

REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

February 7, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the Lowell School Committee took place in the Council Chambers, City Hall, at 7:00 pm, on the above-mentioned date.

ROLL CALL

On roll call at 7:00 pm, all members were present, namely: John J. Leahy, James D. Leary, Connie A. Martin, Mayor/Chairman James L. Milinazzo, David J. Conway, Jacqueline A. Doherty and Alison P. B. Laraba

MINUTES

1. Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2011

Ms. Doherty requested the following changes:

Page 5: The motion was by James D. Leary not John D. Leary

Page 12: Eight lines up from the bottom, the cost of the consultants was *14 hundred dollars per day*; not 48 hundred.

Third line from the bottom should read: *\$900,000 of it was on the curriculum*

Page 13: The first paragraph, go up 11 lines, full base for the buck should be: *full bang for the buck*. The second to last line of that paragraph, the amount is not 48, it is: *14 hundred dollars a day*

Page 17: The paragraph halfway down the page that begins Ms. Martin, change *Jut* to *Just* and change the last word *intend* to *tend*. The last bullet change fund money to *fun money*. The first line of the last paragraph change *disparate* to *desperate*.

Ms. Laraba requested the following changes:

Page 12: First paragraph, last sentence, last two words should be: *stakeholders group*.

Fifteen lines from the bottom, misspelling, should read: *Fountas and Pinnell*

Page 14: Bottom set of bullets, change *acting* for this program to *asking for this program*

Page 16: Third paragraph which states: it would be right to his colleague Committee goal, take out the word *Committee*.

Page 19: First paragraph, four lines down, change *Less* to *Lee*

Page 20: After her statement, it was *Ms. Doherty* who stated it was a vote of the full body; not Ms. Martin and *Ms. Doherty* responded in the affirmative; not Ms. Martin.

Ms. Martin moved:

To approve the minutes of January 5, 2011 **as amended**; seconded by Mr. Leahy. Minutes **as amended** APPROVED

2. Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2011

Ms. Laraba requested the following changes:

Page 2: Third paragraph from the bottom, last sentence, change three to *two*. On the very last sentence she wanted to take out actually bid on what the items would be and add the exact quote of Assistant Superintendent Lang, “*We get to decide if we want to execute years two and three of the contract.*”

Mr. Conway moved:

To approve the minutes of January 19, 2011 **as amended**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Minutes **as amended** APPROVED

PERMISSION TO ENTER

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, presented and recommended the following contracts for School Committee approval:

 ARCHWAY, INC. ----- \$1,000
 77 Mulberry Street
 Leicester, MA 01524

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

 CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS, INC. ----- \$1,822
 405 Washington Street
 Hanover, MA 02339

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

 COTTING SCHOOL, INC. ----- \$ 507
 453 Concord Avenue
 Lexington, MA 02421

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, INC. ----- \$ 905
38 Narrows Road
Assonet, MA 02702

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

LITTLE PEOPLE’S SCHOOL, INC.----- \$6,507
dba Learning Prep School
1507 Washington Street
West Newton, MA 02158

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

NEW ENGLAND ACADEMY, LLC ----- \$1,410
500 Cummings Center, Suite 1100
Beverly, MA 01915

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND ----- \$1,850
175 N. Beacon Street
Watertown, MA 02472

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for two (2) students enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

PROFESSIONAL CENTER FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN, INC. ----- \$ 474
32 Osgood Street
Andover, MA 01810

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

SEVEN HILLS FOUNDATION, INC.----- \$ 341
 dba Seven Hills Clinical Associates, Inc.
 81 Hope Avenue
 Worcester, MA 01603

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL, AT HARTFORD, FOR THE DEAF ----- \$3,116
 139 North Main Street
 West Hartford, CT 06107

To amend the existing contract to provide for the out-of-district tuition additional costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

THE JUDGE ROTENBERG EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.-----\$62,485
 250 Turnpike Street
 Canton, MA 02021

To amend the existing contract to provide for the additional out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the School Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

KENNETH R. MCDOWELL-----\$16,250
 dba McDowell Transportation
 3 Ballard Road
 Lawrence, MA 01840

To provide roundtrip transportation for one (1) special education student from Easter Seals in Manchester, NH to the TEACH Program in Haverhill, MA.

Funding provided by the Lowell School Department - Special Education Transportation Budget

FIRST CHOICE TRANSIT, INC. ----- \$16,650
 101 Jackson Street
 Methuen, MA 01844

To provide roundtrip transportation for one (1) student per the McKinney-Vento Act to and from Lowell, MA to the Woburn Street School in Wilmington, MA.

Funding provided by the Lowell School Department - Transportation Budget

Mr. Conway moved:

To separate *Seven Hills Foundation, Inc.* from the contracts; seconded by Mr. Leahy.
APPROVED

Mr. Leary question *The Judge Rotenberg Educational Center, Inc.* for the amount of **\$62,485**. These contracts were adjustments allowed by the state. He wanted to know the prior amount. He couldn't vote on this amount without additional information.

Ann Murphy, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, stated that *The Judge Rotenberg Educational Center, Inc.* amendment was for an additional student just coming in.

Mr. Leary also questioned *Kenneth R. McDowell* in the amount of **\$16,250** and *First Choice Transit, Inc.* in the amount of **\$16,650**.

Ann Murphy, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, stated that would be for a student that we have physical responsibility for. The student is living in a group home attending a private facility.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that most of the students under the McKinney-Vento Act are homeless so we are required by law to provide that service.

