



Lunenburg Public Schools

Loxi Jo Calmes
Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, June 4, 2014
Town Hall- 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

School Committee

Gregory Berthiaume
Michael Mackin
Colleen Shapiro
Brendan Grady-absent
Heather Sroka

Superintendent

Loxi Jo Calmes

Recording Secretary

Liz Petersen

Student Representative

Sophia Holman

Guests

Brian Spadafino	Judith Moodie
Timothy Santry	Donna Dufour
Elaine Blaisdell	Nancy Karis
Dale Diamantopoulos	Kay Alverson-Hillman
Martha Cheesman	Sheila Szocik

* Call to Order – Dr. Gregory Berthiaume called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He stated that this meeting was being recorded and would be available for future viewing.

* Recognition of Retirees – Dr. Berthiaume and Superintendent Calmes recognized the following 7 retirees for their substantial contributions to our educational program during all of their years of service within the district: Nancy Karis, THMS teacher with 33 years of service; Dale Diamantopoulos, THMS physical education teacher with 33 years of service; Judith Moodie, Primary teacher with 32 years of service; Sheila Szocik, LHS Administrative Secretary with 29 years of service; Kay Alverson-Hillman, LHS teacher with 22 years of service; Donna Dufour, Primary teacher with 20 years of service; and Martha Cheesman, LHS teacher with 13 years of service. The Superintendent wished all retirees a long, healthy, happy retirement, as well as relaying their background teaching information and retirement plans. Dr. Berthiaume presented each retiree with a certificate and engraved photo frame with a picture of that teacher within their classroom with students. Dr. Berthiaume thanked all of the retirees for their years of service to the district.

* Chair's Report- None noted. Comment made by Dr. Berthiaume stating that Graduation would be taking place on Saturday.

* Review and Approve Minutes

- May 21, 2014 Regular Session Minutes
Minutes were approved by Dr. Berthiaume and the committee.

* Review and Approve Warrants – Warrants were on the table for signatures. There were no line item transfers. Superintendent Calmes relayed that the integrated agreement for the paraprofessionals had been signed and ratified by the union through the MOA process. This required the signature of the school committee. Agreement passed to school committee members for signature.

* Superintendent's Report

- Community Awards Night: This will take place tomorrow night in the LHS Auditorium starting at 6pm for graduating seniors. This is a time to recognize how much the community invests in our graduates by providing scholarships and awards.
- Baccalaureate Service – Superintendent Calmes stated that she appreciated the community, teacher, and student participation and attendance. She passed the program to the school committee for viewing.
- 8th Grade Washington D.C. Trip- Superintendent Calmes received a letter from a parent chaperone, Mr. John Mola, who expressed his appreciation and pride at the 8th grade Class of 2018, who were exceptionally polite and did a fine job representing Lunenburg Schools in our nation's capital. Superintendent Calmes read the list of staff and parent chaperones who had made this trip a success. A special acknowledgement went out to Ms. Sharon McCullah, 8th grade teacher who has coordinated these trips for many years. Ms. Shapiro who had also chaperoned on the trip expressed to the public how impressed she had been with the student's behavior, and thanked both Ms McCullah and Faith Merchant of Merchant Vacations for coordinating this trip.
- Poetry Recognition- Superintendent Calmes recognized Kaylyn Carlucci, a 7th grade THMS student who is a semifinalist in the National Amateur Poetry Competition. Her poem will be published in the poetry anthology "Across the Ways" and has been published on the Teenink.com website. Congratulations to Kaylyn.
- Nashoba Arts Exhibit- Eight students from LHS participated in the Nashoba Arts Exhibit last night. This was made possible by their art teachers, Mr. Nathan DiPerri and Ms. Karyn Giuliani.
- THMS Spring Concert- wonderful concert held last Thursday. Isaiah Rawlinson, graduating senior received recognition from the American Federation of Musicians for being an outstanding senior musician.
- New Teacher Hires- Ms. Jacqueline Favreau, former tutor at the Primary School has been appointed as a first grade teacher for the 2014/2015 school year. Justin Sparks has been appointed as a 2nd grade teacher, as he wanted to experience a different grade level. Formerly, he had been a 3rd grade teacher.

* Student Representative's Report : none discussed

- * School Building Committee Report – Mr. Mackin reported that several important meetings had taken place recently. Superintendent Calmes and Mr. Mackin met with Jack McCarthy, Executive Director of the MSBA last Tuesday, as well as the Assistant Executive Director. This was to ensure the school building project was moving forward, and this was a positive meeting per Mr. Mackin. Last Thursday Superintendent Calmes and Mr. Mackin attended a training with the MSBA and Inspector General's Office, which laid out important information as to the building process. Today the Board of the Massachusetts School Building Authority met with Mr. Mackin, Superintendent Calmes, Town Manager Kerry Speidel and Representative Jennifer Benson. The Board of Directors voted unanimously to approve the revised plan for the new school building project, and move towards a Project Funding Agreement. Mr. Mackin expressed his appreciation for Representative Benson's continued support of the new building project.

