

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 25, 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

Not Present

Rosanna Jiang, Student Representative

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Dr. Julie Hackett, Superintendent
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 7:01 p.m.

Call to Order and Welcome:

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

PRESENTATION:

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION: OUR CALL TO ACTION

Dr. Julie Hackett gave a brief history of tonight's presentation prior to introducing the Administrative team. The written report, *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Our Call to Action*, prepared by Dr. Hackett and LPS Administrators, was presented and discussed.

- Issue of disproportionate suspension/disparities - the way we are treating students of color or students with special needs related to discipline was a community concern in the past year.
- How do we work together to address the challenges?
- Administrators expressed interest in discussing and focusing on the topic of equity and inclusion during their retreat in August with the Superintendent.
- The goal is to work together, figure out how to better support children, and to rebuild trust with the community.
- The paper is structured to reflect community concerns, and it is a draft that will evolve over time. The document reflects the community's values and interests, and Dr. Hackett welcomed community input and feedback.
- The position paper is organized into five sections:
 - Introduction
 - Research - What do experts say about the problem?

- LPS Data Analysis
- Our History with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Conclusions and Our Proposed Call to Action

Proposed Call to Action

Equity Audit: This involves bringing in an outside group to review current school district and classroom based practices with a focus on:

- Degree to which schools and district are equitable
 - academic placement
 - tracking groupings
 - student leadership
 - recognition
 - instructional strategies

- Degree to which Lexington Public School classrooms are equitable:
 - school policies
 - school organization/administration
 - school climate
 - assessment, placement
 - professional learning

- Factors related to teacher behavior and persistence
 - instructional interventions
 - curriculum interventions
 - classroom management interventions
 - personal interventions

Discipline Data Review

- Review and analyze discipline procedures within buildings and throughout the system
- Review alignment of recording practices for discipline systemically
- Analysis of common discipline review data
 - include monthly review of school suspensions (context)

Professional Learning Development

- To increase capacity of district to provide an equitable educational experience to all students
- Supporting each lever of change
- Include School Committee, School Resource Officer, Community Members in active bystander training. Increase communication and increase collaboration around making Lexington a more equitable school system

Break for Community Speaks:

Gresh Lattimore, CAPT USNR - 5 Jackson Court - spoke on behalf of Lexington Veterans Association (LVA). The Veterans Association would like to establish an annual means of honoring LHS seniors volunteering for military service, especially those who enlist. Those selected to attend the military academics or receive ROTC scholarships are usually accorded specific presentations by military officers. Lexington Veterans Association is requesting a meeting to include the Andrew Stephens, principal at

Lexington high school, a representative from the Guidance Department, the football coach and any other interested faculty and administration to discuss this issue.

Mona Roy - Burtwell Road - Thanked Dr. Hackett and the Administration team for tonight's presentation. Really appreciate everyone's efforts in addressing this very difficult subject. Mona expressed some concern on data and how incidences are being reported. She would like for parents to have a safe way to report concerns without fear of identification.

Mabel Amar - Would like to see a more diverse staff in the school system.

Valerie Overton - she/her LexPride, 25 Emerson Gardens - Commended Dr. Hackett for her leadership in making this equity work happen. Ms. Overton suggested making a decision either to focus the work specifically on discipline disparities or to expand the focus to broader issues of equity and inclusion.

Sean Osborn - 822 Mass Ave - Expressed his appreciation for a comprehensive presentation. He then expressed concern over the local data, indicating he would like to know what we can do for this year's class to make sure the disparities are addressed for the students who are currently in high school. He raised a question related to how the school system ensures that the students and their caretakers understand how to properly report incidences and that the individuals to whom they report to know how to properly respond.

Return to Discussion of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Our Proposed Call to Action:

School Committee members thanked Dr. Hackett and administrators for their dedication, honesty and the hard work that went into this paper. Further discussion and comments were made around data on disparities. Members agree there are other factors that can lead to equity-related disparities, for example, achievement gaps, harassment issues, particularly LGBTQ students, but also disparities between male and female and low income families. Members of the School Committee expressed interest in seeing if there is a way to collect data on all aspects, to help draw connections and figure out root causes of all inequities, not just discipline.

