

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, June 16, 2020**

**7:00pm**

**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; Peter Rowe, Interim Director of Finance and Operations; Joshua Gilman, ExecTA; Andreas Masiokas, Student Senate Representative

**Call to Order**

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

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Presentation**

The LS School Improvement Plan was presented to the Committee by Bella Wong. Ms. Wong expressed her gratitude to the members of the School Council.

Parents: Lauren Hochberg, Jen Dudgeon, Samantha Karustis, Sophia Resnick, Glenn Merrill-Skoloff, and Subhasri Gangopadhyay

Students: Noah Krebs, Emma Giunta, Maheen Khan, Riya Misra, Gabriella Stevenson, Sarah Watson, and Caleb Yee

Faculty: Carly Evans, Erica Wilsen, Hanka Ray, Isaac Fisher, Mark Mason, Suanne Peterson, Chris Herbert

There was an ambitious plan for school improvement this year despite the school closure. The strategic plan for the school was an important focus of the plan and it will be presented to you at the next School Committee meeting. Setting school goals for the coming year will be postponed until guidance from the Commissioner of the Department of Education is issued. Planning for E-term for summer 2020 has been deferred to next year to concentrate on the Racial Climate Task Force and online learning. Academic Honesty Policy was completed by January so that it could be included in the Student Discipline Code school year 2020-2021. Ms. Wong briefly reviewed the changes made to the Academic Honesty Policy. Kevin Matthews inquired about the consistency of the policy in implementation. Ms. Wong acknowledged that further work on implementation would be necessary. Mr. Matthews stressed the importance of Academic Honesty in shaping students' ethical formation. Mr. Gilman noted that the creation of steps of transgression in Academic Honesty has been very useful for the faculty. Ms. Kasper inquired about changes in the policy shaped by the remote learning

environment. Ms. Wong replied that it was uncharted territory which will require reflection and conversation among staff regarding their experiences with the online environment. Ms. Joachim expressed her concern regarding interpretation of different scenarios of infractions of the honesty policy.

Ms. Wong responded that the remote learning environment and use of Google shared documents has presented a learning experience for students and faculty. Ms. Wong responded that the student discipline code is reviewed with all students at the beginning of each school year.

School Schedule Review was on the list of tasks for the School Council in response to the change in School Start Time. The School Schedule Review was not given a high priority as a result of more pressing events this year and will be postponed to fall 2020. Ms. Wong stressed that any change to the school schedule would have to be completed before January 2021 to effect the change for the following school year. As the environment for delivery of instruction will be challenging, the creation of a new schedule will be postponed until the 2021-2022 school year.

The goal of reflecting on ways to improve student well-being, including sleep, negative stress, homework, and substance use is ongoing particularly given the results issued by the Metrowest Youth Health Survey. Discussions regarding homework have been ongoing on a departmental level. Work to alleviate student stress will be ongoing next year.

Consideration of Racial Climate Task Force Data was given a high priority this year. Of the eight hires this year, four positions have been offered to educators of color. Darius Green will be joining the staff as Associate Principal in the fall. Professional Development is an ongoing project which is dependent upon guidance from the Commissioner of Education. Attention to micro-aggressions in the classroom remains a primary area of focus. Enhancing an environment encouraging student voice has been a focus of work and collection of student input through exit interviews of graduating students. A great deal of rich data has been accumulated regarding means of improving Community Engagement. Candace Miller inquired on the number of students participating in exit interviews. Ms. Wong responded that members of the Racial Climate Task Force interviewed students leaving LS. Cara Endyke-Doran expressed an interest in information regarding student leadership, increased cultural proficiency, fostering leadership, increased knowledge of youth culture, cultivating community particularly during this period of remote learning and lessening microaggressions in the classroom.

Continuation of work on curriculum guidelines and common assessments is part of the NEASC growth plan. Over the past year, the departments agreed on guidelines for curriculum that are connected to the portrait of an LS graduate and include outline skills, instructional strategies and assessment practices as well as resources to be used and student outcomes expected for that course. The target for finishing this project is fall 2020 and it has a high priority. FATA and Wellness Departments have been most challenged in the remote learning environment we are hoping for in school time in the fall.

Focus on cultivating community through encouraging student voice is a constant endeavor. Students have been very active in the Racial Climate Task Force projects. A number of surveys have also been conducted to gain information on how students are feeling about their means of communication at school.

