

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, November 19, 2024**

**6:30PM**

**REMOTE**

**Present**

Ravi Simon, *Chair*; Cathie Bitter, *Vice Chair*;  
Maura Carty, Cara Endyke-Doran, Kevin Matthews (absent), Lucy Maulsby

**Also Present**

Maureen Bolton, *Co- President of the Teachers' Association*  
Kirsteen Patterson, *Director of Finance and Operations*  
Leslie Patterson, *Director of Curriculum, Assessment & Professional Development*  
Evie Schwartz, *Vice- President of LSRHS Student Senate*  
Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34PM.

**Public Comment**

- **Jeanie Cherng, Sudbury, MA.**  
“I have two boys at LS right now- A junior and a freshman. They are both interested in taking AP classes. My junior is currently taking three AP classes this year, and I want to make sure that opportunity remains for my younger son.”
- **Jake Heckler, Sudbury, MA.**  
“My name is Jake Heckler, I'm a Junior at LS. I'm here today to express my concerns, and many other students' concerns around not being given an opportunity to take advanced placement classes. As a student, I believe it is highly important to challenge myself academically and prepare for college. LS has always taken pride in education.”  
  
“However, as of lately, LS is unable to provide these widely recognized high-level courses to students in the second half of students' high school career. Unfortunately, I found myself to be among the group of students who were not given the chance to take an AP course as a junior, despite my commitment to learning. The classes not only provide a more rigorous curriculum, but they also allow students like me to earn college credits and develop skills that are critical for success in higher education.”

"I requested three separate AP classes in hopes of getting one, so I could earn college credits to free up my time in college for additional interests."

"However, many LS students including myself have been met with disappointment in both their junior and senior years. I understand that there are limitations to course offerings regarding the school's resources. But, denying access to these classes will limit my potential and other students who are equally prepared. I'm currently stressed about my senior year, while also afraid I won't receive an AP class. If I am given the opportunity to take an AP class the final grade(s) will appear on my transcript, which is sent to colleges. With nine AP classes offered at LS, it is upsetting to know I could take only a few AP classes. If I'm lucky, I can probably take two AP classes before graduation."

"As a result, I've decided to self-study for three AP exams. So colleges are aware I'm capable of taking these classes. However I'm worried that this will be a strain, as I am taking the standardized tests, in addition to mostly high honors classes. If I'd gotten into an AP class, I wouldn't have felt the need to self-study for so many courses. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak with you and to make this issue well known. So, we can prevent it for future students."

- **Kim Goldman, Sudbury, MA.**

"Good evening to members of the School Committee, Mr. Stephens, Mrs. Patterson and attendees. Thank you for taking the time to meet on this important topic, specifically AP classes, and for your recent reevaluation of the honors program. Your dedication to providing educational excellence at LS is deeply appreciated and reflects your commitment to our student success."

"I'd like to really start by sharing a story about my daughter. Rachel who's currently a Junior at LS was faced with considerable frustration when she wasn't able to enroll in or request AP courses, or in her alternative double enrollment choices. She initially requested two AP courses and three double enrollment options. Yet, she was denied all five of them. It raises the question- What percentage of students who requested AP courses were unable to take those courses? Through conversations in our community. I know my daughter's experience is not unique. We just heard from Jake Heckler who experienced something similar. There are many students and parents who share similar frustrations, which has a significant impact on student morale and opportunities."

"This summer, we had an opportunity to do our first college tour at the University of Washington. Admissions representatives emphasized the critical role of the academic rigor and their evaluation process. They specifically mention the importance of AP

courses and double enrollment and strengthening a student's application. It is disheartening to think that a high caliber school like LS, unintentionally limits opportunities for students to demonstrate this level of rigor. There are families who choose to live in towns like ours because of the stellar reputation of the school system. I believe this reputation is at risk if we do not focus on providing every student with equal access to AP courses during their sophomore, junior and senior years. We owe it to our community to sustain and build upon the foundation of excellence. It has been Lincoln Sudbury's hallmark."