After discussion, Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve all contract for permission to enter except *Seven Hills Foundation, Inc.*; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Mr. Leary moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve *Seven Hills Foundation, Inc.* for permission to enter ; seconded by Ms. Martin. On roll call, Mr. Conway voted present. All other members voted in the affirmative. Six yeas; one present. APPROVED

MEMORIALS - The Committee as a Whole stood for a 'Moment of Silence' in memory of the following:

1. Dan Crowther, Lowell High School Senior.
2. Nathaniel Holscher, recent Lowell High School student.

3. George D. Kouloheras, Lowell School Committee member in which he served many terms from 1964 to 1997.
4. Francis Ventura, father of Maria Hannus, Lincoln School Special Education Teacher.
5. Margery B. Angst, mother of Nancy Weber, Math Resource Teacher at Moody, Washington and Pawtucketville Schools.
6. Charles H. "Chick" Loucraft Sr, member of a prominent family
7. Linda O'Neil, Sullivan Middle School English Teacher.
8. Robert S. Warnick, father of Steve Warnick, Music teacher at the Stoklosa Middle School.
9. James Corkery, brother of Eileen Skovholt, District Support Specialist for English Language Learners.
10. Herondina Lobao, sister of Manny Silva and Agostino Silva, McAvinnue School custodians; sister-in law of Filomena Silva, Moody School teacher and aunt of Cynthia Lewis McAvinnue School teacher.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Judy Flood – 198 Holyrood Street, regarding report of the Special Education/Student Support Services

Judy Flood stated that she has lived at 198 Holyrood Street in Lowell for 36 years. She has been a Guidance Counselor for the Lowell Public Schools for the last 16 years. From 2006 to 2010 she was the Guidance Counselor for the Molloy Alternative High School. During these four years while she was Guidance Counselor there, our enrollment consistently listed approximately 100 to 125 students spanning grades 9 through 12. The reasons for these students being placed at the Molloy were as varied and complex as the students themselves. Each student was a unique individual requiring an individualized and flexible plan for success. Sometimes the student's success would be measured by the student arriving at school on time for three days in one week, building one small success upon another. Each step would bring them to their ultimate goal, high school graduation and a diploma. These small achievements were the results of an entire school community being fully committed to the success of a student. The Molloy staff was a collective group of outstanding educators who cared deeply about these students and their futures. Many established trusting relationships with their students, and these relationships resulted in academic progress and success for these students. For many, enrollment at the Molloy was possibly their last opportunity to complete their high school education and earn a diploma. Many students were constantly challenged by serious life circumstances on a daily basis. That is:

- teen pregnancy
- teen parenthood
- childcare
- domestic violence
- substance abuse
- medical problems
- financial difficulties
- gang issues, and
- homelessness.

Within the Molloy community, many students were able to struggle through and succeed. In her opinion, two factors that greatly contributed to this success were:

1. the dedication and caring of this Molloy school community, and
2. the structure and size of the Molloy Alternative High School.

This small building created a learning environment for students that provided ready access to a team of supportive adults. Some took longer than others to trust and to fully commit to the program. One female student struggle for a year with poor attendance and poor grades. The next year she gradually improved. She passed all her subjects allowing her to earn all her credits. It was slow, but she made it. I have observed some students who have improved at a faster rate, and others who did not. Statistics, numbers, and data are not a perfect indicator for a student's success. Historically, students have moved back to Lowell High at the end of:

- semester one in January
- and semester two in June.

During this period regarding a student's transfer, benchmarks were prepared by the students' teachers at the Molloy and then reviewed by a team at Lowell High. Based on our benchmark evaluations, we typically had no more than 5 students ready to transition back to Lowell High at either one of these times. It has been stated in the records that in June 2010, there were 90 students on the Molloy roster. On August 24th, approximately one week before the very first day of school, there was a memo sent to Lowell High Guidance with an attachment. This attachment listed the students recommended to return to Lowell High School immediately. There were 44 names on this list, which represents approximately 50 percent of the Molloy student population as of the end of June 2010. Every grade 11 and grade 12 student was on this initial list. As their former Guidance Counselor, she was very concerned by this large number identified as being ready to return to Lowell High in the potential that many of these students would simply drop out of school. During the ensuing days, a number of students and parents reported that they did not receive notification that they were returning to Lowell High. Last week, a student chose to speak publicly at a subcommittee meeting about her experience. She stated that she was not alone with her story. To Judy Flood's knowledge, the student's statements are accurate. The current report indicates that 21 students returned to Lowell High, and, at this time, 11 no longer

attend Lowell High. *“I’m still concerned about the actual number of students who have dropped out, and why they are no longer attending school. I am also concerned that at present, the Molloy School does not have any grade 12 students and only two grade 11 students.”* It appears that the Molloy is no longer truly representative of an alternative high school providing educational services to an entire high school population, grades 9 through 12. *“In my opinion, a larger urban-school-district benefits greatly for providing alternative educational choices to meet the diverse needs of its student population.”*

2. Edward J. Rozmiarek, Headmaster of Lowell High School

Headmaster Rozmiarek stated that in following what Judy Flood just said, he was at the same subcommittee meeting about a week ago. He wanted to clarify some of the statements about the Molloy Alternative High School, and about the procedures that took place. *“We all care about the students. We all care about the success of all of the students.”* When the students were transferred at the beginning of the school year from the Molloy back to the high school, procedures took place that to his understanding (and he is equally new to the school) these procedures we followed had always been in place. The students’ names were recommended. Student files were reviewed. We look at every individual student; and, as Mrs. Flood mentioned, statistics, numbers and data don’t tell the whole story of the student. That is absolutely true. We didn’t rely on statistics, numbers, and data. We spent hours looking at each individual case:

- talking with the coordinator of the Molloy School
- talking with the Housemasters at the high school
- discussing why students had initially gone to the Molloy
- what their success had been while there (at the Molloy)
- what likelihood their success would be returning back to the high school/

We considered a variety of things:

- their attendances
- their absences
- their grades
- their progress both at
 - the Molloy Alternative High School
 - the high school before having gone to Molloy
- likelihood for continued success if student stays at Molloy, and

There was a long list of factors. We went through:

- each individual student
- considered each case one by one.