Completing the building for LS Academy in order to bring the program to campus is a goal that has been on hold. Ms. Wong appreciates the School Committee's support of use of excess and deficiency funds for support of academic programs. The LS Academy will continue to be operated remotely from campus for the coming year but the intention remains to integrate the program and promote connectivity of the program to LS for students and staff.

School goals for next year are usually presented at this time but Ms. Wong recommends waiting for guidelines to be provided by the Department of Education before establishing goals for the coming school year. Ms. Kasper inquired as to the connection between school goals and the LS Strategic Plan. Ms. Wong responded that establishing school goals, as part of the LS Strategic Plan implementation road map efforts, would be the work of summer 2020. When the strategic plan is finalized, the school goals will flow from that plan.

### **Recognitions**

LS students Hannah Titleman and Kate Solowey have been raising funds for charity such as Feed America; students have been making masks to donate to essential service workers. Other students have been writing letters to members of the elderly community and to veterans in the community.

This is the last week of school. Meetings are being established for professional development. Ms. Wong recognized Kathleen Thompson, Shari Idelson, Sandy Crawford, Donna Cakert, Charles Despotopulos, Francy Zingale and LS students who took photographs are creating a video of the Conferral of Degrees on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The LS Class of 2020 Graduation Ceremony is still on the calendar for July 25 (rain date July 26). Information must be gathered regarding students planning to participate in the graduation event and numbers of family members.

Ms. Wong commended Peter Elenbaas for managing the retrieval of property from undergraduate students which took place during the current week. Members of the Administrative Team were very active in different initiatives: Virginia Blake for organizing and managing the Learning Continuity Committee; Sandy Crawford for Advising the Senior Class and School Council; Leslie Patterson and Martha Wall for their work on the Racial Climate Task Force; Leslie Patterson and Dan Conti for their work managing the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Peter Elenbaas and Jim Berry worked hard on data analysis. Dennis Phillips, Dave Walsh, and Ryan Medeiros of our Tech Team for their work in facilitating and supporting staff in remote learning. A special shout-out to Charles Despotopulos for all his hard work on creating the video presentations of the awards ceremonies, the scholarship ceremony, the Cum Laude video and the conferral of degrees. Chuck has worked under extraordinary time constraints and we appreciate all he has done.

### **Student Senate Representative Report**

Andreas Masiakas reported that students have responded to surveys regarding online learning and gave feedback on a wide variety of issues including staff connectedness and approachability, suggestions for improving remote learning should it continue into the fall, and curriculum structure. Several students have expressed their concern on the future of LS learning in the fall. The Student Senate met this week with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to discuss potential initiatives for the coming year and supplied feedback on their presentation.

### **METCO Parent Report**

There was no METCO Parent Report.

### **Teachers' Association Report**

Joshua Gilman reported that Mark Mason of the English Department has been elected by the Teachers' Association to replace Paula Myers and will be Co-President with Joshua Gilman for the coming year.

Mr. Gilman then read a statement from the LS Teachers' Association.

"Dear Communities of Boston, Lincoln and Sudbury –

We, the members of the LS Teachers' Association, unequivocally condemn the senseless killing of black people and the chronic injustices perpetrated against people of color in this country. We are devastated by the recurring loss of black lives, the brutalities inflicted upon people of color, and the impact of these social injustices on all our communities. Today we recommit ourselves to addressing racism and educating our students and one another about the pervasiveness of racism in all its forms. We call upon everyone in our communities to have the moral courage to stand with us and to work for justice. We believe that education is among the best solutions to the scourge of racism in our country. Many of us have already engaged our students in our virtual classrooms to help them understand the complexity of current events. Furthermore, in keeping with Lincoln-Sudbury's core values, we seek to teach our students to foster caring relationships, to respect differences, and to cultivate community with an empathetic and compassionate heart. Today, we, the LSTA, join our administration, in accepting the challenge of our times and reaffirming our commitment as educators and as Americans, to create a nation of liberty and justice for all.

Respectfully,

The Lincoln-Sudbury Teachers' Association

### **Chairman's Report**

Ms. Joachim announced that the EDCO Board met on June 4, 2020. Lexington withdrew its recommendation to terminate EDCO but still plans to withdraw. EDCO continues to work on turning things around financially. Concord and Concord-Carlisle technically have their withdrawal in place but will reassess in the coming months.

The Sudbury Select Board met last week and has hired legal counsel to advise them on the Regional Agreement.

The Sudbury Select Board is having a virtual community conversation on Race and Safety on June 25 at 5pm which will be broadcast on SudburyTV – they hope to have a robust conversation on how things stand in Sudbury.