"It's also important to know, in my opinion, AP courses offer more than just a boost for college. Admissions research has shown that AP courses accelerate time to college graduation, reduce tuition costs, and provide flexibility for students to explore other course interests. I urge the committee to prioritize increasing access to AP courses. We need to ensure that all students are motivated to challenge themselves academically or offer that opportunity. Although we're supporting our students' aspirations, we are also preserving the reputation of our schools, as leaders and academic excellence. Thanks for your time."

- **Jen Greer-Morrissey, Sudbury, MA**

"I want to reiterate all of the things Kim previously expressed on all the work that has been done on both this and the course level so far. I think this has already led to really good progress, but I do want to just raise a few other concerns. I agree that colleges take AP classes availability into consideration. Being that LS offers nine courses in the current structure, it may make it difficult to take more than one or two AP classes."

"I work in higher education. I've been in higher education for two decades, and I spent a few years reviewing admission applications for a local four-year, private college. Now granted this work was 15 years ago, and although I was not the regional representative or expert on particular schools. I can tell you, when I was looking at a student's transcript who took one AP course before their senior year, I would not contemplate whether they had bad luck with scheduling, or they couldn't double enroll because they're in Orchestra, which is a singleton that limited them. I wouldn't have had the capacity to engage with those nuances. I would probably think, okay the school offers nine AP courses, and this kid took one. That's good. Perhaps they could have challenged themselves more. Those nuances would arrive at a later stage in the process. It was not a level of nuance that I was able to address at that particular time. I do want to say, speaking from experience, that the complicated aspects previously highlighted are not things college admission officers will have the capacity to focus on."

"I do think the current non-AP courses offered at LS are super rich, and that's amazing. It does seem tricky to offer AP courses where a student has to be double enrolled or

can only take after taking a standard course. Are there “*low hanging fruit*” courses? Especially for the musical students. That way, LS can make a long-term plan around building more AP offerings. Hopefully, this can address the staffing issue. In making a long-term plan for professional development, you aren't dealing with the scheduling logistics of double enrollment. The musically talented students will be able to receive support in accessing these courses.”

### **M.A.S.S Superintendent's Award for Academic Excellence**

Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

Please congratulate Seniors *Michelle Su* and *Remy Jang* who were selected as the Lincoln-Sudbury HS recipients of this year's Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Award (MASS) for Academic Excellence.

Michelle and Remy have excelled academically over their careers and possess a deep love of learning, intellectual curiosity, and committed work ethic. Michelle and Remy have cultivated a wide range of interests that are deeply meaningful to them and they have consistently put the work in to turn those interests into tangible opportunities. They are both respected by their peers and adults not just because of what they have accomplished but because of how they conduct themselves. They are kind, they care about their community, and they both know that, in order to achieve, you have to want it and work to earn it. Michelle Su and Remy Jang have certainly earned everything they have achieved and truly deserve the recognition as recipients of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Award for Excellence.

### **Student Senate Updates**

Evie Schwartz, Vice- President of *LSRHS Student Senate*

- There were two METCO students who joined the previous Student Senate meeting.
- The Student Senate and attendees discussed the following topics.
  - The upcoming “Winter Fundraiser” event.
  - All donations being given to Sudbury Pantry.
  - The fun activities for the “Winter Fundraiser” event, like a photo booth to promote students and staff to donate.
  - Preparations for “Spirit Week” (before winter break).
  - In bringing community, organizing a fun contest to incentivize participation throughout LS.

### **METCO Program Report Updates**

No METCO Updates

## **Teachers' Association Updates**

Maureen Bolton, Co- *President of the LSRHS's Teachers' Association*

- LSB presented- "Mamma Mia" on Wednesday, November 20th-23rd.
- On Wednesday, November 20th, the 'First Year' teachers at LS had the opportunity to visit classrooms of other teachers in their department and/or cross departments.
- LS held a 'Blood Drive' on Friday, November 22. Thank you Greg Gammons for facilitating this event.
- LS staff are awaiting the 'Professional Development' day on Monday, December 2.