* Public Comment: none noted.

* New Business:

- a. Turkey Hill Middle School Improvement Plan- Mr. Santry recognized his School Advisory Council as a terrific group of dedicated individuals who not only helped to create the school improvement plan but also contributed greatly during the school reconfigurations with great ideas and viewpoints.

Three measurable goals were decided upon:

1. Improving student learning by thinking critically at higher levels as evidenced by MCAS scores, data, and PPI scores. In order to implement this, the following steps will be taken: Great Books program and shared inquiry will be used towards higher level thinking skills. DDM's will be developed to show a reliable measure of student growth in each subject. RTI models will be refined so students are supported and challenged. Development of universal accommodations in all classrooms to ensure success. Intervention blocks will be used for teachers to work with students on enrichment or to support skill

development. Project based learning activities during intervention blocks to challenge higher level students.

2. Supporting social/emotional growth-this will be supported through direct instruction in group settings with proven interventions. Assess effectiveness by decreasing number of office referrals for behavior. Would like to increase time for morning meeting for 4th and 5th grade, 7th grade new Face to Face text for perspective taking in CPR groups. Continue peer mediation & Big Sibs groups with LHS students.
3. Increasing the use of technology to support teachers, students, and parents-utilize wireless technology to build capacity to expand communication between school and home and provide a uniform web based homework site. In 2010/2011 had 171 parents accessing the online grade book, now have 24,841 in 2014. iPad cart from PTO donation helpful to student/classroom access.

Mr. Santry will update plan after September release of MCAS scores and will update the school committee again in November. Dr. Berthiaume commented upon performance not being uniform and asked how targeted the interventions were as it seemed that there were curriculum alignment issues. Mr. Santry replied that faculty were working this summer, as well as within faculty meetings and professional development to address concerns. Will address more in November. Update on PARCC, finished today. THMS part of only 10% of Commonwealth who participated in performance based end of year assessment. 14 sessions were completed with 2 classes from each grade level. In assessing student feedback, content was not difficulty, technology glitches were the frustration. When looking at state statistics, Mr. Santry reported that 46% of students taking math assessment experienced a technology problem, and 31% of students taking an ELA assessment experienced the same technology problems. Mr. Santry relayed that they would be apprehensive as early adopters of PARCC until all technology glitches are resolved. Superintendent Calmes commented that we do not have the capacity to handle PARCC next year if this was purely an online assessment. Special education students participated with end of year assessments more successful than midyear. Some accommodations made for students were text to speech and color highlighting on computer screen.

b. Primary School Improvement Plan- Ms. Blaisdell thanked all of the members of her school council including faculty, parents, school committee member, and community member who had reviewed one goal each time they had met which they discussed and updated. The council decided upon 4 goals:

1. Reading: teachers adapted 7 more model curriculum units, 2nd grade adapted author study to include children developing their own books. Teachers will revise curriculum maps, use Junior Great Books strategies, and work with RTI groups to provide enrichment as well as skill development. Reader's workshop will be utilized with student/teacher conferencing and revised rubrics to include problem solving and critical thinking.

2. Written Language: Handwriting without Tears, a pre-k through 2nd grade program with common expectations for handwriting and time each week for skill development. Six Traits of Writing within each grade level, and a writing workshop daily in each classroom. Focus will be on student output this year in writing such as persuasive and narrative.

3. Math: improving number sense and math reasoning by utilizing student data on common assessments to improve instructional strategies. These will be identified through results meetings, implementing RTI to identify areas of weakness and reviewing and reinforcing skills. AIMS Web

4. Social/Emotional: school climate focus on school wide positive behavioral supports. Cafeteria Chain based on a kindness a child, family member, or teacher has done. Students invited to share a kindness on 2 boards in the cafeteria as a visual display of kindness, After school activities expanded in order for teachers to make sure that all students could participate if they chose to. School council became problem solvers and ambassadors of kindness. Goal is to improve school culture and adding specific targeted growth measures as they receive data.

