



# Lunenburg Public Schools

Dr. Kate Burnham, Superintendent of Schools

**MEETING MINUTES**  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, March 20, 2019  
LMS Collaborative Room #D132  
7:00 p.m.

School Committee

Heather Sroka, Chair-Present  
Wendy Bertrand, Vice Chair-Present  
Carol Archambault, Secretary-Present  
Meredith Weiss-Present  
Jim LaVeck-Present

Student Representative

Alizah Raboin-Present

Guests:

Kyle Weiss-  
LHS Student

Superintendent

Dr. Kate Burnham-Present

Business Manager/ HR Director

Michael Cassidy-Present

Recording Secretary

Christine Hladky-Present

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*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.*

1. **Call to Order**-Ms. Sroka called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Chair's Report**- Ms. Sroka discussed the misinformation remarked during the previous School Committee meeting. The discussion indicated the public was not made aware of the budget gap. The budget timeline was presented to the public as follows: Superintendent Burnham presented the initial recommendation budget during the December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting with the School Committee. The School Committee was informed of the large gap and the proposed 5.9% budget increase. At that point, Superintendent had not yet spoken to the town manager. Meetings were held on January 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> for faculty to be informed of the gap. Two community forums were held on January 28<sup>th</sup> at the Eagle House and Lunenburg Middle school. Both forums were well publicized. A District wide email regarding the budget was sent February 7<sup>th</sup>. School Committee was presented with the budget update on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr Burnham and Mr. Cassidy provided the Superintendents proposed budget to the Finance Committee on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Awareness of the budgetary issues has been communicated to the public since December 19<sup>th</sup>. Public comments will consist of no more than three minutes per speaker or 10 minutes per public comment.
3. **Public Comment-Agenda Items**- Ms. Beardmore presented information to advocate for the French program. Included in programs of studies in towns around Lunenburg. Most schools have French. Many schools offer 3 and 4 languages to their students.  
Mr. Weiss does not understand the reason for cutting the advisory groups.  
Mr. Mackin discussed his concerns about the current direction of the budget in a year where the revenues are up. Urged the School Committee to maximize the position using the town budget to avoid cuts. If additional funds become available would like the French program to be reconsidered.
4. **Review and Approve Warrants & Line Item Transfers**-Ms. Sroka acknowledged the warrants on the table for signature.
5. **Review and Approve Minutes**- Ms. Sroka entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Bertrand moved to approve the recent meeting minutes as revised. Mr. LaVeck seconded. Vote: "Unanimous."
  - March 6, 2019 Regular Session
  - March 6, 2019 Executive Session

6. **Superintendent's Report-** Superintendent Burnham discussed the emergency school cancellation occurrence on March 12<sup>th</sup> due to a water main break on Mass Ave. All students must attend 180 days of school. Primary school will have to make up the day. June 13<sup>th</sup> will be the last day of school for Turkey Hill and LMHS. June 14<sup>th</sup> will be the last day for the Primary school. Starting a pilot school breakfast program at the Middle school. Begin serving on March 25<sup>th</sup> in the cafeteria at 7:45 a.m. Cold breakfast options. Similar to the lunch program. Offer model not the Serve model. Select three items to include a fruit. Full pay students cost \$1.50. Reduced cost students 30 cents. Public school funding-joint committee at the State House. Primary School principal search made an offer to one candidate. Withhold an announcement on the name. Will provide a formal announcement next week.
  
7. **Student Representative's Report-** Ms. Raboin discussed the annual "Jump rope for Heart" on Friday March 29<sup>th</sup> at the Primary school gym. For grades 1 and 2. After school 3:20 p.m.-4:15 p.m. Spring book fair takes place April 1st-3rd at the Primary school. Turkey Hill Elementary started Spring activities. Running 5-week sessions. Volleyball, kickball, board games, yoga, 3-D sculptures, and crafts. National Honor Society blood drive will be held on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Annie Junior the musical will take place on May 10th. Tickets are \$10. Spring sports have started. Begin competing in the next week or two.
  