We did not just merely go through numbers, statistics, and data in making these decisions. We continue to be very concerned for these students. Headmaster Rozmiarek has spent in the last couple of weeks, hours in meetings to consider proposals to make sure that we serve

all of the students in the Molloy. We have programs that we are discussing that are premature to even...I probably said too much already. It is premature to present proposals to you, but these are things that Mrs. Flood is simply not aware of because of her position as a Guidance Counselor. *“We continue to be concerned for the success of these students, the welfare of these students. We are trying to not only to serve these students, but to even expand the program and to expand the outreach to make sure that we retain students in school.”* The characterization that the people in the school don't care about these students and that they are lost, he feels is unfair. *“We really have done all we can to treat students independently and individually.”*

3. Catherine Keane – Coordinator of the Molloy Alternative High School, regarding her letter dated January 27, 2011 to the Members of the Lowell School Committee (number 1 on the agenda under COMMUNICATIONS).

Catherine Keane stated that she didn't have a lot to say. She had given the letter with her thoughts about everything we did do. *“I assure you we did follow procedure. I always do. In all my years of running the Brady (Alternative School), the Cardinal O'Connell (Alternative School), and now the Molloy (Alternative High School), I have always followed procedures set out. All I can say is the Headmaster has given you a lot of facts, and that's exactly what we did. The only thing I can honestly say is, anyone that has any questions, you are welcome to come any day to the Molloy, to the Cardinal. My door is always open. Everybody at the Molloy, everybody at the Cardinal, students are our number one priority. Always have and always have been. In my 36 years with the Lowell Public Schools, that's been my concern. I just want to reassure that to you and let you know, students come first.”*

Mr. Leary stated that a lot of people are not aware that Cathy Keane took on two schools this year. She is running the Cardinal O'Connell, which is our middle alternative school and the Molloy Alternative High School. She was asked by the administration to do this in July (2010), and she did this without any increase in pay. He wanted to thank Cathy publicly for taking the initiative, because she didn't have to. It is not required in her contract. She has taken on double the workload that she had the previous year. Double the workload for her is running two schools of very challenged young individuals. Clearly they range with a whole list of issues that he's fortunate enough not to have to deal with. They are very complex. He appreciated all the speakers that spoke tonight. There are disagreements. There have been conversations people don't know about. We have been working with our community partners on behalf of these students. Maybe the best place for these students isn't at the Molloy or the high school. The bottom line is, “What is in the best interest of these students going forward?”

Ms. Doherty wanted the Superintendent to confirm that her understanding of the process and timeline was what Headmaster Rozmiarek and Catherine Keane said. Was that her understanding of what happened.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that what the Headmaster and Cathy Keane said was exactly her recollection of what happened. We did have numerous issues that we

needed to address at the Molloy School. Everything from attendance issues to appropriate academic placement, and to make sure all of the students were receiving proper services. There were ongoing issues at the school. Cathy agreed to take on the challenge last summer. Ms. Keane was asked to go through the file of every student to make sure they were on the roster of the school they were attending. They found that some students were not coming to school. They were ghost students and to track down where they were. That was part of the discrepancy between the number last year and the number this year. That was an ongoing issue. Again, the population of students that are served historically by the Molloy do have:

- truancy issues
- behavioral issues
- academic issues

It is a very complex group of children. The Molloy School has been attempting to be a lot of different things to a lot of different students. Part of the journey for us has been to look at the original mission of the school. That was part of the conversations we had with the administration. The original mission of the school being 45 to 90 days placement. What the goals and objectives of the school were, and who presently goes to the school? These questions were fully explored. Everything from:

- special education services being provided or needed
- more academic offerings being provided to some students
 - so they would be able to graduate

All these students have the right by law to attend the least restrictive environment. There was ongoing concern for some students to be transferred back to the high school, and there was some delay in that. The teams from the Molloy and from the high school met, and that was shared by the Headmaster and Ms. Keane, to go over the transition plan for the students at the high school. Right now, as has been discussed at various subcommittee meetings, we are still looking at the services and the programs we are offering at the Molloy. We are engaged in conversations with our community partners to bring forward a proposal that will reach and address the needs of a group of students who have been in some ways clumped together. Because of snow days, we have been cancelled twice recently. We do think within four weeks we will have a thoughtful proposal to come before the Committee, to look at the alternative options for the students who traditionally have been serviced by the Molloy.

Ms. Doherty thanked all the staff that came to speak to the Committee tonight. It takes courage to come forward to speak whether you are a parent or an employee of the system. She also wanted to thank Catherine Keane for her role as Coordinator of the Molloy Alternative High School along with her duties at the Cardinal O'Connell Alternative Middle School. From the letter Catherine Keane wrote, she sensed that Mrs. Keane thought we were attacking her in some way. That was not her intention. It was not her intention when she made the motion back in the fall. She wasn't privy to any conversations. She wasn't made aware of what she considered were major changes at the Molloy until we had our

subcommittee meeting back at the end of November or early December (2010). She also knows there have been many improvements at the Molloy Alternative High School under Mrs. Keane's leadership but the enrollment has been reduced by nearly half of the students. Since this timeframe at the end of November and early December, there also has been discrepancies:

- the number of students transferred to Lowell High
- what happened to those students
- the process of transferring the students out of the Molloy
- whether meetings took place or not

We had a student attend the subcommittee meeting who said she showed up at school not having any notice that she was no longer at the Molloy. She wants to be clear so that the Superintendent and the Headmaster understands that the questions proposed by the subcommittee and that she continues to raise here now are merely our attempt to do our job. It is our responsibility to make sure we educate every student in our school system. Since she first learned about the changes at the Molloy, she has been getting conflicting information. She's sure that the Superintendent can understand she has concern about what exactly happened to a number of students. How big of a change is it to reduce the enrollment at the Molloy by 50 percent? How big of a change is it when you go back and have the Molloy Alternative High School (and she can go back 4 years and as long as she can remember) always being a 4-year high school, and now it is a 2-year high school? We can go around about:

- was it a big change?

