

Sudbury Public Schools (SPS)
School Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 17, 2017 @ 7:30 p.m.
The Senior Center, 40 Fairbank Rd., Sudbury

Open Session:

Chair Lucie St. George opened the session at 7:34 p.m. Sudbury Cable TV broadcasted the meeting live.

Members Present: Lucie St. George (Chair), Maggie Helon, 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, Colleen Kenosian, SEA.

1:38 Recognitions:

Dr. Wilson congratulated the instrumental music and choral groups from Curtis who traveled to New York recently. Dr. Wilson recognized the group for receiving an outstanding orchestra award. Dr. Wilson stated that the groups represented SPS well and the staff reported that students were wonderful citizens.

3:20 Open Forum:

Student: 118 Peakham Road. Speaking about Curtis music program. Job positions for the middle school should stay the same. Will be hard to find someone to do orchestra and band. Better to keep the program the way it is. Outstanding band and orchestra awards.

Student: 147 Nobscot Road—Great experience at music program. Band program helps us to relax when we didn't like school. Helped us to get through the days. Curtis helped us to appreciate music. When

we heard the orchestra play we got lost in the music. Music program is a great experience and we want the other kids to have a great experience.

Student: 58 Lakewood Drive—Tab block was a great way to enjoy the program. Having early music helps us to wake up early. Curtis helped to give us focused teaching. Greatly improved our music. Directors we had answered all of our questions.

Student: 53 Pine Street— Is in school orchestra at Curtis. Everyone loves our teacher. She is the best and can light up a crowd. If she leaves, other kids won't continue. Won't be the same if she leaves.

Jean Nam: 81 Newbridge Road—Thanks the community for passing the override. It was really hard and the budgets were hard to talk about. We have a hard job to do moving forward. The override process stirred the community. Hopefully the budgeting process will be improved. Concord: Annual town meeting report. Budgets went up 4.65, 4.17 6.48% one year. No overrides in Concord with these numbers. Early 2000s hit the school budgets. What happened during the recession? We dug ourselves in a whole. Tried to get the teachers back...called it restoration. The last few years we've been at 3% increase. What are we doing, we are trying to get back to where we were...a baseline. My point is maybe we can have some understanding. We had a recession. Ease off on the schools. During this past election, spent a lot of time standing next to the new Selectman. We have to make some choices...police, fire, schools...must have...then there are nice to have....new tennis courts, 3.5 million. 1.3 million of it, was rejected by the electorate. Our system of government is town meeting. Not everything makes it to the ballot. The schools are an easy target. It's nearly half the budget. We need to step back and look at the big picture. We need to look at the entire budget.

Kay Bell: 348 Old Lancaster Road—Pie chart showing the results of the ballot question. 57% voted yes for the Override, 41% voted no. More than half of the people voted that they could trust the body to work the budget. There is a mandate to convince the town that we are using these resources well. With regard to the recess policy, the American Association of Pediatrics has documented a report regarding the importance of recess. Gave the school committee members the report. The first recommendation is the conclusion "Recess is a necessary break in the day..."

Mr. Tinsely recently asked what data do we have? We need to collect data and accumulate the data to make sure recess is not being withheld for punitive reasons.

Suzie Kornblum: 22 Virginia Ridge Road: Here to speak about Agenda 5. Clarifying two things. A \$60K fee is an increase of \$5 a month. Our tuition increase is 3%. Had a meeting scheduled with Susan Rothermich in December. SR said we could get to the point where we could pay 60K, 75K or 125K a year. Susan and she had conversations during the year about establishing a lease. The organization that did the study did not contact SED to ask for rates and policies. Suzie not sure why the outside entity did not contact them. It would have been important for us to know before we established our contract next year. Asks the Committee to consider the good will of SED, helped to provide scholarships for L-S students, contributing \$30K for security systems after Sandy Hook. People have moved here for the schools and for SED. Eroding the good will of the parents will negatively impact the schools. Urging us to continue working with SED as a partner.

Mara Huston—578 Peakham Road—Here to talk about the music program. Talking about social emotional learning for students. Student is alive when I am singing. The first period is very important. It is a stress relief. Getting social emotional wellness from singing. Cutting back what is happening in the elementary schools.

