

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, January 22, 2019
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: 7:04 p.m.

Chair Eileen Jay welcomed and introduced committee members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Eileen Jay, Chairperson
Kate Colburn, Vice-Chairperson
Kathleen Lenihan, Clerk
Deepika Sawhney
Alessandro Alessandrini
Rosanna Jiang, Student Rep

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Dr. Julie Hackett, Superintendent
Peter Rowe, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

NOT PRESENT

Rosanna Jiang, Student Rep

The minutes were taken by Kristen Cronin, Executive Assistant to the School Committee and Administrative Assistant to Superintendent

Ms. Jay made an opening announcement regarding the cancellation of the January 22, 2019 School Committee meeting. The next scheduled meeting will be held on February 5, 2019.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE LPS FY2020 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

At 7:07 p.m. Ms. Jay opened the Public Hearing on the Superintendent's FY 2020 Recommended Budget. Superintendent Hackett gave a very brief overview of the FY 2020 Recommended Budget that was presented at the Tuesday, January 8, 2019 School Committee meeting and on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at the first Public Hearing. A link to review the complete Recommended Budget can be found here: [Superintendent's FY 2020 Recommended Budget](#)

Ms. Judy Crocker - Courier Court - Ms. Crocker is the Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator, which is a Municipal base community working with the schools and the Municipal Government promoting sustainable transportation. Ms. Crocker stated that in the FY 19 Budget a line item was removed in terms of Student Transportation and Safety. A few years prior, School Committee had passed a new Policy EEAC - School Transportation and Safety Litigation. With the implementation of the policy it was agreed that each school property would have their traffic plan evaluated. To date, there are four schools that have yet to be evaluated, Bowman,

Central Registration, Harrington, and Lexington High School. Ms. Crocker is requesting to have this line item reinstated back into the budget. Ms. Eileen Jay informed Ms. Crocker the Administration will follow up with her request.

Ms. Jay informed the committee that at the last joint meeting on mental health, the Municipal/Town Task Force would be putting together a list of recommendations and will most likely be presenting to both boards by the end of this school year with further recommendations in the fall. Questions arose as to whether there was an interest in setting aside any additional funds in the FY 2020 operating budget to be used towards some of the recommendations for mental health. One member had a few questions on what or how the money is intended to be used. Other members agreed this should be a shared expense and should also be a shared decision making process. Discussion of shared expenses will be discussed at the next Summit budget in conjunction with Dr. Hackett's comments on the CHNA Grant.

Students from the SADD Club & Direct Prevention Program with Lexington High School expressed their appreciation for the K-12 Health and Wellness program and expressed a shared concern with some of the challenges in the program. The biggest concern they have is the minimal amount of time elementary students are receiving in health education, 1.5–2 hours per year from High School students. They receive a lot of questions from elementary students that trained professionals would be better answering. The students feel the school system should grow and change along with the evolution of technology and what young children are being exposed to on a daily basis and would like for School Committee to help develop an elementary health curriculum in the budget.

Superintendent Hackett reported that this year for grade five, trained professionals were integrated into the curriculum for health education and in the FY19-20 school year a full time equivalent is included in the budget and the following year FY 20-21 greater increase in the full time equivalent.

Chair, Eileen Jay closed the public hearing on the budget at 7:55 p.m. and continued with the School Committee meeting.

CONGRATULATIONS & CELEBRATIONS:

Superintendent Hackett extended congratulations to Keena and John Gao, two Lexington High School students who invented a new app to assist with busing routes. Keena and John created the app due to weather in New England and instead of standing out in the cold and rain this was a good way to track where their bus was en route. The app is available for download on the Google Play Store or in iTunes App Store. Further information on the app can be found here: www.rideontimetech.com

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Each member thanked the Human Rights Committee for organizing events for Martin Luther King Day observances and for the individuals who spoke on the panel about their personal stories with race, and bigotry.

Ms. Sawhney extended her gratitude to the custodial staff at Diamond Middle School for the great job that they do in keeping the building clean for the students.

Ms. Colburn gave a brief update on the January 11 School Master Planning Advisory Committee meeting. Discussion was had around short term solutions for space mining opportunities and potential for adding temporary space to the high school. Next steps include having staff from the high school attend a committee meeting with recommendations on short term solutions at the high school might be.

Ms. Colburn gave a gentle reminder to turn off your vehicle while waiting to pick up your children at school in order to comply with the no idling by-law.

Ms. Alessandrini stated that the Supreme Court recently upheld the banning of transgender people in the military, and when something like that happens we have to be certain that our students who also identify in the LGBTQ community that we actually provide a place for them to talk about it as well as to be there for them, letting them know the future is not always that bleak.

Ms. Lenihan echoed Ms. Colburn's comments regarding the no idling by-law.

Ms. Jay provided a brief update on the Minuteman/Inter-Municipal Agreement regarding the fields that the Minuteman High School is building. The Minuteman has a plan for \$12 Million that has been put aside in their Capital planning to build fields on the site of their old school building to include three multi purpose fields. They are able to fund one of those fields as a synthetic field and the other two fields are grass. They originally had wanted an even more comprehensive project to include a building with stadium seating, press box, restrooms and concession stands. The plan is to bring this to town meeting in March for a vote. The terms of agreement are still being discussed. A full presentation from the Recreation department will be presented at a School Committee meeting sometime in the near future.

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Karen McCarthy, K-5 Science Coordinator gave a brief overview and update on the Big Backyard program. The Big Backyard started as a Lexington Education Foundation (LEF) funded Pilot at Estabrook Elementary in 1996. These nature walks were designed for the schools by naturalist, Bev Morrison, Fran Ludwig, and trained parent volunteers to provide hands-on learning in Science and Social Studies, while incorporating writing, math, and art, as well as the student's own natural curiosity skills.

Currently there are approximately 2,500 children participating in the Big Backyard experience directly led by 450 parent volunteers and fully funded by the Lexington Public Schools. Each grade has a different walk tailored to their curriculum. Parent volunteers are instructed on how to lead the specific walk with the help of a written guide and walkthrough training provided by a District Level Big Backyard Coordinator. There is a general 2 hour training session for all teachers and new parent volunteers. Big Backyard Coordinators, Pamela Cohen and Fran Ludwig and the Lexington Science Curriculum Coordinator, Karen McCarthy, provide the trainings.

In FY 2019 Ms. McCarthy hopes to increase the hours for the BBY Coordinator to develop revisions, updates and new nature walks as well as seasonal train-the-trainer workshops; provide additional needed support to school coordinators and develop district level best practices.

One committee member suggested using an app with a map of the walks and descriptions to help with the volunteer training.

Committee members thanked Ms. McCarthy for speaking on behalf of the Big Backyard and for the continued success of the program.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS:

Mona Roy - SEPAC liaison to School Committee: Ms. Roy thanked Dr. Hackett and Ms. Jay for attending the screening of "Including Samuel". We are excited to see a line item in the budget "inclusion". We are looking forward to having the Inclusion Consultant come in and take some of the ideas forward. Looking forward to seeing you at our next screening of "Intelligent Lives".

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Estabrook HomeWork Pilot - Final Report

As a reminder, Superintendent Hackett commented on the Goals that was jointly created with School Committee and to get a handle and make decisions on "unfinished business" and what happens with homework across the district, including Estabrook and the High School. The purpose for this report from Dr. Kavanaugh is to hear about the survey results and findings as well as hear feedback from Principal Rick Rogers. In the meantime, Superintendent Hackett is reviewing the old HomeWork Policy along with the new HomeWork Policy and will have continued conversations with Dr. Lyons, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development. Superintendent Hackett will provide School Committee with a recommendation as a pathway moving forward sometime in the near future.

Dr. Kavanaugh's report provides a final summary of key results and is organized into several parts:

- Background, Theory of Action & Implementation
- Monitoring: Key Questions & Data Collections
- Findings
- Next Steps

A full copy of Dr. Kavanaugh's report can be seen here: [1-22-19 SC Packet](#)

Members had further discussion and questions that Dr. Kavanaugh and Principal Rick Rodgers responded to.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Discussion of Sustainability of Lexington Public School Buildings Policy

Ms. Colburn reported that there has been a long standing effort on a part of the Selectmen to adopt a policy on sustainable buildings in Lexington. The Permanent Building Committee (PBC) put forth a draft, as did Sustainable Lexington. Jim Malloy, Town Manager took both drafts and attempted to combine them into a new draft, which was discussed at last weeks Permanent Building Committee meeting which both Ms. Colburn and Ms. Sawhney attended. Ms. Colburn noted that it became clear during the discussion there are two separate issues at play. One having to do with sustainability standards, that PBC would like to see in our buildings, and one having to do with process.

Ms. Colburn's understanding from the meeting is the purpose of a Sustainable Building Policy should focus on sustainability, health and efficiency and specific targets that would like to be achieved with our buildings. Another draft will be forthcoming focusing on the policy piece and saving the procedure parts for a later date. Ms. Colburn went on to discuss the next steps and had some questions on the process of the policy.

Committee members had further discussion on this topic.

