



Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee Digest December 20, 2011

On Tuesday, December 20, the L-S School Committee held a regularly scheduled meeting.

Topics for discussion and/or action included:

- A presentation by Susan Frommer, emerita Faculty and Advisor to the MLK Action Project, on Community Service at LSRHS
- Update on FY12 new Out-of-District tuitions and the process for applying for Extraordinary Relief
- FY13 Budget Review

Martin Luther King Action Project Presentation – Susan Frommer

Susan spoke to the Committee, presented a Power Point that began by reviewing the timeline with regard to LS's commitment to Community Service over the last 50+ years – service hours, areas of service, and changes in requirements. A summary of her whole presentation is available [here](#). The timeline she presented highlighted:

- ❖ In 1976, 10 hours of Community Service was required of all 11th graders
- ❖ In 1979, 20 hours, shared between local and projects away from hometowns, such as the Fernald School, and Cushing School
- ❖ In 1983, 50 hours of service in one specific area was required
- ❖ In 1984 Community Service was eliminated as a requirement completely
- ❖ In 1987, the MLK Action Project was begun, with 25% of the LSRHS taking an active role
- ❖ In 1995-96, LSRHS reasserts its commitment to Community Service as part of the LS-21 vision, looking towards LSRHS in the 21st Century
- ❖ In 1996, 15 hours of Community Service was required of students
- ❖ In 2009, the MLK Action Project took on the responsibility of overseeing student Community Service and ensuring students are on track with the requirements as they progress through their four years
- ❖ For 2011-2012, all incoming 10th graders must have five hours of completed Community Service, all incoming 11th graders 10 hours, and all incoming 12th graders 15. 11th graders are not eligible for their MaxEd cards without their requisite hours, and 12th graders are only eligible for a parking permit with 15 hours completed and submitted.

Susan commented that the iterative requirements across the years at LSRHS allow students to make commitments that are meaningful in their purpose, but not necessarily a significant time commitment any given year. In Spring 2011, 190 LSRHS Seniors participated in Senior Service Day, tackling invasive plants in public areas around Sudbury, providing tech assistance to seniors through both towns' Councils on Aging, working on the outdoor plantings around campus, liaising with town recreation departments about playground maintenance, and a variety of other projects. The tech assistance was so successful that it continues on a regular basis, once a month in Sudbury at the Council on Aging, and once a week in Lincoln. Students and faculty have worked together to provide opportunities for collaborative efforts between other schools, with teams from different schools getting together to increase the numbers and more quickly tackle a project.

There is now online access via iPASS for students of 11 pages of ongoing and pre-approved community service opportunities in Lincoln, Sudbury and Boston. There is also a set of guidelines for students to read as they consider their opportunities, in order to ensure their efforts will meet LSRHS approval, and a bulletin board with updates, changes in offerings and photos of students in action outside the MLKAP office. Students tend to work on activities they enjoy with people they know. Many students also tend to do all of their hours in a single service focus area. Susan said the faculty has been consulted as to how MLKAP can continue to improve the student experience, should the hours required be increased? Are there ways to constructively broaden students' experiences? With the changes already in place, students have moved beyond their comfort zones and found challenge and reward in their efforts, while increasing the overall average number of service hours per student. The number of hours is balanced between genders, too.

Reognitions

Scott Carpenter recognized LSRHS Football Coach Tom Lopez for his award as Division 1a Coach of the Year by the Boston Globe.

LSRHS Faculty member and Field Hockey Coach Vicky Caburian was recognized by the MIAA with a Distinguished Service Award for her efforts to promote Girls & Women in sports. She will be formally presented with the award at Fanueil Hall on February 3 during the annual celebration of "Massachusetts Girls & Women in Sport Day".

20 LSRHS staff members contributed data to the LSRHS Environmental Club's effort to count and reduce electricity use in the classroom. Data was submitted to the ACE (Alliance for Climate Education) "Biggest Loser Project".