Dr. Berthiaume posed a question as to how to handle the integration of 3rd to 4th grade students if there is a proven strategy that is working such as shared language. Ms. Blaisdell responded that during Admin meetings there are discussions between the administration as to strategies that are proven successful and should be carried over between schools. PARCC discussed, Ms. Blaisdell has shared results with 3rd grade staff to ask for input. Staff apprehensive about technology component and the Primary school will move forward to provide students with more practice in typing and technology before assessments are done. Moving forward with wireless in the coming year.

c. Policies- Superintendent Calmes outlined three brand new policies. Policy sub-committee met Monday and provided feedback.

- Fingerprint Policy: requirement for all new employees. Been in place in state since January of 2013 but did not have infrastructure in place in the state in order to implement. Every new

employee will be required to have a CORI and fingerprint based criminal history checked which goes to a National database. This is absorbed as an employee cost, and there is locally one site available in Leominster. Chaperones and volunteers will not be required to participate but may pursue this if overnight trips are involved. Need to discuss procedural pieces. Mr. Mackin commented as to the thinking behind this requirement as being anyone who has direct and unmonitored contact with students. Ms. Sroka asked about employees currently in the district if this would affect them. Superintendent Calmes replied that this would not affect current employees of the district. These regulations relate also to storage, retention and destruction of records, training of personnel, how to interpret information provided, and standards of suitability. Recommendation from policy sub-committee that we do not accept 2nd party determinations such as an employee working for another district, we would not accept that districts determination. Will post policy online after first reading at next meeting. Discussion as to regulations of sharing information and confidentiality. Certain information we are obligated to report to the state commissioner. Policy based on model from the state. Welcome public comment and feedback.

- School Lunch Policy: this is to address the insufficient funds and negative balances incurred by the district. Account deficits have grown as it is the districts philosophy that children should be well nourished to learn and engage. Some districts have a “no lunch” policy, which our district is uncomfortable with as we believe the child should not be penalized as it is the parent’s obligation to pay their lunch balance. In this policy after 30 days of account in deficit, there will be a penalty of 18% interest. Within 90 days it is the superintendent’s recommendation to give account to a collection agency. Currently, alerts are sent through our automated system every Friday, and Rev Track sends an additional alert when a child’s lunch balance is low. In addition, the district communicates to families the opportunity of applying for free/reduced lunch if they are having a financial hardship. Currently a \$9,000 deficit. Ms. Sroka commented that at \$2.75 a day for lunch, some families were 109 days in deficit. Providing “alternative lunches” to students was not providing parents with consequences for their account deficit. Policy outlines payments, returned checks and balances rolling over to the next school year. Will post on website and would welcome public feedback.
- CORI Policy: District has had this implemented for years, but no formal policy. Using state model as to how records are maintained and accessed, and how we train individuals. Small population of people within the district that are trained and have access to this. Will post draft on website. Ms. Sroka commented on having several organizations in town request the same individual provide different CORI checks. Due to sensitivity of information, each organization needs direct information from the source and cannot share with anyone. This is provided from the state at no cost.

* Old Business – none noted.

* Public Comment – none noted.

* Reports

- a. Finance Committee –Dr. Berthiaume reported that there had been no meeting.
- b. School Councils – school councils had met and discussed the school improvement plans.
- c. PTO – Ms. Shapiro reported that they had not met. Ms. Sroka reported the Spring Fling fundraiser will be on this Sunday, June 8th from 3-7pm. NY Life will be doing fingerprinting and Child ID’s. Hot air balloon rides from ReMax. No fee, just pay for activities.
- d. Policy Sub-Committee: Working on policies discussed tonight.
- e. Capital Planning Committee – They are currently done for the year.
- f. Wellness Advisory Committee –Have not met yet.
- g. PAC/SAL – Ms. Shapiro reported that they are meeting next Friday the 13th at 11am.
- h. Acceptance & Diversity Committee: Dr. Berthiaume reported that they met on June 12th, and an out briefing will be done at the next school committee meeting on June 18th.

- i. Building Re-use : Mr. Mackin reported that at the meeting on June 2nd they added to the list of buildings under consideration. The old Primary School Building was added as the developer of senior housing abandoned the plan to use this building. Currently under consideration are TCP, Brooks House, Ritter Building, Town Hall and the old Primary School. Discussion as to understanding the nature of the vote concerning the TCP building as the building needs to continue to be accessed until the new school building is built. May need to take a new vote. Joint workshop meeting with planning committee to understand the village bylaw and how this affects the reuse of the buildings.

j. Other-

* Items for Future Discussion: Superintendent Calmes clarified that DNA testing was not part of the Child ID event at the PTO Spring Fling.

* Executive Session – Dr. Berthiaume stated there was no need for Executive Session. Mr. Mackin made a final motion to adjourn regular session. Ms. Shapiro seconded.

* Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. at the conclusion of regular session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Petersen
Recording Secretary