

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 20, 2016
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

All agenda items and the order of items are approximate and subject to change.

7:00 p.m. Call to Order and Welcome (5 minutes):

Public Comment – Written comments to be presented to the School Committee, oral presentations not to exceed three minutes.

7:05 p.m. Superintendent Announcements:

7:15 p.m. School Committee Member Announcements:

7:25 p.m. Consent Agenda (5 Minutes)

1. Vote to Approve and Not Release Executive Session Minutes of April 26, 2016
2. Vote to Approve and Not Release Executive Session Minutes of June 16, 2016
3. Vote to Approve and Not Release Executive Session Minutes of June 21, 2016
4. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of September 6, 2016
5. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of September 7, 2016

7:30 p.m. Agenda:

1. Summer Curriculum Work and Professional Learning Update (15 minutes)
2. Draft Superintendent Goals 2016 – 2017 (20 minutes)
3. Transportation Update (15 minutes)
4. Update on Training for School Safety (15 minutes)
5. Policy Update (10 Minutes)

8:45 p.m. Adjourn:

Policy AD: Mission/Vision of the Lexington Public Schools

The Lexington Public Schools serve to inspire and empower every student to become a lifelong learner prepared to be an active and resilient citizen who will lead a healthy and productive life. Educators, staff, parents, guardians and community members will honor diversity and work together to provide all students with an education that ensures academic excellence in a culture of caring and respectful relationships.

The next scheduled meeting of the School Committee is as follows:

- Tuesday, October 4, 2016 – 7:00 p.m., Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

TODAY'S DATE: 9/16/16

REQUESTED MEETING DATE: 9/20/16

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Summer Curriculum Work and Professional Learning Update

PRESENTER: Kelly Chase and Caitlin Ahern

SUMMARY: Assistant Superintendent Kelly Chase and Coordinator of Professional Learning and Special Projects will provide an update on summer curriculum work and professional learning.

WHAT ACTION (IF ANY) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?

- No action requested, this is a short update or a presentation of information.
- Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required.
- Request formal action with a vote on a specific item.

If formal action is requested, please check one:

This item is being presented

- for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting
or
- with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested:

Include a suggested motion or let _____ know if you need assistance preparing a motion.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

FOLLOW-UP:

AMOUNT OF TIME REQUESTED FOR THE AGENDA ITEM:

15 minutes

ATTACHMENTS: Copy of MTA article written by LHS teachers Zachary Del Nero and Joshua Olivier-Mason

Lexington Learns Together: Rewriting the PD script

By Zachary Del Nero
and Joshua Olivier-Mason

Educators in the Lexington Public Schools experienced a professional development reboot in 2014 when the district's Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning reimagined the landscape for such programs.

The result was a full day of workshops in fall 2015 run by administrators, faculty and staff in a variety of fields. Aptly named Lexington Learns Together, the event seems destined to become a tradition in the district.

Our goal in this article is twofold: describing our experiences as both teachers and students during Lexington Learns Together and promoting professional development that comes from *within* a district. This model of district or schoolwide PD honors the expertise of faculty and staff — and pays dividends well beyond the day itself.

Fueled by the philosophy of educators teaching educators, the workshop model is authentic, invigorating and good for school culture and morale. The enthusiastic Twitter feed generated from that day (#lexingtonlearns15) includes the voices of educators from throughout the district: administrators, general and special education teachers, liaisons, counselors and specialists.

'Session A is underway!'

While waiting outside the doorway to our classroom on a bright morning in October, we overheard snippets of conversations, such as "I had yoga for my first session" and "Do you know where 'Positive Psych' is?"

Clutching their schedules, the students — our fellow educators, actually, but students this day — talked excitedly, confirming that they had found the right room. After the bell rang and the hallway crowd thinned out, we turned to the eager faces and began the last session before lunch: "Podcasting in the Humanities Classroom."

Fueled by the philosophy of educators teaching educators, the workshop model is authentic, invigorating and good for school culture and morale.

