



Lunenburg Public Schools

Dr. Kate Burnham, Superintendent of Schools

MEETING NOTICE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MEETING

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Executive Session, Town Hall 6:30 p.m.

Regular Session, 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

School Committee

Heather Sroka, Chair-present
Wendy Bertrand, Vice Chair-present
Brian Lehtinen, Secretary-present
Carol Archambault-present
Jim LaVeck-present

Superintendent

Dr. Kate Burnham-present

Business Manager/ HR Director

Michael Cassidy-present

Recording Secretary

Student Representative

Claire Delaney

Guests:

Behavioral Health Advisory Council-Dr. Allison Pigeon-School Psychologist, Carolyn Finch, Nursing Coordinator, Jamie Millett-Social Worker, Sue Cavaioli-LHS Guidance Counselor

In accordance with the requirements of Open Meeting Law, please be advised that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast over the Lunenburg Public Access channel.

Mission Statement: The Mission of the Lunenburg Public Schools is to provide all students with the skills, confidence, and passion for life-long learning so that they may find their own paths to successful careers, active citizenship, and rewarding lives.

1. *Call to Order*-call to order by Ms. Sroka at 6:30p.m. to enter Executive Session.
2. *Executive Session: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel*
Roll Call: Ms. Sroka-yes, Ms. Bertrand-yes, Mr. LaVeck-yes, Ms. Archambault-yes, Mr. Lehtinen-yes
3. *Chair's Report*-Ms. Sroka stated members attended informative session regarding new standards being piloted this year and next regarding Superintendent evaluation. Ms. Sroka also spoke with Mr. Rodgers after the last meeting and will provide details during workshop portion.
4. *Presentations*- Behavioral Health Advisory Council- Ms. Carolyn Finch and members from council presented their presentation regarding high school student stress today vs. in the past. Provided survey to high school students, and 80% responded. Goal was to take data from survey concerning student stress in academics and homework, to help students better manage stressors and in turn perform to their fullest potential. "Climate of Care" framework designed by James Connell suggests that in order for a student to be successful, they need to feel that they fit in and have supportive connections with others. LHS survey suggests that 20% of students do not feel they have a support they can go to, and 25% feel they do not fit in. LHS is working to provide more support through Advisory, Student Support Team, PD for Staff, Therapy Dog, etc. More supports are being implemented to establish a climate of care. These supports are important for students considering the data regarding mental health becoming a public health concern. The subject of trauma supports is also an important component. Positive Behavioral Intervention Support and Restorative Justice is being introduced and implemented over time within each School. This presentation can be found on our district website on www.lunenburgschools.net. Ms. Sroka asked what falls Under the trauma category? Answer was that trauma can present itself in different ways but is anything that impacts the students Social/emotional well-being. Staff based education will occur for Grades 9-12, and students will have a Universal Mental Health Mr. LaVeck commented that the percentages of students that do not have supports or feel they don't fit in is a red flag and we need to find out what grade levels this pertains to or if there is an overlap of students that may not have either support or feel they do not fit in. It was explained that students through the screening that are identified as having a moderate/high risk of anxiety or depression will have follow-up sessions with counselors and trained professionals in the school. Acknowledged that strong supports are needed from the Primary School up through all grade levels. Ms. Bertrand asked that if a student is flagged through the screening, would a parent be notified? Answer was yes, depending upon how high the risk was regarding safety.

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Mr. LaVeck asked when positive reinforcement fails, will there be a punitive punishment? Answer was that there should be a logical consequence applicable to an action. Thanked Dr. Burnham for bringing this committee together. Dr. Burnham acknowledged the individuals on the committee and their phenomenal work every day. Ms. Archambault commented on restorative justice and how important it is for children to not just say sorry but to understand that they have to do what they can to fix it. This skill is not learned in the same way today. Dr. Burnham commented the work they have done mirrors the four areas in the Strategy for Improvement.