## **Presentation**

Leslie Patterson, *Director of Curriculum, Assessment & Professional Development*  
Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

- [AP Presentation](#)

School Committee members appreciated the transparency and detailed presentation Leslie Patterson provided to the School Committee and the Lincoln-Sudbury Community. School Committee members suggested an equitable process, and the potential use of additional resources for all students to gain access to the nine AP courses offered at LSRHS. Supt./Principal Andrew Stephens intends to arrange an administration group at LS in creating/organizing a survey for the College Admission Advisors to inquire/understand how High School AP course offerings are considered in admissions. The committee asked questions, offered feedback, and discussed several ideas to make improvements.

## **Information and Discussion**

### **Preliminary Discussion on GPA**

Ravi Simon, *Chair of the LS School Committee*

- The School Committee received a petition from parents requesting a discussion about the pros and cons of weighted GPAs.
- In addition to the Advanced Placement course survey for the College Admissions Advisors, some School Committee members suggested asking about the advantages and disadvantages of unweighted GPA vs. weighted GPA to the forthcoming survey.
- Whereas, other school committee members preferred the results of the AP courses survey prior to the potential GPA survey.
- Members also discussed accumulating data from comparable districts.

## **Chairperson and Liaison Updates**

### **Policy Subcommittee Update**

Lucy Maulsby, *member of the LS School Committee*

- Subcommittee members collaborated with legal counsel and MASC for assistance in updating the current policy. On Wednesday, November 3rd the Policy Subcommittee continued to discuss the following policies.
  - The “Donations and Fundraising” policy (KCD), which is on the cusp of closing.
  - The “School Committee Organizational Meeting” (BDA).
- Anticipate drafts for the new policies to be presented to the full School Committee.
- The subcommittee plans to discuss Section A of the policy manual; specifically- “Nondiscrimination”, “Declaration of Compliance”, “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex”, “Physical, Verbal or Sexual Harassment”, “Harassment” and “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability”.
- The next Policy Subcommittee meeting will be in January of 2025.

### **MASC Conference Highlights**

Maura Carty, *member of the LS School Committee*

Lucy Maulsby, *member of the LS School Committee*

- Maura Carty and Lucy Maulsby attended the MASC Conference on November 6th-8th. The conference was beneficial and informative. School Committee members had the opportunity to attend the following sessions.
  - How to be a communicative school district with the overall public, not just the school's community.
  - "Data Hub"- A website utilized to compute data of your interest, like comparing data from peer districts.
  - Compliance policies regarding budget. For example: Warrant approvals, Creating and monitoring detailed quarterly budget reports.
- Anticipate an upcoming Finance Subcommittee meeting.

### **Superintendent/Principal Updates**

*Andrew Stephens, LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

- A 'Blood Drive' took place at LSRHS in Gym 3 on Friday, November 22. By appointment.
- LSB production "Mamma Mia" took place on Wednesday, November 20th-Saturday, November 23rd starting at 7:30PM each night.
- The FELS Annual Thanksgiving Pie Sale extended through Tuesday, November 19th at midnight. More info can be found at [www.FELSGrant.org](http://www.FELSGrant.org).
- On Tuesday, November 12, The LS community had the opportunity to attend Dr. Jean Twenge's presentation '*The Anxious Generation: Balancing Technology*' at LSRHS's Auditorium.
- '*LS Financial Aid Information Night*' was planned for Thursday, November 21st at 7PM, including a presentation by a member of the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA). **You can find the Google Meet Link on the most recent LS News & Happenings. [Note: Since the meeting when these minutes were written, the date has been changed to December 2 at 7:00 pm]**
- The MCAS presentation was postponed until Tuesday, December 10.

