



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date:	May 18, 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 shall register to speak in advance of the meeting by sending an 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 submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:34 p.m., members present were, namely: Ms. Chhoun, Ms. Delrossi, Ms. Doherty, Ms. Martin and Ms. Thompson. Mr. Lay arrived at 6:41 p.m. and Mayor Chau arrived at 6:53 p.m.

3. MINUTES

3.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting that was held on Wednesday, May 4, 2022 and the minutes of the FY23 Budget Session of Monday, May 9, 2022; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 5 years, 2 absent (Mr. Lay, Mayor Chau) APPROVED

3.2. Approval of the Minutes of the FY23 Budget Session of Monday, May 9, 2022

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting that was held on Wednesday, May 4, 2022 and the minutes of the FY23 Budget Session of Monday, May 9, 2022; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 5 years, 2 absent (Mr. Lay, Mayor Chau) APPROVED

4. PERMISSION TO ENTER

4.1. Permission to Enter: May 18, 2022

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 5 years, 2 absent (Mr. Lay, Mayor Chau) APPROVED



5. MEMORIALS

5.1. Nancy Crawford, Retired Pyne Arts Executive Secretary

5.2. The Shooting Victims in Buffalo, NY

6. MOTIONS

6.1. [By Susie Chhoun]: Request the Superintendent to provide a list of cultural events and celebrations that were hosted for students and families at schools during the 2021-2022 school year, and plans for expanding these events to be inclusive of all diverse populations in each school next year.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 5 yeas, 2 absent (Mr. Lay, Mayor Chau) APPROVED

6.2. [By Dominik Hok Lay]: Ask the Superintendent to provide an overview on the implementation and enforcement of the Dress Code policy.

Mr. Lay made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mayor Chau) APPROVED

6.3. [By Dominik Hok Lay/Students]: Request the Mayor to ask the City Manager to ensure that the playgrounds throughout the city, including but not limited to the basketball courts, tennis courts, fields are safe for the kids /students to play on including the need to fix the crumbled floors and to apply new paint on the floors and basketball backboards. Additionally, remove of stones and debris from the playing areas.

Mr. Lay made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mayor Chau) APPROVED

6.4. [By Jackie Doherty]: Request the Facilities Subcommittee meet ASAP in May to discuss:

Mr. Georges registered and spoke on this motion.

1. Update on the STEM portables (timing)
2. Plans to address ventilation and cooling for summer school.
3. Full list of furniture/locker priority needs and costs as well as plans to address them
4. Top HVAC concerns that should be addressed before school starts in the fall.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mayor Chau) APPROVED

6.5. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request superintendent to report on the number of students that have been transported to hospital due to mental health issues.



Ms. Doucette registered and spoke on this motion.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

6.6. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request superintendent to collaborate with the school improvement and performance management subcommittee to create an anonymous survey for teachers and support staff to evaluate school building culture.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

6.7. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request superintendent to report once a month on the status of the modular implementation timeline, and financial increase/decrease of this project for the Stem Academy.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

6.8. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the Superintendent to report the number of grant paid positions and programs throughout the district.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

7. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

7.1. Response to Motion 02. CSO of 02/02/22 by Jackie Doherty Relative to Interventions and Enhancements

Mr. Skinner, Chief School Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that all middle school Principals were surveyed to obtain the information provided in the report. They were asked to respond to eight (8) questions, four (4) related to intervention and four (4) related to enhancement/enrichment. The questions were as follows:

- What intervention programming does your school offer?
- What type of instruction is involved in intervention programming?
- Number of students involved in interventions by grade:
- When are interventions scheduled?
- What enhancement/enrichment programming does your school offer?
- What type of instruction is involved in enhancement/enrichment programming?
- Number of students involved in enhancements/enrichment programs by grade?
- When are enhancements/enrichments scheduled?

The results indicated a wide range of intervention and enrichment programming offered during and after school hours. Interventions are focused primarily on reading and mathematics and many schools arrange for interventions to occur during a dedicated block during the school day. Several schools refer to this block as a WIN (What I Need) block. Others provide interventions through tutors who 'push in' to core academic classes.



Ms. Doherty stated that we need a policy that gives us interventions that doesn't take away from the allied arts.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.2. Response to Motion 05. CEEQ of 02/02/22 by Stacey Thompson Relating to the Bias Based Incident Reporting System

Ms. Phillips, Chief Engagement & Equity Officer provided a report to the Committee related to the bias based incidents reports for the months of March and April. The report stated that during the month of March, sixty (65) incidents were reported using the online bias based incident reporting system, and fifty-five (55) investigations were completed and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. As stated in a previous report, the investigation form is separate from the incident reporting form database; therefore, while the Equity Office has centralized access to the submitted incident forms, the Office does not have access to the investigation data until the investigation form is uploaded by a school-based investigator. A synopsis of the investigation findings and administered consequences has been included in the March presentation. As it relates to the typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the time an investigation begins, per our review of the data submitted in the March report as well as the February report, the average timeframe between a reported incident to the launch of an investigation is 1.5 days. Each school has a designated staff person who receives the reports once they're submitted online and is responsible for investigating the reports. If a student, staff or family is not satisfied with the investigation process or outcome, they can request that the Office of Equity and Empowerment review the investigation process and findings. The report stated that since the time of the last report, Equity and Engagement Office staff have been coordinating with a subcommittee of the Lowell Student Advisory Council to work towards improving and streamlining the Racism, Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination reporting process to make it more student friendly and student-centered. During the month of April, forty-two (42) incidents were reported and thirty-two (32) investigations were completed and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. A synopsis of the investigation findings and administered consequences has been included in the April presentation. The typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the time an investigation was initiated was found to be 3.9 days on average in April. This increased time frame may be attributed in part to reports being submitted before or during April vacation week. Currently, the Office of Equity and Empowerment is preparing for the first school-community review team meeting, where a small team of staff, community DEI practitioners and parents will have the opportunity to analyze the reported data and administered consequences, and present recommendations for student and staff training, as well as improvements to the reporting process and data collection process. Furthermore, on June 1st, a select groups of students from each middle and high school in Lowell Public Schools will have the opportunity to review a revised student-friendly reporting form and develop a school-based communications and outreach plan to present to their school administration before the end of the school year, with the goal of increasing awareness of the purpose and available of the reporting form.

