



**LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Henry J. Mroz Administration Office**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

**William J. Samaras**  
**Mayor and Chairperson**

**Jackie Doherty**  
**Vice-Chairperson**

**Andre P. Descoteaux**  
**Robert J. Hoey Jr.**  
**Dominik Hok Lay**  
**Connie A. Martin**  
**Gerard Nutter**

## **Policy Subcommittee Meeting**

**Wednesday, October 16, 2019**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**Tel: (978) 674-4324**  
**Fax: (978) 937-7609**

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Gerry Nutter, Jackie Doherty And Connie Martin
School Committee Members Present:	Andy Descoteaux and Robert Hoey
School Department Personnel Present:	Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer

---

Chairperson Gerry Nutter called the meeting to order at 5:13 p.m. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. **Inoculation of Students Policy Revision - JLCB**
2. **Equity & Engagement Gap Draft Policy**
3. **Staff Code of Conduct Policy Revision – GBEB**
4. **Outstanding Motions on Policies**

➤ **Inoculation of Students Policy Revision- JLCB**

Superintendent Boyd addressed the Subcommittee about Inoculation Students Policy Revision- JLCB and stated that it was his impression from what he has been told about past management that at the beginning of the school year, the district defers to the health department and receives recommendations to enforce the policy, but the policy is at the purview of the School Committee and that the policy largely mimics the state law. He stated if there are questions

regarding the law, the district defers to our staff attorneys and if there are questions in regards to student health, the district defers to the health department. All steps have been consistent with past years and consistent with the law.

The Superintendent asked the Subcommittee for guidance with regards to the fact that in the Lowell's content we use three (3) terms that in other communities are interchangeable. These terms are admission, enrollment and school assignment. He stated that these terms typically mean the same thing because in many communities in Massachusetts and elsewhere, you're simply going to the school closest to your home and whether you're admitted, enrolled or assigned they mean the same thing, but here in Lowell it means different things.

He stated that we have a centralized enrollment process that is facilitated through our Family Resource Center and when a student is assigned to a school they arrive at the school and they're admitted through the Principal and their staff. Students are assigned to a school by a rather complex student assignment policy which will be reviewed by the Committee at a later time. Superintendent Boyd stated that as they were looking at policies, handbooks and other guiding documents related to this particular policy, it was unclear whether those terms he referenced are used interchangeably or intended to have the same meaning or if the district should provide one (1) term with one (1) meaning and go back through all of the documents to make sure we are using the same term, because that could require continuous clarification depending upon the elected body, the policy making body and the administration. The Superintendent concluded saying that uncovering how this policy has been enforced sounds like the district uses two (2) possibilities:

1. Simply bar students from ever enrolling or taking part in any course pending immunization review and;
2. The catch up plan whereby the three (3) notice process where the student upon review can catch up with their immunization and they will receive three (3) notices to catch up.

Ms. Doherty asked about the three (3) notice system and said that she thought it was if a student was behind and that is very different than a student entering the district without any records.

Superintendent Boyd stated yes and said that their immunizations might have expired, but there might be a third rule where students are exempt all together and these cases include homeless, refugee and medically compromised. The law is more complexed than a simple yes or no.

Ms. Martin asked if the notification schedule is (2) weeks.

Ms. Phillips stated that there is not a set period of time, but has heard thirty (30) days and she believes that period of time has been set by our health professionals.

Superintendent Boyd added that he believes the timeline can be adjusted for multiple reasons to ensure that the entire community is safe.

Mr. Nutter stated that he would like this policy updated. The law is pretty clear and we need to keep this in place and he believes we need to work with the health department and come back with an updated policy.

Superintendent Boyd would like the staff attorneys to draft this and stated that he will come back with an updated policy by December.

Mr. Nutter also asked for a report to be provided to them at the December meeting on how many students didn't have full immunization.

➤ **Equity & Engagement Gap Draft Policy**

Ms. Phillips provided the Committee with a handout (Equity & Achievement Gap Draft Policy) and asked for their feedback on this new policy that the district is proposing and reminded the Committee about the district's Core Beliefs and Commitments and stated that this is what is behind proposing this policy. She stated that the Lowell Public Schools has indicated a strong commitment toward eliminating the racial, ethnic and linguistic achievement and opportunity gaps among all students, providing equitable funding and resources among the district's diverse schools and engaging all families with courtesy, dignity, respect and cultural understanding. She stated that as the district begins implementation of the strategic planning process, an important first step is developing a formal policy and a district statement that clarifies and solidifies the district's commitment toward eliminating these persistent disparities in these achievement and opportunity gaps which affirms that all of our goals, initiatives and staff contributions will be grounded in this mission and moral imperative toward equity.

Superintendent Boyd stated that long term sustainability needs to be in the district and we are looking for the Committee's approval to form a community group in order to bring back a draft policy. He stated that we have no policy for our work in our equity office and it will be a big part of our strategic plan.

Mr. Nutter stated that he believes this Committee has shown to be very committed in wanting to establish equity, equality and diversity in our classrooms.

Ms. Doherty stated that she agreed with Mr. Nutter. She stated that she's fine with using words from Boston's policy, but believes that the hard part is how we are going to implement the policy.

Ms. Martin stated that she agrees that this policy can be part of the strategic plan as we move forward.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he can provide a Draft Policy for the next School Committee meeting.

➤ **Staff Code of Conduct Policy Revision – GBEB**

Mr. Nutter stated that the personnel issue that happened earlier this school year was the reason why the Committee needs to look at this policy and he made a recommendation to form an advisory committee made up of the administration and the union as well as legal involvement and really believes this needs to be addressed.

Ms. Martin stated that we have something in place. She stated that we have a structure that an employee either goes out on paid leave or unpaid leave. She stated she would like to see

something in place that would address actionable events i.e. if they're arrested, indicted or convicted.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he would provide the Committee with that information.

Ms. Doherty agreed with Ms. Martin and stated that it should be for every adult working in the Lowell Public Schools and we should be able to go back and look at past practices and have it be fair and protect everyone.

Superintendent Boyd stated that the Staff Conduct Policy is date July 9, 1973 and the language in the policy is very subjective in meaning (1973 laws/meaning compared to the laws meaning in 2019). He stated that we need to define what we mean by a report and what a report is and if an investigation going to take place.

Ms. Doherty said that we should look at other districts to see how they've updated their policies.

Mr. Nutter asked for this to be provided to the Committee by February 2020.

Superintendent Boyd stated he would like to bring a number of policies to the Committee for discussion at that time and maybe a way to go would be looking at policies dated before 1993.

➤ **Outstanding Motions on Policies**

Mr. Nutter spoke about the outstanding motions.

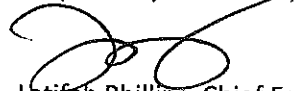
Ms. Martin stated that moving forward we should do this diligently and incrementally and maybe meeting once a month to look at these policies.

Superintendent Boyd stated that we can do that, but also stated that many policies are outdated. Everything the School Committee does is revolved around policies and a lot goes to the policy subcommittee and maybe it could go to another subcommittee.

Ms. Phillips stated that we need to do the Student Assignment Policy before January so our families can plan accordingly.

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 6:07 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Martin. 3 yeas  
APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,



Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity &  
Engagement Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd,  
Superintendent and Secretary, Lowell  
School Committee

LP/mes

4

Policy Subcommittee – October 16, 2019