



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 17, 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.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:34 p.m., members present were, namely: Mr. Dillon, Ms. Doherty Mayor Leahy, Ms. Martin and Ms. Clark. Mr. Descoteaux 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 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.

MEMORIALS

Nixon Alert, 8th Grade Student at the Community Charter Public School

4. MINUTES

4.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, March 3, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of March 3, 2021; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED



4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, March 3, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of March 3, 2021; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter: March 17, 2021

Ms. Doherty made a motion to remove Nicks Luxury Transportation in the amount of \$80,000 and to approve the remaining items on the Permission to Enter as written; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

6. SUBCOMMITTEES

6.1. **Equity & Access Subcommittee:** Report of the Meeting of Monday, March 10, 2021 [Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

Chairperson Doherty informed the Committee that the Lowell Public Schools offers full-day and half-day Preschool Programs to children four (4) years old by September 1st. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) who are three (3) and four (4) year-old students are assigned to preschool based on their IEP, required services, residency, and available space. Children with IEPs are provided preschool programming on or before their third birthday in accordance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Lowell Public Schools holds a pre-registration period for preschool during the months of February through April each year. At the time of registration, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to indicate three (3) school choices. She then spoke about the Kindergarten Reassignment Policy which delineates the process for returning current Kindergarten students back to their original assignments that were made using the guidelines of 2020-2021 school assignment policy which was adopted in January 2020 and enacted until the passage of the temporary policy in July 2020.

Ms. Clark made a motion to provide the School Committee with three (3) years of demographic comparison data regarding the number and type of families participating in the full and half-day Pre-K programs; seconded by Ms. Martin. 6 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Martin. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

6.2. **Facilities Subcommittee:** Report of the Meeting of Monday, March 11, 2021 [Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

Chairperson Doherty informed the Committee about the city's priority list that was provided to the Subcommittee. Ms. Doherty stated that the document addresses safety concerns that the city and



schools share. She stated that there are \$30 million in concerns, but this list has been prioritized to \$2.5 million dollars. The School Department has slated \$1.9 million dollars to address these concerns. She stated that they also will be doing work at some of the Renaissance Schools. She stated that the list can be prioritized in many ways and that some of the work could be done by other funding sources. She stated that a \$100 million dollars is needed to maintain the schools for ten (10) years (\$10 million a year) and that a lot of their concerns deal with HVAC.

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer added that the money must be encumbered by June 30, 2021, but the projects can be completed in the summer.

Mr. Dillon made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Clark. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

7. MOTIONS

Vannak Theng registered and spoke on Item # 7.1.

7.1. [By Hilary Clark]: Motion to adjust the school calendar to identify the second Monday in October as a celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day and abolish the use of Columbus Day. In addition, Lowell Public Schools will establish an Indigenous Peoples Day Committee to develop and implement the commemoration of Indigenous Peoples Day, including instruction in the schools on the culture, history, and diversity of Indigenous peoples. These steps will reaffirm the district's commitment to equity, ensuring that all people are treated with respect, dignity, and cultural understanding; and seeks to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination by promoting awareness, understanding, and accurate truths and history of Indigenous peoples across our District and beyond.

The Committee requested that this be sent to the Curriculum Subcommittee for further discussion regarding curricula details. Ms. Martin requested that student's voices also be included in the discussion.

Ms. Clark made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 4 years, 1 nay (Mr. Dillon), 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

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 March 12, 2021, as well as COVID-19 positive cases per school from September 1, 2020 through March 12, 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 and



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. The report also included information about consent forms for pool testing..

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 and 8.2 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

8.2. Expansion of In-Person Learning

Superintendent Boyd informed the Committee that the district's reopening plan will expand full time, in-person learning for grades K – 5 on April 5, 2021 and grades 6 – 8 on April 26, 2021, aligning our local instructional model with the new statewide requirements that were provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and to establish an instructional model and target date of April 26th to also expand in-person learning for grades 9 to 12 pending future guidance from DESE. Superintendent Boyd and his team also provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee that addressed the expansion of in-person learning. The PowerPoint included the following:

- Guiding Principles
- Commissioner Guidance
- Summary of In-Person Expansion Plan
- Operations and Staffing
- Professional Development Plan
- Community Forums and Parent Orientation
- Next Steps

Committee members expressed concerns around transportation and the change to the two (2) mile eligibility and the potential issue with not having enough buses or drivers. Superintendent Boyd stated he will update the Committee when he receives more information regarding transportation.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 and 8.2 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

8.3. Home Education

Superintendent Boyd recommended that the following parents/guardians be allowed to home educate their child:

Sokhomal Chan
21 Mt. Washington Street

Mr. Dillon made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 years, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED



9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Budget Transfer

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve a budget transfer of \$22,000; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.2. 2021-2022 School Calendar

Superintendent Boyd informed the Committee that he will bring the calendar back with adjustments if needed, but wanted to allow parents to properly plan for next year.

Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.3. 2021-2022 School Reassignment Policy for Current Students

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 School Reassignment Policy for Current Students; seconded by Ms. Clark. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

9.4. 2021-2022 School Assignment Policy for New Students & Transfers

Ms. Martin made a motion to refer the 2021-2022 School Assignment Policy for New Students & Transfers to the Equity & Access Subcommittee or a Special Meeting for further discussion; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

10. COMMUNICATIONS

10.1. Request from United Teachers of Lowell to Support a Resolution to Suspend MCAS

Karen Walton and Mickie Dumont registered and spoke on Item 10.1.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept the communication and to place it on file; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

11. PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

11.1. The Members of the United Teachers of Lowell Hereby Donate Thirty Three [33] Sick Leave Days to Jacqueline Jarvis McAvinnue School Teacher.

Mr. Dillon made a motion approve; seconded by Ms. Clark. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED



11.2. The Members of the United Teachers of Lowell Hereby Donate Forty Four [44] Sick Leave Days to Kimberly Bradley Pyne School Teacher.

Mr. Dillon made a motion approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED

11.3. The Members of the SEIU Hereby Donate Forty-Three [43] Sick Leave Days to Mary Lou Boucher, Central Office Secretary.

Mr. Dillon made a motion approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 5 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Descoteaux), 1 vacancy APPROVED



12. ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

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

JDB/mes