

**Lincoln-Sudbury Safety Review Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2007**  
**Meeting held in Conference Room B, L-S**

**Members present:** Scott Carpenter, Hal Chapel, Eric Harris, Ron Nix – Vice Chair, John Ollquist, Barbara Pedulla, Dennis Picker – Chair, Gary Taylor, Karen Thomsen.

**Alternates present:** Claire Daly, Tim Garvin, Bill Ray.

**Absent:** Sheila Calkins, Mark Collins, Tom DeNormandie, Sarah Cannon Holden, Bill Keller, Tucker Krone, Alexandra Sliwkowski.

8 members of the public were present.

Dennis Picker called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. and opened the discussion for public comment.

**Public Comment:** A comment was made regarding the safety procedures recommended by the police chiefs in the previous meeting, as being more focused on keeping outsiders out of the building rather than keeping insiders safe. The individual making the comment felt that in general those recommendations were not appropriate to L-S. A student commented that none of the police chief's suggestions were in keeping with the culture of the school and the students were not in favor of any of them. John Ollquist said that he thought the chiefs' recommendations were very reasonable and warranted serious consideration. Eric Harris added that the police are working in partnership with the school to figure out new policies and procedures. This is the beginning of a discussion to determine what makes sense for the school. The chiefs presented their ideas strictly from the public safety perspective and are not able to fully evaluate the overall affect of any given idea. Dennis Picker mentioned that the chiefs have, subsequent to their presentation at this committee, started meeting with Dr. Ritchie to explore the implications of the various recommendations and to explore implementation scenarios that reflect the reality of how the school operates. Another individual asked for a policy of moderacy, suggesting that the group start with small steps to improve school safety, and not impose harsh policies all at once that take away from the culture of the school.

**Committee Discussion:**

**Input received from student and faculty/staff focus groups held on 5/22 and 5/23:** The person hired to take and transcribe notes of the focus group discussions did not produce the transcriptions. She cited "personal problems". Group facilitators relied on memory (a week after the meetings) to summarize the content of the discussions.\* This compromised the completeness of the data reported. (\*The administrators' group took and transcribed its own notes because it needed to meet at a time scheduled for another focus group; B. Pedulla made notes immediately after meeting with the non-teaching staff.).

John Ollquist noted that not many people participated in the focus group discussions and therefore the focus groups represent a small sample of the L-S community.

The Committee thanked Tucker Krone, John Ollquist, Barbara Pedulla, Alexandra Sliwowski and Karen Thomsen for all the time and effort they put into organizing, conducting, and analyzing the focus groups and in salvaging data when the note taking arrangements fell through.

The Committee agreed with Karen Thomsen's request to allow Alex Loomis and Rebecca Stubbs, L-S students who attended some of the student focus groups, to join the discussion in place of the student members of the Committee, Tucker Krone and Alexandra Sliwowski, who were not able to attend tonight's meeting. Karen suggested that Alex and Rebecca could help the Committee members understand the meaning of the focus group input.

John Ollquist distributed copies of the notes from each of the 7 focus groups and presented the main themes that were expressed by the attendees at the focus groups. The Committee discussed each theme as it was presented. Karen Thomsen emphasized that a set of open ended questions was posed to each focus group, and the following themes are what emerged from the comments made by attendees.

#### 1) IDs or passes for faculty, staff, students, and visitors

There was a wide range of opinions on the idea of requiring badges, IDs, or passes for people in the building. A summary of the position of each focus group is as follows:

<u>Focus Group</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Visitors</u>
Non-teaching Staff	no	yes	yes
Building/Grounds Staff	?	yes	yes
Administrators	open	open	open
Faculty	small number favored, most did not		
Students	no	?	no

In its discussion of this information, the Committee noted that people attending groups seemed sometimes to be expressing opinions on assumed proposals, when in fact, no specific proposal regarding IDs has been promoted to date by the Committee.

#### 2) Relationships/Communications

This was viewed as a real positive in terms of promoting a safe atmosphere at the school. There was uniform praise for the caring relationships fostered by faculty and staff. Students in particular seemed to appreciate the open communications policy followed by the school

### 3) Supervision in the Building

There is some concern about supervision of students in the building. Adding additional campus aides was an idea that surfaced, with special attention to the time just before and after school. Some people expressed concern that with occasional teacher absences and a shortage of substitutes, there are often large numbers of students in the halls unsupervised when their classes are cancelled. Directed study programs were also mentioned as contributing to this problem. The use of walkie-talkies was mentioned in a number of groups as being very helpful and important in maintaining a safe environment at the school.

### 4) Size of Building, Student Body, and Faculty and Staff

There was concern expressed about how the physical growth of the school because of the new building, as well as the increased number of students and staff has made it more difficult to monitor safety issues. The large new building inevitably leads to more “nooks and crannies” that are not always supervised. The large number of students and staff make it more difficult to maintain the kinds of relationships that are such an important part of the culture of LS. Additional campus aides were mentioned as a possible solution to the supervision problem at such a large school.

