



# LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## *REGULAR MEETING MINUTES*

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**Date:** March 31, 2021  
**Time:** 6:45PM  
**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.

### 1. SALUTE TO FLAG

### 2. ROLL CALL

**On a roll call at 6:48 p.m., members present were, namely: Ms. Doherty, Mayor Leahy, Ms. Martin, Ms. Clark, Mr. Descoteaux and Mr. Dillon. One seat is temporarily vacant due to a resignation.**

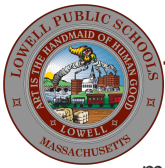
### 3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

**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. NEW BUSINESS

#### 4.1. Update to Temporary Transportation Policy for SY20-21

Mr. Descoteaux, Transportation Director provided a report to the Committee that informed them that based on guidance issued from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that stated *"in all cases, maximum distance between students should be maintained during boarding and transportation. Capacity limitations and physical distancing requirements for students on buses are lifted. Keep windows open at all times during operation at least two inches. Students should be assigned to a single bus and a particular seat. This will limit potential exposure and make contact tracing easier to conduct."* Mr. Descoteaux stated that the transportation department estimates that fifty-two (52) middle school and seventy-seven (77) elementary students would be able to be transported on each individual bus to and from their respective schools. He stated that 1400 students (K-5) will be transported on April 5, 2021 and a total of 1,960 students will be transported when the middle schools 6-8 return on April 26, 2021. He stated that students in grades K and 1<sup>st</sup> will receive bus passes in the



mail and students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> have all been contacted and informed that they need to go the Lowell Public Schools website and click on the bus icon, enter in their student ID number and their route, time and bus number will appear.

Ms. Doherty requested a column be added to the next report that informs the Committee how many are in each school and how many are remote.

**Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve the adjustment of the Temporary Transportation Policy for SY20-21 to allow those in grades K through 8 to be bused if they live within 1.75 miles of their school; seconded by Mr. Dillon. 6 years, 1 vacancy APPROVED**

#### 4.2. First Reading of 2021-22 School Assignment Policy

Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer provided a report to the Committee delineates the process for next year's kindergarten students and students new to the school district. She stated that this policy includes the recommendations discussed at the Equity Subcommittee Meeting which includes the following:

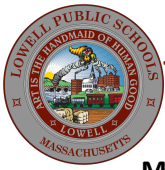
- Revise school placement weights and closely monitor the balance of diverse students across school placement
  - ie. proximity to school, race/ethnicity, gender, economic status and language
- Revise lottery placement weights
  - Consider factors other than solely "siblings"
- Implement the city-wide lotteries at several points throughout the year with full school placement targeted for mid-August
  - ie. Elementary School Kindergarten Class – at least 50% lottery placement in June, at least 25% in July, remaining % in August
- Begin the "first-come, first-served" assignment process after mid-August
- Communicate to incoming kindergarten families that the middle school feeder pattern is under review.

Ms. Phillips reviewed the policy with the Committee and stated that she will be adding non-minority balance per the consent order under the High School section of the policy and that she will also revisit consistency around the weighted lotteries and report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Dillon shared concerns about the process and felt it was unfair to families the way it is currently written.

Ms. Doherty asked if a flow chart could be provided to the public regarding the student assignment policy that can visually explain the process and the lottery. She asked if it was possible to provide the flow chart to the Committee at the next School Committee meeting.

Mayor Leahy expressed concern around the date of the lottery and if the lottery could take place earlier, because he felt mid-August was late for parents to find out. Ms. Phillips stated that they will try and place students as early as possible.

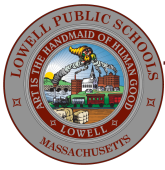


**Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the First Reading of the 2021-2022 School Assignment Policy with changes forthcoming for the final reading; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 5 yeas, 1 nay (Mr. Dillon), 1 vacancy APPROVED**

## **5. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **5.1. Letter from the USN to the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**Mr. Dillon made a motion to accept the communication and to place it on file; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 6 yeas, 1 vacancy APPROVED**



## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to adjourn at 7:41 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Clark. 6 yeas, 1 vacancy  
**APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,

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

JDB/mes