

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

DECEMBER 1, 2020

7:00 pm

Google Meet

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 Co-President; Art Reilly, Director of Athletics and Activities;

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order with a motion to move to Executive Session with a intention to return to Open Meeting at 7:15pm. Carole Kasper offered a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining to return to Open Session as the Chair has so declared. Harold Engstrom seconded the motion. All were in favor in a roll call vote. The meeting returned to Open Session at 7:18pm.

Public Comment

Could you please provide an update on whether and how staff, students — and in particular parents — will be surveyed about the current learning model now that it's after Thanksgiving? Many parents have requested to be included in the survey process as we can share unique input into what is, and what isn't working, in hybrid. The collective bargaining agreement contemplates such surveys (including of families) in the fall to improve the learning experience. Please include parents in this process. Thank you.

Dawn Solowey

Information and Discussion

A Winter Sports Update was presented by Art Reilly, Director of Athletics and Activities. Mr. Reilly reported that the start date for Winter Sports would be December 14, 2020. Games and competitions would begin in January, 2021. Two sports were not approved: Indoor Track which will begin February 22, 2021 and wrestling has been postponed until the Spring. The Dual County League Directors have been meeting regularly to set up guidelines for winter sports. No spectators will be permitted at DCL competitions for winter sports. The DCL Athletic Directors also agreed to utilize a "one team per week" model, similar to the Fall 2020 athletic season, so for example, LS teams will only be competing with Concord-Carlisle in each winter sport during the first week of competitions in January. There will be no school transportation available for athletes. Basketball will be offered but for limited team members, no locker use, and masks worn by all participants. The games will be live-streamed. Hockey will be offered but with significant restrictions and modifications similar to the restrictions for basketball. Alpine skiing will be offered. Modifications and safety protocols are in process for

both Alpine skiing and Nordic skiing. Swimming will be offered with a limited number of swimmers per lane. Meets will be virtual – each team competing at their own pool. Mr. Reilly will begin parent meetings the first week of December if the winter sports are approved by the LS School Committee.

Ms. Wong added that Mr. Reilly has accomplished a great deal with regard to LS school sports. He communicates well with other Athletic Directors in the League, with coaches and with student families. Mr. Reilly is particularly effective at conveying during parent meetings the safety protocols that are essential for a safe sports season. He has met the challenges of this year with dedication and energy maintaining a focus on the welfare and safety of LS athletes. Mr. Engstrom expressed concern that athletes be required to participate in testing program and with the difficulties of maintaining safety protocols with basketball. Mr. Reilly acknowledged the difficulties inherent with indoor sports and averred that he would not hesitate to terminate sports if the practices posed a risk to athletes of contracting COVID. The School Committee members discussed methods for encouraging athletes to participate in testing. The safety recommendations from the MIAA are thoughtful, detailed and comprehensive.

The School Committee will be voting to approve the winter sports of swimming, basketball, alpine skiing, and Nordic skiing.

VOTE: Carole Kasper moved that the Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee approve winter sports at LS, specifically Basketball, Hockey, Swimming, Alpine and Nordic skiing and we remain open to other updates. Harold Engstrom seconded the motion. There was further discussion regarding the importance of recommending that athletes participate in the testing program. All were in favor via roll call vote except Candace Miller who opposed the vote.

Update on Testing

Ms. Wong reported on Round One of COVID testing which will take place on December 3-4, 2020. Collection of consent forms has been essential to participants becoming part of the testing pools. Collection of test kits will take place on Thursday and Friday between 7:30-8:30am; 11 to 12:30pm and 3-3:45pm to allow students to turn in test kits without missing class. Test kits will be sent via FEDEX to the lab for examination. The vendor has indicated that having 50% participation minimum would significantly impact the rates of infection. Currently, 809 in-person students are registered for testing so the first round of testing will involve 68% of our in-person population. Testing on Thursday/Friday will permit detection of infections from weekend exposure. Collection of samples will alter to accommodate the winter holiday. The deadline to participate for the January testing program is December 22, 2020. The cost of testing for January-March 2021 remains \$180. The test is a PCR molecular test which is designed to be surveillance testing for asymptomatic persons. Persons with symptoms of COVID-19 can be detected through the antigen test but that is not helpful in detecting asymptomatic persons. Weekly testing will enable catching positive infections immediately to prevent spread with an end result of diminishing infection rates and ensuring continuation of in-person learning. Ms. Wong extended her thanks to the entire school committee for their

support of the testing endeavor and to the LS staff who have worked to roll out the program. Thanks also to the LSPO for fund-raising and for communication with the LS community.

Action Item

VOTE: Agreement by and between the LS School Committee and the LS Teachers' Association for 2021-2022 as discussed during Executive Session. Carole Kasper moved that the school committee approve the agreement between the LS School Committee and the LS Teachers' Association for one year, 2021-2022. Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. All were in favor via roll call vote.

Ms. Kasper thanked the LS Teachers' Association for the level of collegiality and collaboration during the discussions regarding this agreement as it is much appreciated. Mr. Matthews stated that fashioning a one-year agreement was advantageous to both parties and that perhaps continuing with one-year agreements would be preferable to negotiating a three-year agreement. The ability to respond to current fiscal conditions together is highly effective.

Public Comment

Would precautions be taken so that players don't play on teams outside LS and bring COVID into LS? We can take all the protocols but if other teams our athletes play on don't, it can be an issue. **Lauren Hochberg**

With testing now available to the school at a reasonable price, why would we not require inside, contact sports athletes be tested. **Lauren Hochberg**

Is there going to be intramural basketball at LS this year? **Lisa Burge**

One of the committee members said that students in sports are more likely to contract COVID. That statement is unproven and this committee member did not offer any data to back that assertion. This is not a recommendation against testing, however, we need to make evidence based decisions, and there is no clear evidence that athletes are driving spread. It is really important that we make data driven decisions and not assumptions. **Claudine Coulon**

Erica Askew offered the following link.

[Rapid COVID tests are rolling out to Massachusetts schools soon. Here's what you should know.](#)

Adjourn

Ms. Joachim thanked the School Committee members for convening for the December 1 meeting. Carole Kasper moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kevin Matthews. The meeting was adjourned via roll call at 8:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale

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