



# LEXINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Superintendent's Bulletin

Volume V, Bulletin #4

November 2, 2009

### Message from the Superintendent

Dear Colleagues:

What makes our schools so special? In addition to an extremely strong academic program, our schools are alive with excitement and enrichment. Here are two events I observed in the past week.

On October 23, Harrington School hosted Abdou Sarr and Tony Vacca for a day of Senegalese dancing and drumming. FOLMADS provided funding for this special day.

The day began with an assembly for the entire school. Tony and Abdou played instruments, danced, told stories and involved the audience with clapping and spoken response. The percussion instruments included gongs, drums, bells, an African xylophone, and rattles. One piece included members of the Harrington staff as "the band." Abdou danced in an outfit he created using the colors of the Senegalese flag.

After the assembly, Tony and Abdou gave workshops with students in grades 2-5. The fifth graders played a complex percussion piece under Tony's direction. The other classes learned African dance steps from Abdou. I am so pleased that the all K-5 music teachers were able to participate in the day's activities.

Last Tuesday, approximately 410 French students in grades 6, 7, & 8 from both Clarke and Diamond Middle Schools came together during an unprecedented educational and cultural event in the auditorium at Diamond. Brice Kapel, a Franco-Togolese performer and singer, while making a three-week tour in the United States, was invited to perform his currently unreleased and upcoming album and show Porto Seguro and conduct two separate workshops for both schools.

Since the beginning of the school year students have been learning and studying Kapel's songs, which are sentimental accounts of his life experiences, multiculturalism and languages, which include French and his tribal language of Mina. Students also studied about his native African country of Togo, which he fled at a young age with his family during turbulent times. Kapel's inviting spirit and musical and dance talents enthralled students, administrators, teachers and the over 35 parent attendees. Three student singers performed also beautifully as they sang with Kapel on-stage for two songs.

In addition to the group concert, each school participated in an hour-long workshop on movement, sound, and response. After spending the day in Lexington interacting with students, Brice Kapel spoke highly of the students' enthusiasm to learn about another language and culture, and how they participated so readily with welcoming energy. This collaborative event was a true success which touched many lives in the Lexington Public Schools' community.

My thanks to Holly Stumpf, Harrington music teacher, and Christine Goulet, Diamond French teacher, for helping make these incredible events possible.

*Paul*

#### Inside This Issue

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Agendas – November 2, 2009 &  
November 3, 2009

#### Attachment:

"Our Schools" Article



## "Our Schools"

Attached to this Bulletin is an article on the recent findings of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee and its recommendations for the long-range capital needs of the Lexington Schools. This article appeared in the "Our Schools" section of the October 29<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Lexington Minuteman*.

## Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

November 2	School Committee Public Hearing and Information Session on the Recommended K-12 Long-Range Facilities Plan 7:30 p.m., Cary Hall Auditorium, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue
November 3	Superintendent's Administrative Council, 2:30 p.m., Central Office Conference Room
November 3	School Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
November 4	Elementary Conferences
November 5	Elementary Conferences
November 5	LEF Annual Trivia Bee, 7:00 p.m., Cary Hall Auditorium, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue
November 6	Secondary Term Closes
November 9	Faculty Meeting Day
November 10	Professional Development Committee, 12:30 p.m., Central Office, Lower Level, Room 2
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday – Schools and Offices Closed
November 13	Middle School Conferences
November 13	Follow-up Reading Comprehension Course Grades K-2, Morning Grades 3-5, Afternoon Central Office, Lower Level, Room 2

## Human Resource Notes

### Parents of Dependents Who Have Graduated or Reached Maximum Age

If your son or daughter no longer qualifies as an eligible dependent\* because (s)he has graduated or has reached maximum age, and this results in a change of coverage type from Family to Individual, or Family to 2 Person (dental only), etc. you are responsible for notifying the Human Resources Department (preferably a month in advance) so that your coverage type can be changed with the carrier, and your payroll deductions can be changed accordingly. This does not happen automatically.

