

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 11, 2018
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

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

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

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

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

The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Welcome:

Chairperson Eileen Jay introduced committee members and gave a brief recap of the new agenda structure.

9/11 Moment of Silence:

A moment of silence was held for those lives that were lost on September 11, 2001 and recognized those who valiantly saved lives on that fateful day.

PRESENTATION:

Enrollment Trends and Updates

Dr. Maureen Kavanaugh, Director of Planning and Assessment, gave a brief update on enrollment, including current enrollment (as of 9/1/18) and progress towards anticipated October 1 projections. Dr. Kavanaugh informed members that this would be the first of a series of updates that will be provided throughout the year.

Current FY19 Registration Count vs. Projections

Elementary (K-5):

- FY19: 3200 (October 1 projection) – 3065 (current count) = +115 to reach projected
- In previous years, between September and October, the enrollment count going into the new school year increased by +7 (FY18) and +21 (FY17)
- Over the last three years enrollment continued to increase after October 1

Middle (6-8):

- FY19: 1856 (October 1 projection) – 1838 (current count) = +18 to reach projected
- In previous years, between September and October, the enrollment count going into the new school year changed by -3 (FY18) and 0 (FY17)

High School (9-12):

- FY19: 2271 (October 1 projection) – 2304 (current count) + 33 over projection
- In previous years, between September and October, the enrollment count going into the new school year changed by -2 (FY18) and -12 (FY17).

One member expressed relief to see lower enrollment levels at some of the elementary levels. A member asked if housing projection was factored into the model and whether that might contribute to over-predicting. The greatest influx is at middle school and high school. Another member had questions regarding flexible assignment, the process for new families coming into Lexington and how flexible assignment would work for them. Dr. Hackett reiterated some of the challenges with flexible assignment, such as bus routes and the desire to assign students to their geo-coded areas whenever possible. Sometime in the near future, the district could consider a policy that outlines timelines for notification of school assignments in order to relieve pressure for those families that have been flexibly assigned, for example, sending notification by the second week in August.

Consent Agenda:**PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT APPROVAL**

- Accounts Payable Period Ending August 24, 2018 (\$419,885.38)
- Accounts Payable Period Ending September 14, 2018 (\$567,066.69)

A motion was made to approve the School Department's accounts payable warrant dated August 24, 2018 and September 14, 2018 – Seconded (5-0)

- Payroll Period Ending August 31, 2018 (\$665,527.51)

A motion was made to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated August 31, 2018 – Seconded (5-0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 26, 2018
- March 28, 2018
- April 9, 2018
- April 11, 2018
- April 24, 2018
- August 28, 2018

A motion was made to approve School Committee Minutes from March 26, 2018, March 28, 2018, April 9, 2018, April 11, 2018, April 24, 2018, and, August 28, 2018 – Seconded (5-0)

School Committee Announcements:

Alessandro Alessandrini: Mr. Alessandrini attended a Community Center Advisory Committee Meeting. One topic of discussion was the use of property at Minuteman Technical High School. Minuteman may be waiting to receive proposals from various communities.

Mr. Alessandrini will be attending the Recreation Committee Meeting on Thursday, September 13 to discuss the Center Track & Field Project.

Kathleen Lenihan: On Wednesday, September 12, the Lexington Coalition will be hosting a welcoming coffee at 9:30 am at the Community Center.

On Wednesday, October 17 from 7-9 pm at Cary Hall, there will be a presentation and Q&A discussion with Nicholas Chadi, M.D. on “What you need to know about Vaping & E-Cigarettes” This event is free and open to the public.

Deepika Sawhney: Ms. Sawhney asked to take a moment to recognize crossing guard, Sally. Sally is the crossing guard at the intersection of Adams, Hathaway, and East Streets. This is a very busy intersection. Wanted to recognize how amazing she is. In very hot weather, very cold weather, she keeps the kids safe as the crossing guard and she bookends the kids days with a smile. Extend recognition to all the crossing guards.

Kate Colburn: Ms. Colburn is excited about the first School Master Planning Advisory Committee meeting on Friday, September 14. This will be the first meeting to refresh the plan and update it to reflect the new realities we are facing with enrollment and capacity in our system. Thankful for the members of the committee who have volunteered to serve.

Rosanna Jiang: Mary Yardley is hosting a Sustainability Fair at Lexington High School on September 29. “Tools for Thriving in a Changing Climate”

Eileen Jay: On behalf of the School Committee, we would like to congratulate and welcome the appointment of our new Town Manager, Jim Malloy, who will begin on October 5th. Ms. Jay expressed thanks to Kelly Axtell who has stepped in as the acting Town Manager since Mr. Valente’s retirement.

Also on behalf of the School Committee, we send condolences to former School Committee member Margaret Coppe whose son recently passed away.