"I feel very firmly that we should have been involved much earlier in this, and I am looking forward to thoughtful suggestions and recommendations that will come before this Committee going forward before we make some changes and improvements. I believe we are all on the same page, and we all do our best job to educate our students." In light of the comments made tonight, she wants to share an email that came to her attention. It is an email from Headmaster Rozmiarek to the high school community and a number of people, dated August 24th, which is a week before school started, Tuesday, August 24th at 4:15 pm. *"I will just read a couple of excerpts from this that speaks to the idea, the notion, was this a real change, was it a significant change, not only in the makeup of the school, but the process and procedures for dealing with students being transferred out?"* Ms. Doherty read:

Thank you for your flexibility on this. I realize this represents a change in the way things have worked in the past, and I realize that adjustments are going to be needed. I know you Housemasters and Guidance will probably be running into inference in explaining this "New System" to teachers who maybe upset about it, and I thank you already for the work I'm sure will be required.

And then further down...

We all wish that we had resources available to provide every student with the very best “alternative setting” individually tailored to suit his or her needs in order to encourage the most work possible, But the reality is that we just do not have the resources to do that for everyone. We are in a position in which we are being asked to focus our attention and resources on the younger students who are in the best position to benefit from the investment.

Ms. Doherty stated, *“We make decisions about how resources are allocated in this school district, and we do not throw away children. I have major concerns, about the way the process was handled.” But at this point, I want:*

- to move forward
- allow the administration to come up with thoughtful suggestions and recommendations to improve our alternative program

She looked forward to hearing them.

Mr. Conway stated that when he was at the high school there were numerous discussions on what to do with students that were constantly disruptive. They needed to come up with a plan for an alternative setting if monies were available. These students needed individual help, extra help, and resources they didn't have at the time. Monies were available so they created a plan for an alternative school. It gave the student an opportunity for that second chance. With a school as large as Lowell High School, students can fall through the cracks. He thinks everyone wanted to make sure those students didn't fall through the cracks. Due to the budget situation, it has taken all of our plans and put them into complete turmoil. He thinks there certainly were discrepancies About the Molloy School, and the process of the sending school and the receiving school. He thinks everyone involved did the best they could. However, in going forward, we need to take a look at our communication and make sure that everyone truly is involved in the process. When we are talking about the receiving school, not just having the students dropped off at the doorstep and say, *“Okay, come up with a plan.”* Those people have to be involved with the plan prior to the students coming down. The system is so very complicated. He did not think anyone wanted to see students fall through the cracks. Going forward, we certainly have to take a look at the process of communication. *“We have to refine that process to make sure that all parties are involved with the decision for each and every student so that we can give them the best education possible.”* He also thought that everyone was aware that there were mishaps, concerns, and lack of communication. Going forward he hoped those mishaps, concerns, and lack of communication would be taken care of so students could be serviced the best way possible.

Ms. Laraba stated that she was a little surprised to have communication that is not shared with the rest of the Committee on the floor. Also, she thought it was a little unfair to paraphrase an email that's sent out without going through the full context. We didn't know what the beginning thread of the email was. At this point we don't know what the entire

email states so this is rather an unfair way to present some information. As is often said if I'm privy information, other people on the Committee should have access to that same information. Beyond that we talk about this school, and there have been several conversations about the school going back to budget time, which Mr. Leary has already stated. There were conversations about how the school was being handled and run. Somebody was physically asked to take on additional responsibilities, to look at that population and figure out ways to best serve them if I understand what he said correctly. I do recall that we had conversations at budget time about the student population. I also recall that this is a population of a moving target. We are talking about children who:

- are homeless
- move in and out of the city regularly

If she understands correctly, it is entirely possible that somebody dropped off the role, because they moved to Dracut, and then showed up in the fall and said, "*Here I am,*" – and not have any information about him. I think we have valid concerns in terms of making sure we provide services for everyone, but I'm comfortable with the notion that there is **NOT** a big conspiracy. I think we asked people to do a job, and they have gone ahead and done it. Now we are taking issue with the results. I think we would be better served to really work on our outreach, and as Mr. Leary said, working with our community partners, to make sure all these children have options if the Molloy School is not the perfect choice for them or if the high school is not the perfect choice for them.

Ms. Martin stated that she wanted to respond to a couple of different things that have come up this evening. The first thing is email. As far as the concern regarding email, personally, she appreciates that Ms. Doherty shared the email with the Committee. What she would recommend is that this email and its entirety be forwarded to us. All email conducted by an employee of the Lowell Public School District is actually a property of the district. We should be able to get a copy of that email, and Ms. Laraba can have access to the full context of it if there are any other questions within that. I would recommend, and I am sure it goes without saying, that any student information should be retracted, and we shouldn't have access to any of that. The actual email and its context is something this Committee should have full access to. It shouldn't be overly problematic to get us a copy of that. I think some of the things that have come up with our speakers, all three come to genuinely share information with this Committee, and I appreciate that. There are some things that have jumped out over the course of the times we have had these conversations. We have gone from a number of 5 to 7 students typically leaving the Molloy at a time to 44. I do think that is a dramatic change. I don't think anyone would argue with me that is a dramatic change in the number of students transferring out back to the high school. I think to achieve that kind of change, something must have happened in the process. Whether that was the concept of moving from a 4-year institution to a 2-year institution; but that would probably have a big impact. Again, as we look at some of the numbers and the data, I think when we look at our school population fairly spread, and now we have as Judy Flood said one or two 11th graders and no 12th graders. That does seem to substantiate the idea that there has been a real focus on the younger grades, the 9th and 10th. I think that, and again I think it will be clearer to all of us when we have the actual email, clearly and what from hearing it just

now, it seems that the school administration was asked to make this change to focus resources on younger students. For the Committee, that is not a conversation we have ever had. That is not a change in policy that we have every discussed so I do think that was a dramatic shift from the way resources had been allocated at the school. I agree with many of my colleagues as we say this is a critical institution within our district. Whether these services are provided at the Molloy or whether they are provided at the high school, there are a lot of different concepts that are going to have to be considered as we go through our budget process. At the end of the day, it is a program that we respect, that we've seen really good results from, that we've made significant investments in, and I think we all recognize the profound need for in a district like the City of Lowell where cookie-cutter approaches simply don't come close to meeting the needs of our most challenged and desperately needy students. The idea that the administration is working to come up with some new proposals to present to the Committee, I am certainly looking forward to that. Based on past performance, we should be able to create something that is in line with School Committee priorities with this population. It has been very obvious over time introducing new ideas to this Committee, we generally listen to these new ideas. We've backed a lot of initiatives. We've backed a lot of new proposals and ideas. I think that process has worked very well for us. The idea that the administration is working together to be able to present us with something that she hopes will be student focused, and she knows the administration is capable of creating. She is looking forward to this