The 15th annual Depression workshop was offered by the LSRHS clinical staff, providing a series of programs, discussion groups and a film presentation. LSRHS tenth graders were divided in half and one half attended the two-hour workshop in the morning, the other group in the afternoon. Students are also facilitated in small groups with clinicians and trained LS juniors and seniors to discuss best ways to detect depression and how to support and guide peers who may be showing symptoms of depression. Programs such as these have provided students with the education and confidence to connect with adults with personal concerns about themselves or peers.

Scott expressed his appreciation to the students and staff who facilitated the workshop: Clinicians Sue Leichtman, Lynn Carlson, Jen Reen, Lindsey Hogan, Jill Coutu, Emily Phillips, John Ansty, Laura Fair, Chris Shutzer and Tegan Barson. The Depression Workshop student leaders were: Erin Santomenna, Zelda Rosen, Emma Jansen, Jahnea Johnson, Arianna Kerber, Mike Karon, Annie Loeb, Greg Dykes, Shannon Prenetta, Callie Flanagan, Katie Barker, Kim Heller, Charlotte Balogh, Aleks Kusik, Yarik Loban, Sophia Dee, Alexandra Braverman, Sofia Neri, Catherine MacKeen, Sam Sugg, Shumika Jean-Baptiste, Amanda Sifferien, Katelyn Muse and Hailey Rosenblatt.

Scott mentioned that members of the Wellness faculty and Counseling departments were part of an all-day curriculum program on teen dating violence sponsored by REACH Beyond Domestic Violence. Funding for the training was provided by SERF.

Thanks and compliments were offered to Tom Grandprey, the LS Music Department and students for a wonderful winter instrumental concert on Dec. 15th. Also, Tom Grandprey brought a select ensemble of students to perform at the invitation of The Massachusetts Medical Society in Waltham on Monday.

18 juniors and 2 staff members participated in a full day mediation training run by Karen Thomsen, Susan Shields and Lori Hodin on December 15. The program focused on the nature of conflict, reflecting on personal conflict resolution styles and practicing mediation skills during a contentious role-playing exercise. Students will continue to develop and hone their mediation skills in small group practice role-plays so to be ready to serve as student mediators in the LS mediation program.

Teachers' Association Report

LSRHS Teachers' Association President Lisa Weiss reported that students were working through a week of tests and quizzes, with two weeks remaining in the term prior to mid-term exams.

Chair's Report

Another draft incorporating discussions with regard to the Donations and Fundraising Policy at the previous meeting was provided by Chair Nancy Marshall to the Committee for further discussion in January.

Nancy also reported that the Attestation letter was sent to the MA Department of Public Health to allow the completion and vote of a finalized draft of the Concussion Policy in the New Year.

Nancy, Scott and Judy attended the Sudbury Finance Committee's budget workshop, where conversations continued with regard to the FY13 budget and the stress from an increased out-of-district tuition will put on all educational services at LSRHS. State Representative Tom Conroy was in attendance and has requested some data to demonstrate the growth in enrollment and cost in this area, both within LSRHS and the feeder k-8 districts, to better understand trends and changes over the past 8-10 years.

The FinCom workshop also provided further discussion with regard to facilitating LSRHS's capital needs and the process to allow a change in the Capital Planning bylaw to allow LSRHS to be added as a cost center for capital funding consideration. LSRHS Director of Finance and Operations Judy Belliveau was thanked for her efforts in compiling a comprehensive five-year Capital Plan for LSRHS as part of the FY13 budget information.

Superintendent/Principal's Report

Scott Carpenter spoke about a meeting of Superintendents from both Lincoln and Sudbury k-8's and LSRHS, along with the Special Education Directors for each District. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange information and assemble k-12 Special Education data and encourage better ongoing communication between the Districts as to enrollment trends and in-house services and programs available for students with special needs. Discussions focused on mapping future service needs and considering programmatic and curricular changes to better retain students in-District. Whether the k-8 Districts might better facilitate stronger retention and successful transition to LSRHS by offering new and/or better-aligned programs to those offered at LSRHS was also discussed. Piloting any new programs would have a cost, but the hope would be that such pilots would inevitably save all Districts much needed funds for education in-house for all students.

