

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2022**

7:00PM

ZOOM Meeting

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; Mark Mason, Teachers' Association; Ellie Gottlieb, Student Senate Representative; Dan Conti, English Department Coordinator

Call to Order

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

Public Comment

Dawn Solowey, Sudbury

I want to express my hope that the Committee will insist that LS remain open for uninterrupted full in-person learning and activities this year. The importance of keeping schools open for in-person learning and the damage that remote learning did in terms of learning loss and mental health issues is now universally acknowledged by health officials and by both federal and state leaders of both political parties. Dr. Joseph Allen said "schools should never close due to COVID" even as Omicron drives up the local infection rate. Thankfully the state has taken steps to protect kids' safety and mental health by stating that remote learning does not count toward the mandated total. LS should keep open activities and sports that are so important to kids developmental social and emotional development. I expect we will hear during this meeting of staff shortages which affect every workplace. I presume LS will be creative in finding work arounds. Lexington has asked parents to act as subs when needed, other districts have dramatically increased pay for substitute teachers. Some districts have asked for volunteers and gotten long lists of those willing to help. LS should also update its COVID protocols. Many schools are discontinuing contact tracing and that everyone should be self-monitoring for symptoms instead. Other schools have determined that rapid testing is a better use of school resources than weekly pool testing. LS should make it a priority to stay open like all essential services. Thank you.

Presentation

Dan Conti, English Department Coordinator, presented the English Department's philosophy that learning is a lifelong process, that the curriculum challenges students' perception of their intellectual limits and encourages them to become critical thinkers; that LS students learn about their cultural traditions as well as the cultural traditions of others; and that intellectually and

emotionally diverse learners experience freedom of choice in course selection, assignments and books. The department philosophy dovetails with the LS Portrait of a Graduate.

All 9th grade students take 9th Grade Composition and Literature which is a foundational introduction to LS English with an emphasis on writing, reading and critical thinking. Different forms of writing are presented in this full year course (analytical, expository, personal, and creative) as well as different literary genres. Students are prepared with the skills that they will need for elective courses in subsequent years at LS. There are 22 elective courses offered for students after completion of E9 including writing classes, courses in the American/British tradition and courses in the World History tradition.

The overarching goals of the English Department:

- Seeks to personalize the experience to meet each student's needs;
- Literature based courses have at least three formal writing assignments per semester and summative assessments;
- E9 and two writing courses offer writing-intensive experience for students

Virtual writing folders are maintained for each student via Google Drive to provide a record of each student's writing progress through their four years at LS. Student self-assessments and reflections their senior year are data which guide future curricula and pedagogy for the next year. The summer reading program, begun in 2018, provides students a reading list of about 100 books, is recommended for all students. The list provides a wide variety of reading and students complete a questionnaire as school begins – with a response rate of 78%. Through the Department's course offerings, assignments, and assessments, students will meet five themes in the Portrait of a Graduate:

- Global Citizen
- Open to Growth Mindset
- Innovate and Creative
- Critical and Discerning
- Self-Aware and Reflective

The English Department requests that the School Committee vote to discontinue the graduation requirement that students take an American/British literature course and a World Literature course. This will permit the department to incorporate American/British literature into World Literature and vice-versa. This has the support of the Department as well as the Academic Council. The state mandated requirement of 16 credits/4 years of English would remain the same.

Information and Discussion

LS School Committee Policy review continues. Discussion on the MASC updated section D on fiscal management began as a first reading. The School Committee members requested seeing an annotated copy of the changes that were made. It was resolved to have a more in depth discussion at the next meeting.

The LS School Calendar for 2022-2023 was reviewed as a second reading. There were no comments, questions or concerns.

VOTE: Kevin Matthews moved to approve the LS School Calendar for 2022-2023 as presented to the School Committee. Heather Cowap seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote.

Recognitions

Ms. Wong recognized the effort of the Student Senate to brightened the days before break with themed days for wearing pajamas, sports gear, etc. The Senate also sponsored a food drive that was very successful.

Ms. Wong reported the State of Massachusetts has distributed masks and quick tests to all schools in time for teachers and students returning to school after the winter break. The distribution was very timely as it permitted all teachers to quick test before school began on January 3rd, 2022.

Student Senate Representative Report

Ellie Gottlieb reported that the Student Senate has raised funds for the Sudbury Food Pantry as well as collected foodstuffs. The Student Senate representatives are hearing from individual students that they don't know exactly what the student senate is doing. The representatives are planning an initiative to disseminate information about Student Senate activities, meetings, and fundraising plans. The senate representatives report that the new Mid-Term Period plan was a good solution for mid-term exam week during Omicron.

Teachers' Association Report

Mark Mason reported that Mike Guanci and the Forum staff have been publishing great issues of the school newspaper. Chris Collins and the Environmental Club have been very active in promoting environmentally sound practices at school. Mark commended the faculty for being proactive in re-configuring the end of semester exam week.

METCO Parent Report

There was no METCO Parent Report.