### 5) LS Culture

There was an overwhelming sense that the culture at LS makes a very positive contribution to the sense of well-being that exists at the school.

Eric Harris asked the members of the subcommittee who attended the focus groups and analyzed the data whether they were surprised at any of the input. The subcommittee members answered with the following list:

- 1) Students are not willing to compromise openness and trust for implementation of safety measures because they don't believe the school will really be any safer.
- 2) One faculty member had commented that it would be safer to have two doors for access in each room, most have only one door.
- 3) Karen Thomsen was surprised at the low participation in the focus groups. She resorted to actively recruiting students to attend.

Barbara Pedulla encouraged everyone to read the summaries of the focus groups.

## **Discussion of the preliminary report:**

As a matter of business, the group discussed which alternates present would vote for which absent persons. Claire Daly served to fill in for Sheila Calkins for the remainder of this meeting.

The group discussed what type of preliminary report it might issue by the end of June. Members expressed the feeling that it was important for the report to describe what ground the committee covered and to also shed light on the nuances and complexities of the various safety-related topics that the Committee spent time discussing to date. The group discussed the range of types of recommendations that might be appropriate for the preliminary report—from high level conceptual recommendations to fairly detailed proscriptive recommendations. During this discussion, the Committee decided to work to create a preliminary report that had something to say about every safety-related area that has been discussed, and not to try to narrow down to a smaller number of areas in which the Committee felt it could adopt some recommendations. It decided that voting to select 3 or 4 areas to focus on for creating recommendations was not the best way to proceed.

Ron Nix made a **Motion** that no specific recommendations be included in the preliminary report, but instead that the report should include only a discussion of the areas that the committee has considered. John Ollquist seconded the motion. Discussion on this motion focused on how much could be accomplished in the remaining amount of time between now and June 27. The motion was **denied**, 4 in favor, 5 opposed.

The committee discussed how to proceed with creating the preliminary report. Hal Chapel suggested opening the report with a summary of what the committee covered and did not cover since it began in March. The Committee agreed that beyond this summary, there would be chapters that go into more detail on the topics that were covered. Each of those chapters would describe the work the Committee did in that area, the information obtained, the nuances and complexities that were discussed, and a description of any general conclusions that the Committee has reached about that area. In some cases, the chapter might end up containing specific recommendations that the Committee adopts by the time the preliminary report is issued.

The group delegated drafting versions of each section of the preliminary report to individual members. The Committee will briefly discuss those drafts that might be available prior to the 6/13 meeting at that meeting to give basic feedback as to the organization and completeness of those drafts. The substantive discussion of the drafts would take place at the 6/20 meeting, with the possibility of continuing to the 6/27 meeting. During those discussions, the Committee would make changes as needed to the various draft sections prior to adopting any of them.

The sections agreed upon to be drafted for the preliminary report are:

- Introduction and Summary- Hal Chapel

- Weapons policy – Eric Harris
- Campus supervision – John Ollquist
- Data collection, Ipass - Scott Carpenter
- Outsiders, visitors, building access – Ron Nix
- Build off things learned from the Pollack report – Gary Taylor and Barbara Pedulla
- Staff/student ratios – Bill Ray
- CASE/SPED, out of district placement issues – The Committee agreed to ask Sheila Calkins, who was absent, whether she would agree to draft this section

The Committee also agreed that there would be a Conclusion section, which might also discuss next steps, and that it would discuss the drafting of this section on 6/20.

The Committee discussed various plans for when and how to present its preliminary report to the L-S School Committee. Patty Mostue, Chair of the School Committee, told the Committee that the School Committee has a meeting scheduled for 6/26 and can meet during July if the Committee wants to present its report at that time. She expressed a preference for members of the Committee to actually attend the School Committee meeting and participate in discussion, and not just submit a report. The Committee discussed the implications of presenting at the 6/26 School Committee meeting, at a meeting in July, or waiting until September. No conclusions were reached, and the Committee agreed to discuss further on 6/20.

Dennis Picker informed the Committee that the June 13 meeting will take place in the L-S library to accommodate a potentially larger audience for Dr. Pollack's presentation and discussion. The Committee agreed that if there was time after the members asked Dr. Pollack questions and held discussion that the audience would be given a chance to direct questions and comments to Dr. Pollack.

**Review and Approve minutes:** The Committee agreed to defer approval of the minutes of the 5/30 meeting to the next meeting, as members had not had adequate time to read the draft minutes prior to tonight.

**New business:** There was no new business.

**Adjourn:** John Ollquist made a **motion** to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ron Nix. The motion was **approved**, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.