Every fall, this scene plays out on university campuses all over the country. It is now a familiar one for those working in the Lexington Public Schools.

The day consisted of three 75-minute sessions. Educators had submitted proposals to offer workshops for a range of courses that varied widely, from "Art and Archetype" to "A Public School's Journey with Yoga" and "Photoshop Basics." Participants signed up for sessions based on interest and availability. With 147 sessions offered, the difficulty was in deciding what *not* to take.

A two-way learning experience

We co-taught the "Podcasting in the Humanities Classroom" session, which was a valuable experience for many reasons. It was energizing to teach together and to work with teachers outside the department. Lexington Learns Together created bonds between various faculty members and administrators, making cross-disciplinary collaboration one of the day's most noteworthy aspects.

Giving participants the opportunity to *make* something was a crucial ingredient in the success of many of the workshops. As facilitators, we didn't simply tell people about podcasting.

Participants produced a multitrack audio file. After playing clips from several student models, we ran a quick tutorial on the software — the same software we provide for our sophomores. Participants found a poem online to read aloud and record. We then helped them find music to complement their recording, import it into GarageBand, and fade it into the background.

During this stage, everyone in the room was

working together and sharing his or her progress. Ultimately, the day inspired us to refine our own teaching based on real-time feedback from fellow educators.

In traditional PD settings, teachers can be the most resistant students; a common refrain runs along these lines: "We've seen it all before." Part of the problem is the term itself — professional development. The phrase sounds like something out of a management textbook.

Professional development, as term and concept, was popularized in the mid to late 20th century, and the model for it hasn't changed much since then. As Tim Walker described the problem in *NEA Today*, "For many classroom teachers, the words summon bad memories: the valuable instruction time that was wasted listening to a so-called 'expert' who hasn't spent a day in their classrooms."

As educators, we are aware of the importance of active learning. Much current research recommends project-based approaches, collaboration and student-centered classrooms. Why do these ideas go out the window when it's time to schedule professional development?

Teachers are encouraged to help students pursue their own lines of inquiry. Why should we exclude ourselves from that experience?

The Lexington Learns Together model offers other school districts a chance to create PD that doesn't feel like PD. Lexington Learns Together is easily exportable. Your experts are your educators. By empowering them to organize sessions specific to the needs and interests of their district, you provide a professional learning experience uniquely tailored to your audience.

It's OK to have fun

Having finished our podcasting workshop, we took part in the final session of the day — "Art and Archetype," in which K-12 educators learned how to use supplementary visual sources to define character.

Lexington Learns Together should be a model for PD

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archetypes in myths and legends. As the session wrapped up, there was little doubt that those in the room could implement and adapt the methodologies highlighted by the instructor.

Anyone walking into the classroom halfway through would have seen a group of adults engaged in a vibrant, authentic conversation about what characters in a painting might do later that evening. But what was so striking was that we were not discussing the painting solely in terms of tomorrow's lesson plan or learning objective. We were talking about this painting because it was fun. Educators don't have to think in the language of learning objectives and Common Core all day long.

Lexington Learns Together is *fun* — and that's OK. Teachers who have fun in the PD classroom are more likely to translate what they've learned to their own classrooms.

Lexington Learns Together was first presented to us as innovative, and it is. But it shouldn't be. It should be the norm. When professional development works, we develop more than just our professional selves.

Del Nero and Olivier-Mason are English teachers at Lexington High School.

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

TODAY'S DATE: September 15, 2016

REQUESTED MEETING DATE: September 20, 2016

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Transportation Update

PRESENTER:

Ian Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

SUMMARY:

The School Department's Transportation program continues to grow annually and has reached another record level this year. At this time, there are 3,680 completed registrations. This is distributed over 35 buses and 85 routes. This is an increase of 253 riders (+7.4%), 4 buses, and 12 routes over 2015-16 levels.

