



Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee Digest November 29, 2011

On Tuesday, November 29, the L-S School Committee held a regularly scheduled meeting.

Topics for discussion and/or action included:

- Update from Paul Schultz, LSRHS Robotics Coach, with regard to grant application status
- Review of the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's annual conference
- Further discussion of the revision of the Donations and Fundraising Policy
- Review of District practice and procedures governing Head Injuries
- Review of FY12 budget to date and a projected increased Out-of-District Special Education tuition expenses

Recognitions

Scott Carpenter expressed his thanks to LSRHS staff members who took the time to develop, organize and/or facilitate a professional development session on November 16th:

Amanda Klein - Experiential Education methods and techniques seminar

Ben Coleman - Four Elements of Hip Hop

David Bloom & Sarah Greeley - What you may not want to know about LS: Talking about substances and our kids –
How can you get involved

Mark Sobkowicz & LS Web Team - Making and Editing an LS Wordpress Website

Seth Weiss - Creating online Math Assignments & Assessments

Dan Conti & Mark Mason - Evaluation of Student Writing in English

Rebecca Reitz & Joanne Delaney - Teaching Students with Language Based Disabilities

Nancy Errico - E-Learning study group

Lori Hodin - Visions group

Jorge Allen & Cristina Gonzalez - Integrating the Smartboard into Everyday Teaching

LSRHS will be sending a team to the top 16 competition of WGBH's High School Quiz Show Super Sunday competition, which will be televised in February. Members of the LS team are Justin Robbins, Jeffrey Ho, Meredith Derecho, and Ethan Blackwood.

Ann Kramer organized a trip of more than 300 ninth graders to see a production of *Romeo and Juliet* in Boston. Other participating LS-RHS Faculty who brought their classes to production were Nancy Goldstone, Tracy Burke, Jaime Wong, Mark Mason, Dan Lewis, Carly Evans, Tracie Lopez, and Rebecca Carr.

Paul Shultz, of LSRHS Fine and Applied Technology (FATA) department, successfully orchestrated a series of grant proposals and outreach efforts on behalf of the LSRHS Robotics Team in their efforts to participate in the US FIRST Robotics Competition later this winter.

Three members of the LSRHS World Language Department - Joan Campbell, Jorge Allen, Cristina Gonzalez - presented workshops at the national ACTFL conference (American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language). The national ACTFL conference took place Nov. 17-20 in Denver, CO. Jorge and Christina workshop topic was *Using Technology to Enhance Interactive Language Activities* and their efforts were sponsored by a SERF grant. Joan Campbell hosted three workshops: *Teaching Classical German Poetry at the high school level*, *Introducing Schiller & Goethe to the high school curriculum*, and *Running a Successful Exchange Program*.

Thomas Grandprey, Michael Bunting facilitated the participation of forty LS students in the Mass Music Educator's Association Senior

District competition. For the third year in a row, L-S has the highest number of students selected for the festival, and the highest number to qualify to audition for the All-State ensembles. Of special note, three of our students achieved the top audition score for their instruments and were awarded first chair placement. The two-day Festival will be held at Boston Latin H.S. on January 6 & 7. The students who were selected are: Brittany Baltay, Jeremy Bernstein, Ethan Blackwood, Adam Blake, Jesse Bogdan, Caitlin Chin, Stephanie Chin, Kenter Davies, Gregory Derecho, James Jhun, Maggie Klureza, Haley Lynch, Ian Marshall, Anna Menkis, Jessica Newman, Julia Palmerino, Jon Pan-Doh, Eric Qin, Ori Ravid, Demi Sperazza, Sarah Stone, Sarah Tsang, and Valerie Zhao.

Sara Fine-Wilson of the Visual Art Department organized and led a museum field trip to New York City for the AP Studio Art and other Visual Art students.

Nancy O'Neil was the recipient of the MA Athletics Director of the Year award.

The Wellness Department welcomed two school visits within the last few weeks from Cambridge Public Schools and the Winsor School. Their visit incorporated presentations on the Wellness curriculum, student assessment and utilization of technology. In addition, Wellness Faculty member and coach Chris Belmont presented at the Connecticut State PE and Health Conference on the Wellness Curriculum.

