

Sudbury School Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

Silvia Nerssessian, Chair
Meredith Gerson, Vice Chair
Sarah Troiano
Tyler Steffey

Members Absent:

None

Also Present:

Brad Crozier, Superintendent
Don Sawyer, Director of Business and Finance
Kim Swain, Assistant Superintendent
Melissa Morabito, SEA President

Regular Session Meeting

Chair Silvia Nerssessian opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

1. Opening Statement/Executive Session

- a. Chair Silvia Nerssessian performed a roll call and made an announcement that the session is being recorded, shared live for the public to see and hear and there should be no expected right to privacy, as this is a public forum. Silvia Nerssessian, Meredith Gerson, Sarah Troiano, and Tyler Steffey all affirmed in the positive.
- b. Meredith Gerson motioned to enter Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, specifically the Superintendent; and to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with the Sudbury Education Association, the Education Support Professionals Association, the Nurses' Union, and the Custodians' Union, because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee; and to review and approve minutes from the School Committee Executive Session Meeting on June 14, 2021; and to return to open session, Sarah Troiano seconded.
 - i. ROLL CALL VOTE
 1. Meredith Gerson: Aye

2. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye
3. Sarah Troiano: Aye
4. Tyler Steffey: Aye

a. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Return from Executive Session

- i. Chair Silvia Nerssessionian noted that the Committee returned from the Executive Session at 7:00 PM. Chair Silvia Nerssessionian performed a roll call and made an announcement that the session is being recorded, shared live for the public to see and hear and there should be no expected right to privacy, as this is a public forum. All members affirmed in the positive.

2. Public Comment

- a. None

3. Educational Matters

- a. District Reports

- i. SEA Report

1. SEA President Melissa Morabito reported to the Committee on positive developments staff members perceived from this past school year, including the support of colleagues, the resilience of students, increased flexibility in how student work can be submitted, and the sharing of lessons, units, and ideas amongst the staff members.
2. Ms. Morabito also spoke to the Committee about staff members' hopes for the year to come. These included more collaboration with, and respect from, the School Committee and administration; to put away the plexiglass dividers; for time to increase collaboration with teammates; to continue the ILAP teacher-directed time; and that everyone will be healthy and there will be limited mask wearing.
 - a. After the Committee inquired about examples of what "greater respect" would look like, Ms. Morabito ventured a guess that what's important to staff is increased trust, communication, and transparency. The School Committee noted their role regarding personnel and the statutory limitations on the School Committee's ability to communicate, as well as the opportunity afforded to staff to provide a report at each School Committee meeting.

- ii. Business and Finance Director's Report

1. Business and Finance Director Don Sawyer informed the Committee that the Business Office's sole focus at this point in time is closing fiscal year 2021. Mr. Sawyer does not anticipate any issues in doing so. A recap of the year-to-date budget for FY21 will be sent to the Committee sometime in July.

iii. Assistant Superintendent's Report

1. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain informed the Committee about the District's summer learning offerings for teachers. Ms. Swain also spoke to the Committee about the future of the IDEAS courses, noting that they are being transferred from EDCO to MASS and that SPS currently has 14 educators enrolled in this summer's IDEAS 1 courses.
2. Addressing concerns about backorders in technology, Ms. Swain reported that gaps have been closed and the district will be ready to meet obligations to students and staff this fall.
3. In response to the impending closure of the Open Circle program, Ms. Swain informed the Committee that the district is currently transitioning to other programs that offer similar professional development opportunities, including Sanford Harmony and Calm Classroom.
4. Following the conclusion of Ms. Swain's report, she answered questions from the Committee about the main themes of the summer professional development offerings, and if teachers can still register for new learning opportunities that arise later in the summer.

iv. Superintendent's Report

1. Superintendent Brad Crozier spoke to the Committee about what the district's next set of strategic initiatives and the importance of ensuring that his annual goals and those of the School Committee both tie into that larger plan.
2. Superintendent Crozier gave an update on projects occurring across the district, including the Loring playground and the ADA-accessible pathway at Loring. Both are progressing as anticipated.
3. Regarding the SMILE program, Superintendent Crozier informed the Committee that enrollment stands at 155 students, with room for a few additions. In addition to the town funding the district secured at Annual Town Meeting, the district recently received supplemental funding thanks to a grant awarded to Ms. Swain. The district's plan will be to use these newly acquired state funds first, then to tap into the town funds for any remaining expenses; depending on how much money remains at the end of the program, this may even allow SPS to also offer SMILE during the summer of 2022.
4. Other SMILE-related updates included: information on trainings staff have undergone specifically for the program and the enrollment of rising-kindergarteners.

