary purposes."

Rich would like to see teachers have the ability to remove recess.

LVK—Would like to see what information exists regarding why recess is withheld from students.

Anne Wilson—There may be a reason that a teacher may need to withhold recess for a particular event where the teacher and student need to connect.

Christine--Motion to approve Wellness Policy, Rich—Seconded motion to Approve, Approved 5-0.

Ellen Motion to delete AIDS policies 3.3.3. and 4.2.11. Seconded by Christine. Motion approved 5-0.

Update on School Start Time and Meeting with LS and LPS: Lucie met with Tim and Elena to discuss a Tri-District meeting. Talked about important topics for Tri-District meeting. Talked about school start time at the top of the list. Talking about the transition of special needs and social emotional. Looking at doing a meeting in the Fall.

4:04:03 Approve Budget Transfers as Detailed on March 22:

Motion to Approve Budget Transfers by Rich. Seconded by Ellen. Motion Approved 4-1. Christine voted No.

Christine moving forward would like to see where the money is actually being transferred to, and from where it came. Ellen states that it doesn't matter where the money is going and which line item goes into another.

4:09:55 School Committee Communications:

Motion to Approve Highlights by Christine. Seconded by Ellen. Approved 5-0.

4:12:25 School Committee Report (Liaison /Subcommittee Reports):

Christine—Had a Town Hall Blue Ribbon Committee meeting to approve the Article.

Lucie—Went to the EDCO Board meeting. Lucie has a list of all opportunities to use EDCO.

3:53:10 Open Forum:

Meredith Gerson: 23 Hilltop Road. Questions regarding the math curriculum should have been asked before the curriculum chosen. She does not like the tone the School Committee chose to communicate with, and present ourselves with eye rolling.

Maia Projansky-Bell: 38 Lakewood Drive. Really important that people go to Town Meeting and get involved, and make your voice known. If you feel like the override budget needs to be preserved, you need to get involved and vote yes for the override. If you have concerns about why we got in this place, stay involved in the next year. If we do not get this override, there will be devastating effects for our students.

Allison Whitebone: 28 Old Forge Lane. Really want everyone to work together. Cannot allow the class sizes to be larger than they are right now. Cannot allow SED to be gutted. Want to make sure Sudbury stays a great place. We moved here for the beautiful schools, nature, and the kids. Need to invest in the young teachers. Want to find a way to maintain excellence. People are going to be looking at moving. Let's keep Sudbury great. I need better communication. We are a community.

3:42:50 SEA Report:

Audrey Swennes reported on creative learning experiences by specialist teachers. They are the educators that teach the children over the course of their entire school careers.

4:15:43 Assistant Superintendent's Report:

Kim Swain acknowledged the role of SERF, and receipt of certain grants. Update regarding professional learning during ILAP Day today.

4:18:48 Superintendent's Report:

Would like to talk through a couple misunderstandings about budget cuts: First round of notices of reductions have been delivered. It is a complex and stressful process. Things will be different because of these cuts. During May and June, the administrative team will be working on reorganization of tasks. There is misunderstanding around the elementary school assistant principals. It is important that we think about equity through cuts. We have to look at workload and how we will share resources. We will look at what things will get done. There will be a huge change for students and families. It will not be the case any longer that we will have full time assistant principals at the schools. Our response times will not be the same. We will respond to emergencies quickly. The focus will be on equity. With regard to general education teachers being cut, some cuts were made with enrollment. Focusing on K and 1st grade and keeping to guideline. We will continue to watch move-ins and move-outs. States that she has very limited flexibility to add sections.

Director of Business and Finance interviews were held last night. Will decide whether we will bring finalists back. Posted for an Interim Student Services Director. If there are things that won't blend well with our philosophy, we will not hire. Posted as an internal posting for Nixon Principal this afternoon.

Strategic Planning team meeting next week to guide our goals for next year. Anxious for School Committees feedback on goals.

Minutes:

Members will send changes.

Members Forum:

None.

4:31:15 Future Agenda Item Discussion:

Use Fees, State of the Schools, \$10,000 for policy manual, CLEARGOV

Susan R. Wanted to add additional information \$30,000 divided by 600 in SED is \$50 per year. If they are passing it on, it's \$5 a month. There has been no discussion with SED regarding changes in fees. Susan R states no fees or numbers have been given to SED or any other user group. The only discussion with SED is that we are discussing fees.

Executive Session:

None.

4:39:40 Adjourn:

Motion to Adjourn by Christine. Motion Seconded by Ellen. Motion Approved 5-0. Time adjourned 12:20 a.m.

AGENDA PACKET DOCUMENTS

- Mathematics Curriculum Update Presentation “A Presentation to School Committee”;
- ‘Evaluating the Superintendent—Understanding the New Massachusetts Educator Evaluation System”;
- Sudbury Public Schools Facility Use Fee Comparisons spreadsheet;
- Draft 2017-2018 School Year Calendar;
- Draft Wellness Policy dated April 6th;
- Memorandum from the Office of the Director of Business and Finance dated 3/22/17 Re: FY2017 Budget Update;
- Munis Report Year to Date Budget;
- Draft School Committee Highlights from April 3rd meeting;
- Superintendent’s Personnel actions;

- Draft Minutes from April 3rd School Committee meeting.