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TO: Liam Skinner, Superintendent
FROM: Wendy Crocker-Roberge, Assistant Superintendent for Schools & Leadership
DATE: January 29, 2025
RE: *Response to Motion Regarding LHS Dismissal*

The following report is in response to a motion by David Conway:

Request the superintendent to prepare the detailed process, procedure, and plan that are currently in place for the safe and orderly end-of-school dismissal at Lowell High School. And furthermore, list any and all additional safety measures that are being discussed.

As of January 26, 2025, there are exactly 3,400 students enrolled at Lowell High School, including 1019 freshmen and 2,381 upperclassmen across the multi-block campus. While the morning arrival process spans at least 15 minutes, at dismissal, all students exit the buildings simultaneously, with the exception of those remaining at school for clubs, athletics, or after-school support. As such, there is a large concentration of students who either board the city buses, get picked up by parents or caregivers, walk to their vehicles in the parking garage, or walk home within a window of just a few minutes. Ensuring a safe and orderly dismissal requires a comprehensive plan that is consistently implemented and refined when needed.

Below is the current LHS dismissal plan:

Lowell High School Dismissal Plan

Lowell High School dismissal occurs at 2:30 pm. When the students begin exiting the buildings, we have 12 LRTA buses on site, security, and administration, and LPD traffic control positioned to

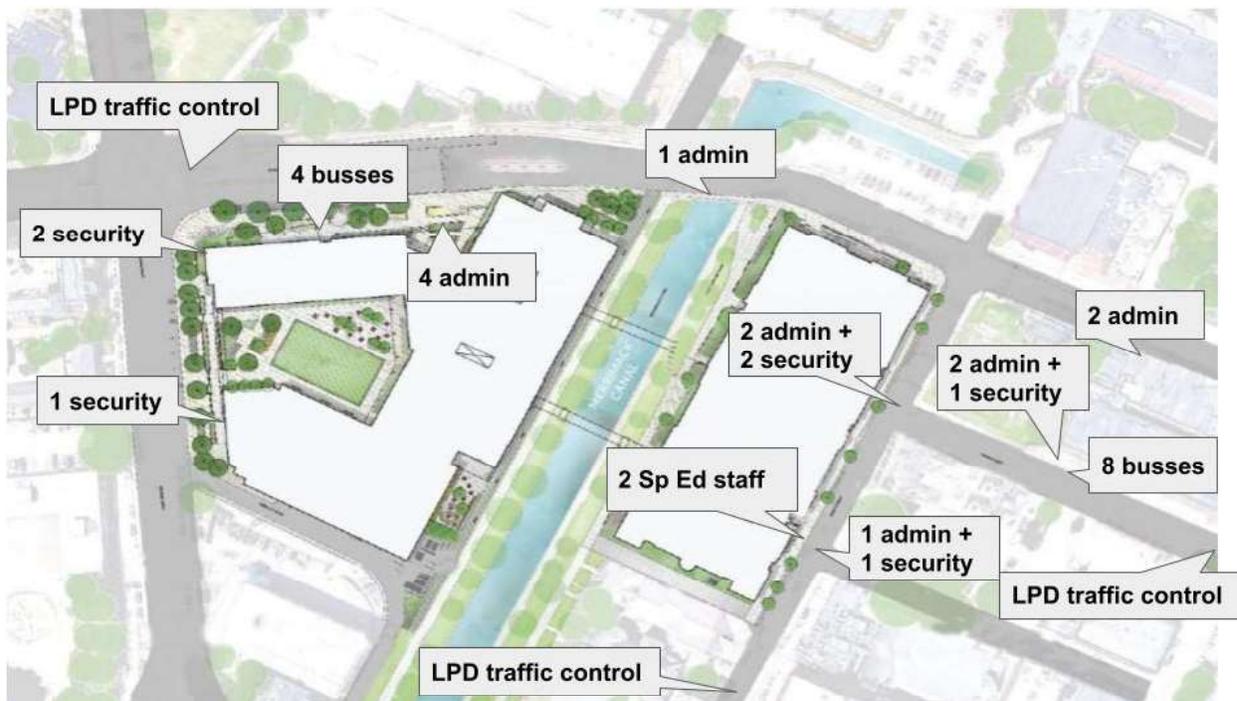
monitor activity and safety as the students begin making their way home. The graphic below shows the positions of personnel and buses.

Timeline:

- 2:27-2:30 – Administration and security guards take their positions
- 2:30 – Students are dismissed and begin exiting the buildings
- 2:35-2:37 – Buses drive away
- 2:45 or when there are no students in the area – Admin and security leave their dismissal positions and return to the buildings

Positions:

- 1 security guard at the Arcand Drive entrance of the gym
- 2 security guards at the corner of Arcand and Father Morissette Blvd
- LPD traffic control at Arcand and Father Morissette stopping eastbound traffic
- 4 administrators in the area of the main entrance of the school on Father Morissette
- 1 administrator on Father Morissette at the canal
- 2 administrators and 2 security guards at Paige and Kirk
- 1 administrator, 1 security guard, and 2 Special Education staff members at Kirk and Lee
- 2 administrators and 1 security guard at main entrance of Freshman Academy on Paige Street
- LPD traffic control at Paige and John Street
- 2 administrators on John Street



Historical trends indicate that in the warmer months of the school year, students are more likely to remain downtown in groups and congregate in different areas of downtown. Additional strategies employed thus far to manage these trends include the following:

- LHS administration and the Lowell Police Department have collaborated on increasing patrols during the after school hours around the downtown area.
- The Superintendent met with administrators at the LRTA to discuss increasing the availability of afternoon busing relative to the demand of bus riders. LRTA was not able to accommodate additional buses due to a lack of drivers. The pilot of free public busing that began in Massachusetts on December 1, 2024 allows more students to access the LRTA now than at the start of the school year so they can leave campus immediately after school on a bus instead of walking in the downtown area.

Opportunities to strengthen the current practices include the following:

- LHS administrators are tracking student involvement in after school activities and are conducting outreach to get more students connected to athletics, clubs, and support activities that will keep them on campus following dismissal. Currently, an average of 1,000 students are participating in one of these activities.
- LHS administrative and security staff may extend the length of outdoor supervision past the current time as needed in the warmer months or as behaviors dictate.
- The School Site Council will consider increasing the number of LHS Security Guards in FY 2026 if funding permits, with an emphasis on the “swing shift” hours to provide more supervision during the afternoon and early evening hours from dismissal to the conclusion of athletic and club events. This would allow for increased presence and supervision at dismissal in key areas where students tend to congregate.
- The District Safety Coordinator will conduct observations of dismissal monthly with follow-up feedback provided to the Head of School, Lead Security Officer, and Discipline and Operations Specialist.