

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2020**

7:45pm

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, Co-President Teachers' Association; Andreas Masiakos and Riya Misra, Student Senate Representatives

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:49 pm.

Information and Discussion

Proposal for Temporary Shift from Hybrid In-Person Learning to Remote Learning from 11/23 to 12/6

Ms. Wong reported on a revised plan for a temporary shift from hybrid in-person learning to remote learning from November 23 through December 6. She illustrated the data available regarding infection rates of COVID-19. The highest priority of LS is to maintain in-person learning while offering remote learning for students/families who preferred that. Ms. Wong initially proposed a shift to remote learning from November 20 through December 6, 2020. Upon review of input from the community and discussions with the LS School Committee, Ms. Wong presented a revised shift from in-person to remote learning beginning on November 23 with in-person learning recommencing on December 7th, 2020. In-person student cohorts would shift to remote learning for a total of 4 school days (2 days for each in-person cohort). Ms. Wong pointed out that Wednesdays are remote learning days and Monday, November 30, is a Teachers' Professional Day. Ms. Wong announced that PCR testing for the COVID-19 virus would begin on December 3 and 4 for all in-person students, faculty and staff.

The reasons for the temporary shift surrounding the Thanksgiving holiday are many and include: Increasing rates of infection within the Commonwealth and nationwide; a surge of infection following each national holiday; Thanksgiving holiday is a significant travel holiday as a result of family needs including family members in need of in-person support; college students returning home leading to transmissibility within households; and likely social behaviors among students. Ms. Wong is closely monitoring data regarding rates of infection, faculty/staff/student absences, and capability of successfully completing contact tracing when a member of the LS community tests positive for the virus.

Ms. Wong reiterated that the short-term shift would enable continuation of maintaining the safety of students, faculty, staff and community members so that a continuation of hybrid in-person learning will continue.

COVID-19 Testing

Weekly surveillance COVID-19 testing will begin for the LS Community (all staff and students) on December 3rd and 4th, 2020. Parents are invited to attend a WiTT informational

meeting on November 12, 2020 to learn more about the surveillance testing. The testing will enhance safety protocols to better sustain in person learning. It will utilize alternate strategies making large scale testing more affordable and will be especially important for the upcoming winter months.

The test will be a PCR molecular test and a surveillance test will be administered weekly utilizing the concept of pool testing in which there are approximately 20 test samples per pool. If there is a positive test in a pool, the lab is able to return and identify the individual positive test result (reflexive testing) that has already been submitted and the student/family will be notified by the School Nursing Department. The test will be administered at home with nasal test kits picked up at school. The test sample is returned to school in a bag provided by the vendor on Thursday or Friday. Samples are barcoded and deposited into a pool which will be organized by house and cohort. All samples are picked up at the end of the school day for delivery to the lab. Test results are expected 24 to 48 hours after receipt by the lab.

The Town of Sudbury COVID Relief Grant which expires December 31st will cover the cost of the December testing. Funding for January 1 through March 31 will amount to \$180 per student. LSPO fundraising, a letter writing campaign for family contributions, and additional grant funding will be sources for covering the cost for student testing from January 1st through March 31st, 2021. Funding for testing from April 1 through the end of school has yet to be determined.

In order to have successful testing, our students and families must participate in the testing, we will need our families to contribute to the cost, and informed consent per student is required. Informational sessions begin immediately with a mailing the week of November 11th; a "We're in This Together" session on November 12 at 7pm; small group google meets with Bella beginning the week of November 16th. The target date for enrollment is November 20th with a deadline of December 1st followed by an initial date for testing December 3 and 4, 2020.

Ms. Joachim clarified that the testing will be provided for LS students, staff and faculty and that funding for the testing from January to March will be provided by individual families to the extent possible with funding sought for families who cannot afford the cost. Ms. Endyke-Doran encouraged all families to participate in the testing for their students because it is imperative to in-person learning to maintain a low level of infection within our community. Because COVID-19 is a seasonal virus, testing through the winter is of utmost importance. Funding for staff/faculty testing will be covered by the LS general fund. An additional benefit of the weekly testing is that students currently in the Remote Cohort may feel comfortable in returning to hybrid in-person learning. Ms. Joachim reminded the community that 100% in-person learning remains impossible because the social distancing preventative measure is impossible given the population and the confines of the building. The intention is that testing will ensure that the student population can continue with hybrid in-person learning. Mr. Matthews commended Ms. Wong for listening to parental concerns and adjusting the shift to remote learning for a limited period of time.

Public Comment

Questions and Opinions from community members are posted on the LS School Committee website.

Action Items

VOTE: Candace Miller offered a motion to adopt Superintendent Wong's recommendation for a temporary shift from Hybrid In-Person learning to remote learning from November 23 through December 6, 2020. Carole Kasper seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote.

Adjourn

Candace Miller offered a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Carole Kasper. There was no further discussion. All were in favor via roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale

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