

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, December 18, 2018**  
**Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room**  
**1625 Massachusetts Avenue**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Eileen Jay, Chairperson  
Kate Colburn, Vice-Chairperson  
Kathleen Lenihan, Clerk  
Deepika Sawhney  
Alessandro Alessandrini

**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

**NOT PRESENT:**

Rosanna Jiang, Student Rep

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

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**At 6:34 p.m. in open session, the Chair moved that the Committee vote to go into Executive session under exemption 3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Further, to adjourn only to go back into public session.**

**Roll Call Vote - Alessandro Alessandrini - AYE; Kathleen Lenihan - AYE; Deepika Sawhney - AYE; Kate Colburn - AYE; Eileen Jay - AYE**

**Return to open session at 7:11 p.m.**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Alessandro Alessandrini:** Attended the Community Center Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Alessandrini noted someone will have to replace him in the spring since he will no longer be on the School Committee. Mr. Alessandrini reported that later start time was discussed and the Community Center Advisory Committee members appreciated the 2020 start date because their programs will be affected. Mr. Alessandrini also reported that sometime in January a discussion will occur regarding the type of fields that will be built at the Minuteman High School.

**Kathleen Lenihan:** Attended the *Understanding our Differences* program at Harrington, along with other committee members. *Understanding Our Differences* is a disability awareness curriculum that originated in Newton in 1978 and has evolved over time to become a nationally recognized program that is utilized by many districts in MA and nationwide.

Two units, led by trained parent volunteers, were provided for 3rd and 4th grade students:

- **Physical Disabilities** in 3rd grade on **December 6th** from **9-11am** in the Harrington cafeteria
- **Learning Disabilities** in 4th grade on **December 13th** from **9-11am** in the Harrington cafeteria

Other units include: Autism, Intellectual Disability, Blindness / Low Vision, Deafness, and Asthma / Diabetes / Allergies / Epilepsy. We are hoping to expand the units offered at Harrington and hopefully across the district in the future.

The School Committee, Dr. Hackett and other LPS administrators also attended the Hastings “Topping Off” Ceremony on Thursday, December 6, 2018.

**Deepika Sawhney:** Ms. Sawhney commented that a lot has happened and the weeks are going by really quickly. As 2018 is coming to an end, she noted that it has been an amazing year.. Ms. Sawhney attended the Diamond chorus concert on December 10, 2018. Ms. Delgado and Ms. Chelnokova produced an amazing concert.

Ms. Sawhney echoed Ms. Lenihan’s praise about *Understanding our Differences*.

Ms. Sawhney extended her congratulations to the FDC (First Deck Challenge Teams) at the High School. The Battle of Lexington will be held the first weekend of January. Ms. Sawhney recommends parents to come and see how much robotics has progressed starting at the elementary level all the way up to the high school level.

**Kate Colburn:** Ms. Colburn echoed Ms. Lenihan’s sentiment on the Hastings Topping Off Ceremony.

On December 10, 2018, Ms. Colburn along with Mr. Alessandrini and Dr. Hackett met with the two Co-Presidents of the SEPAC, and Ms. Sugita and Ms. Slesser for their first quarterly meeting. The purpose of these quarterly meetings is to hear directly some of the issues that are being brought up amongst SEPAC parents and to help better communicate any misunderstandings so they can be dealt with directly and quickly, and to ensure that we fully understand what the issues are the parents are bringing forward.

On December 14, 2018 Ms. Colburn attended the Master Planning Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Colburn reported that the group is shifting its focus more toward the high school. Recent enrollment data at the elementary level have shown a bit more stability and flattening of elementary enrollment, although the group will continue to monitor the trends. With projections showing over 2,500 students at the high school over the next few years, planning

for the high school has the greatest urgency. The next Master Planning Advisory meeting will be held on Friday, January 4, 2019 and the topic of discussion will be the high school.

**Eileen Jay:** Ms. Jay echoed her sentiments about the Topping Off Ceremony at Hastings and the *Understanding our Differences* event at Hastings.

Ms. Jay gave a brief update on the Recreation Committee meetings she attended on October 17 and November 28. The Committee has had two public hearings on the Center Track project with a third public hearing to follow on December 19. Committee members had discussion around the 6 lane track vs. 8 lane track topic that had been raised at the public hearing. One School Committee member asked how communication was being handled between the Recreation Committee/Recreation Department and the Schools. Dr. Hackett informed them that Naomi Martin has been attending all of the meetings and has advocated for more lanes as well as artificial turf and has communicated the schools' needs. After each meeting Naomi relays the message to both Mr. Rowe and Dr. Hackett.