## **Director of Finance and Operations**

*Kirsteen Patterson, Director of Finance and Operations*

- FY24 Year End Closeout Reports:

- [Closeout Summary](#)

- [Financial Report](#)

- [Raw Data](#)

- [ALL Fund Balances FY24 Closeout](#)

- [Athletic Funds FY24 Closeout](#)

- The-Year-End closeout is known to be a lengthy process, allowing final warrants to be processed through June 30th to July 15th of each fiscal year.
  - The Year-End-Report must be submitted to D.E.S.E., as well as, the Excess & Deficiency submission to D.O.R.
  - The district utilized all of the resources available in the previous fiscal year, closing out in the positive.

### **Action Items:**

No action items

### **Approval of Minutes:**

-The LSSC Minutes for October 22, 2024 were approved.

-The LSSC Minutes for November 6, 2024 were approved.

### **Public Comment**

- **Rachel Heckler- Sudbury, MA.**

“Thank you Superintendent Stephens and Leslie Patterson for tonight’s presentation.

The presentation was a lot more robust and provided a lot of information. At the start of the meeting, myself and my son were shocked to hear a parent mentioning a junior having three AP courses, while a student graduating has 7 AP courses. My son couldn’t even get one AP course during his junior year. I know I am not alone, and there are many parents going through a similar situation. I am advocating for everyone who wants an AP class to be able to retrieve that class.”

“My son wanted to take both accelerated math and science AP courses. In addition to-Statistics as a junior, which will potentially guide his major in college. Hopefully, he’ll be able to take this class in his senior year. At this point, we’re lucky if he graduates with three out of the nine AP courses.”



"We are currently visiting colleges, who mentioned, they look to see how many AP courses are available at the high school, they take it into consideration. Even with a brief description from the Guidance Counselor elaborating on the unfortunate situation to the College Admissions, it just doesn't seem fair. Some students are graduating with seven courses. While others have three courses in one year. Not to mention- the students who can't get one course. I hope this matter is addressed during the next steps."

- **Mary Warzynski- Sudbury, MA.**

"I want to thank all of you for taking the time to address the AP courses issue. I know it's been on the minds of a lot of students and parents for several years now. I want to echo the sentiments already expressed by the parents. Thank you Jake, who took the time to offer his perspective to the committee tonight. I think it's always compelling to hear from students. I thought he articulated his concerns extremely well on behalf of, not just himself, but many LS students."

"The parent who worked in college admissions, kind of hit the nail on the head when admissions officers are reviewing the applications of an LS student relative to our school profile. They're seeing nine AP classes available, while students have taken maybe two or three. It will matter. The counselor letter is lovely, but I think on average these college admission officers are first and foremost quickly looking at a student's GPA, transcript and test scores. We don't know if they're even getting to that letter in the college application process. Especially with the volume of applications they are reviewing since COVID."

"I appreciate the rigor of the many LS classes that are available, but for me, and for many of the parents that I'm speaking to, this is not necessarily about the rigor, it's about the opportunity. Students don't have the opportunity to take the courses that should be available to them, With regard to the waitlist. I realized there are size limits on certain classes and while the wait list is a nice opportunity for kids to get into AP classes. This leaves students to start a different class and invest in finding success in that class and then a week or several weeks into their semester. They transfer out of one class to transfer into an AP class, and now have to get caught up in the AP class where they're already behind. This only adds to the stress of the students and it shifts the burden of fixing this issue from the administration to the students. The same argument could be made for students who can study for AP exams and take them independently in addition to their already rigorous course load. Jake is taking accelerated classes at LS and studying independently, so he can get three additional AP classes. That doesn't seem equitable."

"We heard a lot about tensions and barriers tonight, but I really hope that the discussions around finding solutions are going to continue."

"Lastly, there are size limits in the science AP courses, particularly the ones with labs for safety issues. But I'm wondering what the size limit is on AP Calculus? There were 38 students in an AP Calculus course. A couple have dropped out. I'm wondering how many students can enroll in the class before a waitlist is created.?"

### **Adjournment**

Ravi Simon motioned to enter the executive session without returning to the open meeting. Maura Carty second the motion. Five(5) out of five(5) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:49PM.