Susan Lilly 32 Stone Root Lane—Wants to add something about the music program. Combining band and orchestra talk about that. Natick has one teacher for band and orchestra. Contacted friend in Natick who said this is Natick's first year teaching band and orchestra together. Hoping can continue with the way we are going.

Steven Shepard—58 Lakewood Drive—Combining orchestra and band with one teacher and the number of people who can do that is very difficult. Band is very difficult. With strings every finger has to be placed on strings very carefully. Need someone to know where the fingers are going and technique. When get to high school can have someone who can lead orchestra and band. The value of good music education is incredible. I use it every day. All due to what I learned in 6th 7th and 8th grade. In long run, not the way to proceed.

Joyce Minkoff--175 Fairbank Road—Talking about social emotional impact of music in a child's life. The impact of music program in my life is incredible. Isn't a week that hasn't gone by that the music program hasn't impacted our lives. Taught us how to be a good person, how to be an upstanding person. Challenging us all to do better with a better program. We are in Sudbury because we want good meaningful programs.

Maia Projansky-Bell—Forming a new Committee tonight. Urging the School Committee, in a new year, to enter with positivity and cooperation. Wants the School Committee to have efficient compromises and find the best answers to our challenges. It has to be done in a positive way. I have seen a lot of the other. Hope School Committee will work more cooperatively to get the work done. These meetings are too long. They go for five hours. People are gone. It might mean having more meetings. Looking forward to the new year and this new Committee.

Nicki Payne—15 Thoreau Way—Grew up in this town, professional musician. Wants to say that also teach in after school private lesson program. Our teacher has an incredible inspiring voice, highly respected in her field. The fact that we have one string specialists in the elementary school and having continuity through middle school is so important. Teacher prepared them very well. To lose her is a terrible thing. Why would we change something that is working really well.

45:12 Curriculum Update:

Kim Swain introducing Betsy Grams and Terry Miller, the last of our Curriculum Updates. Ms. Grams will discuss what SEL programs are and different metrics we use to monitor programs. Process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply knowledge. CASEL: Been in existence over 20 years to help schools come up with and plan and implement social emotional learning components.

Rings of influence, home, community, schools and classrooms. Really important to teach social emotional learning. Academic performance increases, improved attitudes and behavior in school. Decreases in negative behaviors and emotional distress. SEL provides protective factor for our youth. It also benefits them into the workplace. Skills are transferable into adulthood. DESE is one of their five strategic authorities. Promotes a tiered system of support and a positive environment for our students. Two of our four district goals cross over into SEL. We have an anti-bullying policy, consultations with Stan Davis, known for bullying prevention activities. All of our schools have the benefit of working with him. We have lots of school programs that foster an inclusive school climate.

We have a tiered system of support approach to SEL.

How do we measure SEL?: We do a connectedness Survey. We also use the DESSA Screener. We also use other surveys, number of interventions with school psychologist and nurse.

Stan Davis helped to create the Connectedness School. Survey based upon extensive research. Students are more likely to succeed when they are connected to school. Building positive relationships. Ms. Grams discussed and referenced the history of the Connectedness Survey. Look at the data in three ways, 1. strengths-areas we improved in or areas that we maintained; 2. Ask questions that ask us to use data for social norming; 3. Look for data where we can improve. Ms. Grams references data from Curtis.

Ms. Grams discussed improvement across the elementary school data. Opportunities for our District to do Social Norming campaigns. It is an intervention to correct misperceptions by exposing actual norms to benefit a community by motivating individuals to reduce problem behaviors or increase participation in healthy behaviors.

Haynes Loring and Noyes all had an increase in exclusionary behaviors within a cohort. Encouraging them to come up with an action plan.

Nixon—increase in negative actions on buses and online.

Curtis—Students who receive special help report higher frequency of exclusion and name calling. We would continue with social norming.

DESSA screener—measures skills related to school and life assessment.

Full DESSA—72 question tool, much more comprehensive. Only use it with students who feel need screening. Ms. Grams discusses the data from elementary schools.