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she wanted to be clear that the Molloy Alternative High School remains a 4-year year program. It is not a 2-year program. It is true that the numbers for the 11th and 12th grades are not there as they were in the past. There are no 12th graders and only four in the 11th grade. The explanation that was given at the subcommittee meeting was the courses that the students need to graduate. Edward J. Rozmiarek, Headmaster of Lowell High School, stated that he would continue to refer 11th and 12th graders to the high school.

Mr. Leahy stated that he thought the Guidance Counselor at the Molloy Alternative High School should have been involved in the process.

Ms. Laraba stated that the Guidance Counselor at the Molloy was transferred to the high school so at that point she wouldn't be involved. No one slighted her intentionally, she was transferred out.

Mr. Leahy stated that the Guidance Counselor has been at the Molloy a number of years. They moved her in September. She has been with these kids.

Mr. Leary stated that one of the reasons the Guidance Counselor was moved back to the high school was because those students transferred back to the high school would have the services of that Guidance Counselor.

Mayor Milinazzo thanked all the speakers for coming down tonight and speaking on this very important issue.

Ms. Martin moved:

For a **Suspension of the Rules** to bring a communication from Cathy Keane, Coordinator of the Molloy Alternative High School on the floor now; seconded by Mr. Leary.

Suspension APPROVED

For the record, the following Communication is now on the floor

1. Letter dated January 27, 2011 to the Members of the Committee from Cathy Keane, Coordinator of the Molloy/LHS Alternative School and the Cardinal O'Connell McHugh Alternative School regarding the Molloy/LHS Alternative Program.

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the communication and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Laraba. APPROVED

MOTIONS

1. (by Alison P. B. Laraba) – To ask the Superintendent to provide a report to the committee regarding the current usage and state of textbooks in Lowell Public Schools. In general how many textbooks over 5, 10, 15 and 20 years old are being circulated in the district-how are we monitoring the condition of these textbooks, what is a reasonable lifespan of a textbook and, given the extreme budget constraints we have faced and continue to face, how are we approaching the replacement of these textbooks when they exceed their “lifespan” or are damaged beyond practical use? Motion seconded by Ms. Martin. APPROVED

Ms. Laraba stated that these books are falling apart.

Mr. Leahy requested a report on roughly how long books are used. He has gone from school to school. Some books are good; some are falling apart.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated she would provide that report.

2. (by Alison P. B. Laraba) – To have the Superintendent direct the recording secretary of regular, executive and subcommittee meetings to transcribe and electronically distribute rough draft version of minutes to all School Committee members within **Five Business Days**. This is to ensure that minutes are completed and distributed on a timely basis and to allow School Committee member's time to review same for errors and/or omissions before the next scheduled meeting; seconded by Ms. Martin for discussion. On roll call Ms. Laraba had the only affirmative vote. All other members voted in the negative. One yea; six nays.
DEFEATED

3. (by Jacqueline A. Doherty) –]: Request the Superintendent direct appropriate staff to provide information to the City’s Immigration Commission regarding the process for residents and their children to access educational services in the Lowell Public Schools; seconded by Ms. Martin. APPROVED

Ms. Doherty stated that she was a member of the City’s Immigration Commission. The City Manager has established a welcoming desk at City Hall. Our hope is to expand that welcoming desk to provide one-stop information about a lot of different services in the city, particularly services that our newcomers can access. She gave Adult Education as an example, which services hundreds in their GED program. They have a one-page flyer. She wanted to mirror that with the Parent Information Center. She wanted it to be a guide for someone who was new to the city. Have someone who spoke different languages there at certain times of the week. For instances, members of the community would know that Wednesday there was someone who spoke Portuguese. They also hope to expand on the city’s website for services. It is about better communication. She doesn’t see it as a huge amount of work for the staff.

Mayor Milinazzo thanked Ms. Doherty for serving on the City’s Immigration Commission. During the last few months, they have been able to reactivate it. They have done some great work.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Mr. Leary moved:

For a **Suspension of the Rules** to take the Personnel Subcommittee report out of order; seconded by Ms. Doherty. **Suspension** APPROVED

For the record, the following subcommittee report is now on the floor:

6. Personnel Subcommittee: Report of the Meeting of Monday, February 7, 2011, by Connie A. Martin, Chair

Ms. Martin stated that the meeting took place earlier this evening. It began at 6 pm. All members of the School Committee were here as they were charged with coming up with a new Superintendent search. There was a motion made by Ms. Laraba; seconded for the purposes of discussion by Mr. Conway, to put forth before the full Committee a motion of instead of doing the Superintendent search to put in place an interim Superintendent to allow the School Committee more time to create a more thoughtful and considerate process for the search.

Ms. Laraba stated that we are now looking at a budget cycle that is probably going to be as bad as last year, although the numbers are starting to look a little better. She thinks it’s just an awful lot to have on our plates. She wants to take the time to go over the job description and to have a conversation with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, to discuss with some Head Hunters what possible scenarios there are to give us a little more

time to do this in a thoughtful way. It seems like a very tight timeframe to find someone to lead the district.