The Conferral of Degrees on June 7, 2020, went well and it was great seeing the students in their caps and gowns and watching them walk across the stage. Given the circumstances it was a nice event and clearly many hands worked to make the event progress smoothly.

### **Liaison Reports**

Carole Kasper reported that Lincoln had its Annual Town Meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>. Lincoln passed its portion of the LS FY21 Budget. Lincoln's portion of OPEB Funding and capital requests were also approved. Lincoln Election Day was June 15, 2020. Ms. Kasper congratulated Candace Miller and Harold Engstrom for winning their elections. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will be presenting their work to the LS School Committee at the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, School Committee meeting.

Kevin Matthews commended the Conferral of Degrees event and was thankful to all staff members who contributed their time and enthusiasm during the event that was meaningful to students and families. He appreciated the fact that LS administration and staff listened to the hopes and desires of students and parents to create a positive and joyful environment for the events.

The OPEB Trustee Committee representatives met with four vendors and will present their findings to the entire Trustee committee next week.

Mr. Matthews mentioned that MASC presented a webinar reflecting on institutional contract negotiations during these challenging times. He recommended that his fellow committee members read the materials presented from the webinar.

### **Superintendent/Principal Report**

#### **Student Survey on Remote Learning**

Twenty-five LS staff are retiring, moving or were in long-term sub positions that have ended. We have offered 8 positions to people of color. There is a great deal of hiring work going on while school is in session. Ms. Wong is grateful to staff involved in the hiring processes and noted that we will miss the staff members departing LS.

Ms. Wong reported on the Remote Learning Spring 2020 Student Feedback Survey answering the questions:; "How are you doing/feeling overall (not just school-related)?"; "How easy is it for you to find and access your work for class each week?"; "How clear are your tasks for the week?"; "If you have questions about work assigned, have you been able to get help?" and "How often do you need to ask for help to engage in school activities?" and "What is most

helpful to you so that you know what is assigned and what to do?”. Additional questions “On average, how much time do you spend each week per class?” Students in general spent between 1-4 hours per class. In terms of work provided, students generally found that it was just right or only a bit too much and that the challenge was primarily just right. There were 806 responses accumulated by the first week of June (week 11 of remote learning). Faculty will be considering the responses to prepare for the coming year.

### COVID19 Update

The Commissioner of Education has issued summer guidance and initial supply guidance as well as initial Special Education guidance. LS is ordering personal protective equipment to meet the Commissioner’s guidance. Students will be expected to bring their own masks but LS is obligated to provide equipment to staff. Summer education plans in a limited capacity are being considered. Remote programs will be offered for LINK students but REACH students will have an in-house program. Credit recovery programs are being investigated to recommend to students. Guidance for Fall 2020 is not yet available which is unfortunate since the last day for faculty is Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020. It will be critical for faculty and staff to check their emails throughout the summer to check in for information regarding the coming year. Transportation needs for the fall are a critical subject for guidance from the state. Ms. Wong anticipates a hybrid model for students returning to school in the fall in that, at maximum, only 50% of the student body will be permitted in school at a time. Work at building capacity and flexibility for a future learning program will be the focus for the summer. An advisory group of parents and an advisory group of students will be necessary for planning for the next school year. School council members have been approached to participate in increasing planning capacities. Faculty members have been instructed to take advantage of professional development days to prepare for continued remote learning and reworked curriculums. The tech team is preparing a menu of options to support staff for the future school year.

### School Start Time

School will begin at 8:25am and end at 3:14pm. It has been challenging engaging with transportation vendors. We have determined that Boston students will be picked up 15 minutes later and we will see if that works with the new schedule and traffic patterns. The transportation vendor has said that it will be able to adjust the pick up time as needed. Faculty and staff may have additional duties to support students who arrive at school before hours. Breakfast will be provided for students arriving early.

A parent questioned what considerations are being made for students who utilize the school bus and that parent also wondered what effect current conditions would have on METCO funding. Ms. Wong will be discussing with the Board of Health safeguards for students using bus transportation. In terms of budget funds for the next few years, Ms. Wong is committed to spending mindfully and carefully to preserve funds for education, safety and equities of LS students. Funding from the state is in question and the METCO grant completely covers the transportation costs and staffing for the program as well as summer programming.

