

**LINCOLN-SADBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

Present

Ellen Joachim, Chair; Carole Kasper, Vice-Chair; Cara Endyke-Doran, Harold Engstrom; Kevin Matthews, Candace Miller

Also Present

Bella Wong, Superintendent-Principal; Kirsteen Patterson, Director of Finance and Operations; Mark Mason, Teachers' Association; Andreas Masiakos, Student Senate Representative; Lynn James, METCO Parent Representative; Art Reilly, Athletic Director

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Public Comment

With a teacher vaccine imminent and a scientific consensus that school is safe with protocols, it is past time for L-S to start planning to add in-person learning time to our current hybrid model immediately, and to move to a fully in person learning model as soon as possible. Other districts are announcing transparent plans to bring kids into the building more and establishing planning committees to get it done. Why isn't L-S? The building is empty on Wednesdays for no good reason. We have half days when most of our peer districts have full days. We are in the bottom 4% of in-person time in the state and kids' mental health and learning are suffering. Please make a transparent plan to get kids back into school and include all stakeholders in that process. **Dawn Solowey**

Please explain to ALL of us why you cannot add more in-person hours this Spring. It is a simple question that none of you can seem to answer. Concord-Carlisle HS...they have double the in-person hours we have. That's hours IN THE BUILDING. Same size, same teacher issues/conflicts, a regional school with students coming from 2 towns. You can't get more apples to apples than that. Please stop making excuses as to why we can't do this and answer the question.

LS has also stated to DESE that we have 18.5 hours of synchronous learning per week. My senior son has about 10 hours per week. Others I know of also don't come close to what you have indicated so I'm not sure how you think we are in compliance with these blown up numbers, not to mention 6 hours of in-person learning being on the low end of hybrid learning hours in the state.

Candace said you are all in "continuous proactive planning". What does that mean? Why are parents/families not privy to this information and why can the SC not include anyone else in this planning? WHAT IS THE PLAN?? Other schools have committees comprised of parents, SC members, health professionals, etc. Why can't we do this to get a more comprehensive and transparent plan together for our students? I expect real answers. **Karen Guderian**

What planning has to be in place in order to allow for more in-person learning?
We're coming up on an entire year of students not being full-time in school. It's time our students got back into the building for more hours. **Andrew and Karin Smith**

Director of Finance and Operations Report

Kirsteen Patterson reported that there were currently three audits taking place at LS: the end of year report audit, a student activity fund audit, and a general audit. The transition to Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Program for employees and retirees has begun. On January 26, 2021, a meeting of the OPEB Trustees took place with a presentation from the new actuarial company.

Recognitions

Ms. Wong recognized the LS Student Senate which organized a meeting with all staff to hear a thoughtful presentation on student feedback. The Student Senate will be invited to an upcoming Faculty Meeting to continue the discussion on their feedback.

Ms. Wong appreciated the buildings and grounds crew for their unending work on clearing the campus after the recent snowstorm.

The Racial Climate Task Force has arranged for the screening of the film "I am not a racist...am I?" All LS Faculty were able to screen the film. Follow-up discussions will take place this week.

Ms. Wong recognized LS students for their extraordinary attention to the safety protocols designed to prevent the spread of COVID19 among the school community.

Student Senate Report

Andreas Masiakos reported on the most recent Student Senate Meeting. Students spoke with LS Faculty about screen time, information regarding remote schedules, and the importance of communication between students and teachers. Students suggested that students and teachers coordinating weekly regarding remote schedules would be most helpful to students. Students also requested meeting more regularly with teachers and staff members.

METCO Parent Representative Report

There was no METCO Parent Representative Report.

Teachers' Association Report

Mark Mason recognized David Grace and JK Park for the work on the Global Scholars program; students taking Psychology are currently caring for their egg babies; Susan Shields, Department

Coordinator for Wellness is coordinating a book club discussion with the Students Empowering Women group reading “Warriors Don’t Cry” regarding the integration of Little Rock, Arkansas. Mr. Mason also congratulated MJ Walsh who retired last Monday.

Chairperson and Liaison Reports

Ms. Kasper reminded viewers that the public hearing for the FY22 Budget will take place on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 followed by a vote on the FY22 Budget on March 9th. She provided an update on the continuing progress in planning for the transition of incoming ninth graders to LS via a virtual program. The documentary “I’m Not Racist...am I?” will be available at the end of February for public viewing.

Candace Miller reported that the policy update and review process has been stalled. She will endeavor to restart the process.

Superintendent/Principal Report

Update on COVID data

Ms. Wong provided an update on data related to COVID19. There are currently 40 student positives. LS has very strict protocols supported by LS families and the speedy contact tracing by LS nurses, typically contact tracing is completed within a day. Along with the ongoing support of the Health Departments of both towns, we are grateful to LS nurses for their ability to complete contact tracing and follow-ups. The weekly pool testing has aided in returning students to school as soon as possible. Ms. Wong believes that, as a result of pool testing which picks up asymptomatic infections, LS is able to decrease the spread of infection. She also attributes 6 foot distancing in place at school has been instrumental in keeping infection spread at a minimum. 85% of combined staff and students are tested weekly. Ms. Wong has not yet heard from the state when vaccination for Massachusetts educators will be available. Unfortunately, the hours scheduled for vaccinations are the hours that teachers must be at work. She is hopeful that local health departments will be able to provide vaccination opportunities for educators.