8. **New Business**  
**Discussion**
  - a. **Soldier's Angels Presentation-** Mr. Weiss discussed the fundraising that benefits veterans. Company is based in Austin, Texas. Sell shirts to the High School students. Shirts and shorts to athletes. Sell during advisory times. Ms. Raboin indicated the goal is to raise money and rally the sports teams together. Ms. Archambault inquired if the proceeds go to Texas. Mr. Weiss stated the proceeds are sent to the base in Texas but the funds help nationally. Will provide around 50% of the sales to the fundraiser. Shirt cost averages \$8. Items are priced differently. Organization assists in the needs of veterans. Student council begins evaluating charities in January. Charity is voted upon.
  - b. **Personnel Report Update-** Mr. Cassidy indicated there are two teacher retirements. Ms. Sroka entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Bertrand moved to approve the personnel report as a document in progress. Mr. LaVeck seconded. Vote: "Unanimous."
  - c. **Superintendent's Report of Entry Findings-** Superintendent Burnham discussed her report of entry findings. The full report can be accessed and viewed on the district website at:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1edXv6Er3JpOBvwqDoK87JGygENYL\\_5rU/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1edXv6Er3JpOBvwqDoK87JGygENYL_5rU/view)  
Ms. Weiss inquired as to how the district has done so well since there has been no curriculum leader. Superintendent Burnham indicated the dedication and investment of the staff has made a difference Ms. Archambault indicated the report findings show a good base to move forward. Captured the District well.
  - d. **School Committee Goals-** Ms. Sroka discussed the goals. Goal 1. Increase community awareness of the School Committee role. The committee will use multi-modal communication in order to increase community awareness of the role of the School Committee. Increased community awareness will be measured using pre and post surveys of the community administered in the fall of 2018 and the summer of 2019. Results will be shared with the community in October of 2019. Work on a survey. Workshop meeting. Goal 2. Approach the budget process with impact on teaching and learning as a focus in order to ensure resources are allocated to achieve the highest impact on teaching and learning. The governance team, committee and Superintendent will implement a new transparent approach to budget development for FY20. The FY20 budget will: 1. Be developed by the district leadership team through a collaborative process. 2. Incorporate prioritized requests with justifications. 3. Be submitted to the Committee by the Superintendent. 4. Be approved by the Committee following an opportunity to ask questions of department and building leadership following the Superintendents budget presentation. Action items-Superintendent Burnham discussed the action items to include: empowering the Superintendent to evaluate and prioritize line items with the leadership team. The budget will be presented in a clear manner allowing all stakeholders to understand what is included in the budget, why it is necessary, and if cuts are needed, exactly what cuts would be made. Ensure all operational line items are as lean as possible in order to make new requests that impact teaching and learning possible. School Committee members will discuss the changes implemented in the FY20 budget process at the conclusion of the process and provide feedback to the Superintendent regarding their level of confidence that through this transparent process, resources have been allocated to the highest impact on teaching and learning. The School Committee will create, administer, and analyze a survey on department and building leaders in order to determine the degree that which they feel the FY20 budget process was collaborative, transparent and unified the leadership team around a teaching and learning environment. Ms. Sroka discussed Goal 3.-Develop and adopt operating

protocols. In order to increase efficiency of School Committee meetings, the Committee will draft, implement, advise as needed to adopt operating protocols by April 2019. Final two actions will go through Town Hall.

#### *Action*

- e. ***Appointment of SC Negotiation Representatives***-Superintendent Burnham indicated the Secretaries union is entering into negotiations and, based on past practice, a member of the School Committee will be a part of the team. Ms. Archambault indicated she would be the representative to meet with them. Ms. Weiss moved to appoint Ms. Archambault to the negotiating committee to the secretaries. Mr. LaVeck seconded. Vote: “Unanimous.”

#### **Old Business**

##### *Action*

- a. ***School Choice FY20***- Superintendent Burnham recommends supporting 20 choice students to the freshman class and 10 choice students to the junior class. Current class size of 2020 is 127. 26 slots are available at Monty Tech. 122 students in the current sophomore class. Ms. Sroka entertained a motion to approve. Mr. LaVeck moved to open the choice slots recommended by the Superintendent of 20 for the freshman and 10 for the sophomore class. Ms. Archambault seconded. Vote: “Unanimous.” Superintendent Burnham indicated the electives were factored into the decision of the number of school choice slots.
- b. ***Transportation Bid***-Mr. Cassidy indicated that one vendor submitted a bid; Dee Bus Company out of Shirley, Massachusetts. General transportation Contract is increasing 3.45%. The bid is average to below average compared to other local communities. Transportation expense in FY17 was 105k. FY18 was 80K for after school events and field trips. Asking for approval to draft a contract. Will bring to the School Committee for signature. Bid sheet is estimating over 5K miles for athletic events. Making efforts to reduce. Average wait time is 4 hours. General education transportation will be seen every year. Supported by athletic fees. Additional costs will come out of the activity fees. Revenues offset the costs. Does not impact the local budget. Subsidized by athletic fees. Ms. Archambault moved to approve the school bus transportation bid as presented. Ms. Weiss seconded. Vote: “Unanimous.”
- c. ***Third Reading Policy 5402 & 5406***- Ms. Bertrand presented the third reading of the policy number 5402. “Student Harassment” in its entirety. Mr. LaVeck presented the third reading of the policy number 5406 “Interrogations, Search & Seizure” in its entirety. Both full versions of the policies can be found on the district website at: <https://www.lunenburgschools.net/school-committee-1/sc-district-policies> Ms. Sroka entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Weiss moved to approve the third reading of the policies. Ms. Archambault seconded. Vote “Unanimous”.

