

Sudbury School Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2020
Goodnow Library
21 Concord Road
Sudbury, MA 01776

Members Present:

Lisa Kouchakdjian, Chair
Silvia Nersessian, Vice Chair
Meredith Gerson
Maggie Helon
Christine Hogan

Also Present:

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

Regular Session Meeting

Chair Lisa Kouchakdjian opened the meeting at 7:04 PM.

1. Special Matters

a. Update EEE Response and Coronavirus Guidance

- i. Bill Murphy, Director of the Sudbury Health Department; Carol Bradford, Chair of the Sudbury Board of Health; and Peter Honing, Board of Health Consulting Physician spoke to the Committee about Sudbury's approach to combating coronavirus.

1. Mr. Murphy explained that the role of the Board of Health is "disease surveillance," which the Board is carrying out by interviewing people in town who have traveled to coronavirus hotbeds, including learning if they have children in the public schools. Mr. Murphy also noted that he has been in frequent communication with Superintendent Brad Crozier.
2. Mr. Honing briefed the Committee on the virology of the coronavirus/COVID-19, with an emphasis on its impact on children.
3. Ms. Bradford explained to the Committee what the schools are doing to help prevent the spread of coronavirus, as well as how the school nurses triage a potential case.
4. Questions from the Committee concerned how the Town and District would respond to a positive COVID-19 test; the current

quarantine recommendations; how the Board of Health identifies travelers to interview; what advice the Board of Health has given Superintendent Crozier that may be shared with the community; how the practices of LS and SPS are being aligned; after how many COVID cases SPS should increase its cleanliness efforts, and whether the Town had emergency funds to help support those efforts.

- b. Eastern Equine Encephalitis
 - i. Mr. Murphy also updated the Committee on Sudbury's response to the eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) outbreak that occurred in Fall 2019. Additional traps have been placed around town, there's due to be more testing of mosquitos, and targeted sprayings will continue as the weather warms. Since Sudbury is entering the second year of a three year cycle, Mr. Murphy advised that he expects EEE will again be present in the environment. Mr. Honing added that deet is the most effective mosquito repellent available.
- 2. Public Comment (Moved to immediately follow
 - a. Monica Rogan spoke to the Committee about the importance of SPS maintaining frequent communication with the community.
- 3. Educational Matters
 - a. Districts Reports
 - i. SEA Report
 - 1. SEA Representative Ellen Vedora informed the Committee that parent-teacher conferences are underway, and will continue for the next few weeks. Teachers are also in the process of creating progress reports and report cards.
 - 2. Ms. Vedora also reported that artist Bren Bataclan has recently visited every elementary school, sharing his mission of spreading kindness through art.
 - 3. Ms. Vedora also reported that 4th and 5th grade teachers have been working with Wellness Coordinator Betsy Grams to explore Sanford/Harmony curriculum tools.
 - ii. Business and Finance Director's Report
 - 1. Business and Finance Director Don Sawyer provided the Committee an update on bus registration, which started earlier this year due to the upcoming change in school start times. Registration is open until March 31, 2020. Mr. Sawyer described the various ways parents have been reminded of this deadline. To date, there have been 869 total registrations, roughly 700 shy of average.
 - iii. Assistant Superintendent's Report
 - 1. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain updated the Committee on a pair of items related to METCO. First, Ms. Swain told the

Committee about changes in the METCO registration process. Secondly, SPS was awarded roughly \$62,000 in additional funding for FY21 through the METCO Supplemental SpEd Grant.

2. Ms. Swain also recognized the LS staff and students who put on a production of “The Other Room” for the SPS faculty.

iv. Superintendent’s Report

1. Superintendent Brad Crozier began his report by thanking the SALT members who joined a food packaging event on a recent Sunday afternoon. During the course of the event, over 45,000 meals were made for area foodbanks.
2. Mr. Crozier updated the Committee on the Student Opportunity Act. The district stands to receive an additional \$13,450.
3. Mr. Crozier also reported on the latest budgetary developments at EDCO.
4. Mr. Crozier then reviewed some of the precautions taken by the district, as well as vendors Whitson’s and First Student, to combat the spread of COVID-19.
5. Mr. Crozier also shared a clarification he recently received from DESE on which school closure days must be made-up. The district has begun to consider remote learning options in the event a closure related to COVID-19 is necessary. Mr. Crozier and the Committee proceeded to discuss upcoming events that have been or could be postponed or canceled. The discussion then transitioned to an examination of where the district stands in regards to cleaning supplies and back-up staffing.