\*Dependent children are eligible until age 19. If dependents 19 or older are full time students, they are eligible until graduation or age 26, whichever comes first. (Age 26 for BlueCross BlueShield and Delta, Age 25 for Harvard Pilgrim)



## Teaching Vacancies 2009-2010

### Elementary

- 1.0 SPED Resource Long-Term Substitute (beginning 1/10 – 6/10) – Moderate Disabilities licensure required. Knowledge of assessment, direct service, IDEA and IEPs preferred.
- 0.5 Reading Specialist Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. 12/09 – 3/10)

### Clarke Middle School

- 1.0 Reading Specialist Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. 2/10 – 6/10). MA DESE Reading license required and Wilson Reading and/or Orton-Gillingham certification preferred.
- 1.0 Physical Education Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. 4/10 – 5/10)

### Lexington High School

- 0.3 Social Worker (MSW/LICSW/DESE licensed) – to work with students with social cognitive deficits
- 0.7 TV Production Teacher
- 0.5 English Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. late 1/10 – 3/10)
- 1.0 English Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. 12/09 – 6/10)
- 1.0 Math Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. 12/09 – 6/10)
- 1.0 Chemistry Long-Term Substitute to cover maternity leave (approx. late 1/10 – 4/10)



## 2009-2010 Positions

### Student Support Instructors

PreK-5 support instructor for ABA therapy in school and at home working with students on the autism spectrum. 32-36 hours per week @ \$20.00 - \$25.00 per hour, commensurate with experience. Bachelor's degree required.

### Elementary Overmax Aides

10 hrs/wk (5 days per week, 2 hours per day) – beginning immediately – June 2010. To provide classroom assistance. \$16.25 – 18.35 per hour. Does not include benefits.

**For all of the above positions, please forward a letter of application, resume, and other supporting materials to:**

Robert J. Harris, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
146 Maple Street  
Lexington, MA 02420

### System-Wide

#### **Building Technology Liaisons (internal candidates only):**

Duties include:

- Trouble-shooting routine computer issues with teachers as needed.
- Offering help to teachers on basic software uses.
- Communicating with staff about technology resources and issues.

Elementary Schools: Estabrook and Bridge (1 liaison per building)

High School: 1 or 2 liaisons

Annual Stipend \$1,000 (Subject to collective bargaining)

**For all of the Building Technology Liaison positions, please forward letter of application to Robert Harris.**

## Lexington School Committee Meeting Agendas

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*Lexington School  
Committee Public Hearing  
to be held on Monday,  
November 2, 2009, in  
Cary Hall Auditorium*

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**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
PUBLIC HEARING AND INFORMATION SESSION  
ON THE RECOMMENDED K-12 LONG-RANGE FACILITIES**

Monday, November 2, 2009  
Cary Hall Auditorium  
1605 Massachusetts Avenue

**7:30 p.m. Call to Order and Welcome:**

**8:00 p.m. Discussion Items:**

1. Overview of the Recommended K-12 Long-Range Facilities Plan (30 minutes)
2. Public Dialogue (1 hour, 30 minutes)

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday, November 3, 2009  
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room  
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

**7:30 p.m. Call to Order and Welcome:**

Public Comment – (Written comments to be presented to the School Committee; oral presentations not to exceed three minutes.)

**7:40 p.m. Superintendent's Announcements:**

**7:50 p.m. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns:**

**8:00 p.m. Discussion Items:**

1. MCAS Report (45 minutes)
  - a. District Results
  - b. New Data Warehousing System
  - c. New Growth Model
2. FY10 Capital Budget Recommendations (45 minutes)
3. FY09 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Financial Report (15 minutes)
4. FY10 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Financial Report (15 minutes)

**10:00 p.m. Action Items:**

1. Vote to Accept School Committee Goals for 2009-2010 (10 minutes)
2. Vote to Approve Diamond Middle School Field Trip to Quebec City, Canada (5 minutes)
3. Vote to Accept \$1,500 Donation in Support of the Activities of Students Against Drunk Drivers (SADD) (2 minutes)
4. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of October 20, 2009 (3 minutes)

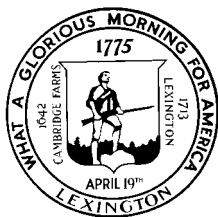
**10:20 p.m. Executive Session:**

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the Global Ministries Christian Church, 670 Washington Street, Dorchester