Terry Miller—6th Grade school counselor. Last year first introduction to the DESSA. This year felt ready to move it out in all grades. Met frequently with mental health team...what questions would come up with faculty members. Look at the data for teams, look at trends, whole grade trends. Focused on under developed skills. Look at on an individual level and global level. Gives us good data and helps us fine tune data. Goal directed behavior—growth mindset—when we think we can do something we are more successful, the ability to initiate and stick with something. Some kids may already be in a social skills

program. Using an exit ticket from the classroom, may be teachers using growth mindset language, you can do it. Promoting an environment where questions are good. Helping the students note when they are using the skills. The eight competencies carry through life, Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, goal oriented, personal responsibility, decision-making, optimistic thinking. As a counselor it is great to have data, but gives you a way to fine tune things. Excited about using the DESSA screener tool at Curtis.

Ms. Grams: References Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey. Based upon the Centers for Disease Control, parents are notified and can choose to opt out their child. It is a census survey. Participation rate this year was 93%. Report will give us key indicators, only include 7th and 8th grade. Bullying victimization has gone down over the years...Cyber bullying went up to 18% saying they have been victimized by cyber bullying. CH raised concerns surrounding the suicide data presented and asked for strategies in place to address.

Interventions for Mental Health Indicators—Stress management unit in Grades 7 and 8, no homework days, regular recess, mindfulness programs for 7th and 8th graders, yoga units, support from school based mental health professionals, outside referrals. Interventions for cyberbullying include social norming and poster campaigns, technology behavior rubric, technology agreement, behavior rubric, digital citizenship.

Professional Learning in SEL—focused on DESSA tools, what are the 8 competencies, planning evidence based interventions.

What's happening next year—As of next year all teachers will be trained in the DESSA tools, also implementing social skills curriculum, Second Step at the Middle School, will also have time spent supporting and implementing program, will be transitioning to standards based report card.

Challenges going forward—Time, takes a lot of time. Focused on continuing improvement.

CRANE—Support for families. Cranehelp.org

SPS has a social emotional website for parents—Casel.org

Doe.mass.edu

MH—What need in budgeting—grant monies. RT—Second Step—How are they planning for that. Ms. Grams—two of six days will be an advisory block. Each month will have a theme that coincides with each competency. RT—When do parents get involved? Ms. Grams-They are invited to get involved. Second Step comes with program letters. When can parents know that their kids have been identified in a needs column. Oftentimes the student already has an ed. Plan. RT—Encourage to put it in the report cards of schools. LSG—Assuming with professional development becomes standard language within classes, persevering, re-enforcing the language into the classes.

CH—What other districts are using DESSA screener? Ms. Grams does not know what other districts are using DESSA. CH—Have we taken into consideration the fact that we did not have the correct school

start time for students at the middle school. Ms. Grams in her mind it does not weigh in. CH—Was the grant money 10K per year or one time? Ms. Grams—One time. CH asked about compensation for Ms. Grams, Kim Swain and John Verre’s participation in the DESSa promotional material. Ms. Grams stated not compensated as it was in-kind as part of the grant. CH asked for the questions from 72 questions to be made available.

LVK—How many school psychologists are at each elementary school and at Curtis and does Ms. Grams find that sufficient? Ms. Grams—We have one school psychologist at each elementary school and three psychologists at Curtis. Ms. Grams—We could always use more support.

2:17:13 Reorganization of the School Committee:

Motion to Nominate Christine by LVK. Second by RT. 5-0 vote.

Motion to nominate RT for Vice Chair by Christine. Second by LVK. 5-0 Vote.

Liaisons:

BOS: RT and CH.

Finance and Budget: RT and LVK

MASC Delegate: MH

L-S: RT and CH

SEPAC: MH

METCO: LVK

EDCO: LSG

Fairbank Task Force: RT and LVK

Permanent Building Committee & School Building Committee

Energy Committee and Planning Board: LSG and RT

Health Advisory Committee: LVK

Capital Finance Committee: RT

SERF: LSG

Park and Rec.: LVK

Budget Strategies Task Force: RT and CH

Haynes Liaison:	LVK
Loring Liaison:	RT
Nixon Liaison:	CH
Noyes Liaison:	LSG
Curtis Liaison:	MH
Negotiations and Labor Relations:	RT and MH
PR/Communications:	LVK
Special Education:	LSG
Class Size Subcommittee:	CH and RT
Start Time Subcommittee:	CH and LSG
Legislative Forum:	LVK

Took off Budget position.