Update from Paul Schultz, LSRHS Robotics Coach, with regard to grant application status

LSRHS FATA Tech Ed Faculty member Paul Schultz spoke to the Committee to provide an update with regard to his application for funding to allow the Robotics team to enter the US FIRST competition for the first time in ten years. Mr. Schultz and FATA Department Head Paul Sarapas had apprised the Committee earlier in October with regard to their efforts to seek grant funding, donations or raise funds through student efforts to provide the \$5,000 required for entry. Paul Schultz had filed a grant proposal with NASA, but given the deadline for US FIRST entry being one week following notification from NASA, Mr. Schultz pursued other funding opportunities as well. He spoke with the coach of the Lincoln k-8 Robotics team and through her found another grant resource to which he sent a proposal. Late last week Paul Schultz was notified that he had received the NASA grant, in the amount of \$6,500, a second grant in the amount of \$3,500 and further donations amounting to \$1,500. The NASA grant could be renewed pending demonstration by LSRHS of efforts to secure sustainable funding from other sources. Pursuit of Raytheon for funding this year missed their grant cycle, so they will be approached for future funding. Method Machine in Sudbury will also provide in-kind support for the team. Mr. Schultz expressed his thanks to Scott Carpenter, the granting agencies, and to Nancy Marshall for their support. US FIRST is a wonderful opportunity for team collaboration and working with other teams to problem solve.

The US FIRST robotics challenge for 2012 will be provided to each team in January. Teams will have six weeks to assemble and program their robots. The competition will take place at Northeastern in March, with teams from all over the US and the world, including Brazil and Mexico. Should the LS team be successful, they will advance to the World Championships in St. Louis in April. An LSRHS parent who is an engineering professor at Tufts has worked with Schultz to facilitate university students to be mentors for the project. Paul Schultz is also hopeful that a Lego engineering program can be initiated at LSRHS. The LS Robotics team has about 20-25 student members.

Student Representative Report

Charlotte Balogh, a junior Student Senate member, updated the Committee. Areas they have been exploring include:

- The Student Senate is continuing its efforts to seek funding to erect a plaque at LSRHS to honor Alumni and Staff who have served in the armed forces.
- The Student Senate is also seeking input from the faculty and Department Heads with regard to providing a firsthand narrative about courses offered at LSRHS.
- The L-S smart phone app is nearing completion.
- The Student Senate is also seeking ways to facilitate more ways to communicate progress to students beyond iPass.
- School Spirit events, including dances, a dodgeball tournament, and possible 'homecoming' activities in the spring are also under discussion.

Teachers' Association Report

L-S Teachers' Association President Lisa Weiss spoke of the efforts of faculty and the School Committee Sub-Committee overseeing revision of the teacher evaluation process at LSRHS in line with the State Department of Education's updated legislation. Working with the Sub-Committee, Elena Kleifges and Patty Mostue, faculty will study what is already done by LSRHS in line with the new regulations and what additions need to be considered in the evaluation process.

Chair's Report

Nancy Marshall also commented on her family's attendance at *Loves Labours Lost*, how wonderful a night it was, how confident and joyful the cast were in their efforts, and the wonderful addition the music and instrumentalists provided to the production. She also reminded the Committee of the upcoming Choral Concert on Thursday, December 1, at 7.30 in the auditorium and encouraged them to consider attending.

Superintendent/Principal's Report

Scott Carpenter reported to the Committee about his recent travels to Germany as a guest of the German government sponsored PASCH program and Goethe Institute. LSRHS is one of 9 US Schools, 12 North American Schools, who participate in this cultural exchange program. Scott recognized the efforts of World Language faculty members Joan Campbell and Michele LaPietre in submitting a proposal for L-S to be considered as a possible PASCH partner school. The trip earlier this month took 8 US Principals to Germany for an immersion into German education practices and programs. Scott remarked that there is a high level of involvement by business and industry to facilitate future needs in the workforce. The German corporation Siemens, for example, has an in-house 'university' for students to attend classes, train in relevant areas of concentration in keeping with corporate programs, and obtain a degree after 3 years, as well as employment within Siemens. Job commitment and loyalty is steadfast in Germany, versus the US practice of more transitions between employers. Through funding provided by the German Foreign Office, Principals visited schools, universities and vocational/technical academies.

Scott also remarked on the Annual LSRHS Senior Citizen Thanksgiving Dinner, which was held the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. He expressed his gratitude to the MLK Action Office for their facilitating of the meal, along with the LSPO, who helped provide funding towards the purchasing of food for the event. Former teachers from the k-8 and LSRHS were in attendance, one remarking that she had waited too long to attend for the first time, the event was so enjoyable. Students performed music selections under the direction of Michael Bunting and Tom Grandprey, FATA Music Faculty members. FELS, the Foundation for Educators at Lincoln-Sudbury, provided pies that were purchased by donors for the event. There was a record number of volunteer students to help serve and greet the seniors in attendance. Scott also expressed his thanks to Bob Harden and the LSRHS Food service staff, as well as to many in the greater Lincoln-Sudbury community for their support of this wonderful annual event.

