



# LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## *REGULAR MEETING MINUTES*

---

**Date:** February 17, 2021  
**Time:** 6:30PM  
**Location:** Pursuant To Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying The State's Open Meeting Law Issued March 12, 2020, Meetings Will Be Held Using Remote Participation As Follows: Members Of The Public May Not Participate In-Person And May View The Meeting Via LTC.ORG (On-Line; Live Streaming Or Local Cable Channel 99) And Zoom.

Pursuant To Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying The State's Open Meeting Law Issued March 12, 2020, Meetings Will Be Held Using Remote Participation As Follows: Members Of The Public May Not Participate In-Person And May View The Meeting Via LTC.ORG (On-Line; Live Streaming Or Local Cable Channel 99) And Zoom.

### 1. SALUTE TO FLAG

### 2. ROLL CALL

**On a roll call at 6:38 p.m., members present were, namely: Mr. Hoey, Mayor Leahy, Ms. Martin, Ms. Clark, Mr. Descoteaux, Mr. Dillon and Ms. Doherty.**

### 3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

**3.1.** Members Of The Public May View The Meeting Via LTC And Those Wishing To Speak Regarding A Specific Agenda Item Shall Register To Speak In Advance Of The Meeting By Sending Email To The Superintendent Indicating The Agenda Item, A Phone Number And Email Address So We Can Provide A Zoom Link To Access The Meeting. Email Address Is Mpalazzo@Lowell.K12.Ma.Us If No Access To Email You May Contact Us At 978-674-4324. All Requests Must Be Submit It Before 3:00 PM On The Day Of Meeting.

### 4. MINUTES

**4.1.** Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 3, 2021

**Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 3, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of February 3, 2021; seconded by Ms. Clark. 7 yeas APPROVED**

**4.2.** Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of Wednesday, February 3, 2021

**Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, February 3, 2021 and the Special School Committee Meeting of February 3, 2021; seconded by Ms. Clark. 7 yeas APPROVED**



## 5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter: February 17, 2021

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED**

## 6. MOTIONS

**6.1. [By Jackie Doherty]:** To reconsider approval of the Permission to Enter for \$228,150.00 to RCM Health Services pending more information regarding efforts to fill the open positions.

Ms. Doherty asked about advertising and was told no advertising was done. The posting has been refreshed and the administration will continue to try to hire full time unionized people for these positions.

This motion was withdrawn.

## 7. SUBCOMMITTEES

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to poll members to schedule a Finance Subcommittee and a Facilities Subcommittee for next week; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

**7.1. Equity & Access Subcommittee:** Report and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, February 2, 2021 [Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

Ms. Doherty, Chairperson of the Equity & Access Subcommittee and the report included informed the Committee about the school assignment findings shown below based on review of the K-4 data below:

1. As pertains to the Voluntary Desegregation Plan, Zone 1 and Zone 2 fall within the racial balance as of 62% - 82% minority student enrollment (targeted 72% with +/- 10% above or below the 72%) for the broader elementary school population in both scenarios (choice assignment vs proximity to school assignment).
2. As relates to individual school racial balance (not a requirement of the Desegregation plan), two (2) school's individual racial balance are outside the parameters set in the Voluntary Desegregation Plan.
3. As relates to students identified for McKinney Vento services, some schools may have higher percentages of McKinney Vento students due to the following factors:
  - a. Location of shelters
  - b. Socio economics of the neighborhood
  - c. Doubled-up families
4. As relates to economic data, some school's economic balance will exceed the district average of 50% student population identified as high needs based on direct certification, (replaced free and reduced price lunch data process).



Ms. Doherty stated that there will be ongoing data analysis and emerging policy considerations. She stated that the Subcommittee is looking for some newcomer proposals, information about curriculum driven programs and information on how brood the assignment moving forward will be and asked for it to be presented at the next Subcommittee meeting.

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 7yeas APPROVED**

## **8. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

### **8.1. COVID-19 Data Monitoring**

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer gave the Committee a COVID-19 Data monitoring update that included the Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 and Percent Positivity Rate. It also reported the number of total staff and students as reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) of positive COVID cases, total number of quarantined due to in-person instruction, total number of quarantined due to outside school factors, the approximate number of quarantined from September 1, 2020 through February 12, 2021, as well as COVID-19 positive cases per school from September 1, 2020 through February 12, 2021. He stated that the district applied to utilize the Abbott BinaxNOW antigen testing program for when more students are in school as well as sponsored pool testing. Lowell Public Schools also have a Covid-19 dashboard that provides data, protocols and guidelines, where to go to get tested, what to do if you test positive or if you have come in contact with someone who is positive, and information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Dr. Hall stated that the goals for returning to in-person learning are February 22, 2021 (3%), March 1, 2021 (25%), and April 1, 2021 (expansion of our in-person learning model to include additional students beyond those assigned to in-person learning at the beginning of the school year). He stated that the district will continue to monitor PPE availability and options, continue to meet with City personnel on facility readiness and potential improvements, monitor onsite COVID-19 testing grants and options, meet with the City to collaborate on testing capabilities, work with the city to enhance contact tracing, and provide information in regard to vaccine availability for school personnel. The report included information from the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education regarding vaccines and eligibility. The report concluded with considerations for an April 1<sup>st</sup> return and what a 2:3 Hybrid Model is an overview of potential Lowell Public Schools Hybrid Plan.