COMMUNITY SPEAK:

Mona Roy - Ms. Roy commented on the Estabrook Homework pilot report and the drop in MCAS scores for students on IEP's. Ms. Roy suggested if this pilot was to be implemented in all of the elementary grades a formal process should be put in place on what happens to children on IEP's, do not want inconsistency. Suggests if this program is going to be implemented to have more consistent interventions and targeted homework.

Mark Sandeen-Chair of Sustainable Lexington: Mr. Sandeen had a few comments and suggestions from earlier discussion on the policy for Sustainable Lexington. Mr. Sandeen echoed the importance of earlier involvement. Suggesting any policy take a look at getting policy objectives in place well in advance of selecting the Design Team in order to have a team that is actually able to accomplish your goals at the end of the day. Mr. Sandeen also suggested to include in the policy what happens after you move into the building? Build into the policy things that allow us to manage the building effectively to achieve the outcomes we desire.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Hackett reported on the following:

Lexington Public Schools Announces District-wide Redistricting Plans:

On January 16, 2019, the Director of Planning and Assessment, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and the Superintendent met with AppGeo, the firm recently awarded the redistricting contract for the Lexington Public Schools. AppGeo led redistricting efforts in Phase 1 and they have done work for the Town of Lexington.

The Phase II redistricting effort will have a widespread impact on all families in Lexington, and it will require careful and thoughtful planning. Superintendent Hackett appointed Dr. Maureen Kavanaugh to be the project lead on the redistricting effort, and a redistricting timeline is under development, reflecting anticipated goals, actions, and communications. A Working Group has been established and includes the Director of Planning and Assessment (Project Lead), Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Transportation Coordinator, and the Superintendent of Schools. An Advisory Group will also be established and will include one parent or caregiver from each elementary and middle school (a total of eight representatives), one elementary and one middle school principal or assistant principal, and two School Committee liaisons (a total of 12 Advisory Group members). Dr. Kavanaugh will work directly with both groups, and Working Group members will participate in Advisory Group meetings as appropriate.

Ms. Colburn moved to appoint Ms. Lenihan as School Committee appointee to the Redistricting Advisory Group - Mr. Alessandrini seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

A timeline of the redistricting work can be seen here: [Superintendent's Report](#)

Creating A New Educational Vision for the Lexington Public Schools:

On January 9, 2019, approximately 80 administrators gathered together for a Joint Council meeting to create an educational vision for the Lexington Public Schools. In order to build a solid foundation for the work, a number of articles were read indicating the costs and benefits of strategic planning in education. The Lexington Public Schools Strategic Planning Timeline was discussed, and various strategic plans were analyzed from multi-paged documents to one-page plans. A Strategic Planning Repository was also built, where any educator can include documents or plans that have historical value and/or might inform our strategic planning efforts.

Administrators then engaged in a "Keep, Lose, Dream, Innovate" activity, which gave us an opportunity to reflect on what matters most to us, what practices we need to stop, what we can improve, and what innovative ideas we have yet to consider. By all accounts it was a highly productive day, thanks to the efforts of many.

Superintendent Hackett noted our strategic planning process is different from the rest because our teachers and students are at the heart of it.

CONSENT AGENDA:

ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS/GIFTS

Approval of Season's Four donation check to Lexington High School in the amount of \$2,400 (split \$1,440.00 for vocal music and \$960.00 for orchestra).

Ms. Lenihan moved to approve donation check to Lexington High School from Season's Four in the amount of \$2,400.00 - Ms. Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT APPROVAL

Payroll Period Dated January 18, 2019 (\$3,855,377.65)

Ms. Sawhney moved to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated January 18, 2019 in the amount of \$3,855,377.65 - Ms. Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 8, 2019

Mr. Alessandrini moved to approve School Committee minutes from January 8, 2019 - Ms. Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

NEW BUSINESS:

Vote School Committee member as "acting representatives" for Community Center Program Advisory Committee and Library Executive Trustees Committee.

Committee members agreed to wait on voting for a representative for the Community Center Advisory Committee until the new School Committee member's term begins in March.

Ms. Colburn moved to nominate Ms. Jay to be School Committee designee for appointment to the Library Executive Board Trustee Committee - Ms. Lenihan seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

Mr. Alessandrini commented that a liaison to the Munro center will also need to be voted. Mr. Alessandrini asked the committee members to recommend someone in the community that loves the arts to represent School Committee at the Munro Center and should be included on an upcoming agenda.

COMMUNITY SPEAK:

None

A motion was made to adjourn at 10:32 p.m. - so moved by Ms. Sawhney (Approved 5-0)