Sub-Committee Reports

MASC – Mark Collins attended the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) annual conference. He attended programs on the new Teacher Evaluation requirements, Health Insurance legislation, regional collaboratives, and collective bargaining models. He recommended that the Committee obtain copies of the Power Point presentations available online. The MASC website is password protected. Nancy Marshall will facilitate password information to the Committee.

Donations and Fundraising Policy Revision

Nancy Marshall reviewed the efforts of the Policy Sub-Committee to date. She, Patty Mostue, and Elena Kleifgas have met with Scott Carpenter, Judy Belliveau, Nancy O'Neil, faculty members, coaches and parents to review proposed revisions to the policy to better facilitate budget transparency and compliance with proper accounting practice, in line with audit recommendations for the District. A draft of the revision was provided to the Committee for review and comments at the next meeting on December 13. Concern was expressed with regard to ensuring that the policy can allow for fundraising efforts, but avoids facilitating a system that allows student fundraising that supports stipends for coaching staff.

Concussion Policy

In line with State regulations through the MA Department of Public Health (MADPH), the District initiated a policy within the Athletic Department requiring all student athletes to complete an online course on concussion injury, as well as review the policy prior to being permitted to participate in LSRHS Athletics. Athletic Director Nancy O'Neil drafted a policy over the summer and the Committee needs to review the Policy and submit it to the MADPH by December 31 or provide attestation that a policy is in place and filing will follow by March of 2012. The Committee and Administration will review the draft provided by Nancy O'Neil and work to file a policy by December 31.

FY12 Budget Update

Judy Belliveau provided an update to the Committee of adjustment in expenditures to date, including areas where savings have been realized as well as areas of increased expense. Of acute concern is an additional \$488,000 in new Special Education Out-of-District tuition expenses, as well as an accompanying \$23,000 increase in Special Education transportation costs. All transportation costs are borne by sending Districts; they are not reimbursable through Circuit Breaker. Some of the new expenses are wholly un-anticipated, some are the result of legal settlements. Combining this increase with the addition of \$600,000 of anticipated Out-of-District costs that were articulated in the FY12 budget, LSRHS is eligible to apply for Extraordinary Relief from the State. Extraordinary Relief is available

to Districts who realize increased Special Education costs of 25% or more over the previous year's Circuit Breaker-eligible expenses. Funding is limited and is disbursed based upon the number of applicants. In FY11, the pool of funds amounted to \$3million and was not fully exhausted. For FY12, the pool will be \$5million. LSRHS may make application in January of 2012. LSRHS will be liable for the first 10% of any additional costs, after which reimbursement will be provided for 75% of any remaining expenses. The total expense for Out-of-District tuitions for FY12 will increase by \$1.1million, including transportation.

Sudbury Public Schools has also had an unforeseen increase in Out-of-District expenses of approximately \$400,000 for FY12 and will be making budget adjustments, utilizing savings, and possibly instituting a spending freeze near year-end if necessary.

In order to alleviate some of the cost, Judy has recommended that the Committee consider retaining the funds that would be reapportioned to Lincoln and Sudbury, surplus funds that in being reapportioned reduce each town's budgeted assessment for the high school.

LSRHS has a variety of programs that address a broad spectrum of Special Education needs that allow for a free-and-appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, including the REACH and EXCEL programs, as well as memberships in the CASE and EDCO Collaboratives and a possible participation in the EXCEPT collaborative. The number of students enrolled in Out-of-District placements has remained reasonably steady over the past few years, but the cost of tuitions has increased at a rapid rate. A conversation is necessary, to allow towns to understand that this isn't a discussion aimed at pitting regular and special education against each other, more to provide understanding to towns of the impact of unanticipated Special Education expenditures on the general budget.

The Committee decided not to vote on the proposed budget transfers and retention of the reapportionment funds until each town's Finance Committee has been informed.

Information on Insurance Advisory Committee

Judy Belliveau provided to the Committee a list of the members of faculty and staff who have been appointed to participate on the Insurance Advisory Committee, in accordance with Mass General law Chapter 32 Section 3. The IAC is comprised of representatives from employee groups within the District, to include Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Buildings and Grounds, Technology, Campus Aides, Instructional Assistants, Administrative Assistants, and Retirees. The School Committee is responsible for voting the Retiree representative, and the recommended nominee is Susan Frommer. The Committee unanimously voted her appointment.