

To the Littleton School Committee

Many thanks for the opportunity to present to you a plan to make the Littleton schools Number One in the state. I know that you are concerned about budgets, increasing costs, teacher dissatisfaction with their contracts. But all of these problems should not distract you from the main reason why we are all here: to improve the education of the kids in Littleton's schools. That is your primary responsibility. Everything else is secondary.

When I read that your goal was to make Littleton schools number one in the state, I felt it my duty as a Littleton resident to offer my knowledge and experience in helping you achieve that goal. I know it can be achieved by making rather simple changes in your primary school curriculum and in the way you do Special Education. The Alpha-Phonics reading program I devised almost 30 years ago has been fully tested by thousands of parents in their homes and by some teachers. In fact, I would like you to read the letter which Paul Lukawski, a Florida teacher, wrote me a few months ago. The results he's gotten with Alpha-Phonics he calls a miracle, and who am I to argue with that?

The reason why the program works so well is because it is pure, unadulterated systematic phonics, with no pictures to distract the student. Students love it because I made it so easy to learn to read. And it appeals to their intellect because I teach the entire English alphabetic system as a system and not as some fragmented bits of information. This enhances their brain power, leads to the development of a larger vocabulary, and turns them into literate human beings capable of reading anything they want. All of this has been confirmed by neuroscientists who are now studying the effects of reading on the brain.

After reading Paul's letter, you might wonder how much more we can improve the literacy skills of Littleton's students with the implementation of Alpha-Phonics. We can improve them so that they will become number one in the state, and probably number one in the nation.

What I am offering you is a golden opportunity to turn the schools of Littleton into a model for the future of American education. I have no idea why any one of you decided to become members of the Littleton School Committee. Maybe you did so as a means of eventually getting involved in state or county politics. There is nothing wrong with such ambitions. Good politicians usually start at the bottom. But if you would like to do something as a school board member that will reverberate throughout the commonwealth and may even become national news, then here is your chance to do it.

This is the kind of opportunity that comes only once in a lifetime. You can make a difference if you are willing to do what no other school committee has done in an American public school system. I hope and pray that you will accept the challenge.

Littleton Schools

2007 SATs	2005 SATs
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Reading 530.0	546
State 488.1	500.8
Writing 529.0	534
State 483.0	506.6
Math 534.0	
State 496.0	

MCAS 10 th Grade	2007	2004
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Students Tested English	106	111
Warning Failing	2	9
Needs Improvement	12	25
Proficiency	58	24
Advanced	34	53

In November 2007, the National Endowment for the Arts issued an alarming report on the present state of American literacy, *Reading at Risk*. According to the Report, the number of 17-year-olds who never read for pleasure increased from 9 percent in 1984 to 19 percent in 2004. About half of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 never read books for pleasure.

Endowment Chairman Dana Gioia stated: "This is a massive social problem. We are losing the majority of the new generation. They will not achieve anything close to their potential because of poor reading." The survey found that only a third of high-school seniors read at a proficient level. "And proficiency is not a high standard," said Gioia. "We're not asking them to be able to read Proust in the original. We're talking about reading the daily newspaper."

International Test Scores

Results In short, the tests showed U.S. fourth-graders performing poorly, middle school students worse, and high school students are unable to compete. By the same criteria used to say we were "average" in elementary school, "we appear to be "near the bottom" at the high school level. People have a tendency to think this picture is bleak but it doesn't apply to their own school. Chances are, even if your school compares well in SAT scores, it will still be a lightweight on an international scale.

Downward sloping performance confirms John Taylor Gatto's thesis in his book **Dumbing Us Down** and his speeches which charge compulsory government education with deliberately producing robots instead of adults who are the best they can be.

Comment In 1983, **A Nation At Risk** urgently recommended reforms in education warning "the United States is under challenge from many quarters". Today we're at greater risk than ever. The Government Education Monopoly continues to imperil our economy by failing miserably at preparing the workforce. Business increasingly looks for talent overseas. The world's greatest concentration of PhD's is in Seoul, Korea and half of Americans can't even find Seoul on a map.

International Math & Science Study

Math

Grade 4: 12th out of 26 nations. Number One Singapore scored 625; U.S. 12th, 545

Grade 8: 28th out of 41 countries. Number One Singapore scored 643; U.S., 500

Grade 12: 19th out of 21 countries. Third from the bottom.

