



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 3, 2021
Time: 6:30PM
Location: Pursuant To Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying The State's Open Meeting Law Issued March 12, 2020, Meetings Will Be Held Using Remote Participation As Follows: Members Of The Public May Not Participate In-Person And May View The Meeting Via LTC.ORG (On-Line; Live Streaming Or Local Cable Channel 99) And Zoom.

Pursuant To Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying The State's Open Meeting Law Issued March 12, 2020, Meetings Will Be Held Using Remote Participation As Follows: Members Of The Public May Not Participate In-Person And May View The Meeting Via LTC.ORG (On-Line; Live Streaming Or Local Cable Channel 99) And Zoom.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:34 p.m., members present were, namely: Ms. Clark, Mr. Descoteaux, Mr. Dillon, Ms. Doherty and Mayor Leahy. Ms. Martin was absent. One seat is temporarily vacant due to a resignation.

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

3.1. Communication Remote Participation: Members of the public may view the meeting via LTC and those wishing to speak regarding a specific agenda item shall register to speak in advance of the meeting by sending email to the Superintendent indicating the agenda item, a phone number and email address so we can provide a zoom link to access the meeting. Email address is mpalazzo@Lowell.k12.ma.us if no access to email you may contact us at 978-674-4324. All Requests must be submit it before 3:00 PM on The Day of Meeting.

4. MINUTES

4.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Mr. Dillon made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 17, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of February 17, 2021; seconded by Ms. Clark. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED



4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Mr. Dillon made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 17, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of February 17, 2021; seconded by Ms. Clark. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter: March 3, 2021

Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

6. MEMORIALS

6.1. George Nutter, Brother Of Former School Committee Member Gerry Nutter, Cousin Of Special Ed Teacher Tina Nutter, Retired Elementary Teacher Mary Ellen Conole, Nephew Of The Late Walter Nutter School Adjustment Councilor / High School Teacher And Cousin To Former School Committee Member Clement G McDonough.

6.2. Margaret Martin, Mother of School Committee Member Connie Martin

7. SUBCOMMITTEES

7.1. Finance Subcommittee: Report and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Monday, February 22, 2021 [Connie Martin, Chairperson]

This report was deferred to the next School Committee Meeting being held on March 17, 2021.

7.2. Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting: Report of the Meeting of Monday, March 1, 2021 [Connie Martin, Chairperson]

The Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting was cancelled.

7.3. Equity & Access Subcommittee: Report of the Meeting of Monday, March 1, 2021 [Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

The Equity & Access Subcommittee Meeting was cancelled.



8. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

8.1. COVID-19 Update

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer gave the Committee a COVID-19 Data monitoring update that included the Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 and Percent Positivity Rate. It also reported the number of total staff and students as reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) of positive COVID cases, total number of quarantined due to in-person instruction, total number of quarantined due to outside school factors, the approximate number of quarantined from September 1, 2020 through February 26, 2021, as well as COVID-19 positive cases per school from September 1, 2020 through February 26, 2021. He stated that the district is utilizing pool testing and that the results are delivered within 24-48 hours. The report provided pool testing participant numbers by school on February 24, 2021 and February 25, 2021. The report provided information on the next steps if the district receives positive pool results as well as pool testing plans moving forward. Lowell Public Schools also have a Covid-19 dashboard that provides data, protocols and guidelines, where to go to get tested, what to do if you test positive or if you have come in contact with someone who is positive, and information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Dr. Hall stated that the goals for returning to in-person learning are February 22, 2021 (3%), March 1, 2021 (25%), and April 1, 2021 (expansion of our in-person learning model to include additional students beyond those assigned to in-person learning at the beginning of the school year). The report concluded with information on the Phase Three Roll Out.

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

8.2. April 1st Reopening Plan Update

Ms. Desmond, Chief Academic Officer provided the Committee with the April 1, 2021 Reopening Plan update. The update included the following:

- Governor and Commissioner Guidance
- Overview of Potential Hybrid Plans
- Current Data
- Timeline
- Technology
- Items for Consideration
- Next Steps

Mr. Descoteaux stated that he was upset that they were planning on administering MCAS.

