



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date:	February 23, 2022
Time:	6:30PM
Location:	City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852 Members Of The Public May View The Meeting Via LTC And Those Wishing To Speak Regarding A Specific Agenda Item, A Phone Number And Email Address So We Can Provide A Zoom Link To Access The Meeting. Requests Must Be Submit It Before 2:00 PM On The Day Of Meeting.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:38 p.m., members present were, namely: Mayor Chau, Ms. Delrossi, Mr. Descoteaux, Ms. Doherty, Mr. Lay and Ms. Martin. Ms. Thompson was absent.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3.1. Consideration of Temporary Adjustment to the Student Attendance Policy

Mr. Skinner, Chief Schools Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that COVID-19 has had a direct and significant negative impact on student attendance this school year, leading the administration to examine the district's retention, promotion and attendance policies more closely for projected impacts to students across schools. The administration is recommending a temporary adjustment to the policies to ensure consistency, equity and fairness across schools and to allow for school leaders to consider supports needed to address students' varying needs that are resulting in high chronic absenteeism and subsequent learning loss. He stated that the current policy has not been implemented historically within the schools and the reason for bringing this to the Committee tonight is to now align the district policy with actual practice within the district

Ms. Martin stated that implementation and plans are important to her and she wanted to know how they can be tracked. She stated that she believes we need a policy subcommittee to do the deep dive into this so we can do a professional job reviewing this policy and others. She stated that they need to be reviewed and it requires the administration to give insights and recommendations and then have the School Committee take action. She asked if there is a way to come up with a memo for principals to go by that can be tracked in Aspen.



Mr. Skinner responded yes and that's a very sensible idea.

Ms. Doherty stated that we are at the 11th hour and that she has been asking for this information from the administration. She stated that in June she had a motion on how many students were failing two (2) or more courses. She stated that she sent ten (10) questions and she still doesn't know how many students are impacted.

Mr. Skinner stated 3400 students are impacted if the policy doesn't change.

Mr. Descoteaux asked if there are any theories that debunk the theory discussed tonight. He stated that he believes that we are doing a disservice to students passing them along and at times students can be three (3) or four (4) grade levels below where they should be.

Mr. Skinner stated that there is no research that debunks what was discussed tonight.

Superintendent Boyd stated that the Committee needs a longer discussion and the administration wants guidance from the Committee for the academic year so we are transparent with families and the governing body.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve the temporary said changes for the 2021-2022 school year; seconded by Mr. Lay. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Thompson) APPROVED

4. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Martin made a motion to adjourn at 7:36 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Thompson) APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

**Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D., Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

JDB/mes