Science

Grade 4: 3rd out of 26 **Grade 8:** 17th out of 41 **Grade 12:** 16th out of 21

Grade 12: Top students in Advanced Math: 15th out of 16.

Grade 12: Top students in Advanced Science: 16th out of 16. Bottom of the Pack

Year 2000: U.S. was not in the top ten in Math, Science, and Reading:

U.S. was 15th in Reading; 24th in Math; 21st in Science.

Year 2009: U.S. was 17th in Reading; 30th in Math; 23rd in Science.



Town of Littleton School Committee

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MICHAEL FONTANELLA, Vice Chair
DARYL BAKER, Member

PAUL J. AVELLA, Chair

CHUCK DECOSTE, Secretary
TYLER GRAY, Member

The Littleton School Committee will meet at the High School Library Seminar Room on Thursday, February 2, 2012 at 7:30 PM.

*** * * A G E N D A * * ***

7:30 I. ORGANIZATION

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consent Agenda
 - Minutes – January 19, 2012
 - Oath to Bills -
and Payroll

7:35 II. INTERESTED CITIZENS

7:40 III. RECOGNITION

1. Henry Vincent Couper Charitable Foundation. Donation in the amount of \$2500.00 to the High School Physics Program.
2. LHS All-State Music Festival Winners
 - High School Senior Rachel Marshall
 - High School Junior Ella Duncan

These two students have been accepted to perform in The Massachusetts Music Educators Association's (MMEA) All-State Music Festival at Boston Symphony Hall.

7:50 IV. PRESENTATION

1. Mid-year School Improvement updates:
 - MS Principal– Mr. Mark Branco
 - HS Principal – Dr. John Harrington
2. Recommendation that the School Committee review and approve a four year Mathematics requirement for LHS Students.

It is the policy of the Littleton Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, color, homelessness, sexual orientation, age or disability in its educational programs, services, activities or employment practices. Further information may be obtained by contacting Dianna Peterson, District Equity Coordinator at 978-540-2503, dpeterson@littletonps.org or 33 Shattuck Street, P.O. Box 1486, Littleton, MA 01460.

Our mission is to inspire and sustain learning and achievement, preparing each student for the challenges of life in the 21st century.

8:35 V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on letters sent to State Senator and State Representative
2. Continued discussion - Pursuit of Excellence.

8:40 VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Open Meeting Law – Remote Participation

8:45 VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. School reports: Student Representative – Pat Rauker
2. Action Item List
3. Personnel Update
4. Russell Street Principal Search Committee Process.
5. Superintendent's Transition Plan: Report on Technology.
6. Business manager update: FY12 Budget Update

9:30 VIII. INTERESTED CITIZENS

9:35 IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. School Building Committee
2. Budget Subcommittee
3. Safety & Security Subcommittee
4. Policy Subcommittee
 - Policy JJIF Concussion and Sports Injury Concussion Policy- First reading

9:40 X. ADJOURNMENT/EXECUTIVE SESSION

NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

February 16, 2012

7:30 PM

High School Library Seminar Room

Policy Sub-Committee Meeting

Monday, February 6, 2012

4:00 p.m.

Superintendent's Office

Budget Sub-Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

7:00 a.m.

Superintendent's Office

February 2012
Upcoming School Events

Shaker Lane

Feb. 10 100's Day
Feb. 29 Shaker Lane Willow Book Night

Russell Street

Feb. 2 Staff/Student Basketball game 6:15
Feb. 7 Winter Concert 6:30 at High School (5th grade band & chorus)
Feb.15 School Wide Meeting

Middle School

Feb.3 8th grade Kid's Night Out 7:00-9:00 PM
Feb.7 School Council 2:30-3:30
Feb.16 PTA Family Volleyball Night

High School

Feb. 1 MCAS - Bio
Feb. 1 HS Staff Meeting 2:15
Feb. 2 MCAS – Bio
Feb. 2 School Committee Meeting 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 6 Concussion Information Night 7:00 p.m.
Feb. 7 School Council Meeting 3:00 p.m.
Feb. 8 Jr. College Planning Night 7:00 p.m.
Feb. 15 Early Release
Feb. 16 School Committee Meeting
Feb. 20-24 School Vacation
Feb. 29 MCAS ELA Re-test
Feb. 29 Principal's Breakfast 7:15 a.m.