Ms. Doherty asked what percentage of responses the district has received from the survey that was sent out.

Dr. Guillory stated that he will get the exact number and that schools are also reaching out to families.



Ms. Doherty stated that she has been hearing concerns that if the district went hybrid how would the 25% remain in school when the cleaning took place on Wednesday and not be disrupted. She was also concerned about the differential in class sizes.

Mr. Dillon and Mayor Leahy asked about distancing and if we were holding to the 6 feet.

Mayor Leahy stated that he has been hearing kids not able to get to school and would like the transportation piece looked at.

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

8.3. Personnel Report

The Personnel Report officially informs the Committee of all retirements, resignations, promotions and new hires.

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Kindergarten Reassignment Policy

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to send this to the Equity & Access Subcommittee meeting for further discussion; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 years, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.2. Fair Student Funding Update

Monica Lundberg registered and spoke on the Fair Student Funding Update.

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer provided a report that to the Committee that informed them that Lowell Public Schools implemented Fair Student Funding (FSF) during the FY20/21 budget cycle. Through FSF, school based budgets are now determined by the needs of the students in a school – not a predetermined staffing model. The goals during this first year were to increase equity through a weighted system of funding, increase transparency using clear and easily understood rules and create a flexible system in which autonomy is balanced with accountability. Through this approach, the people closest to our children - parents, teachers, principals and support staff - are now positioned to make decisions about the school's educational and financial plans. In our 2nd year of using FSF, we have added the fourth goal of ensuring a stable and sustainable system by providing predictable allocations to support school and district multi-year strategic goals. With FSF, school budgets are determined using enrollment and demographics to build the per pupil weights that feed the overall school allocation amount. Our enrollment projections show a decrease of approximately 260 students for the FY21/22 school year. Despite this decrease in projected enrollment, the administration recommended an increase to the school based pool (SBB) of \$4 million (\$2 million from the additional Chapter 70 dollars



and \$2 million from the ESSER II dollars). If the increase is approved, the total increase from the original SBB pool for FY20/21 to the FY21/22 pool would be approximately \$10.9 million. The original figure was \$137.7 million with a subsequent \$2 million increase approved by the School Committee. An additional \$4.9 million was eventually added to the average salaries used in the school budget workbooks to accurately reflect the step increases and raises that were contractually obligated. That \$6.9 million increase from last year plus the \$4 million increase recommended for this upcoming budget year totals the \$10.9 million increase. Ms. Turner stated that the administration was asking for a vote from the School Committee to proceed with both the \$2 million increase from Chapter 70 funds and a \$2 million increase from ESSER II funds so that they can complete the budget workbooks that are scheduled to be released to schools on March 5th. She stated that this additional investment will raise the 67% invested directly into schools to 69% for FY21/22. She stated that a full ESSER II plan for the \$17.9 million allocation will be brought before the School Committee at a later date.

Mayor Leahy and Ms. Doherty expressed concerns about budgeting money the district hasn't received yet.

Mr. Dillon made a motion to approve increasing the School Based Pool (SBB) by \$4 million (\$2 million from the additional Chapter 70 dollars and \$2 million from the ESSER II dollars); seconded by Ms. Clark. 3 yeas, 2 nays (Mayor Leahy, Ms. Doherty), 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.3. Budget Transfer 1,

Mr. Dillon made a motion to approve a budget transfer of \$8,381,933; seconded by Ms. Clark. 3 yeas, 2 nays (Mayor Leahy, Ms. Doherty) 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.4. Budget Transfer 2

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve a budget transfer of \$33,519; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.5. Establishment of Subcommittees

Mr. Dillon informed the Mayor that he has in interest in being the Chair of the Facilities Subcommittee moving forward.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve the Establishment of Subcommittees; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 4 yeas, 1 nay (Mr. Dillon), 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED



10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Martin), 1 vacancy APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

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

JDB/mes