

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022**

**Present**

Cara Endyke-Doran, Chair; Candace Miller, Vice-Chair; Heather Cowap, Harold Engstrom, Kevin Matthews, Mary Warzynski.

**Also Present**

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal; Kirsteen Patterson, Director of Finance and Operations; Danielle Weisse, Teachers' Association Representative; Ellie Gottlieb, Student Senate Representative; Rachel Cooke, Melisa Shen, Tracy Ryan, Chris Shutzer, Advisory Program

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Presentation**

Tracy Ryan, Melisa Shen, Rachel Cooke and Chris Shutzer presented the Advisory Program. The LS Strategic Plan was informed by student survey input. It was clear that a common priority for students was for increased inclusion and belonging across all identity groups (race, gender, community of residence and grade level). Students expressed a need for connectedness with their peers and with the school community as a whole.

Last year the Advisory Committee researched existing programs at peer schools and evaluated best/worst practices to provide recommendations for an LS advisory program. Student feedback was solicited. The findings were presented to LS staff over several sessions during last fall/winter. Faculty was surveyed whether to pursue the program further, 70% of staff supported the initiative. During Fall 2021 a pilot program was created: 3 groups of seniors, 8-12 students and 2 advisors per group that met weekly during first semester lunch.

The proposed structure for a 4 year Advisory Program is a 25-30 minute mid-morning meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> same grade students and 1-2 staff members to discuss topics and lessons designed to build community, address social/emotional wellbeing and strengthen school climate. Topics would include relationship building, self-development, citizenship, information regarding LS supports and programs for students, sharing transitional skills for adapting to academic challenges at LS and beyond. The next steps will be to develop lesson plans, provide staff training, and evaluate the negotiation impact. Ms. Wong stated that this was a program that involved a change in schedule and additional training for staff but promises to be very beneficial to students and will fill a need that students have expressed for connectivity, as well as community and relationship building.

Mr. Matthews questioned how LS faculty would be trained for this endeavor. Chris Shutzer responded that faculty would be trained to know whether conversations during advisory meetings with students indicated a need for additional support for individual students. Rachel Cooke reported that during her pilot group of seniors, the students stated that they valued the opportunity to become acquainted with students outside their normal social circle. Ms. Ryan noted that the teacher would facilitate conversations among students rather than fill the role of “instructor”. Ellie Gottlieb noted that there have been a number of schedule changes over the past few years as a result of the time change, and pandemic adjustments. Ms. Ryan responded that the schedule change for Advisory Program would not take place until 2024-2025.

Ms. Cooke added that reducing student stress was another aim of the Advisory Program and that goal would balance the inconvenience of a schedule change. Mr. Engstrom believes that the benefits of meeting fellow students and engaging in conversations with them has a high value. Heather Cowap spoke from her own experience guiding an advisory group and that it was focused on community building and relationship building. She found students benefitted from the opportunity to express their individual stress points and have conversations that were not about academics. She feels that this is one of the best things that LS can do for students. Ms. Wong added that the program was about becoming familiar with students, getting to know students. She has found that parents ask over and over “How do you know my student, how do you know students that are quiet?” Ms. Shen stated during the presentation that the small size of the student groups allowed all students to become known by the teacher and their fellow students in the group.

### **Information and Discussion**

There was no information and discussion.

### **Student Senate Report**

Ellie Gottlieb reported that the Student Senate would be working with the Sudbury League of Women Voters to sponsor a voting registration drive on May 4, 2022, between 11 and 2pm at LS. The student senate will hold their annual staff appreciation event on May 11, 2022. She also reported that the Student Senate elections will be held in May.

### **METCO Parent Report**

There was no METCO Parent Report.

### **Teachers’ Association Report**

Danielle Weisse reported that LS students worked for Habitat for Humanity in Baltimore during the April break. Steven Driscoll and Regina Shopiro organized the trip. The faculty were looking forward to the School Committee members visit on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to attend classes and meet with members of various departments.

### **Chairperson/Liaison Reports**

Mary Warzynski reported that the Superintendent/Principal Evaluation Subcommittee would be meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **Superintendent/Principal Report**

### EDCO Update

The EDCO dissolution will be complete on June 30th, 2022 with application for closure submitted to DESE by June 1, 2022. LS has been approved by EDCO to be the plan administrator for resolving health care benefit obligations to retirees. Ms. Wong requested a vote by the LS School Committee to accept the updated retiree plan administration by LS. Kevin Matthews requested that the LS School Committee be kept up to date on the progress of the plan over time.

***VOTE: Heather Cowap offered a motion to accept the updated retiree health plan and the EDCO Board approved agreements to appoint LS as the plan administrator which includes the adoption of the PARS115 Trust. Candace Miller seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote.***

### FY21 E&D Update

The E&D Certification for FY21 has not been received yet from DESE. The item was placed in the agenda in the event the certification had been received by today. Ms. Wong reminded the school committee that \$500K would be directed to the OPEB Trust and \$500K would be directed to the LS Stabilization Fund.

### Schedule Review Committee

The Schedule Review Committee will present to the LS School Committee. The review of the LS schedule was initiated as a result of the change in school start time. The original timeline was interrupted by the pandemic. Susan Shields and Tim Jason will be reporting to the school committee.

### General Updates

Ms. Wong recognized:

- The LS ExecTA, specifically Danielle Weisse, Mark Mason and Dan Lewis, for organizing tomorrow's school day for LS School Committee Members.
- Lori Hodin and Peter Elenbaas organized the MVP training for 10<sup>th</sup> graders in healthy relationships. After an assembly, groups broke off into small group discussions on how to recognize healthy v. unhealthy relationships with trained staff members and upper class students.
- Hiring continues to prepare for next school year.
- Nicole Digenis, Science Department Coordinator, will be taking a year of absence. Caroline Singler will be the interim Science Department Coordinator.
- FELS grants have been awarded to several LS faculty members who have been awarded travel scholarships for France, Alaska, Spain, Yosemite, and Glacier National Park.
- The student travel program for next school year will be presented to LS families on Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. Trips to Costa Rica, the Cold War trip, French exchange, German exchange, Habitat for Humanity, and Cambodia (TBD) will be discussed. Trips to New Zealand and Japan are being explored for the school year 2023-24. Information

regarding trips is presented to families well in advance so that they can plan for the expense.

### **Director of Finance and Operations Report**

Kirsteen Patterson presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter expenditures through March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Advisor and Coach stipends will be expended at the end of May 2022. Major cost centers: contract services, out of district tuition services, utilities, and health insurance costs are included. The health insurance renewal will commence on July 1<sup>st</sup> to coincide with LS fiscal year.

Approval from DESE for the ESSERIII COVID Relief grant allocation has been received. The funds have been used for additional support staff, nursing hours, additional classroom coverage and specialized intervention needs of students during in-person learning.

LS has received an update on the OPEB Trust which has been shared with the OPEB Trust Subcommittee. The LS contribution for this fiscal year has been submitted. The current asset value of the OPEB Trust is \$2,903.911. It has grown by \$145,000 this year.

### **Action Items**

Action items were completed earlier in the meeting.

### **Future Agenda Items**

There were no future agenda items.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Harold Engstrom moved to approve the Minutes for April 12, 2022. Mary Warzynski seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote except Candace Miller who abstained.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Adjourn**

Harold Engstrom moved to adjourn the meeting and move to 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; to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining because to do so in an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee; and to review and approve executive session minutes. Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. All were in favor via roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Francy Zingale

**To view video of the meeting, please go to: <https://sudbury.vod.cstus.tv/vod>**