5. *Public Comment-Agenda Items*- none noted
6. *Review and Approve Warrants, Line Item Transfers*-warrants were on the table for signature. First line item transfer from Primary School for \$3375 from New Furniture Equipment Line to Contracted Services Line to fund additional 150 Lexia Reading Licenses. Second transfer from Primary School for \$41.14 from General Supplies to Office Supplies Line for additional supplies. Last is one from Mr. Londa for \$1766 from Electricity Line to Maintenance of Grounds Supplies for additional mulch for playgrounds in regards to safety. Transfers presented for payment for Extended Day and School Linked Services rental of space at TCP. Ms. Sroka asked if the mulch was rubber or regular? Answer was the child safe rubber mulch. Motion to approve line item transfers as presented by Ms. Bertrand, seconded by Ms. Archambault. Vote: Unanimous.
7. *Review and Approve Minutes*
 - October 16, 2019 Regular Session
 - November 6, 2019 Regular Session
 - November 20, 2019 Workshop Session-noted these would not be presented until the next meeting. Mr. LaVeck made a motion to accept both sets of minutes presented, seconded by Mr. Lehtinen. Vote: Unanimous.
8. *Superintendent's Report*- Congratulated Karen Rash on her retirement. Started in 1997. Started career as a tutor, then became A third grade teacher in 2000, followed by being a Special Education Teacher and most recently a Title I Reading teacher. Thanked Ms. Rash for the service to her students and wished her a happy retirement. Delayed openings with recent storm had announced that Extended Day would be closed that morning which was a departure from past practice, however in consultation with Mr. Londa, this decision is made regarding the following factors: timing and intensity of the storm, functioning of all sowing operating equipment, and staff available to operate equipment. Will send out communication to all Extended Day parents to be prepared that there may be a possibility of a closure during storms depending upon the factors mentioned. If conditions are such that we can open for a delay, we will do so. If a storm comes in the afternoon in which we would have to cancel after school activities, we would notify parents as early as possible during the day, and may have to move pick up time for Extended Day students up a bit if necessary. This all will be on a case-by-case basis depending on a lot of conditions. We will do the best we can to accommodate fully recognizing that any change in scheduling can be challenging. Have assured parents that if she knows that closure is necessary well ahead of time, we will notify parents the night before a storm. Extended gratitude to Jack Rodiquenz and his DPW crew for their assistance in clearing an unexpected amount of snow. Also recognized maintenance and Custodial crew for their work that went on over multiple shifts to clear the snow and open the campus for students. Have had recent calls and emails from parents in regards to robo calls for weather conditions. Due to syncing issue between School Messenger and PowerSchool, we are working with School Messenger to adjust the filters to alleviate this problem. We thank families for their patience while we are working through this. Have date for elevator inspection at the Primary School. Next week, December 10th at 4pm, which requires an overtime inspection. Reminder that Gift Card Drive is underway, Supposed to conclude the drive on Friday. At this point have not had much response, making an appeal to please support needy families. Mr. LaVeck commented that he had confirmed that these cards could also be electronic. Annual Tree Lighting tomorrow evening, however there are challenges with the amount of snow on the Gazebo T lawn. Mr. Rodiquenz and his crew will continue to clear the snow to hopefully ensure the tree lighting will take place. There may be a possibility however of postponement or cancellation. That decision will be made by the Town Manager tomorrow. We will send out an email to families notifying them of the outcome.
9. *Student Representative's Report*- Kyle Weiss reported the senior class doing their clothing drive until December 9th so you can drop off any soft item at any school building including T.C. Passios. Dance for High School this Friday from 6-9pm. Tree Lighting tomorrow, Student Council selling baked goods with proceeds benefitting Lunenburg Lions Club. Winter sports started. Christmas Spirit Week will be in two weeks.
10. *New Business*
Action
 - a. Budget Update Report: Mr. Cassidy reported a quarterly budget report. Salary and wages accounts aligned taken care of by budget transfer on 10/16. Point of clarification on transfer not to create new positions, but to shift funding to which building certain staff members are working from. Health Insurance is properly funded this year. Motivating buildings to purchase supplies as quickly as possible, as will need to cease PO's for this in the Spring. Monitoring substitutes account, absenteeism and overtime account for the custodians. Still one man down. Report looks a little