Community Speak:

None

Superintendent’s Report:

Dr. Hackett reviewed the following written report:

1. **A New Timeline for the Distribution of the School Committee Agenda and Supporting Materials**
 - Wednesday – those who are making a presentation to the School Committee will be asked to submit materials for the packet by no later than the Wednesday prior to the School Committee meeting
 - Thursday – the School Committee agenda will be sent to the Town Clerk’s office and posted
 - Friday – School Committee agenda and supporting materials will be sent to Committee members
 - Monday – School Committee agenda and supporting materials will be posted on the Lexington Public Schools website and on Constant Contact
2. **Make Way for High-Quality ESP-PD**
 - In the upcoming school year, Professional Learning will be focused on three educator-identified themes that we fondly refer to as “E-S-P-PD,” which stands for (1) equity; (2) Social and Emotional Learning; and (3) Project-Based Learning -- Professional Development. On November 6, 2018, we will convene for our annual Lexington Learns Together (LLT) annual professional development day. More than 150 sessions will be offered, focusing on the three E-S-P strands.
3. **LexPride’s Open to All Campaign**
 - Earlier this summer, LexPride contacted various local organizations in an effort to build awareness for the nationwide “Open to All Campaign.” Dr. Hackett pledge to participate in all of LexPride’s local “Open to All” efforts. The LexPride campaign aligns with the School Committee’s policy of nondiscrimination that extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business.

New Business:

LexPride’s Open to All Campaign

A motion was made to go on record in strong support of LexPride’s “Open to All” local campaign, authorizing the Superintendent of Schools to make a pledge to serve all in our school system equally and without discrimination; to display the “Open to All” graphic at central office and/or on the website; and to willingly make a commitment by the Superintendent-School Committee team to participate in anti-bias or diversity training within one year. – Seconded (5-0)

Unfinished Business:

1. Data from Estabrook Pilot

Eileen Jay gave a brief update on the history of the Estabrook Elementary School Homework Pilot. The 2017-18 school year was the second year of the pilot. Further discussion was had regarding what kind of data and feedback was available on the experience of the students, families, and educators. There were some questions regarding data on the transition of middle school students who participated in the first year of the pilot. One member suggested having a “no written homework policy” at all of the elementary levels. Members are interested in seeing more data and feedback at grade levels, a break down of practices and teacher responses from

different grade levels, as well as parent data on after school tutoring and dyslexia data. Members were also interested in hearing about MCAS results for students who participated in the pilot.

Community Speak:

Valerie Overton – 23 Emerson Gardens; Ms. Overton expressed her appreciation to the Superintendent and School Committee for the “Open to All” endorsement. Noted that LGBTQ students are concerned and having a lot of anxiety about the upcoming November 6th No on 3 campaign. Suggested School Committee write a letter of support for the LGBTQ community stating support for all students.

Marie-Tristan Rago - 43 Forest Street – Announced on March 23 there will be an event for the French speaking community.

2. Dyslexia Task Force Update

Ellen Sugita, Director of Special Education, gave a brief update on the Dyslexia Task Force and the early screenings that have recently been provided. In May of 2018, 375 incoming kindergartners were screened for possible reading disabilities. The assessment used was the Pre-K level of the Predictive Assessment of Reading (PAR), which is a researched-based and normed assessment. The PAR is especially effective because it contains a rapid-naming subtest and can predict performance farther into the future than other screening tools.

On September 7, 2018, PAR K-3 evaluation kits will be passed out to elementary buildings. These kits will be used to screen students who either moved in over the summer or missed the Pre-K screening in May 2018. These kits will also be used for ongoing evaluation of students up through Grade 3.

One member asked what the process is once a student has been identified with dyslexia. Ms. Sugita addressed this question.

3. LHS Science Labs Space – Discussion of Next Steps

Eileen Jay led the discussion on the LHS Science Labs. Dr. Hackett reviewed the timeline and analysis from the PowerPoint presentation given at the Summit in June. With a large current 9th grade class and even larger incoming 9th grade next year, there will be severe shortage of science classrooms. The most important concern is that the timeline is extremely short.

- 2019-2020 - need space for 2 additional sections of biology above capacity
- 2020-2021 – 3 additional extra sections of biology, plus 2 additional of chemistry above capacity
- 2021-2022 – need space for 2 additional sections of chemistry and 1 additional physics above capacity
- 2022-2023 – need space for 1 additional section of earth science, 3 additional sections of biology, 1 additional section of chemistry and 3 additional sections of physics above capacity

Dr. Hackett has spoken with Kelly Axtell, Acting Town Manager, and Michael Cronin, Director of Facilities. Both indicated we are on track with this project. Dr. Hackett went on to review the timeline for “Option 1” funding at Special Town Meeting this fall.

Dr. Christine Lyons reported that capacity of the high school is over used and over scheduled. By 2023, depending on which of the four science courses we are discussing, there will be 5-18 class periods per week that we will not have space for. Based on thorough review by the LPS administration and facilities department, it seems that more space is the only option at this point. A task force will be formed to study multiple issues related to science at LHS, including the additional impacts the space issue is causing, the nature of the scheduling and planning of AP classes for the high school, and the effect on graduation requirements. These are complex issues, but space is the most immediate and pressing need.

One member asked if there was a suggested source of funding for this project.

Community Speak

Mona Roy- Bertwell Rd. – liaison from SEPAC and SC – acknowledges the work that Ellen Sugita and the team did for the dyslexia work. Between Ms. Sugita, Mr. Alessandrini, and the work of the Dyslexia Task Force, something positive is happening.

Valerie Overton – Strategically focused homework policy currently at Estabrook has also been shown through quite a lot of research to close achievement gaps, contributing to your equity strand.

Motion was made to adjourn and seconded at 9:30 p.m.