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

Peter Rowe reported that the OPEB Trustees will be meeting on June 18, 2020. There is an additional item that will require a vote from the School Committee. The food service program ended with school closure and the cleaning service contract has continued. However, the contract with First Student, the transportation service has been cut short as a result of school closure. There has been no contract amendment for the Transportation Service. Special Legislation Chapter 92 has been issued by the state to give authority to the school district to offer payment to transportation vendors. Some communities have offered a 30% payment to First Student to cover incurred costs of maintaining a bus fleet for readiness for the coming school year. Mr. Rowe recommends the School Committee authorize a payment of \$68,000 to First Student Transportation Company for the cost of maintaining equipment which has been idle for the 63 days of school closure. LS will have saved \$158,000 during that period of time. Mr. Rowe considers it reasonable because LS will be working with them closely during the fall and will require flexibility to solve whatever problems may arise. This does not require coordination with Sudbury Public Schools. The vote should take place by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Matthews expressed doubt on the appropriateness of such a payment using taxpayer monies to pay a large national company. Ms. Joachim recommended communicating with Sudbury Public School to find out what they are planning to do.

Mr. Matthews requested additional information on 1/12<sup>th</sup> funding for July, August, and September because Sudbury Town Meeting will be in September. Mr. Rowe indicated that July and August will not be a problem in terms of budget monies. If the 1/12<sup>th</sup> funding extends into September and October, the school may not have all the funds necessary for outlay.

### **Action Items**

#### **Resolution on COVID19 State Funding**

Carole Kasper suggested that the committee join with other school districts in passing this resolution. Ms. Mostue inquired whether the state would provide funds to support additional expenses incurred with re-opening schools. Mr. Matthews asked Ms. Wong and Mr. Rowe what the cost would be of providing Personal Protection Equipment. Ms. Wong was more concerned with the cost of hiring additional personnel if that became necessary. Mr. Matthews suggested that the statement was primarily a philosophical statement. Ms. Joachim pointed out the ramifications of school districts not acting in concert with one another. Ms. Kasper suggested that postponing voting on the resolution until guidelines were established could be an option, if Committee members did not feel ready to vote tonight. There was further general discussion, after which the Committee felt that standing in solidarity with other school districts lends power to the request that there be no unfunded mandates for COVID-19 and that it would be wise to send out the statement before guidelines are established.

***VOTE: Kevin Matthews offered a motion to pass the resolution regarding COVID-19 State Funding: "WHEREAS, if schools are to re-open this fall in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the responsibility of each school district to do so safely and responsibly; and***

***WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that each school district is able to pay for the enormous additional staffing, transportation, and material expenses required to do this; and***

***WHEREAS, the state cannot expect mandatory COVID-19 safety guidelines to be followed, without also ensuring that each school district has the funds required to implement these guidelines; therefore, let it be***

***RESOLVED: that the state must guarantee every school district full reimbursement for whatever COVID-19 expenses are required to follow state mandates.***

***We must ensure a statewide school re-opening that is safe, responsible and equitable.***

***THERE CAN BE NO UNFUNDED MANDATES FOR COVID-19.”***

***Patty Mostue seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All approved via roll call.***

#### Draft School Committee Statement on Racial Justice

Ms. Joachim believed that the Committee should consider issuing a statement on Racial Justice following the Select Board of Sudbury’s statement and the Teachers’ Association’s statement. Ms. Joachim offered a draft for the Committee’s consideration.

***VOTE: Cara Endyke-Doran made a motion to accept the Statement on Racial Justice, with edits as noted. Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. All were in favor based on a roll call vote.***

***“We the members of the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School Committee are profoundly aware of and saddened by the racism and injustice that permeate our society. The recent horrific killings of George Floyd and many others, as well as the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities of color, have brought to the fore the unacceptable inequality that has in reality existed and persisted for far too long.***

***We take this moment to reaffirm our commitment to racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. We pledge to continue working to ensure that Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School is a place where all students and staff, regardless of race, religion, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, or abilities feel welcome and included as equal members of our community and where all students have equal access to a high-quality education. In addition, we recognize the tremendous power of education to combat racism, bigotry, and oppression in all its forms and we will continue to work with administration and staff to ensure that Lincoln-Sudbury is actively engaged in educating students to value and respect differences and to contribute to the creation of a better world.***

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of Minutes was postponed to the June 30, 2020, meeting.

#### **Other Business**

There was no other business. A parent question involved who conducted the senior exit interviews. Ms. Wong responded that members of the Racial Climate Task Force conducted the exit interviews.

**Future Agenda Items**

There were no future agenda items.

**Calendar**

Sudbury Town Election	June 23, 2020
LS School Committee Meeting	June 30, 2020
LS Graduation	July 25, 2020

**Adjourn**

Kevin Matthews offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Cara Endyke-Doran. All approved via roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:54pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Francy Zingale

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