

Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2013

The Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School Committee (the "School Committee") convened for a regularly scheduled meeting beginning at approximately 7:32 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 in Conference Room B at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. Elena Kleifges, Radha Gargeya, Nancy Marshall, Kevin Marshall, Patricia Mostue and Gerald Quirk, being all of the members of the School Committee, were present for the meeting. Also attending the meeting were Michael Connolly, Finance Director, Lisa Weiss, President of the Lincoln-Sudbury Teacher's Association (the "TA"), and members of the faculty, administrative staff and the public. Mr. Quirk kept the minutes of the meeting.

The first order of business for the School Committee was the appointment of a subcommittee (the "Search Committee") to review applications for, and to recommend to the School Committee appropriate candidates for, the position of interim Superintendent/Principal. Following discussion, and upon motion by Mr. Matthews that was seconded by Ms. Mostue, the School Committee unanimously approved the appointment of the following persons to serve on a search subcommittee: Ms. Kleifges, Mr. Matthews, Ms. Mostue, Nancy Errico and Steve Roderick from the faculty, Jason Medeiros from the administration, and Mike Walsh, a parent of a current student.

Next, the School Committee discussed a memorandum of understanding with the TA regarding the terms under which an extant health claims trust would be dissolved, and the means by which the faculty and staff would avail itself of the portion of the trust funds allocable to the faculty and staff. Ms. Marshall described the material terms of the memorandum, describing in particular how these funds would be distributed through the end of the 2015 plan year. Following discussion, and upon motion by Ms. Kleifges that was seconded by Mr. Matthews, the School Committee unanimously approved the execution of the memorandum of understanding in the form presented to the School Committee at the meeting.

The School Committee then turned to the primary agenda item for the meeting, which was a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the Search Committee. Ms. Marshall began by briefly reviewing the confidentiality obligations of members of the Search Committee. She then introduced Glenn Koocher, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, who is advising the School Committee on the search, and asked him to present feedback from focus groups and an on-line survey that was conducted seeking feedback on the attributes of an optimal candidate.

Mr. Koocher circulated to the School Committee and Search Committee a report providing a summary of the feedback received from focus groups and an on-line survey conducted for the purpose of outlining the opportunities and challenges of the interim Superintendent/Principal position and the attributes of a successful candidate. He outlined the major themes that arose from this feedback, which included:

- That the appointment of an interim Superintendent/Principal should not represent a "holding period" in the operations of our high-functioning school. Continued progress should be made on the major strategic initiatives at the high

school, including the adoption of the new educator evaluation standards and continued improvements in financial operations, during the interim period. The successful candidate should be "visionary," even if his/her tenure in the position will be short.

- The successful candidate should value collaborative decision-making and honor the history and traditions of the high school.
- The successful candidate should have a strong, persuasive and dynamic communication style with all stakeholders, including faculty and the broader community. S/he should be able to communicate proactively the value of a Lincoln-Sudbury education for the dollar, and not just react to messages from a minority of the community.

Mr. Koocher reviewed other feedback that was received, which included: (i) confidence in the unique, dual role of Superintendent/Principal; (ii) concern about the interim's ability to drive the ongoing technology initiative at the high school; and (iii) the need to continue addressing the needs of "at risk" students. He also noted the challenges that will be faced by the interim Superintendent/Principal, which will require courage and skill in addressing financial issues.

Mr. Koocher then presented proposed interview questions for the candidates.

Next, Ms. Marshall reported that thirteen (13) candidates had submitted applications for the position, and that packages including application information are available to the Search Committee for review. She also noted that personal knowledge of one of the candidates is not disqualifying, but reminded the Search Committee that remaining objective and maintaining confidentiality will be even more critical in such a case.

Mr. Koocher then reviewed the obligations of the Search Committee under state "open meeting" laws, which apply equally to an interim as they do to a permanent hire. He noted that initial screening of applicants and screening interviews can be conducted in executive session, because doing so in open session could be detrimental to the search process by compromising candidates in their current employment. He reminded the Search Committee that all meetings must be posted forty-eight (48) hours in advance, exclusive of weekends and holidays. Mr. Koocher also reviewed how executive sessions are convened and how minutes are to be maintained. He also recommended adopting certain procedures to ensure that the candidates being brought forward for public interview are appropriate for consideration. The Search Committee will submit a report to the full School Committee of which candidates to move forward for public interviews.

Mr. Koocher then reviewed conflict of interest rules with respect to family members. He also reported how straw polls can be used to accelerate deliberations. Mr. Koocher reviewed interview questions that are inappropriate for purposes of compliance with anti-discrimination laws. He advised the Search Committee that unauthorized reference checks should not be made. He also counseled the Search Committee not to rely on information available on-line about candidates, as information found through such sources may not be accurate or may have posted by someone who wishes to intentionally harm the candidate. Finally, Mr. Koocher recommended that the Search Committee appoint a public spokesperson, which spokesperson should be a member of the School Committee.

Ms. Marshall then made recommendations to the Search Committee about planning meetings and commencing the screening process.

Mr. Walsh then asked several questions of the School Committee regarding the search and the search process. In response to those questions, it was reported that: (i) the search will be for an interim rather than a permanent Superintendent/Principal because the pool of qualified candidates available for a permanent position is depleted at this time of year; (ii) it is possible that an interim candidate who is not retired could be a candidate for the permanent position, but the School Committee has discretion over that decision, and (iii) the job description is available on the School Committee's website.

The Search Committee then scheduled its first two meetings, which will be held from 8:00-11:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 4 and at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 9, in each case in Conference Room A at the high school.

The School Committee and Search Committee then engaged in a discussion regarding attributes of a successful candidate that were not discussed in the report circulated by Mr. Koocher. Ms. Errico indicated the candidate must embody the core values of the high school and improve morale following a difficult period. Mr. Gargeya indicated that the candidate must be able to "hit the ground running" and have experience managing a school district. He added that while having a high-potential person "learn on the job" could work in the case of a permanent hire, it is less desirable in an interim. He also indicated that the candidate must be familiar with school finance. Mr. Quirk then indicated that the candidate should have strong skills in managing people in order to support the senior administrative staff, many of whom will be new to their roles next year. Finally, Mr. Medeiros indicated the candidate must be a good cultural fit for the high school.

Following this discussion, Mr. Gargeya thanked the members of the Search Committee for their service.

There being no further business to be conducted during open session, at approximately 8:50 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Matthews that was seconded by Ms. Kleifges, the School Committee unanimously resolved to adjourn the meeting into executive session, not to return to regular session.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald E. Quirk