##### *Discussion*

- d. ***FY20 Budget Update***- Discussion FY20 update Superintendent Burnham indicated the target budget has been raised from 2.5% to 3% increase for an amount of 101k. Evaluate teaching and staffing positions first. Additionally, look at the stipends being withheld for next year. Strive to restore stipends at any level. Mr. LaVeck hopes to maintain the French program. Ms. Weiss indicated student percentages seem to be stable throughout all languages on the third year. Ms. Sroka discussed providing an update on positions during the next meeting.
9. ***Public Comment***- Open- Ms. Beardmore indicated the stipends on afterschool funds are in jeopardy. Activities have enriched the education and experience at the school.
- Mr. O’Connell (Jr.)-Appreciates the effort the school has made in participation and active following of the budget process. Resources for students regarding town participation are lacking. Concerned about the funding of the clubs. Offering two languages does not measure up to other schools.
- Ms. Violette discussed the school clubs as being essential. Provides opportunities and foundational understanding. Clubs allow education to be more dynamic.
- Mr. Weiss indicated the 30 additional school choice spots will pose restricted electives on students.
- Mr. O’Connell commented that strategic plans can and should change, a strategy for improvement is wasteful. Evaluate the transportation and staff to remedy the deficit. Arts produce diversity. Encourage a higher enrollment.
- Mr. Mackin discussed the Superintendents entry plan involving communication. Current operating protocols does not allow all of the public to speak. Asks the School Committee to look at the protocols and revisit. Supports ensuring an efficient meeting.
- Ms. Kelly requested the hiring of the first-grade teacher be set as a priority.
- Mr. Beardmore indicated the phasing out of the French program recently became public. Decision about cuts considered was not specified earlier. Believes students will be impacted.

10. **Reports**

- a. Charter Review- Mr. LaVeck indicated the next meeting will be held on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Will discuss the legality of the language town council.
- b. Athletic Advisory- Mr. LaVeck indicated the next meeting will be held on the first Tuesday of April.
- c. Finance Committee- Ms. Archambault discussed the departmental presentations. Discussed budget updates. Next meeting will be held tomorrow. Town budget presented on March 28th at 6:30 p.m.
- d. Blizzard Bags Advisory- Ms. Archambault contacted surrounding towns to evaluate issues. Some good suggestions. Will have a great impact on the administrative staff. Put on the agenda to discuss after the budget. Department heads could impact the program.
- e. Wellness Advisory- Ms. Bertrand discussed the finished survey of student's in middle school regarding overall wellness habits. Taking next steps to administer. Will determine how the data will be used. Working with cafeteria manager in an online forum to discuss nutrition.
- f. Policy Subcommittee-Meet next Monday.
- g. PTO-Ms. Weiss indicated the Parents Trivia Night will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. at the Townsend Country Club. Bring a team or create one.
- h. School Councils- Ms. Archambault indicated Turkey Hill met yesterday. Discussed the literacy task force. Excited about starting the program. April 1<sup>st</sup> Kylee's Kare Kits for Kids fundraising is holding a jog-a-thon. Looking for one more bicycle donation. Concerns over possible change in Title 1 distribution. Ms. Weiss indicated the high school met at the end of February. Discussed possibly changing the four-year math requirement to a three-year math requirement. Looked at other schools. Most students take the four years who plan on attending a university. Benefits other students who are not good at math. Looked at surrounding schools. Ms. Bertrand indicated the Primary school met last week. Discussed principal search and the school improvement plan. Mr. LaVeck indicated there was no middle school update. Meeting will be held next week.
- i. Capital Planning Committee-No update

11. **Topics for Future Discussion.** - Entry findings, School Committee goals, Fund our Future resolution, School Council trip
12. **Adjournment-** Ms. Sroka entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bertrand moved to adjourn at 9:23 p.m. Mr. LaVeck seconded. Vote "Unanimous".

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hladky-Recording Secretary