5. The single question from the Committee for Superintendent Crozier focused on if the 155 student enrollment figure for SMILE includes those who will be joining on July 12th.

4. Business and Policy Matters

a. School Committee Vacancy Update

- i. The Committee discussed the vacancy created by the resignation of Member Maggie Helon. A joint meeting with the Select Board has been scheduled for 7:00 PM on Thursday, July 1, 2021. The process for appointing a new member is set by School Committee Policy BBBE and Massachusetts General Law 41:11. The joint meeting with the Select Board will feature interviews with applicants prior to a vote.
- ii. The Committee discussed what documents would be included in the agenda packet for that joint meeting, what questions will be asked of the applicants, and if the Select Board would be asking their own pre-planned questions.

b. 2021-2022 School Committee Goals Discussion

- i. The Committee reviewed and discussed its SMART Goals for the 2021-2022 school year. The proposed Equity Goal, and the actions listed in its subsequent bullets, is driven by the desire to implement the Equity Statement approved by the Committee during the 2020-2021 school year. Part of this conversation centered on how the Committee can enact partnerships and professional learning opportunities in the community while also remaining within its purview.
- ii. The proposed Student Achievement Goal for the Committee also builds off its 2020-2021 predecessor. A new addition to this year's goal is a focus on student wellbeing, not just academic growth. As currently written, the Goal also focuses on identifying both areas of strength and areas of growth; and using comparable district MCAS data to help the Committee make informed decisions.

1. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the School Committee 2021-2022 SMART Goals as edited, Sarah Troiano seconded.

a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
- ii. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye
- iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
- iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

1. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Superintendent 2021-2022 Goals Discussion

- i. Superintendent Crozier reviewed his proposed goals for the 2021-2022 school year with the Committee. Superintendent Crozier's District Improvement Goal will focus on equity, and prepare the district for the equity audit by reviewing hiring practices, improving the district website, analyzing SEL data by subpopulations, and prioritizing professional

learning opportunities that emphasize educational equity. Upon suggestion by the Committee, Superintendent Crozier agreed to add details about how the disaggregated SEL data on subpopulations will be utilized to improve the district.

- ii. Superintendent Crozier's Student Achievement Goal stipulates that he will assess, address and monitor learning for all students using new and existing benchmarking and progress monitoring tools. This will be done by using benchmark student metrics for assessing academic and social-emotional learning outcomes, reviewing benchmarking calendars and tools for efficacy and making recommendations for revisions or additions, strengthening a tiered approach for student support to address instructional and mental health needs, and monitoring and reporting upon learning throughout the school year.
- iii. The Professional Practice Goal for Superintendent Crozier will also revolve around the collection and use of student data to improve outcomes. Action steps Superintendent Crozier will take to realize this goal include attending the MASS summer workshop on data use, reconvening the district data team, conducting school site visits focused on specific content areas or instructional practices, structuring professional learning for SALT team on "Look Fors" aligned with content frameworks and instructional practices.
- iv. Finally, Superintendent Crozier and the Committee reviewed his selected Indicators of Practice for the 2021-2022 school year.
 1. For the "Instructional Leadership" indicator, Superintendent Crozier selected "uses multiple sources of evidence related to student learning, including state, district, and school assessment results and growth data, to inform school and district goals and improve organizational performance, educator effectiveness, and student learning."
 2. For the "Management and Operations" indicator, Superintendent Crozier selected "develops a budget that supports the district's vision, mission and goal; allocates and manages expenditures consistent with district and school level goals and available resources."
 3. For the "Community Engagement" indicator, Superintendent Crozier selected "collaborates with families and community stakeholders to support student learning and development at home, school and in the community."
 4. For the "Professional Culture" indicator, Superintendent Crozier selected "fosters a shared commitment to high standards of service, teaching, and learning with high expectations for achievement for all."

During discussion on these indicators, the Committee and Superintendent Crozier recounted successes in each of these areas that can be built upon from the 2020-2021 school year. There was also discussion about whether a single year would be enough time to evaluate the success of the Professional Culture indicator, which resulted in the Committee and Superintendent Crozier agreeing to continue that work in the following if deemed necessary at the end of the 2021-2022 school year.

- v. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the Superintendent's 2021-2022 Goals as edited, Tyler Steffey seconded.

- 1. ROLL CALL VOTE

- a. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - b. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 - c. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - d. Tyler Steffey: Aye
 - i. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

- d. Superintendent Evaluation Timeline

- i. The Committee reviewed the draft timeline for the Superintendent Evaluation Process. Building upon previous discussion by the Committee, the timeline proposed for 2021-2022 moves each landmark a bit earlier in the year than in previous years.