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

### **8.2. Districtwide Key Performance Indicators: Midyear Report**

Dr. Guillory presented the Districtwide Key Performance Indicators: Midyear Report to the Committee. The report included the following as well as a report that included strengths and areas for improvement.

- Key Performance Indicators
- Renaissance Network: Instructional Rounds
- Quality Improvement Plan: Status Check



Ms. Doherty asked how many surveys were sent out to parents regarding the data information and how they were sent out and how many replied.

Ms. Phillips stated that about 3000 surveys were sent out via email, text, phone calls, facebook, etc. and that the survey closed today so the information provided in the report was preliminary information.

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

### **8.3. Report on Motions**

Superintendent Boyd provided the Committee with an updated report on the status of outstanding motions and asked the Committee if they had any concerns or questions.

Ms. Doherty asked why Mr. Descoteaux's motion from February 19, 2020 regarding School Site Councils hasn't been completed. She stated that it's been a year and the Committee is supposed to approve the School Site Council plans. She requested information regarding terms, how they do the elections, etc. be included in the report.

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

#### **8.3.1. Response to Motion 5.CEEO of 02/03/21 by Jackie Doherty Regarding COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution**

A copy of the letters that were letter to Governor Baker, the State Delegation, City Council and Board of Health requesting that urban and low-income districts be prioritized for COVID-19 vaccination distribution was provided.

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

#### **8.3.2. Response to Motion 5.CEEO of 02/03/21 by Connie Martin Regarding Meeting Postings and 48 Hours In Advance Materials**

**Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the revised Lowell School Committee Rules that include Section 11; seconded by Ms. Clark. 7 yeas APPROVED**

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

#### **8.3.3. Response to Motion 3.CAO of 12/09/20 by Bob Hoey Regarding SEL Resources**

Ms. Desmond, Chief Academic Officer stated that the district is currently reviewing potential service models for additional SEL supports throughout the District. At this time, in-person SEL locations have not been implemented due to safety concerns based on active COVID cases in Lowell. The District is



currently using other options for social workers to connect with parents, students and their families. The District has taken measures to identify student and families need. Building based social workers have provided a number of options for parent /student outreach such as: google classrooms, zoom parent meetings, home visits, referrals for outside agency assistance, teacher consultation and staff training around mental health and social emotional learning. The District also implemented the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) screening tool. The goal of the DESSA tool is to universally screen, assess, monitor progress, measure outcomes, and strengthen the social-emotional competence of all students, K-12 in a strengths-based format. This assessment assists staff in identifying a student who might not have been previously established as needing or requiring assistance. The next assessment periods are set to be conducted in March and June. Recently, school social workers participated in data collection to provide further insight to current offerings at each building. Individual building leaders may have different asks for social workers when it comes to parent and family outreach; however, of the social workers who responded to the survey, they indicated that the majority of their time is spent conducting student check-ins, social groups, counseling referrals and teacher consults to support students.

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.4 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

#### **8.4. Personnel Report**

The Personnel Report officially informs the Committee of all retirements, resignations, promotions and new hires.

Ms. Martin asked about the high number of staff who have resigned in the Special Education Department. Mayor Leahy asked why the positions haven't been filled and asked for an update at the next School Committee meeting.

#### **8.5. Home Education**

Superintendent Boyd recommended that the following parents/guardians be allowed to home educate their child:

Amanda Campos  
18 Pineview Avenue

**Ms. Clark made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED**

### **9. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **9.1. Budget Transfer**

**Mr. Dillon made a motion to approve a budget transfer of \$315,770.28; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED**



## **9.2. Pre-School Registration Policy Revision**

Committee members expressed concern with parents only being able to register online and asked for language to be added that provides additional assistance for families while registering.

**Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the Pre-School Registration Policy Revision with the addition to the policy of access for parents over & above the online choice; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 6 years, 1 nay (Mayor Leahy) APPROVED**

## **9.3. 2021-2022 School Committee Meeting Dates**

**Mr. Dillon made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 School Committee Meeting Dates; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 yeas APPROVED**

## **9.4. Vote to Accept Donation from Fred Morel**

**Mr. Hoey made a motion to accept and approve a donation from Fred Morel; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 7 yeas APPROVED**

## **9.5. Approval of WestEd Research Study Proposal**

WestEd, in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass), is conducting an independent research study of an online math tutoring platform for sixth grade math classrooms. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (R305A190256), the Personalized Affective Learning Study will investigate the impact of using the MathSpring platform for 6th grade math instruction on teacher practices and student achievement. MathSpring is a free, research-based, online platform that students use to practice math in topic areas selected by a teacher. WestEd is proposing to lead a randomized control trial study to test whether MathSpring improves student outcomes related to learning and attitudes toward math that will be for the 2021-22 school year and run through December 31, 2023. Teachers who wish to participate in this study will be randomly assigned to either the "immediate use" treatment group or the "delayed use" control group. Professional development will be provided and the use of MathSpring will be given to teachers of the treatment group for the 2021- 22 School Year. Teachers that are assigned to the control group will use their existing math instructional and homework practices for the 2021-22 School Year and then may begin to use MathSpring in the following year (2022-23).

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to approved I-Ready Diagnostic Research Program Proposal; seconded by Ms. Clark. 7 yeas APPROVED**

**Ms. Martin made a motion to hold a Curriculum Subcommittee meeting in the first week of March to discuss Special Education; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 7 yeas APPROVED**



**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Dillon made a motion to adjourn at 8:51 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D., Superintendent and  
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

**JDB/mes**