Discussions and planning within the Learning Continuity Committee and the Academic Council have begun regarding adjusting the schedule given staff vaccinations, the coming of temperate weather, etc. The Learning Continuity Committee which first convened on March 2, 2020, is made up of volunteers and includes representatives from each department, members of the teachers’ association, the three members of the ExecTA, and some administrators and technology specialists. Surveys are being prepared to solicit student feedback regarding further changes in the school day to students depending upon changing data with regard to the pandemic.

Ms. Wong clarified the state’s required in-person vs. synchronous and remote schedule for total hours. LS has always complied with this requirement – even before issued by the state.

Funding exists for LS pool testing through the end of March. Now DESE offers funds for pool testing for schools. Ms. Wong requested a credit from the state to support the existing LS pool

testing. In addition, JCM Works has modified the costs of pool testing to accurately reflect the number of students participating in the pool testing. These adjustments will enable LS to continue testing into April and May.

Ms. Joachim recognized the enormous energy and time that Faculty and Staff have put into managing the current educational environment as presented by the pandemic throughout the past year.

Update on FY'22 Budget

Ms. Wong presented an update on the FY22 Budget which reflects the budget as presented to the Sudbury and Lincoln FINCOMS. Additional COVID funding will become available and will be reflected in the current proposed budget as it in fact becomes available. Total one-time resources available via COVID funding is \$499,923 which must be expended by June 30, 2021. Projected adjustments to the budget are an increase in the projected circuit breaker amount to \$1,700,000; a \$250,000 contribution to the OPEB Fund; elimination of van monitor salaries estimated at \$75,000; slight reduction in instructional capital; and addition of .25FTE in Mandarin and Computer Science. Discussion regarding the OPEB Trust contribution and issues of fiscal responsibility ensued among the members.

Update on Winter and Fall 2 Sports

Art Reilly, Athletic Director, reported on Winter and Fall 2 Sports are continuing with safeguards in place and careful watch of testing results. The Winter Season will end with the end of February break. Fall 2 Sports (Football, Volleyball, Track and Cheer) will begin February 22nd. Spectators will not be permitted for Fall 2 sports. Cheer will not include competitions with other schools. Football is a high risk sport for which Mr. Reilly has been researching results at other schools. Transmission of infection was not evident in Football if safeguards are maintained. Indoor Track will not be offered in Fall 2 season because there is no indoor facility in which to hold competitions. There are approximately 150 students signed up to participate but there is no indoor venue which can manage this number of students. Other clubs and activities are running by faculty advisors who are very careful to run the clubs as they would manage their classrooms. Mr. Reilly expressed his gratitude to SudburyTV for live streaming sports competitions for the sake of LS families. Mr. Reilly inquired about LS Sailing if state permits can be issued. The sailing season begins mid-March and ends with Memorial Day weekend. It is dependent upon the state opening lakes to use by sailing teams.

VOTE: A motion was offered by Carole Kasper that the LS School Committee approve the proposal that Fall 2 Sports season include Football, Cheer and Volleyball begin on February 22 through April 24th, 2021. Harold Engstrom seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, all were in favor via a roll call vote.

VOTE: A motion was offered by Carole Kasper that the LS School Committee approve the proposal that Sailing be offered as a Spring sport by LS. The motion was seconded by Kevin Matthews. There was no further discussion, all were in favor via roll call vote.

Student Opportunity Act Plan

Ms. Wong introduced the Student Opportunity Act Plan required by the state to inform them what LSRHS will do with the increased funds provided by Chapter 70. There is \$18,635 in additional funds and that money was used to pay for an ELL tutor to support our Portuguese speaking students.

VOTE: Carole Kasper moved that the LS School Committee approve the Student Opportunity Plan as provided by the Superintendent. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and all were in favor via roll call vote.

Information and Discussion

Action Items

See above.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion from Carole Kasper, the Minutes for January 19, 2021, were approved. Candace Miller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and all were in favor via roll call vote except Cara Endyke-Doran who abstained.

Future Agenda Items

There were no future agenda items.

Public Comment

What level of in person learning are you planning for this year?

Also please recognize how wonderful Art Reilly has been. The consideration and time he has put in has been incredible. **Ms. Provisionato**

Just hoping that since the MIAA approved the sports that fall under the FALL II category , that LSRHS will support running those programs .
Our children are in need of this seeing as they presently have limited involvement in person. Losing their sport may be a breaking point mentally for kids that are struggling . They need something to feel hope. **Lee Rudman**

My daughter has had a very difficult time with the hybrid model. The isolation is very challenging. What planning has to be in place in order to add in-person learning? With teachers having the option to be tested AND vaccinated why is there not a plan in place for additional in person learning opportunities for all of the Lincoln Sudbury students? **Renee Bordner**

You have stated that there have been 40 positives all year. I think it is important to contextualize this figure by including a count of positive cases that have been reported to the school for students who were not in school when they were diagnosed (i.e. over thanksgiving/christmas break) and/or were diagnosed and were not in school so did not expose students in school.

It also is important to put that figure of 40 into context to note how many positives are coming out of the testing program. For example, I don't believe Cohort A has had a single positive case since testing began. Based on the data you have shared over the past three months, students are not transmitting or catching the virus in school and are not contributing to community spread. Therefore, it would make sense to incrementally increase in person learning after February break. There is no justification not to increase in person learning given the data you are presenting. **Claudine Coulon**

Adjourn

Carole Kasper moved to close Open Session and enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because to do so in open session may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and to review and approve Executive Session Minutes. Candace Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor and there was no further discussion. Open session was concluded at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale