

**LINCOLN-SADBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2020**

**7:00 PM**

**Google Meet**

**Present**

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

**Also Present**

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal; Kirsteen Patterson, Director of Finance and Operations; Joshua Gilman, ExecTA; Harold Engstrom, School Committee Member-Elect.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

**Public Comment**

Q: Will we receive daily/weekly notification of the number of cases and have it broken down by number of staff vs number of students? It will also be good if the public is aware of the number of staff & students in quarantine.

The Board of Health director has told me that it will be up to the schools on how they report this information. I personally wish the health departments were mandating the sharing of this information on a daily basis. There shouldn't be any issues with privacy as we are talking specifically about numbers.

It is well-known that the more information, the better as we try to contain the spread of the virus. There are districts in other parts of the country that are already reporting this information daily/weekly and it has proven very beneficial. Not sharing real data on a regular/timely basis is going to create more speculation, rumors, and worry within the community.

A: Ms. Wong responded that a positive case of the virus in the community will be reported. We continue to work on reporting protocols. Ms. Miller indicated that LS would have to work closely with the Boards of Health of Lincoln and Sudbury. Ms. Wong specified that she did not have an answer for whether reporting would indicate a positive case being attributed to a student or staff member.

Q: Due to the latest scientific studies that the coronavirus can stay in the air up to 3 hours, having mask breaks inside the building does not make sense. Please address this and provide space for mask breaks only outside. Please provide an update on teacher testing frequency & turnaround time, and can you provide information on testing sites for students in Sudbury?

If classes will be live-streamed for students who are remote or missing an in person day due to illness or exposure, does that eliminate the option for holding classes outdoors weather permitting?

Will families have the option of going remote once students have their schedules & see if some of their teachers will be remote? I completely understand some teachers need to teach from home, however it does not make sense for a student to come into the school for a class if their teacher is remote.

Q: There will be places for “mask breaks” inside and outside the building. In classrooms, cafeteria, and hallways the air will be recirculated by our robust HVAC system. Ms. Wong responded that there was a great benefit to students coming into school but that plans were being developed to provide flexibility for students and staff.

### **Recognitions**

Faculty and Staff were welcomed back to school on Monday, August 31 2020. A great number of people played a role in opening school: the staff that welcomed our new hires; tech support provided sound so that our meeting on the stadium field was a great success; Building and Grounds has worked hard to prepare the building and grounds for opening. It was good for everyone to be together after working remotely throughout the summer. Ms. Wong was grateful to all who contributed to making the day a success. She extended her gratitude to Ms. Joachim for being present to welcome everyone to the new school year.

### **LS METCO Parent Report**

There was no METCO parent report.

### **Chairman’s Report**

Ms. Joachim reported that the SPS School Committee did receive a mini-grant from the Sudbury Foundation to hold a forum on equity. They have invited LS and the Lincoln Public Schools to participate in the forum. Ms. Joachim will attend a meeting and report back on the substance of the meeting.

The next School Committee Meeting will be held on September 15<sup>th</sup> and at that meeting will welcome Harold Engstrom as a new School Committee Member and bid a fond and grateful farewell to Patty Mostue who has served on the School Committee for fifteen years.

### **Teachers’ Association Report**

Josh Gilman reported that faculty was generally happy to be back and energized by the changes and innovations to curriculum and classrooms. The first two days for faculty have provided a wealth of information and strategies for meeting the instructional challenges of the new school year.

### **Liaison Reports**

There were no Liaison Reports.

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

Kirsteen Patterson delivered an update on projects that the Business Office is currently working on. Transportation and Food Service have been foci to prepare for the new school year. Transportation has been particularly complex but bus routes are being finalized and families will be notified of the routes for their students. Collaborative effort between SPS and LS has been tackling the transportation issues.

The end of year financials are being finalized. Ms. Wong and Ms. Patterson are working together and will be providing a full financial report in the next few weeks.

## **Superintendent/Principal Report**

### **Opening Update**

The first day of faculty returning concentrated on the Hybrid Learning Plan and ensuring that all understood the elements of the plan. Each day begins with staff together for an informational presentation followed by departmental meetings. Tuesday and Wednesday's informational meeting will focus on Safety Protocols. The afternoon session was focused on technology followed by a technology drop-in. The subject of Thursday's session is self-care. The first parents informational session will be held on Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Parents have been surveyed to learn what parents are most concerned with.

## **Information and Discussion**

### **Athletic and Activities Update**

Art Reilly, LS Athletic Director, reported on the status of LS fall sports. Mr. Reilly reached out to Activity Advisors to learn which activities were most suited to the restrictions required by the pandemic and the parameters of the Hybrid Plan. An evaluation based on club advisor input, Administration input, and the concerns presented by the Teachers' Association will determine which clubs and/or activities will be open to students.

The region's Athletic Directors and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association representatives have met throughout the summer to determine the shape of fall sports for school year 2020-2021. Fall registration for LS sports programs has resulted in 486 students registering for Fall sports this year. Not all sports activities will be offered in the fall following state guidelines. The Athletic Directors of the Dual County League, of which LS is a member, strongly believe that interscholastic Athletics plays a vital role in the re-engaging of students and providing some sense of normalcy in changed times. A functioning athletic program will aid in the process of rebuilding the interpersonal connections that will support any of the instructional academic models being proposed. They have sought to creatively reimagine what is possible within the constraints of the new health and safety protocols established in response to COVID19.

Competitive sports that will be offered at LS this fall are Golf, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys and Girls Soccer, and Field Hockey. Extensive rules, modifications and safety precautions will be followed. Sports will begin on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. There

will be no Fall State Tournaments. Any changes in COVID trends may result in immediate cancellation of fall sports. (see Powerpoint)

Competitions with other schools will be limited to one school competition per week. There is flexibility for schools who are unable to play a game for whatever reason. There will be two dual county divisions. LS will compete with Acton-Boxboro, Newton South, Concord-Carlisle, Westford Academy and Cambridge Rindge and Latin. Competitions will begin on September 30<sup>th</sup> and end November 14<sup>th</sup>. Winter Season will be November 30<sup>th</sup> to February 21<sup>st</sup>; Season 3 is a floating season (Fall 2) will be held between February 22 to April 25<sup>th</sup>. The Floating Season will permit cancelled sports and/or games to be held during the floating season. Season 4 will be held from April 26<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Extensive safety measures and rule/regulation adjustments will be made. Spectators to games will be limited to one family member per player with a formal check-in for family members.

***VOTE: Carole Kasper moved that the LS School Committee accept the LS Athletic Director's Recommendation For fall sports 2020: Mr. Reilly recommends that Golf, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys and Girls Soccer, and Field Hockey be offered at LS as the competitive sports in the Dual County League during the Fall season of 2020, beginning September 18<sup>th</sup> and ending November 20, 2020. Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. There followed some discussion regarding any concerns Art Reilly might want to share with the Committee Members. The recommendation was approved by all members via roll call. Ms. Joachim abstained from the vote because a family member is an LS coach.***

### Testing Protocols

Ms. Wong expressed her appreciation to Candace Miller and Cara Endyke-Doran for their efforts in drafting the LSSC resolution and contacting Massachusetts Legislators. Ms. Wong reported that the Tri-County Superintendents' Group has identified a vendor offering COVID testing to the group in the form of saliva PCR testing. Students in groups of 20 will take a saliva test first thing in the morning. Vials will be collected and sent to a testing site and tested as pools. The test is highly sensitive, if a pool testing results in a positive for COVID, then all members of the pool would be tested to provide contact tracing. The tests would be taken once per week at a cost of \$500 per year per person. The cost of the testing requires that LS submit a Request for Proposal which will allow further research into provider and testing method. There are 1530 students enrolled at LS; 200 staff members would also participate in testing. Ms. Wong would suggest that families cover the cost of this test. The District would cover the cost for staff. There is a possibility that the expense for staff might be mitigated through insurance.

Ms. Kasper inquired about the timing for such a program. As a public entity, LS must follow a request for proposal which would delay the enactment of the program. It may be possible to shorten the procurement timeline given the circumstances. Ms. Miller expressed interest in the details of a given company for such widespread testing.

Mr. Matthews opined that there may be a question of whether or not LS may require students/staff to undergo testing. Ms. Wong agreed that only full compliance will benefit the LS community. She noted that because the test was saliva based, it might be more palatable to the community. Ms. Wong believes that insurance will probably cover the cost of a secondary test if one is part of a positive pool.

Ms. Kasper recommended the subject for a parent information session. Ms. Wong requested approval from the LS School Committee to draft the Request for Proposal application to begin the process. Ms. Miller stated that public health is about prevention and that testing students and staff would be the best way to prevent an outbreak. Ms. Wong added that the vendor was amenable to halting the testing year in the event that a vaccine becomes available. All School Committee members agreed that pursuing testing for students and staff was an essential step to protect the school year for all.

#### Metrics for Transitioning Among Learning Models

LS will be opening with a hybrid plan but it is possible that a shift will be required to remote learning. The Sudbury Board of Health is looking for LS to establish the metrics for transitioning from hybrid to remote learning. Metrics can involve trends, rates of infection, and continuity of learning. Ms. Wong proposed putting a metric transitioning plan in writing for review by the School Committee members.

#### Start/Stop Protocols

Ms. Wong proposed that, in the event of a positive case of COVID19, school would shift to remote learning for at least one day while the extent of exposure was ascertained. A memo sent to Superintendents on July 17<sup>th</sup> stated that students/staff were not permitted to return to school if tested positive for 14 days UNLESS a negative test was submitted and you were asymptomatic and wore a mask. On August 18<sup>th</sup>, the DESE guidance was changed to recommend that if one is a close contact to a case of COVID, you must not return to school for 14 days. In the most recent guidance, every student within a classroom would have to quarantine for 14 days if there were a confirmed COVID case in the classroom. If start/stop protocols interfere with continuity of learning, then LS may decide to transition to Remote Learning at the beginning of the following week. Ms. Wong suggested that it was likely that learning would shift to Remote Learning at Thanksgiving because college students would return home, outside classrooms would not be available because of the weather, and the rates of infection might increase at that time of year.

#### **Action Items**

The School Committee members discussed the mask policy regarding student mask breaks within the classroom to understand its particulars. The policy is before the School Committee for a vote because it carries with it a non-negotiable consequence which will be added to the student handbook and is embedded into the day-to-day protocols sent out to families and will be part of student and staff training.

***VOTE on Mask Policy. Cara Endyke-Doran moved to accept the Mask Policy as presented, seconded by Candace Miller. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call.***

### **Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes for August 25, 2020, were approved on a motion from Patty Mostue and seconded by Carole Kasper. The Minutes were approved via roll call vote, all were in favor, there was no further discussion..

### **Future Agenda Items**

There were no future agenda items.

### **Public Comment**

Q: Will you be addressing the organizing principles behind the groupings (a and b) coming to school on different days?

A: The cohorts are alphabetical to keep siblings in a family together. Many classes are multi-grade classes but others are limited to students in a single grade so keeping single grades within cohorts would mean that some classes would not be half size.

Q: I support the testing but I'm wondering if LS can legally require students to do testing? What percentage of students would have to agree to the testing to make it a useful tool.

A: That question has already been addressed.

Q: Hoping for an update about how Remote Academy will be run? Last email said remote kids will "just miss" the in person meetings for each class. This is 1/4 of instructional time! Just more independent work will not suffice to replace teacher instruction for remote academy kids.

A: There will be another informational session offered by Sandy Crawford and communication will be sent to families.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17pm on a motion offered by Carole Kasper, seconded by Candace Miller that the meeting move to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining not to return to open session as the Chair has so declared. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Francy Zingale