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*Lexington School  
Committee Meeting  
to be held on Tuesday,  
November 3, 2009, in the  
Selectmen's Meeting Room*

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# Lexington Public Schools

146 Maple Street ♦ Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

Paul B. Ash, Ph.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*

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fax: (781) 863-5829

## Our Schools

October 29, 2009

*Paul B. Ash, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools*

### Meeting the Capital Needs of Lexington Schools

Even in times of economic downturn like those we currently face, we cannot lose sight of the need to take care of our school buildings. Our students and staff depend on them every day. To determine how to maintain our aging buildings, the School Committee established the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee (AHFC) to assess the Facilities Master Plan recently developed by Design Partnership, consider the options in the report, and make recommendations.

The AHFC was comprised of exceptionally qualified individuals, which included School Committee representatives Phil Poinelli and Tom Griffiths; Selectmen representatives George Burnell and Peter Kelley; and Permanent Building Committee representatives Eric Brown, Jon Himmel, and Peter Johnson. I want to thank the members of the AHFC Committee for their dedication and their well-considered recommendations, which I will summarize in this article.

In its report to the School Committee, the AHFC supports the Master Plan and recommends that the town annually budget sufficient capital funds to keep our schools and municipal buildings properly maintained. The AHFC recommends:

**RENOVATING AND EXPANDING LHS:** Addressing current roofing, HVAC, and other capital needs at LHS; adding space to deal with overcrowding (total estimate \$37.7 million dollars); and filing a Statement of Interest (SOI) with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for a possible reimbursement of 31% to 40%.

LHS was renovated between 1999 and 2001, but various building components were cut from the original project when the 1997 debt exemption was defeated. Consequently, some of the HVAC systems and roofs at LHS are in need of immediate attention. In addition, LHS is significantly overcrowded because of a significant increase in enrollment and the expansion of legally required special education and English language learner programs. Overcrowded conditions will continue for at least another ten years based on local and MSBA projections.

LHS does not have enough educational spaces, which affects programs and class sizes. Space is also needed for computer laboratories, specialized instruction, special education, teacher preparation, student meetings, and extra help. Moreover, the size of the average LHS classroom (658 square feet) is well below the MSBA recommended size (950 square feet). Small classrooms make it difficult for

teachers to use flexible teaching strategies and add modern technology to the classroom. Also, the school does not have sufficient cafeteria space, requiring many students to go off campus or eat in the hallways.

**OTHER SCHOOL BUILDINGS:** The AHFC agrees with the Master Plan approach to the Bowman and Bridge schools (\$13.1 million dollars) and recommends renovating both schools in the near future, filing a SOI with the MSBA for the Estabrook School after the disposition of the LHS SOI is known, and continuing to monitor enrollment numbers to determine Hastings' future use. The AHFC recommends that the Estabrook and Hastings Schools be maintained so they do not further deteriorate. The AHFC does not recommend that the School Administration Building (old Harrington) be renovated at this time. The AHFC, recognizes that the remaining spaces in the Administration Building are needed for programs that cannot be housed in other buildings, such as pre-kindergarten and LABBB collaborative special education programs. The districtwide print shop has already been relocated from LHS to the Administration Building to free up one classroom for educational use.

Beyond commenting on the Master Plan, the AHFC also recommends preparing a technology plan for all nine schools and budgeting sufficient operating funds to keep all schools, as well as other town buildings, in proper repair commencing in FY2011.

The recommendations of the AHFC are detailed, comprehensive, and timely. The temptation in tough economic times is to allow maintenance and capital needs to fall to the bottom of the priority list. Even with continually shrinking State budgets and building program reductions, LPS must continue to pursue avenues that keep our facilities safe and able to serve our students. The good work of the AHFC has brought us closer to that goal.

On November 2, at 7:30 p.m., the School Committee will hold an information meeting and public hearing in Cary Hall Auditorium on the recommended PreK-12 long-range facilities plan. The Master Plan, AHFC Report, and Educational Technology Plan can be viewed at <http://lps.lexingtonma.org>

*Paul B. Ash, Ph.D., is the Superintendent of the Lexington Public Schools.*