Dr. Hackett provided the next steps moving forward, including a communication being sent out to anticipated reviewers, as well as entire school staff, encouraging their participation. She indicated that there is a structure and mechanism in place for feedback. The formation of the Community Input Team on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will happen in November. She noted that while the paper was a lot of work that required many hours, the real work starts now.

CONSENT AGENDA:

ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS/GIFTS:

- Approval of Stop & Shop A+ Rewards donation to Lexington High School in the amount of \$1,088.56

A motion was made to approve Stop & Shop A+ Rewards donation to Lexington High School in the amount of \$1,088.56 - seconded (5-0)

PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT APPROVAL

- Payroll Period Ending September 14, 2018 (\$3,774,577.33)

A motion was made to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated September 14, 2018 in the amount of \$3,774,577.33 - seconded (5-0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 11, 2018

A motion was made to approve School Committee Minutes from September 11, 2018. - seconded (5-0)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Deepika Sawhney: None

Kate Colburn: September 14th was the first meeting for School Master Planning Advisory Committee (SMPAC). She indicated that they had an excellent discussion of what the group hoped to accomplish during this effort. She noted that there are a few initial items that were agreed upon (1) agreed that we will pursue a 10 year plan rather than a 5 year plan; (2) agreed flexibility is going to be the key and that we will try to plan on a scenario level; (3) the need to understand the core causes to our enrollment shifts; and (4) agreed the Enrollment Advisory Group would begin its work again. She noted that next meeting is October 12th and is open to the public.

Ms. Colburn attended the SHAC Meeting on September 17th with Ms. Sawhney. She indicated that it was a very informative and interesting presentation by Jason Wheeler, Consultant with Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ youth.

On Wednesday, October 10th, SHAC is sponsoring a presentation at the Community Center from the organization, Minding Your Mind. The purpose of the presentation is to provide parents and community members an opportunity to hear the same presentations given to Juniors in their health classes, followed up with a "Q & A" by trained health clinicians.

Alessandro Alessandrini: Mr. Alessandrini attended a Special Education Parent Advisory meeting (SEPAC) with Ms. Colburn. He noted that they met with the new president and discussed what was coming on the school side. Parents expressed interest in finding a way to report/describe situations anonymously.

Kathleen Lenihan: The Coalition is hosting a welcome coffee on Wednesday, October 3th at 9:30 at the Community Center. The topic of discussion is about the schools, so the public is encouraged to attend.

Eileen Jay: none

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Hackett addressed the following topics in a written report:

1. **My Entry Plan: A Focus on Equity**

- Entry plans are communication tools designed to help leaders listen to stakeholders, build relationships, develop goals, and ensure a smooth transition. A superintendent new to a school system may use a variety of data collection methods, such as document analysis, interviews, and focus groups to learn more about their school system. It is customary for leaders of organizations to report on their “First 100 Days” in a new job, a valuable way to let the community know that as their leader, you are listening.
- “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Our Call to Action” is more than a position paper, it is an effort to reflect back to the community what I have learned through my entry and to align these new understandings with a clearly articulated course of action
- While the position paper on equity is not the typical format one would expect to see in an entry plan, it is my hope that you will find it to be a purposeful document reflecting the values of our school community, and containing future goals and actions

2. Safety and Security Measures in the Lexington Public Schools

- On September 6, 2018, I met with Police Chief Corr, Fire Chief Wilson, and the Director of Public Facilities to review safety and security in the Lexington Public Schools. Although one meeting per year is required under the law (M.G.L., Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000), this was only one of many meetings to collaborate with our first responders
- Consistent implementation of school safety protocols is a priority. As we have reviewed current safety measures in place, educators and first responders have expressed concerns about the inconsistent implementation of safety drills in the past.
- As a first step to ensuring that all schools in the district have the same level of familiarity with safety protocols, we are conducting a pilot at Diamond Middle School at the request of the administration and members of the Crisis Response Team. On September 27th, students at Diamond will practice a dangerous intruder drill using the ALICE protocol.
- The practice on September 27th will be brief, and clear language will be used to indicate to everyone in the building that there is no danger.
- Following the practice of the safety protocol, Principal Turner will email families with a review.