Scott highlighted the increase in enrollment and cost over the last three years:

FY10 had 34 out-of-district students with a total cost for tuitions to the District of \$2million

FY13 is currently projected to have 64 students out-of-district, with an estimated cost of \$4million, a 37.4% increase in cost over FY12

The current FY13 No Override Budget based on the assumptions provided by the Sudbury Finance is \$25,166,431.

Scott also spoke to the Capital Needs of LSRHS as articulated to both towns' Finance Committees, highlighting in particular the need for upgrades in technology across the high school. Most of the computers at LSRHS were provided as part of the construction eight years ago. The District put \$100,000 from its stabilization fund towards computers in FY12 to begin a process to refresh technology, re-assigning older computers elsewhere within the building and/or offering them to the k-8's if no longer needed. The magnitude of the need is understood by each town's Finance Committee and it has been suggested that a debt exclusion proposal be considered to take to voters in at Town Meeting 2013 as a means of offering a one-time funding for the need without incorporating the funding in perpetuity in the LSRHS operating budget.

Scott also spoke about a new class under by Choral Director Michael Bunting and Technology Faculty member Carol Padden. The class allows students to make films and compose musical scores to accompany the films. Unfortunately the current LSRHS technology could not fully support the curriculum as planned, forcing digression from lesson plans and projects and intervention from tech support to ascertain what patching and/or redirection for instruction was necessary.

Scott told the Committee to expect an email from him with regard to the issues surrounding the recent controversy about winter holiday celebrations in the building. He remarked that conversations had taken place, taking into account comments and ideas from students, including members of the Student Senate and Senior Steering Committee. He felt that the Senior Spot had a balanced and respectful decoration for the season and that the general reality and appropriate dialogue inside the building was far more straightforward than the outside perception and news would lead one to believe.

Scott reviewed a second draft of his District Goals, incorporating areas around multi-culturalism stemming from the "December Dilemma" surrounding winter holiday celebrations. He plans to provide some benchmarking dates in January.

Update on the Out-of-District Tuition impact on the FY12 budget

Judy Belliveau reviewed for the Committee the process for applying for Extraordinary Relief from the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The application process will take place in February, and she has ascertained from someone within the DESE that LSRHS would qualify for consideration. The total Out-of-District cost for FY12 will amount to \$3,858,638. Currently, the Extraordinary Relief fund amounts to \$5million. The maximum amount that LSRHS would be eligible to receive is \$621,366. There is no census data to facilitate understanding as to how many potential applicants, nor how much aid might be sought for other Districts in the Commonwealth facing the same fiscal circumstances. Applications will be available in February 2012, and notification as to funding will not be until April or May of 2012.

Judy also mentioned a proposal that has been submitted on Beacon Hill that would allow regional school Districts to establish a reserve fund in which to allocate or appropriate funds to cover unanticipated and/or unbudgeted costs for out-of-district tuitions and/or

transportation relating to special education. The authorization for allocation or appropriation would be part of the annual budget vote at the annual town meetings of those member towns served by the regional district.

Preliminary FY13 Budget Information

Judy Belliveau provided a copy to the Committee of currently known fiscal information for FY13. Given the legislative changes in healthcare administration for districts and municipalities and the current collective bargaining negotiations for LSRHS, and other factors that are currently awaiting confirmation, the numbers are very preliminary. That said, given the anticipated increase in Special Education out-of-district tuitions for FY13 that cannot be funded without reductions elsewhere in the budget, the District will face a deficit. Should the District receive the full amount of its application for Extraordinary Relief funding for FY12, there may be a carryover to permit reducing the deficit for FY13, but not to fully balance the FY13 budget. Judy will provide updates to the Committee early in the New Year as preparations are made for formal budget presentations to both towns in February.

Links used in the document

- [L-S Community Service \(January 2012\)](#)