The bus registration process for the 2016-17 school year opened April 1, 2016. Payments were due on August 1, 2016. The following registrations have been processed as of:

August 1, 2016: 302 registrations
August 15, 2016: 228 registrations
August 22, 2016: 170 registrations

At this time there is no waiting list for the regular transportation program. However, there is currently a wait list of 43 students for after-school program transportation. The Department is currently focusing on addressing the timeliness of existing routes and balancing registered riders across existing routes. This includes overcrowded routes at Clarke, Diamond, and the High School. Increased levels of traffic, coupled with close starting/ending times across levels in schools, has created challenges in ensuring timely service for all schools.

Enrollment for the after-school program has continued to grow year over year. Each elementary school has historically identified one bus to transport students from school to after-school programs identified in Lexington. This has required that a seat for one student be held on two different buses typically. Increased participation rates and complex schedule structures have made it difficult to accommodate all enrollments on one bus. It has also created challenges in ensuring that students board the correct bus in the afternoon. Transportation is currently conducting a detailed analysis of existing after-school registrations and current waitlist registrations to determine if they can be accommodated.

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SUGGESTED MOTION:

FOLLOW-UP:

AMOUNT OF TIME REQUESTED FOR THE AGENDA ITEM: 15 minutes

ATTACHMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

TODAY'S DATE:

September 16, 2016

REQUESTED MEETING DATE:

September 20, 2016

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Policy Subcommittee Update

PRESENTER:

School Committee Policy Subcommittee

SUMMARY:

The Policy Subcommittee will present a brief update on the buffer zone policy process.

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SUGGESTED MOTION:

FOLLOW-UP:

AMOUNT OF TIME REQUESTED FOR THE AGENDA ITEM: 10 Minutes

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft Buffer Zone Policy

Attendance Areas: Buffer Zone Policy

Lexington Public Schools has historically maintained specific school attendance areas for each of its elementary and middle schools. However, when circumstances related to rapidly increasing student enrollment directly affect the delivery of equitable educational opportunities, alternative attendance area strategies need to be considered. *Buffer zones* and *redistricting* are attendance area tools that can be used to relieve overcrowding, address program needs, promote the balanced and efficient use of school facilities and resources, and ensure educational quality for all students.

A buffer zone is defined as a specific geographic area where students residing at an individual address within that zone are assigned to one of multiple schools designated for that attendance area. All other attendance areas are predetermined and students living within those boundaries are assigned to one specific school based on the student's address. Buffer zones shall be delineated on clearly drawn attendance area maps that are approved by the School Committee following public hearings. Once approved, these attendance area maps shall be made available in the Superintendent's office and on the Lexington Public School website. Any changes to buffer zones require School Committee approval.

It should be noted that in ALL cases, each student must have a fully completed school registration in order to be assigned and enrolled at a school. Newly registered Grade K-12 students residing in a buffer zone shall not have a school assignment until registration is complete and the Superintendent/designee has determined the student's school placement. Once a student is assigned to a school, that school shall be his/her school as long as s/he continues to reside at that address. Subsequent siblings shall be assigned to the same school. Exceptions to school placement or sibling assignment may be made based on a student's individual education plan.

Buffer zones are a necessary strategy to manage student enrollment and programmatic parity. This tool provides the Superintendent/designee greater flexibility to assign students where space and resources afford the most equitable education for all students. While it may be impractical to reconcile each and every student assignment, equity shall be achieved by considering the following factors:

- Available enrollment data
- Disparities in class size between schools and/or a condition of classroom overcrowding
- Once a student is assigned to an elementary school, all siblings will attend the same elementary school
- Functional and operational capacity of school core space (cafeteria, gymnasium, bathrooms, hallway and stairway spaces)
- Safe and reasonable school bus transportation and pedestrian patterns
- Any situation in which the Superintendent/designee deems to be an extenuating circumstance
- Family preference will be considered but it is not guaranteed.

CROSS REF: JC – Attendance Areas

JCA – Assignment of Students to Schools

JCAA – Redistricting

JCAC – Student Transfer Policy

JFAB – Policy on Non-Resident Students

JFABC – Admission of Transfer Students

JFBB – School Choice