- 1. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the Superintendent Evaluation Timeline as presented, Sarah Troiano seconded.

- a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - ii. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 - iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

- 2. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

- e. Review School Committee Operating Protocols

- i. The Committee reviewed and discussed its operating protocols, in accordance with School Committee policy. These protocols were drafted and revised with MASC guidance. The Committee read and discussed each of the twelve protocols individually. Other topics touched as part of this conversation included how agenda items are set; the importance of upholding and supporting the decisions made by the Committee as a whole; making every decision based upon fact and evidence; defining how the Committee should channel information between parents/the community and the administration/schools; requests for information from the administration, outside of the usual reporting received by the Committee, should be discussed and made by the Committee as a whole, not from individual members; all Committee member questions should be sent to the superintendent, with the exception of questions that would be best answered by the Director of Business and Finance; and liaisons are

to serve as conduits for information between the School Committee and community boards and organizations, not as advocates of any sort.

- ii. The protocols are available for review by the public as part of the “About Us” page on the School Committee’s portion of the SPS website.

f. Acceptance of Gifts

i. Curtis Middle School STEM Award

- 1. The Committee reviewed and discussed a gift of \$500 from the Raytheon Retirees’ School Volunteer Association to support the Science Olympiad at Ephraim Curtis Middle School.

- a. Meredith Gerson motioned to accept a gift of \$500 from the Raytheon Retirees’ School Volunteer Association on behalf of the Ephraim Curtis Middle School Science Olympiad, with gratitude, Tyler Steffey seconded.

- i. ROLL CALL VOTE

- 1. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - 2. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye
 - 3. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - 4. Tyler Steffey: Aye

- a. VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

g. Appoint Superintendent to CASE, EDCO, ACCEPT Boards of Directors

- i. Each year, the School Committee appoints the Superintendent to the Boards of Directors for the several collaboratives to which the district is a party.

- 1. Tyler Steffey motioned to appoint Superintendent Brad Crozier as the Sudbury School Committee’s Representative to the CASE Collaborative for the 2021-2022 school year, Sarah Troiano seconded.

- a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - ii. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye
 - iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

- 1. VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

- 2. Sarah Troiano motioned to appoint Superintendent Brad Crozier as the Sudbury School Committee’s Representative to the EDCO Collaborative for the 2021-2022 school year, Meredith Gerson seconded.

- a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - ii. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye
 - iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

- 1. VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

3. Meredith Gerson motioned to appoint Superintendent Brad Crozier as the Sudbury School Committee's Representative to the ACCEPT Collaborative for the 2021-2022 school year, Tyler Steffey seconded.

- a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
- ii. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
- iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
- iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

1. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

- h. Future Agenda Items

- i. The Committee discussed the agenda for its upcoming retreat on July 9, 2021. There will be two two-hour professional development blocks, as well as time for a discussion about the role of the Committee's liaisons. Later in the summer, the Committee will also review and discuss the end of year report that will be produced by Mr. Sawyer.

- i. Minutes

- i. The School Committee reviewed and revised minutes from the June 14, 2021 meeting.

1. Meredith Gerson motioned to approve the open session meeting minutes from the June 14, 2021 meeting, as amended, Tyler Steffey seconded.

- a. ROLL CALL VOTE

- i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - ii. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 - iii. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - iv. Tyler Steffey: Aye

1. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

- j. Adjournment

- i. Sarah Troiano motioned to adjourn at 9:31 PM, Meredith Gerson seconded.

1. ROLL CALL VOTE

- a. Meredith Gerson: Aye
 - b. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye
 - c. Sarah Troiano: Aye
 - d. Tyler Steffey: Aye

1. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,
Justin Dulak

Documents Reviewed During the June 28, 2021 School Committee Meeting

1. School Committee Policy BBBE: Unexpired Term Fulfillment

2. Sudbury School Committee 2021-2022 SMART Goals, Draft 6/28/2021
3. Sudbury Public Schools Superintendent Goals for 2021-2022 DRAFT
4. 2021-2022 School Committee Superintendent Evaluation Timeline DRAFT
5. School Committee Operating Protocols
6. Retirees' School Volunteer Association Check to Sudbury Public Schools
7. Central Office Turn-in Sheet
8. Suzanne Lucey Email to Justin Dulak re: RSVA Check
9. Sudbury School Committee Meeting Minutes, June 14, 2021 DRAFT