4. Business and Policy Matters

- a. Review Updates to District Wellness Policy (moved to immediately follow Item 1A)
 - i. The Committee, along with Nurse Carol Bradford, reviewed the District Wellness Policy and several suggested edits to it. The members of the Wellness Committee that suggested these updates were listed and thanked for their work. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain elaborated on scope of the work done by the Wellness Committee.
 1. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the updated Wellness Policy as revised, Silvia Nerssessionian seconded.
 - a. **VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.
- b. Review and Approve FY21 District Fees
 - i. The Committee reviewed and discussed the schedule of District Fees proposed for fiscal year 2021. Mr. Sawyer explained to the Committee that this was only a partial review, and that additional fees will be discussed at a future meeting.
 1. Christine Hogan motioned to approve the FY21 District Fees as presented, Silvia Nerssessionian seconded.

- a. In discussion following the motion, Mr. Sawyer reviewed the facility use fees raised during the current fiscal year, as well as the new schedule for FY21.
 - b. **VOTE: 5-0.** Motion carries.
 - c. Following the vote, Mr. Sawyer also reviewed the bus transportation and instrumental music lesson fees. These fees were revised last year, and no change for FY21 was recommended by Mr. Sawyer or made by the Committee.
- c. Review Communication from Wayland School Committee
 - i. There were no comments or questions on this item.
- d. Analyze School Committee Self-Assessment Data
 - i. The Committee reviewed the self-assessment survey each of its members took over the last few weeks. The conversation included discussing the structure of the survey itself; the data generated by the survey's questions; the Committee's desire to take an evaluative survey annually; how questions on the survey may be used to create potential future agenda items and summer workshop topics; the best ways for the Committee to receive and utilize student assessment data; the Committee's warrant approval process; work done and to be done on the subject of school handbooks; and ideas for how the Committee can increase community outreach and engagement.
- e. Conduct Initial Review of School Committee Handbook Draft
 - i. The Committee briefly reviewed the first draft of the new School Committee Handbook. Though in agreement that the document will prove helpful, the Committee agreed to postpone larger consideration of the Handbook until a future meeting.
- f. Legislative Forum/Tri-District Meeting Planning
 - i. The Committee reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming Legislative Forum/Tri-District Meeting. A pair of typos were brought-up and corrected, and a concern was expressed about the ability to have an in-depth discussion with the legislators in such a limited timeframe. To rectify this, the Committee considered ways the agenda could be restructured, including suggesting topics that could be removed or reformatted.
- g. Future Agenda Items
 - i. Review School Committee Protocols, review School Committee handbook
- h. Liaison Reports
 - i. Maggie Helon reported on the Noyes Read Across America event, and its ecology theme.
 - ii. Lisa Kouchakdjian reported on the canceled Civics Bee, recognizing the efforts of the staff and students who were slated to participate. Ms. Kouchakdjian also reminded the Committee of the upcoming MASC event "Day on the Hill," as well as the Unified Games.
- i. Minutes

- i. The School Committee reviewed and revised minutes from the February 24, 2020 meeting.
 1. Silvia Nerssessian motioned to approve the meeting minutes from February 24, 2020, as presented, Maggie Helon seconded.
 - a. **VOTE: 4-0-1**, Christine Hogan abstaining. Motion carries.
5. Executive Session
 - a. Silvia Nerssessian motioned at 9:35 to move to Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual; and to discuss strategy with respect to negotiations with union and nonunion personnel, as to do so in public session would be detrimental to the District's position; and to review and approve Executive Session minutes, and not to return, Christine Hogan seconded.
 - i. **VOTE: 5-0**. Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,

Justin Dulak

Documents Reviewed During the March 9, 2020 School Committee Meeting

1. School Committee Wellness Policy with Edits
2. School Committee Wellness Policy Draft Revision 2/2020
3. FY21 Fees Recommendation
4. Letter to the Sudbury School Committee from the Wayland School Committee
5. Sudbury School Committee Self-Evaluation Survey Results
6. Sudbury School Committee Handbook Draft
7. Tri-District School Committee Meeting and Legislative Forum Agenda
8. School Committee Meeting Minutes Draft, February 24, 2020