Ms. Colburn expressed concern about the Recreation Department building a school field and yet the Lexington School Committee does not have an official say on it. Ms. Colburn also noted that this is a public facility and a shared expense with the town. Ms. Jay stated that administration and upkeep of the facilities fall under the Recreation Department, but the decision making and voting rests with the Recreation Committee which is the town-appointed governing body. Ms. Jay suggested that if there is a statement or input from the school side or any concerns to share, they can be brought up at the Recreation Committee meeting on December 19th.

**CONGRATULATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS:**

Superintendent Hackett extended her congratulations to the students whom she conducted at an LHS orchestra concert on Friday, December 14th. Dr. Hackett was a guest conductor for the Lexington High School Chamber Orchestra.

Superintendent Hackett reported that the flag for the Topping off Ceremony at Hastings was flown on the USS Constitution.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS/GIFTS:**

NONE

**PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT APPROVAL:**

1. Payroll Period Ending December 7, 2018 (\$3,773,430.54)
2. Accounts Payable Period Ending December 14, 2018 (\$1,164,426.99)

***Deepika Sawhney moved to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated December 7, 2018 in the amount of \$3,773,430.54***

***Deepika Sawhney moved to approve the School Department's accounts payable warrant dated December 14, 2018 in the amount of \$1,164,426.99***

***Items 1 & 2 were seconded by Alessandro Alessandrini (Approved 5-0)***

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. November 20, 2018
2. November 27, 2018
3. December 4, 2018

***Kathleen Lenihan moved to approve School Committee minutes from November 20, 2018; November 27, 2018 and December 4, 2018 - Kate Colburn seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)***

**COMMUNITY SPEAK:**

Many community members expressed concern for the need of a swimming pool for the High School swim team. Families see this as a perfect chance for the School Committee to work with parents of the swim team and with the town to come up with a plan, both short term and long term, for finding a place where the kids can practice and compete. Some suggested including a pool in the high school plan when the time comes.

Ms. Sawhney suggested that the families file for a citizens petition with the Board of Selectmen for their concerns to be heard at Annual Town Meeting. The deadline to file is December 20, 2018. Another committee member suggested that Superintendent Hackett reach out to the Minuteman High School to discuss a possible partnership if they include a pool at their school sometime down the road.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Superintendent Hackett reported on the following:

**Administrative Searches Underway:**

The search is underway for a new Principal of Estabrook Elementary School, and we hope to recruit many qualified applicants to the position. We are currently in the process of selecting members of the Search Team, and we hope to name a new principal by the first week in February.

The Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations position has been posted, and we are in the process of recruiting qualified candidates. The hiring authority for the Assistant Superintendent rests with the School Committee.

***Eileen Jay moved to appoint Kate Colburn and Deepika Sawhney to serve on the preliminary search for the position of Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations - Alessandro Alessandrini seconded the motion. (Approved 5-0)***

**Eileen Jay moved to appoint Kathleen Lenihan to serve as School Committee representative on the search team for the Estabrook principal - Alessandro Alessandrini seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)**

### **Hastings Elementary School Value-Engineering**

Due to a significant concern with the quality of the soils below the school and road, there is a need to reduce the overall costs of the Hastings Elementary School construction project by \$400,000 to ensure that we stay within budget. The \$400,000 value engineering item list was derived from standard, non-programmatic items that were recommended by the architects and reviewed by the Director of Public Facilities, the Interim Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, and the Superintendent of Schools. The Director of Public Facilities rejected some of the architect's recommendations, appropriately identifying those items that are most important to schools. We agreed with the majority of the recommendations, nearly all of which were aesthetic in nature and will largely go unnoticed.

### **Redistricting Efforts Underway**

In response to our Request for Proposals, on November 27, 2018, the Lexington Public Schools Redistricting Team conducted interviews with two potential redistricting vendors: Applied Geographics, Inc. (AppGeo), a local vendor, and one out-of-state vendor. AppGeo worked with the Lexington Public Schools as recently as 2015. Superintendent Hackett noted that while the out-of-state vendor had interesting demographic data collection methods that were worthy of consideration, it was felt that AppGeo was a better fit for the Lexington community. AppGeo is a Boston-based company with nearly 30 years in the business and experience working in similar districts in Massachusetts. Superintendent Hackett recognizes that we are about to undertake a significant redistricting effort, and anticipate such a challenge to be easier to manage given AppGeo's reputation for facilitation skills and community outreach efforts. The total amount of the contract is \$40,032, and the redistricting effort commences now through June 30, 2019. Ms. Maureen Kavanaugh, Director of Planning & Assessment, is the project lead for our redistricting effort.