Ms. Martin stated that she can't disagree with Ms. Laraba. The timeline as it stands is incredibly challenging. She realizes that we are at the edge of opportunity right now and even the process of doing a search is certainly daunting. Given the point they are right now, she would prefer to move forward with the selection process, start this process in terms of getting the posting out, and do all our diligence at the beginning. I think we all know that this is a process that won't necessarily yield us a new Superintendent in April. Going through this process and we find there is no one out there, an interim maybe the ultimate answer. She would like to give us the opportunity to try and find an appropriate person recognizing the challenges, recognizing the time constraints this Committee is under. For herself, she would rather continue through the process. Ms. Laraba's concept of an interim may become necessary at some point. At this point she is hoping to begin the process to see what prospects are out there.

Ms. Laraba moved:

To install an interim Superintendent as of July 1st, 2011, while we go through the process of the Superintendent search allowing us time to confer with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), Recruiters, Head Hunters and; thus, allowing us time to expand our Superintendent search; seconded by Mr. Conway for discussion.

Ms. Doherty stated that she wanted a point of clarification. She did not think people would be looking for a job as Superintendent a year from now. They usually begin in the summer.

Ms. Laraba stated that she looked at the timeline that was presented and it was very complex. Since this is such a big position, she would like to look at an interim as of July 1st. To spend this time up to July 1st, really carving out the

- job description
- qualifications
- conversations with the Head Hunters

so we could hit the ground running in the fall. It may be that this interim Superintendent would serve a year. It maybe someone who could start immediately and that interim person would not be a full year. She is just looking to instead of cramming all this in from February 7th to March 17th, to give ourselves the luxury of sometime to really consider this process, especially given the fact that we will be dealing with the budget cycle.

Ms. Doherty stated that with that clarification, we always have the option of going to an interim. She agrees 6-weeks is a short timeframe, but this is the timeframe Superintendents are looking. If we don't like what we see, we always have that option. She cannot support Ms. Laraba's motion.

Mr. Leary stated that he appreciated the motion from his colleague. It could come that we appoint an interim Superintendent. At this point, he wanted to see what the market yields. He thinks it is important that we do get a Head Hunter, Recruiter or Personnel Consultant whatever the correct terminology is in the education field. If we can't come up with a candidate he would vote to go to the interim level. At this point he thinks they should move forward to see what the market yields.

Mayor Milinazzo called for a roll call vote. **For clarification**, the following motion by Ms. Laraba is on the floor.

To install an interim Superintendent as of July 1st, 2011, while we go through the process of the Superintendent search allowing us time to confer with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), Recruiters, Head Hunters and; thus, allowing us time to expand our Superintendent search; seconded by Mr. Conway for discussion. On roll call Ms. Laraba had the only affirmative vote. All other members voted in the negative. One yea; six nays. **DEFEATED**

Ms. Martin stated that three other topics were discussed. All Committee members were presented with historical documents from our last Superintendent search. Our administrative liaison for this process is going to be Assistant Superintendent Ann Murphy. She will be kind of a staff support along with Michael (Mike) Cassidy who is the Director of Human Resources. They will be assisting this Committee as well as getting us information as we require it. We did review the past posting. The past posting has all the necessary requirements listed on it as mandated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. There were no changes only requests for updates. With that posting, based on the vote of this Committee, we would be able to go forward. Next step for the posting would be to distribute it and to advertise it in our local paper, the Boston paper, as well as Education Weekly, which is the professional journal for Superintendent types within the industry. Approving that this evening, we will be able to move forward to get the advertising done so we can really, at the very least, get the information out there. We do have a proposed timeline that was presented. It is a challenge. The Committee has to be very committed in freeing up time, but while it is ambitious, she does believe it is achievable.

Ms. Martin moved:

That the Committee approve the Superintendent posting as presented, the timeline for the Superintendent Search as presented, and the establishment of a Blue Ribbon Commission that would assist the Committee in getting local input, having them involved in the Selection Process and the Interviewing Process; seconded by Ms. Laraba. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Ms. Martin stated that the next scheduled Personnel Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 14, 2011, at 7 pm. She will ask June Cormier to poll the Committee to make sure that is a good time for everybody. We will discuss how we are going to populate the Blue Ribbon Commission. She has documentation on how it was done in the

past. She as well as her colleagues are open to new constituents they might want to hear from. To make sure we have the most aggressive search available, we will also discuss the opportunities available working with Recruiters and the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, which may have additional support they may be able to provide us with.

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the Personnel Subcommittee oral report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. APPROVED

1. Lowell High School Subcommittee: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, January 19, 2011, by Jacqueline A. Doherty

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the Lowell High School Subcommittee report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leary. APPROVED

2. Curriculum Subcommittee: Report and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, January 25, 2011, by Connie A. Martin

Ms. Martin stated that the single item they discussed was the Redesign Plan draft for the Murkland Elementary School, our Level 4 underperforming school here in the district. We've looked at this document multiple times. We did try to key into the key changes that a great deal of time and effort went into from multiple staff members, which is very much appreciated. It has already been sent into the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is a program we hope will be approved by the DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). If approved, it will put us in good standing to receive significant additional funds for the Murkland; which, again, is our most critical underperforming school. We have talked a great deal about the design and some of the other plans that have gone on with the Murkland. She would report this as a report of progress.

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the Curriculum Subcommittee report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leary. APPROVED

Mr. Leary wanted to thank the Principal, the Vice Principal of the Murkland Elementary School and Jim Neary as well. These guys have put a lot of time and effort into the Redesign Plan to make the school successful.