Chairperson, Liaison Reports

Mary Warzynski reported that the Superintendent/Principal Evaluation Sub-Committee met and made good progress. Heather Cowap is a great addition to the subcommittee. The subcommittee has requested that Bella edit her goals by January 25th meeting. There will be an MASC training program for the School Committee members regarding Superintendent evaluations. Their goal is to provide an update by the end of the year. Moving forward, it is hoped that the School Committee will be on a June 31 to July 1st schedule.

Heather Cowap reported on the Finance Subcommittee's meeting with the Sudbury Finance Committee meeting regarding the FY22 Budget. The next meeting will deal with the FY23

Budget. Ms. Cowap commended Kirsteen Patterson for her command of the subject and ability to answer questions clearly and succinctly.

Candace Miller reported on a recent LS Safety Council meeting. The meetings involve an examination of recent school crises to plan what response LS would have. The resources and layers of responses such as gun data base searches, emergency removal from school, re-entry processes when a situation is deemed safe. Dr. Miller was reassured by the preparedness of the Safety Council.

Mr. Matthews inquired about safety protocols involving food delivery to the school. Ms. Wong responded that vendors delivering to the school are never permitted inside the building and outside deliveries are within sight of the Main Office. Ms. Wong responded that safety procedures will be reviewed with students periodically.

Ms. Endyke-Doran mentioned that the Public Hearing on FY23 Budget and School Choice will take place at the next School Committee meeting on January 25, 2022. Information on School Choice will be shared with the Committee.

Superintendent/Principal Report

Ms. Wong provided a COVID update. There are now to date 203 positive cases among students and 36 Staff cases since the school year began. Last year there were only 140 positive cases for the entire year. There has been a dramatic uptick in COVID cases this year. For the first three months of school there were only 33 cases in total. In the last week of school before break, there were 21 new cases. From January 6 to January 11th, there have been 76 cases. The Department of Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education distributed KN95 masks and rapid antigen tests to schools, including LS which received 5,000 masks. The CDC has reduced the isolation period from 10 days to 5 days. In addition, there is no requirement to test at the end of the 5 days but you must wear a mask for 5 days upon return to school and you must be symptom free. Positive cases among the student body seem to have been felt more among the 9th and 10th grade students as they had been unable to be vaccinated. In home transmission of the virus is very high with Omicron. 89 students that tested positive have missed between 1-5 days last week.

9th and 10th graders have been most impacted by COVID. Department Coordinators have expressed their concerns regarding mid-term testing given student absences because of COVID. The most recent Department/Faculty meetings were cancelled in order to work on adjustments to the mid-term exam week that will not include routine testing. Assessments will be made in other ways. The school schedule for January 20 through January 25 will be altered and students/families will be notified. Bus schedules for that week in the afternoon are at 1:15pm and 3:15pm for students requiring extra help that week.

Fortunately, staff absences have been widely distributed over departments so that colleagues are able to cover for them. All faculty and staff are working hard to keep students in school and to help them keep up. Ms. Wong stressed that mask wearing, weekly testing, the vaccination clinic, etc. are all helping to reduce the level of infection that would otherwise be evident at LS.

Tables and chairs have been placed at various spots in school to add additional spaces for students to have lunch.

Director of Finance and Operations Report

Kirsteen Patterson reported that the bus drivers have suffered from COVID quarantines but thankfully First Student has worked quickly and effectively to provide additional bus drivers to transport LS students.

The Sudbury Finance Committee met on January 10th to discuss current budget pressures to discern what might impact the future year's budget. On February 7th, the FY23 budget will be presented to the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Auditors will be present at LS on January 18 and 19th to review departmental end of year reporting. The second quarter financial report has been prepared for the Committee's review. The highlights are that out of a total budget of \$34,864,792, funds spent or encumbered are \$33,117,656. Ms. Patterson stated that LS was right on track financially for FY22. COVID funds such as ESSER and AARPA are in addition to the total budget for FY22.

Ms. Patterson presented the Capital Warrant Request for the chain link fence replacement expense which must be submitted to the Town of Sudbury Select Board for approval before it is presented at the Sudbury Town Meeting in early May 2022. The total cost for the chain link fence replacement is \$159,200. The Town of Sudbury share is \$139,443; Town of Lincoln share is \$19,757.

VOTE: Harold Engstrom offered a motion to approve the Warrant requesting chain link fence replacement to enclose Fields 1 and 2. Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via a roll call vote.

The second budget workshop in Lincoln will take place on January 15, 2022. The OPEB meeting will take place on January 19, 2022. The Public Hearing for FY23 Budget will take place at the next LS School Committee meeting on January 25, 2022.

Action Items

All action items have been addressed during the current meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The approval of Minutes for January 11, 2022, will be taken up at the next School Committee meeting on January 25, 2022.

Future Agenda Items

Harold Engstrom inquired about process for informing school committee members about facilities requests for capital improvements. Ms. Endyke-Doran suggested meeting as a Subcommittee with Kevin Rossley, Director of Facilities, and bringing information learned in Subcommittee to the Liaison Reports during LS School Committee meetings.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjourn

Harold Engstrom made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mary Warzynski. The meeting was adjourned at 9:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale

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