

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 20, 2018
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Call to Order and Welcome: 7:14 p.m.

Chair Eileen Jay welcomed and introduced committee members. Ms. Jay apologized for the late start to tonight's meeting due to the public forum at Cary Hall regarding the proposed changes in school start times.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Eileen Jay, Chairperson
Kate Colburn, Vice-Chairperson
Kathleen Lenihan, Clerk
Deepika Sawhney
Alessandro Alessandrini (7:51 pm)
Rosanna Jiang, Student Representative

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Dr. Julie Hackett, Superintendent
Peter Rowe, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
Dr. Christine Lyons, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Kathleen Lenihan: Attended Transgender Day of Remembrance. Ms. Lenihan expressed her thanks to Valerie Overton and LexPride for organizing the service that paid tribute to those who have lost their lives because of who they are.

Deepika Sawhney: Attended LLT 2018 (Lexington Learns Together) on Tuesday, November 6. Ms. Sawhney was very impressed by the participants as well as the presenters and was able to get a good look at what the Professional Development program in Lexington is like.

Ms. Sawhney reminded the community of the Thanksgiving Service being held at Hancock Church on Mass Ave and hosted LICA (Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association). The theme for this event is titled: *The Freedom to Pursue Common Good an Evening of Thanksgiving, Listening and Hope.*

Kate Colburn: Attended the MASC/MASS Joint Conference a few weeks ago along with other School Committee members. It is always a great experience to meet with other colleagues and town to hear the challenges they are facing.

Ms. Colburn expressed her thanks to the Veterans Day Committee for organizing the 100th anniversary celebration of Armistice Day this past Sunday and for paying a special tribute to the eight Lexington soldiers who died during WWI.

Eileen Jay: Echoed her appreciation for LLT 2018 (Lexington Learns Together).

Ms. Jay suggested members share with her one of their favorite sessions from the MASC/MASS Joint Conference for possible agenda item discussion.

Ms. Jay informed the community of the METCO Meeting in Boston on Tuesday, November 27th. A bus will be leaving from the Central Administration building at 4:45 pm

CONGRATULATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS:

Dr. Hackett attended the Rotary Luncheon in Celebration of Thanksgiving, in attendance with the Lexington and Burlington football players, coaches and marching band. It was a wonderful way to celebrate with the community and to celebrate a 50-year tradition before the football game that will be happening “in the cold” on Thanksgiving day. Dr. Hackett extended her well wishes and congratulations to all the players for their good sportsmanship.

Dr. Hackett attended her first Lexington Learns Together (LLT): An Inspirational Day Focused on Equity, Social and Emotional Learning, and Project-Based Learning.

Lexington Public School educators and administrators had an opportunity to attend sessions of their own choosing; sessions were clustered around the focus strands of: Equity, Social and emotional learning, and Project-based learning. Dr. Hackett co-presented “Lexington Listens: Let’s Talk About Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” with Lexington Education Association President, Avon Lewis. Dr. Lewis analyzed student demographic data from 2004-2018 to examine achievement gaps and under- and over-representation of students by race and gender in classes. In addition to co-presenting, Dr. Hackett attended two other sessions: “The British Call if a Shed-Yool” and the LHS Gender and Sexuality Alliance panel.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

2019-2020 School Calendar Recommendation:

Dr. Hackett thanked the School Committee for asking the administration team to seek further input before moving forward with any of the proposed calendar changes. Based on the significant amount of data and feedback regarding the proposed changes from our administrators and teachers, Dr. Hackett is suggesting to hold off on proposed school calendar changes for the upcoming school year. She also recommends doing a comprehensive review of the school calendar to address any outstanding questions and concerns, including those raised previously about religious holidays.

Kate Colburn moved to table any proposed changes to the school calendar for the 2019-2020 school year in order to conduct a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the Lexington Public Schools schools calendar - Seconded by Deepika Sawhney (Approved 4-0)

Proposal to Enclose the Town Pool Complex:

We continue to receive a number of inquiries regarding the possibility of enclosing or “putting a bubble” over the existing Town pool complex. There is interest from some community members in finding a way to accommodate swimmers who will be displaced when Minuteman High School demolishes the pool that the LHS Swim Team has used in the past.. While the idea of encapsulating the Town pool is creative and shows the community’s strong interest in finding a workable solution given our current pool situation, according to the Director of Public Facilities, Mr. Michael Cronin, it is simply not feasible. Mr. Cronin recently submitted a letter to Town Manager, James Malloy, and Dr. Hackett that highlights a number of obstacles. Due to the conditions of the facility and the safety and logistical hurdles, the cost to the town would be prohibitively expensive. Mr. Cronin reassures the community that they will find an alternate site for our Lexington High School swimmers once a decision has been made about a later start.