Took off Town Hall Blue Ribbon Committee position.

Vocational Education Guidance Committee.

RT—Motion to Approve FY18 Liaison. Seconded-MH. 5-0 Vote in favor.

2:40:11 Lease Value Discussion:

SR—Reading Memorandum to SC from SR dated 5/17/2017, RE: Rental Value for Lease for After Care Program.

LVK—Did the company that did the report consider the fact that SED pays the church 19K a year? SR—The company looked at like school facilities in determining the fair market value.

CH—Concerned about the longstanding positive working relationship between SPS and SED and concerned this has now become adversarial. Asked what can we do. What can we do to repair the relationship that SPS has with SED?

SR—We began the conversation back in September with SED. SR----states that Suzie was told in September about the lease.

RT—Is 75K sufficient to get us to parity with other districts? Recommending an annual escalation so we don't find ourselves in this situation again. MH—Susan is CFO of school. Glad dug up where we are

lacking. Astonishing that not looked at in years. MH—Causes wear and tear, doing job to discover areas of need and a lack of attention.

LSG—Looking at it as a business decision. LSG—Are we breaking even? Heat, space, wear and tear.

SR—School and SED work very well together. What I passed around is the law.

CH—Everyone around the table agrees that need a lease. CH asked who was responsible for soliciting the bid because the language in the letter specifies the town of Sudbury. SR stated she solicited the bid. CH asked when did she solicit the services as the completion of the bid is dated February 28, 2017. SR stated she does not remember.

RT—If move it to 60K a year each student moves up \$50 per year. RT-We can ease it in.

SR—Need to go back and look at market.

MH—Actually despises looking at other districts. Look at things sensitively. We haven't done anything. To jump into it, doesn't want to. Need to ease in.

CH—Asked if an RFP was put out for the audit and concerned it is not adequate because our facilities were not evaluated.

SR—An RFP was not put out.

CH—Concerned we audited a specific user group and did not evaluate our facilities.

LVK—60K does not get us to parity as far as what other districts charge. Tax payers of Sudbury have subsidized SED for years.

"Motion to offer SED a 3-year lease with 2 additional year options that in year 1 would start at \$60K and year 3 at \$84K and whatever the average is in year 2 (\$72K) and the escalation for years 4 and 5 will be based on a 4% increase if they choose to exercise those options. If they choose not to they can choose to renegotiate at that time. RT made motion- LSG 2nd. Vote 3-2. RT, LSG, and MH in favor, CH and LVK against."

CH—Voted no because of the process.

LVK—Voted no as would prefer that we start at 70K or 75K.

3:22:54 Facilities Use Fees:

SR-Some people have not been charged in the past. We need to pay forward. LVK—Wants an update every 4-6 months to make sure that we are getting the revenues. SR—Considered special revenue accounts. The money has to stay in that account. An account such as this can only be used for something for the buildings. RT-Salaries should stay the salaries. SR—As we are creating a sustainable model and we want to be able to put in the amount that we want to use.

LVK asked if the list of 51 users is complete. SR stated yes. CH questioned why the list did not contain a list of user groups complete with who was paying, what they paid and who was not paying.

SR - Believes we should focus on fees moving forward.

SR - Some people haven't been charged in the past but were charged this year.

LVK - Believes fee should be consistent in fundamental fairness.

Discussion ensued referring to list of other examples of facility use fees and how to apply for use as we create a sustainable model for our budget.

LVK—Concerned about people entering and exiting building.

LVK-Moves to approve Facility Use Fees as referenced in the memorandum from Susan Rothermich to School Committee dated April 26, 2017, LSG-Second. 5-0 approved.

Award of Food Service Contract:

Off the Agenda.

3:35:40 OPEN FORUM:

Jean Nam—81 Newbridge Road--\$50 is still \$50.