Ms. Thompson asked if the process can be changed to not wait a day and a half before the investigation is started.

The report will be brought before the rescheduled Equity & Access Subcommittee when they meet.



Superintendent Boyd stated that a report will be brought forward.

Ms. Thompson asked what the recourse of a staff member will be when having an issue with another staff member.

Superintendent Boyd stated that it goes through the HR protocol.

Ms. Skinner stated that we do everything we can to not suspend and that most cases Principal's make a judgement call.

Ms. Martin stated that we can't accomplish what we want to do if we don't receive the information.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.3. Enrollment Report

Ms. Phillips, Chief Engagement & Equity Officer provided a report to the Committee that as of May 12, 2022, there are 14,474 students attending Lowell Public Schools. The report states that following our standard format, the May 12th enrollment report includes other categories of enrollment that the district is responsible for monitoring, placing and/or supporting such as home schooled students, out of district student placements, community pre-K student program placements, students referred for special education program evaluation, as well as students in the Family Resource Center category awaiting school assignment. When combining all of these categories together, the total enrollment on the March enrollment report adds up to 15,279. The report states that as of Thursday morning, May 12th, the total number of K-12 students in the FRC category was fifty-one (51). Additionally, fifty-six (56) pre-K students are on the waitlist for the 2021-2022 school year and school year and two (2) remain in the EC other category which adds up to a total of 109 in the FRC category. On this date, of the fifty-one (51) K-12 students in the FRC category, twenty-seven (27) students have been provided an assignment and are ready to attend school. Of the remaining twenty-four (24) students, twelve (12) students are awaiting medical clearance, six (6) are registrants needing to submit required documentation, four (4) are English Learner students who need to complete their scheduled language testing, and two (2) students are awaiting placement by the Special Education department. Since the last report, of the new students who have initiated and/or completed student registrations for Lowell Public schools, 30% indicated English as a home language, 23% indicated Portuguese, 23% indicated Spanish, and 23% indicated an additional language.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.3 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.4. Home Education

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



Kristina Kortisses
Melina Joaquin

Mr. Lay made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. FY23 Budget Adoption <HTTPS://WWW.LOWELL.K12.MA.US/BUDGETINFO>

Ms. Doherty stated that she was disappointed that the Committee has not received the Family Resource Center audit and asked when they can expect to receive it.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he will be providing it to the Committee at the next School Committee meeting.

Ms. Doherty asked about the \$500,000 for the facilities study and if that is separate from the HVAC assessment.

Superintendent Boyd stated that it will be coming out of ESSER and it will appear on the Permission to Enter on the agenda. He stated that it is a separate study.

Ms. Doherty then asked how many new employees we have hired and would like that number be provided to the Committee. She stated that she's concerned about possible unemployment costs down the road when the ESSER funds run out.

Ms. Turner stated that she will provide that information.

Mr. Lay made a motion to approve the Lowell Public Schools FY2023 final bottom-line figure at \$213,706,072 and to submit the FY2023 Budget to the City Manager; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to suspend the rules to discuss the audit report; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

Mayor Chau stated that the City Council would like to have a joint Finance Subcommittee meeting and asked that the Superintendent attend the subcommittee meeting to discuss the audit report.

Ms. Doherty asked that the following information be included: why weren't systems in place, how much money is involved and why wasn't the Committee made aware of the report.

Superintendent Boyd stated that the School Department has an internal auditor and that Ms. Turner will provide a response.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to have a Joint Finance Subcommittee with the City Council to discuss the audit report; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED



8.2. School Assignment Policy Review File: JCA

Ms. Martin made a motion to refer the School Assignment Policy Review File: JCA to the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

Superintendent Boyd asked if the first reading could be done at the Policy Subcommittee due to this needing to be resolved quickly.

Ms. Doherty asked why is everting always under a quick timeline.

8.3. Memorandum of Agreement with UMASS Lowell Regarding Districtwide Performance Management

Ms. Doherty asked how much this was.

Superintendent Boyd stated \$250,000.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement with UMASS Lowell Regarding Districtwide Performance Management; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.4. Consideration of an Adjustment to the Date the Committee Shall Annually Evaluate the Superintendent from “No Later Than June 1” to either “No Later Than August 1” Or “No Later Than December 1.”

Ms. Martin stated that a Personnel & Human Relations Subcommittee will be held in June to move forward with a launch date in July.

Ms. Doherty stated that moving forward we should try to do this in June.

Ms. Martin made a motion to adjust the date of the Superintendent’s Evaluation to be no later than August 1, 2022; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 6 yeas, 1 nay (Mr. Lay) APPROVED

9. COMMUNICATIONS

9.1. Report On LHS MakerSpace

Ms. Doherty stated that she’s disappointed that this space is not being used.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to bundle and accept the communications and to place them on file; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.2. Communication Regarding Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' 2022 Executive Institute

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to bundle and accept the communications and to place them on file; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 7 yeas APPROVED



10. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 8:28 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

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

JDB/mes