LCP and Hastings Elementary School Construction Updates

Special thanks to Michael Cronin, Director of Public Facilities, for providing me with the following information and updates. Phase One early site work on the Lexington Children’s Place building project at 20 Pelham Road was recently completed. This project is scheduled to be completed by August of 2019, so Lexington Children’s Place can begin the 2019-2020 school year at their new location.

Hastings Elementary School construction is underway. Walsh Brothers Construction is in the process of completing early site work, foundations, and structural steel. Concrete foundations are finishing this week and steel erection should be starting late next week.

Topping off ceremony at Hastings in early December. Nice way to congratulate the construction crew. A symbol of good luck and promise of the future.

Links are provided on the website to view cameras at construction sites.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Michelle Carter and Kara Johnson - Fiske Elementary teachers expressed their opinions on the “soft start” during the first week of school and the benefits it has for elementary teachers.

Avon Lewis - LEA President - Addressed change in later start time for LHS.

CONSENT AGENDA:

ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS/GIFTS:

1. Approval of donation for Math LexHack for Lexington High School in the amount of \$500.00

Kate Colburn moved to approve donation to Lexington High School for Math LexHack in the amount of \$500.00 - Deepika Sawhney seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT APPROVAL

1. Accounts Payable Period Ending October 26, 2018 (\$1,177,860.26)
2. Payroll Period Ending October 12, 2018 (\$1,087,252.86)

Kathleen Lenihan moved to approve the School Department's accounts payable warrant dated October 26, 2018 in the amount of \$1,177,860.26 - Deepika Sawhney seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

Deepika Sawhney moved to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated October 26, 2018 in the amount of \$3,840,432.34; Kate Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 23, 2018

Alessandro Alessandrini moved to approve School Committee minutes from October 23, 2018 - Kate Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

PRESENTATION:

Change in School Start Times for 2019-20

Dr. Hackett gave a brief recap on the history of the School Start Time Task Force and previously-considered options before reviewing Option #12: A New Approach:

- August 28, 2018 - School Committee adopts a Later School Start Resolution for Lexington High School
- August 28, 2018 - Consultant Richard Labrie hired to conduct a Transportation Efficiency Study
- Consultant's Recommendation
 - Elementary - 15 minutes later start
 - Middle - (a) no change; (b) start 10 minutes early
 - High School - 45 minute later start

Dr. Hackett reviewed Possible Benefits and Special Considerations with Option #12 and shared both community and staff feedback with School Committee.

Director of METCO Program, Ms. Barbara Hamilton, commented and expressed her appreciation for the concern of the METCO students. Ms. Hamilton assured people that the major part of her job is to advocate for the METCO program in behalf of the parents and the students. Ms. Hamilton believes there would be minimal impact to the high school students if there was a later start time. The only challenge she foresees would be for students who participate in after school activities. Ms. Hamilton's biggest concern is the elementary students getting home later in the evening (5:20 or later) which may impact their after school programs. We are still unsure of the rush hour traffic at this time and how it will impact their commute. Ms. Hamilton would like to look at eliminating the transfer of elementary students to the high school and instead head right to the highway from the elementary school. Ms. Hamilton adjusts transportation yearly based on enrollment for METCO students.

Committee members had further discussion on this topic. Some members had questions on how other communities that participate in METCO program handle after school programs/athletics? When did districts implement later start times after School Committee voted? There are many unresolved problems and complex concerns.

Dr. Hackett's recommendation to School Committee is to vote on December 4th either to implement late start or not and to decide when later start would be implemented.

Kate Colburn moved that on December 4, the vote would only include an option for Middle School that would reduce the length of the school day from 6 hours and 50 minutes to 6 hours and 40 minutes and that we not consider an earlier start time for Middle School - Kathleen Lenihan seconded the motion - (Approved 5-0)

NEW BUSINESS:

Superintendent/School Committee Goals

Dr. Hackett informed the community that the Goals document is a collaborative document between the Superintendent and School Committee.

As a reminder, according to state evaluation requirements, an educator's performance is measured against a possible four (4) standards, 41 indicators, and 21 elements. Superintendents are required to submit one measurable professional practice goal and one measurable student learning goal and at least two district goals developed collaboratively with school committee members.

Dr. Hackett reviewed the Goals:

- Community Outreach
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Lexington's Strategic Plan
- Promoting Student Learning , Engagement, and Well-Being in our Schools

Alessandro Alessandrini moved to approve the 2018-2019 collective goals of Lexington School Committee and superintendent of schools - Kate Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Vote on 2019-20 School Calendar - tabled

School Master Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Update:

Ms. Colburn gave a brief update on the School Master Planning Advisory Committee meeting that was held earlier in the day. Minutes for this meeting are in a separate document.

The next School Master Planning Advisory meeting will be held on December 14, 2018 at 8:30 am at the DPW Building.

***Kathleen Lenihan made a motion to adjourn; so moved by Kate Colburn at 10:19 p.m.
(Approved 5-0)***