3. Safety & Discipline Subcommittee: Report and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, January 25, 2011, by David J. Conway

Mr. Conway stated that the meeting was called to address some safety concerns they had at Lowell High School. What prompted this particular meeting was the fact that one of the police officers was hurt. Officer Santiago hurt himself in a scuffle with a student. It was important to sit down and convene this meeting so we can take a look at what we do as far as safety in our schools. In this particular incident at the high school to see if changes have to be made. It is always good to look at our process to see if we can improve it in any way possible. He asked for a report on:

- Number of expulsion hearings
- Referrals to the Molloy Alternative High School
- Number of fights we've had

When that report came back:

- 56% decrease in expulsion hearings
- 38% decrease in referrals to the alternative school
- Approximately 36% increase in the fights

We discussed this with the Headmaster. He felt very confident that Lowell High School was certainly safe and that we were following procedures and policy. We asked if there were any changes that took place. There were no changes. We also talked about the consistency on how the incidents were recorded in X-2, the data system, and how they can be interpreted in different ways. The safety strategies included:

- Building sweeps

The Committee has that report in their packets. When he looked at the report, he noticed that many of the administrators were missing from that sweep. In the past, at least until a couple of years ago, we have always included all the administrators in these sweeps so they would understand what the teachers, the paraprofessionals, and the staff are putting up with. We also talked about:

- emergency procedure drills
- 30 security cameras
 - if camera goes down, Headmaster receives report
- hot spots
 - areas where students congregate
 - areas where building sweeps can be very effective

Overall Edward J. Rozmiarek, Headmaster of Lowell High School, reported that the school year was going very well and that there was no increase in police response. In talking with:

- staff
- students
- parents

People generally felt very safe at Lowell High School.

Housemaster Maura Ammendolia stated that 60 percent of her time was spent on discipline at Lowell High School, and there is an increase in the complexity of problems the students are bringing forward. Mr. Conway was alarmed, because when you look at society and the economic situation, we have cut back on services. It is going to be very challenging going forward.

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the Subcommittee report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED

4. Special Education/Student Support Services Subcommittee: Report and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, January 26, 2011, by Jacqueline A. Doherty

Ms. Doherty stated that this meeting was in response to their December 14th, 2010 meeting. Members requested a progress report on the students who transitioned from the Molloy Alternative High School back to Lowell High School at the beginning of the year (September 2010). At the December 14th meeting, we were not able to get a number from the high school on how many of the transferred Molloy students actually went to the high school, and what happened to the other students. We knew there were 90 students at the Molloy in June and as of September there were 55 students. We asked for some details about these students. The report specifically discussed the students. Of the 21 students who returned to Lowell High, ten have withdrawn from Lowell High as of this January meeting. Out of these 10 students, 4 have enrolled in programs outside the Lowell Public Schools such as:

- Middlesex Academy Charter School
- Youth Build
- Middlesex Community College Out-of-School Youth Program

In addition 11 students have transitioned to programs outside the Lowell Public Schools. We had discussions about the criteria and process used for returning these students, and the impact of the process of transitioning 50 percent of the students, taking juniors and seniors out of the program, and the Molloy Alternative High School program proposals going forward. The former Molloy Alternative High School student Tandalaya Candelaria, spoke about her frustration not being able to access the Molloy Alternative High School program on her first day of school. She went to the Molloy on her first school day. They told her she was no longer enrolled there. She went to the high school and was told similar things. It wasn't until October that she received a course schedule. At that point she enrolled in the Middlesex Academy Charter School. That was basically an update on what happened to those students. As she mentioned and commented earlier, there were different perspectives on how that played out.

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the Special Education/Student Support Services Subcommittee report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Martin. APPROVED

5. Finance Subcommittee: Report and approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Monday, January 31, 2011, by James D. Leary, Chair

Mr. Leary stated that the entire Committee attended the meeting. He appreciated their efforts as well as the entire administration. We talked about what we need as a school system. At the end of the meeting we asked the administration to articulate per school what our needs are to educate our students. Instead of talking about cuts, which we have done since I have been on the Committee, we decided to layout the first initial two meetings of the Finance Subcommittee to talk about what we need to continue to be successful in the education of our students. This is in light of the Governor's budget which proposes a significant increase in Chapter 70 money. Instead of talking about a 9 million dollar deficit, a potential 2.4 million dollar difference or positive. That is in the context of the Committee taking a vote last year to hold onto 4.8 million dollars that was an additional federal stimulus. Without that even if the Governor's numbers are true (that is up to speculation at this point in time), we could still have a deficit. So taking the hold on the 4.8 million dollars, was a very good move for the school system. In addition as the Superintendent points out, the deficit we're filling with the 4.8 million dollars is going to become an issue in the following budget year, in 2012. In going forward we are going to be looking at every school where we are in need of funds and how do we go about addressing action plans in getting the monies to our students. To highlight the meeting, Assistant Superintendent Lang pointed out that initially we are looking at a 9.5 million dollar deficit. With the additional budget from the Governor, we're looking at a 2.4 million dollar potential surplus in context with the 4.8 million dollar federal increase. One point that has been presented by our delegations is that we really need to look at the House budget, which comes out in March or April and subsequently the Senate budget that comes out in April or May. They will have updated forecasts so we'll really know what we are looking at. The reality of 2.4 million dollar positive is probably not reality, however, what we are going to look forward to right now is changing the discussion. They are planning another meeting in March to hopefully look at the updated House numbers and to look at the administration's plans in where we need funds desperately to continue educating our students. Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, has put out a budget calendar, which we will be following.

Mr. Leary moved:

To accept the Finance Subcommittee report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED

6. Personnel Subcommittee: Report of the Meeting of Monday, February 7, 201, by Connie A. Martin, Chair – This was approved under a **Suspension of the Rules**, pages 16 through 19 of these minutes.

REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT - NONE

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE REQUESTS

The Superintendent presented and recommended approval of the following convention/conference requests:

1. Lowell High Staff Stephen Gervais to travel with twenty-four students and four chaperones to *Beijing and Shanghai, China* during the 2013 April Vacation. There will be no cost to the school department budget. No school days will be missed and no substitute teachers are needed.
2. Overnight Field Trip Request: Colleen Winn and 40 Middlesex Community College's TRIO Talent Search, Upward Bound and GEAR UP program LHS students, along with chaperones, to attend *TRIO Day 2011* in Warwick, Rhode Island on Thursday, February 24th and Friday, February 25th, 2011. There is no cost to the Lowell School Department Budget. All expenses paid by TRIO funds.
3. Field Trip Request/Date Change Request Approved at the 9/1/10 School Committee Meeting: A date change is requested for a previously approved Lowell High School *European* field trip. The request is to change the dates from the February vacation to the April vacation (Friday, April 15, 2011 to Saturday, April 23, 2011). There is no cost to the Lowell School Department budget. No school will be missed and no substitute teachers are needed.

Time Change: this time change will result in ½ students and ½ chaperones to leave school early on Friday, April 15, 2011. There will be no cost to the Lowell School Department budget and no substitute teachers are needed.

Mr. Leahy moved:

That we consolidate and take all three convention/conference requests together; seconded by Ms. Martin. APPROVED

Mr. Leahy stated that the first convention/conference request was in 2013, which is far away. He wanted to make sure that we are keeping track of these trips.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that they were keeping track of all field school trips. The reason this trip is coming before the Committee at such a time is so that we can

give our students and staff permission to fundraise. This trip will be quite expensive for our students. It will take some time to fundraise.

Mr. Conway stated that we have had many discussions about field trips. We have asked them to plan ahead. He thinks Mr. Gervais is planning ahead. These trips are great, and they are a great opportunity for students.

Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the three convention/conference requests; seconded by Ms. Martin. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

COMMUNICATION

1. Letter dated January 27, 2011 to the Members of the Committee from Cathy Keane, Coordinator of the Molloy/LHS Alternative School and the Cardinal O’Connell McHugh Alternative School regarding the Molloy/LHS Alternative Program – This was taken up under a **Suspension of the Rules**, page 15 of these minutes.
2. Lowell Telecommunication [Channel 10] Broadcast of School Committee Meetings: Live on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the Month; Thursdays @ 6PM; Saturday and Sundays @ 2PM; Tuesdays @ 10AM.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

The Superintendent presented and recommended approval of the following request:

1. Lowell School Administrators Association respectfully request that the members donate:

NAME	OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF DAYS
Sherry Vlahakis	Lowell High School Guidance Counselor	22

This request was **WITHDRAWN**

2. The members of the United Teachers of Lowell hereby request to donate sick leave days to the following:

NAME	OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF DAYS
Laura Lafleur	Paraprofessional Sullivan Middle School	7

Ms. Doherty wanted to know if we offer short term or long term disability insurance to our employees.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the School Department doesn't offer that plan, but the City allows for short and long term disability that the employee can purchase on their own.

Ms. Doherty stated that she believed it was common practice in business to do it, and the City does have that option. The reason she is bringing it up is that she wanted to defer the donation of sick leave by the United Teachers of Lowell. Since she has been on the Committee, it seems that it has become habit to approve these requests for sick days. She is concerned about what the cost might be. She wanted to defer this until she received a report from the administration on what the policy is, and the philosophy we have been using about these sick days. How much money for substitutes has it cost the district? She wanted to go back two years, this year and last year. How many sick days have been added in the last two years? A parent told her about a teacher who had been out almost an entire year, came back for the last couple of months, and then ended up retiring. She wanted to be a compassionate employer. Our benefit program is very rich as it is. Given the fiscal situation, there is a reason why business and the City provide long term and short term disabilities insurance. We have an obligation to have those staff in our buildings. We have staff members that are out for a half a year or several months. If it's a teacher, we have to pay for a substitute in addition to paying for sick days. If it is a staff member we are doing without, then perhaps we don't need that position. She wanted some financial information on the long-standing practice to see if it makes sense to just continue this route when it comes before us.

Ms. Doherty moved:

To defer the donation of sick leave by the United Teachers of Lowell pending a report from the Superintendent; seconded by Mr. Leary for discussion.

Mr. Conway stated that he understood where Ms. Doherty was coming from, but the person giving up their sick days was losing their sick days. It wasn't as if somebody is gaining something. It think it is important to look at down the road if there is some type of insurance that can perhaps take care of this situation. There might not be a need for this. At this particular point, until we get that report and that information; he thinks it is important that we go forward with the sick days. Again, it is past practice and before we make a change like that, we have to be very careful.

Ms. Martin stated that she wanted to separate this individual request from an overall concern rather than holding someone up. It doesn't seem that is Ms. Doherty's intent. Moving forward, she wanted to approve this request. She also thinks that conversation around this practice needs to happen. Perhaps it should happen during negotiations. It is something that has been negotiated into our contracts, and it's an established practice. She thinks we need to negotiate it out. We have had some conversation about long term and short term disability when we've been in negotiations. It might be something we want to request from the administration, a recommendation, a proposal as to what the value of this would be if we chose to change it. What the value would be if we chose to turn to a more

structured long term short term disability situation. It is part of our contract so the Committee as a body cannot make that change. It is something we have to investigate.

Mr. Leary stated that part 2, you have to look at the premiums for short term and long term disabilities. It is probably a lot more than the personal sick cost. Assistant Superintendent Lang and he have talked about this at length at different times. He agrees with Ms. Doherty. It is important.

Mr. Leahy stated that it was important to take a look at this, but not to hold up the donation of sick leave request tonight.

Ms. Doherty stated that she would amend her motion, but if it was part of our contract, why do we vote on it every time? We have had motions in the past to defer. That is when she first started to really notice it. We do offer; employees can take out short term and long term disability insurance. She is fine with taking out the deferment, but she assumes people are still interested in getting a report from the administration.

For the record and for clarification, anything involving money has to be voted on by the Committee as a whole and has to have a roll call vote even if it is part of contract negotiations.

Ms. Doherty moved **to amend** her motion:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the donation of sick leave request and to ask for a report from the administration; seconded by Mr. Leary.
Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

ADJOURNMENT – Ms. Martin moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Laraba. This meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee

CAS: jms

Enclosures