Kathleen Lenihan suggested to draft a charge for the Redistricting Committee sometime in February.

### **Lexington Later Start, 2020**

On December 4, 2018, the Lexington School Committee unanimously voted for a later school start to be implemented at the beginning of the school year in 2020. In the near future, Superintendent Hackett will finalize a project implementation timeline and send a communication to all Lexington Public Schools families, formally announcing the School Committee's decision to (1) shift the start times at Lexington High School to 45 minutes later; (2) shift the start times of all elementary schools to 15 minutes later; and (3) reduce the length of the middle school day by ten minutes, making it consistent with the six hour and 40 minute length of day for the high school. There are several recommendations in the report that

administration will need to address in the future. Recommendations can be found here: [Superintendent's Report](#)

## **PRESENTATION:**

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Our Call to Action - Feedback and Revisions**

Dr. Christine Lyons, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning and Dr. Maureen Kavanaugh reported on the Feedback for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Our Call to Action paper.

Members of the LPS Administrative Council presented a summary of the Call to Action at a Lexington School Committee meeting early in the fall. This was followed by an email message from the Superintendent to the community in the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. This message included a link to the paper, encouragement to provide feedback and a link to a Google form where community members could leave such feedback. The Call to Action document was also made available on the district website and through social media.

The Superintendent also sent out individual messages to a number of community groups, inviting them to review the paper and provide feedback, either through the Google form, email or in person. Superintendent Hackett also met in person with a number of these community groups to hear feedback on the work proposed. In addition to outreach through the Superintendent's office, school building leaders also encouraged staff and families through direct communications to review the Call to Action and provide feedback.

### **Community input highlights:**

- prioritization of equity in our schools and related issues
- more than one equity issue to tackle
- planned actions steps
- organization and formatting to improve flow and readability
- representing and addressing the needs of all students
- stakeholder involvement
- action steps
- suggested resources

### **Next steps:**

- iterative process
- revise Call to Action
- use feedback to inform and refine current efforts
- equity audit
- inform strategic plan
- continue to solicit and incorporate feedback
- measuring and reporting progress

One member questioned where the equity self-assessment questions that were asked came from and what were some examples. Dr. Christine Lyons reported that data came from an

Equity Audit Provider (MAEC) that Lexington is considering working with. The self-assessment questions were related to policy, curriculum assessment, and instruction. They provided a very broad range in scope and was able to give a thorough overview of all the areas that Lexington will be looking at.

School Committee members continued with a brief discussion on this topic.

**COMMUNITY SPEAK:**

Mona Roy informed the committee that the SEPAC responses for the DEI feedback were a combined effort. Ms. Roy is looking forward to hearing continued feedback.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Vote to appoint Dr. Christine Lyons as the representative to the EDCO Board of Directors**

*Kate Colburn moved to appoint Dr. Christine Lyons as the representative to the EDCO Board of Directors - Deepika Sawhney seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)*

- 2. FY19 First Quarter Report**

Mr. Peter Rowe, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business, provided a brief overview of the FY19 First Quarter Report.

The School Department currently projects a surplus of \$187,391 from the approved Fiscal Year 2019 Budget. This represents a surplus of approximately 0.17% of the total School Department budget. \$151,111 of the total surplus is projected from the Salary & Wages portion of the budget while \$36,280 is resulting from the expense portion of the budget.

A full copy of this report can be found here: [School Committee packet 12-18-18](#)

*Alessandro Alessandrini moved that the School Committee approve the transfers outlined in Table 7 of the Fiscal Year 2019 First Quarter Financial Report, per School Committee Policy DBJ; Kathleen Lenihan seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Ratification of LEA Contract**

Superintendent Hackett commented on the ratification of the LEA Contract. After many meetings and a long process that started prior to Dr. Hackett's start date, an agreement has been made with the Lexington Education Association (LEA). Superintendent Hackett acknowledged Avon Lewis, the LEA President, who worked very hard on the contract along with Ed Dube and the rest of the negotiating team.

***Alessandro Alessandrini moved to accept the terms and conditions stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement signed on November 21, 2018 and to ratify the first year contract for 2018-2019 and a three year contract for 2019-2022 between the Lexington Education Association and the Lexington School Committee; Deepika Sawhney seconded the motion (Approved 5-0)***

**COMMUNITY SPEAK:**

NONE

***Motion to adjourn; so moved by Kate Colburn at 9:42 p.m. (Approved 5-0)***