Jenn Cripps--39 Ridge Hill Road—If we are going to have curriculum presentations, give parents the right to answer questions. Beneficial to be able to ask questions face to face. Has concerns that if a Committee member asks for information and does not get it, why would we? Would like to see the 72 questions. Moving forward can we do an open session after speakers? Here because we are involved and want to be involved. Things get lost in translation.

Maia Proujansky-Bell—38 Lakewood Drive-- \$50 is a lot of money, but it is required to send in \$50 of school supplies to each kids classroom every year. It is a reasonable amount of money. Recently become apparent that we have some pretty serious things happening with the busing. Three buses at Noyes are maxed out, more than 70 students riding the buses. Maximum allowed is 72 students. Son's bus not the most full bus. Buses are over full, dangerous, not safe. Dangerous situation, which should be looked into urgently, some of the students sit on the buses for 5-10 minutes once they arrive at school. SR-Will look into the three buses being over crowded. Things happen over the course of the year, kids move in, kids move out. Late registration is also a factor. RT—What percent of our students use the bus? SR—Doesn't know. MH—Total student ridership with a bus pass—74%, Curtis Riders—84%, Elementary Riders-69%.

Nell Forgac—12 Great Lake Drive--Happy that publishing the Agenda packets publicly.

3:47:54 Communications:

CH—Motion to approve Highlights. LVK-Second. 5-0 Approved.

3:49:28 Liaison Reports:

CH—went to Nixon PTO meeting, fantastic

CH and MH went to a math presentation, turning 22 in Marlborough.

SEA

SEA retirement party June 15th at Concord's, starting at 3:30 p.m.

SEA Rep. will report on softball bonanza at the next meeting.

3:50:47 Assistant Superintendent Report:

Congratulations for SERF grant for social emotional learning for Loring. Got a SERF grant to purchase books for Social Emotional book collection.

3:51:19 Superintendent's Report:

Jennifer LaMontagne is the new Principal at Nixon. JL has been Assistant Principal for Nixon for three years.

Director of Business and Finance search—negotiating a contract with Mr. Donald Sawyer. Hiring a new shared METCO Director with LS, three finalists. AW gave an update on budget, impact and misinformation regarding process.

First topic SPS music program, very proud of it and have every intention to maintain and expand it. Trying to expand opportunities for all students. Proposed schedule will allow students to take chorus, in addition to band or orchestra. TAAB has been problematic for others. All students will benefit from Team Time and Enrichment blocks. Will be a six day rotation. Challenge to make sure students are not missing core academic time and recess to access band and orchestra.

2nd topic: Staffing cuts due to enrollment changes. Take into account enrollment projections and historic changes and what is in front of us.

SC is responsible for approving the budget, policy and hiring and firing the Superintendent. SC provides direction for the needs of the District. The implementation and day to day management, including staffing is the responsibility of the Administration.

3:58:22 Minutes:

CH asked to table minutes and asked for them to be sent out in Google Doc form so people can edit efficiently.

4:00:10 Future Agenda Items:

Minute taking, State of the Schools, Budget, Schedule for a Day workshop, sign in procedures at the schools, Let's Talk Button, negotiating team.

CH—Would like to set up an Executive Session soon on Contract negotiations.

LSG—Motion to go into Executive Session at 11:33 p.m. Second —RT. Roll call 5-0 approved.

Agenda Packet Documents:

- Social Emotional Learning Presentation by Betsy Grams;
- FY18 Liaison & SC Responsibilities Assignments Worksheet;
- Memorandum from Susan Rothermich to School Committee dated 5/17/2017 re: Rental Value for Lease for After Care Program;
- Market Report Before & After School Programs Sudbury Public Schools, Sudbury, Massachusetts dated February 28, 2017;
- Memorandum from Susan Rothermich to School Committee dated 4/26/2017 re: Facility Use Fees
- List of Customers using the buildings during FY2017;
- SED Tax Return 2014;
- Facility use Fees Comparisons;
- Memorandum from Susan Rothermich to School Committee dated 5/17/2017 re: Management and Operation of School Food Service Program – Request for Proposal Award;
- Draft Highlights from April 26, 2017;
- Superintendent’s Personnel Actions;
- Draft Minutes School Committee Meeting April 26, 2017