3. Groundbreaking and Dedication Ceremonies in the Lexington Public Schools

- On Friday, September 28, 2018 at 3:30 p.m, we will extend our thanks and appreciation to the community at the Lexington Children’s Place groundbreaking ceremony. This memorable event will begin at the Lexington Community Center, followed by a visit to the Pelham property where we will “break ground” together.
- The Jonas E. Clarke Middle School Dedication Ceremony will be held on October 9, 2018 at 3:30 p.m.
- The Diamond Middle School Dedication Ceremony will be held on October 23, 2018 at 3:30 p.m.

- Lexington Public Schools will be hosting the three events in conjunction with the support of the Director of Public Facilities, and in conjunction with the Lexington School Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and the Town Manager

NEW BUSINESS:

FY20 Budget Timeline:

Peter Rowe, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, reported on the Budget Guidelines for School Committee to review and approve. These guidelines provide the Administration with the framework to develop the Fiscal Year 2019-20 budget.

Peter reviewed the FY20 proposed budget calendar for School Committee members

LHS NEASC Self Reflection Report:

Dr. Andrew Stephens gave a brief background and update on the NEASC Self Study DRAFT Report for Lexington High School. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Public Schools requires member schools to demonstrate alignment with the Standards for Accreditation. The revised Standards for Accreditation, effective for all schools in 2020, are streamlined into five core Standards intended to promote an effective learning organization with the capacity to meet the needs of all students through continuous reflection and growth.

1. Learning Culture
2. Student Learning
3. Professional Practices
4. Learning Support
5. Learning Resources

Dr. Andrew Stephens expressed his belief that this is one of the most well-informed and best accreditation reports he has ever seen. The self-study work is in preparation for the two-day visit with NEASC on October 30th and 31st. A small team will come in and visit to observe classes and conduct focused interviews. The visit is intended to help LHS prioritize the areas that need work and to develop a plan for 2020 decennial visit.

Committee members thanked Dr. Stephens and the NEASC Committee for all their hard work.

Discussion and vote to appoint School Committee liaison to recreation Committee

A motion was made to appoint Eileen Jay and Deepika Sawhney as co-liaisons to the Recreation Committee - seconded (5-0)

Vote to appoint representative to the EDCO Board of Directors & Vote to appoint liaison to the EDCO Advisory Board

A motion was made to appoint Dr. Julie Hackett as representative to the EDCO Board of Directors - seconded (5-0)

A motion was made to appoint Kathleen Lenihan as liaison to the EDCO Advisory Board - seconded (5-0)

Vote to appoint members to the School Master Planning Advisory Committee

A motion was made to appoint Kate Colburn, School Committee; Kathleen Lenihan, School Committee; Mike Cronin, Director of Public Facilities; Maureen Kavanaugh, Director of Planning and Assessment; Richard Perry, Permanent Building Committee; Joe Pato, Selectman; Sandy Beebee, liaison for Capital Expenditures Committee; Alan Levine, liaison for Appropriation Committee; Sara Cuthbertson, PPC Chair; Marina Levit, representative of the SEPAC; Dan Voss, community representative; Daniel Abramson, community representative; Superintendent Julie Hackett to the School Master Planning Advisory Committee - seconded (5-0).

A motion was made to include Peter Rowe, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, to the School Master Planning Advisory Committee - seconded (5-0).

Community Speak:

Valerie Overton extended her praise to the LHS NEASC Self-Report team and noted a few additions to be included in the document she submitted online.

Dawn McKenna shared the following “housekeeping” items (1) The Board of Selectmen disseminated different dates for the summit rather than those that were announced; 2) The consent agenda items need to be posted per AG regulations with the Town Clerk’s office. She suggested following Board of Selectmen’s Agenda.

Ms. McKenna thanked Eileen Jay and Deepika Sawhney for being liaisons for the Recreation Committee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Articles from Estabrook Homework Pilot

No need for discussion.

Motion was made to adjourn at 10:08 and seconded