- different, with a memo and budget details. Highlighting a few negative balances, taken care of by transfers tonight. Some that were not was a special detail. Pending journal entry to move funding. At time when ran report, THES had a negative balance for a PO that needed to be closed. Athletic account at HS, pending journal entry. Furniture pending transfer for HS. Ms. Archambault commented that she appreciated the way it was formatted. Motion to accept by Mr. Lehtinen, seconded by Ms. Archambault.
- b. First Reading Policies # 1501, 1505, 1601, 1801, 3101, 3203.01, 5102, 5226, 5226.1, 5226.2, 5226.3: -pulling policies 1801 and 3203.01 as Policy Sub-Committee meeting scheduled for last night was canceled due to weather. Expect to come back next meeting for first reading. Ms. Archambault asked if they were posted on website, will be posted for feedback. Ms. Bertrand read aloud all titles. Last tree brand new. All 5000 series brought forth for an urgent review due to changes and recommendations from Audit performed last Spring. On 1601, Ms. Archambault asked if the change in date to November was in response to availability of MCAS data. Dr. Burnham responded in part and asked leadership team to suspend the approval of the SIP's to the fall was beneficial. The work over the summer was helpful as well to align goals of SC, Superintendent, Leadership, and Teachers. Ms. Archambault made a motion to waive the first reading of all policies presented, seconded by Mr. Lehtinen. Vote: Unanimous.
 - c. Donations: One donation from Special Olympics in the amount of \$1000 to support our Unified Basketball program. Benefits are widespread, not just for students. Recommend acceptance, will be used to purchase uniforms for the team. Motion for acceptance by Mr. LaVeck, seconded by Ms. Archambault. Vote: Unanimous.
11. *School Committee Goals Workshop*: Ms. Sroka read last year's School Committee goals. Ms. Archambault commented that at the last meeting they discussed that the public still did not understand exactly what the roles of the School Committee are and discussed writing a Ledger article. Get some additional information out to people. Ms. Bertrand commented allowing for some more collaboration. Do we have some time prior to our meetings like 1/8 or 1/29. What topics would we discuss? Ms. Sroka concerned there would be no attendance like the forums Dr. Burnham had held previously. Having people possibly Pre-submit topic ahead of time. Mr. Lehtinen clarified that one topic would be surrounding budget. Mr. LaVeck explained that this would be in regards to a Q & A period during initial discussions of the budget separate from the public hearing to give the public a chance to be heard and ask questions. This would be on the agenda as a Q & A. Redoing survey a possibility. Mr. Lehtinen clarified that in a broader sense to increase communication in various forms for the public to understand the role of the School Committee. Mr. LaVeck suggested members of School Committee could be part of other organizations to be part of the community and be visible. Increase in community presence. Ms. Sroka thought this is hard as the elected body changes when there is an election. Very civically engaged right now. Written statements from the School Committee to other organizations could be helpful taking it directly to them. Ms. Sroka does not feel that is the School Committee's job, and people should be seeking out the information. Dr. Burnham said we could potentially select a meeting for a budget topic and have a Q & A period after the presentation to create dialogue. Want community involvement, but not always a wide variety of feedback to help inform decisions. Ms. Bertrand commented was there a more direct way to provide information to stakeholders. Dr. Burnham suggested maybe a quarterly newsletter? Mr. LaVeck stated that the School Committee not only encompasses Parents but also the community. Survey last year was only parents, not community based. Could read function of School Committee before every meeting. Spoke about social media and the uninformed comments posted. Committee agreed that Many people read the Ledger and thought a practical step forward would be to write Ledger articles discussing their role. No town-wide avenue currently to provide survey to all. Should they send out survey again at different time of year? Survey sent now to have targeted letters addressing roles that the public does not understand before May election. Two seats will be available. Could each member write an article on different topics to send to the Ledger? Felt budget process goal was fine but to solicit more public input during the process. Will try Q & A with enough notice so people will attend. Would do presentation first and next meeting would have the Q & A. Could have two goals-budget and communication. Operating protocols complete. Subject of Pledge of Allegiance raised. Could they read this before every meeting, mentioned by community member Mr. Rodgers as well. Discussion whether all buildings are reciting this every day. Dr. Burnham will explore whether this is happening and will report back. Ms. Bertrand made a motion starting at the next meeting on 12/18 that the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited following the call to order, seconded by Mr. Lehtinen. Vote: 4 members acceptance, 1 member declined. Discussion as to having an informational Facebook Page for the School Committee-who would run it and what would be on it. Mr. Lehtinen said that as secretary he would be willing to share information such as agendas, presentations, links, etc. No comments at all from public, too difficult to manage. Private group to start.
 12. *Old Business*-none noted
 13. *Public Comment-Open* –Lisa Leblanc LEA president and teacher commented that they are matching donations for the Gift Card Drive up to \$500. Great to work together for Lunenburg.
 14. *Topics for Future Discussion*- Ms. Archambault attended last ROAR presentation, spoke about Freshman Orientation. Need to educate families more regarding opiod addiction. Young man spoke who was a hockey player and became addicted due to a hockey injury. Not sure if this is discussed during Health class. Has to be a family component. Mr. Lehtinen liked the idea of more forums except they have not been well attended to date. Important family topic. Ms. Bertrand asked if there are presentations like this that are filmed, could they be posted on the School Committee page or provide a link to information? Trying to plan a presentation from DA's office surrounding social hosting, SRO addressed parents before the prom twice about this topic. Multiple topics tying into the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee and Wellness committee. Ms. Sroka asked on ½ PD Days, could we facilitate something for students about these topics. Dr. Burnham said this is a challenge to try

- and find a way for parents to engage in these topics. Dr. Burnham mentioned that as part of his School Improvement Plan this year, Mr. McGrath, LHS Principal is addressing the data points discussed during the presentations.
15. Adjournment- Mr. Lehtinen made a motion to adjourn at 9:19pm, seconded by Ms. Bertrand. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,
Liz Petersen