



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 03, 2019
Time: 6:30PM
Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:32 p.m., all members were present, namely: Mayor Samaras, Mr. Descoteaux, Ms. Doherty, Mr. Hoey, Mr. Lay, Ms. Martin and Mr. Nutter.

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

3.I. Spotlight on Excellence: Kathryn P. Stoklosa Knowledge Bowl Competition 2019

The first Spotlight on Excellence recognized the Wang School, champions of this year's Kathryn Philbin Stoklosa Knowledge Bowl Competition. Carolyn Rocheleau, Coordinator for the 2019 competition spoke briefly about the competition and then introduced Matt Stahl, Principal of the Wang School. Mr. Stahl thanked Ms. Rocheleau and introduced the school coaches, Karen Cole and Jolane Roy who then introduced their students.

3.II. Spotlight on Excellence: Generation Citizen's Civics Day

The second Spotlight on Excellence recognized Generation Citizen's Civics Day. Lowell Public Schools attended the Generation Citizen's Civics Day on December 4, 2018 at the Massachusetts State House. Grade eight students from the Bartlett, Butler, Pyne/Arts, Robinson, Sullivan, and Wang Schools, along with students from Lowell High School attended this event. Mr. Nangle from the Pyne/Arts and Mr. DeLossa from Lowell High School spoke to the Committee about the program. Several students then shared their projects with the Committee.

4. MINUTES

4.I. Minutes: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes from the March 20, 2019, Lowell School Committee meeting; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 7 yeas APPROVED



5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.I. Permission to Enter: April 3, 2019

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 years APPROVED

6. MEMORIALS

6.I. Memorial - Moser

Morris Moser, father of LPS Data Analyst Kim Lew and father-in-law of LHS Scheduler Mark Lew.

6.II. Memorial - O'Brien

John O'Brien, Father of Sharon Lagasse, General Manager of Food and Nutrition

6.III. Memorial - McQueen

Donald McQueen, father of MaryLou MacKenzie, Wang School teacher.

6.IV. Memorial – McMahan

Gerald McMahan, friend of Bob Hoey and LHS graduate

6.V. Memorial – Kinney

Georgina "Betty" Kinney, retired Lowell High School math teacher.

7. MOTIONS

7.I. **[By Andy Descoteaux]:** Ask that the Superintendent check with all school principals to verify if all classroom teachers are reciting the Pledge of Allegiance every day, as required by Mass General Law.

Ms. Descoteaux made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 years APPROVED

7.II. **[By Andy Descoteaux]:** Ask the Superintendent to work with the City Manager to try and obtain the use of some of the Greater Lowell Technical students to help alleviate some of the open work orders that are overwhelming our city workers.

Assistant Superintendent Turner informed the Committee that she had already met with the Greater Lowell Technical Vocation High School and unfortunately it interferes with the unions and the unions have said no. She will reach out again.

Ms. Descoteaux made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 years APPROVED



7.III. [By Gerard Nutter]: School Committee vote to request City provide minimum 42% of their NET School spending requirement in the form of a cash contribution to the Lowell Public School System in the next Maintenance of Effort Agreement.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.IV. [By Gerard Nutter]: School Committee request in the next Maintenance of Effort Agreement that the City CFO or their representative attend the 2nd School Committee meeting every January with a detailed report on Maintenance of Effort charges year to date and October with a detailed report on Maintenance of Effort charges for the previous school year.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.V. [By Gerard Nutter]: Request for a Finance Subcommittee before the next School Committee meeting and have Assistant Superintendent Turner present a list of policy and procedures that have been put in place that address many of the oversight and accounting issues raised in the Fiscal Audit.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.VI. [By Gerard Nutter]: Request Mayor invite City Auditor to attend the next School Committee meeting to address questions / finding stemming from the Fiscal Audit and best practice procedures. Among the issues to address:

- a. Use of School Facilities - The school department directed the City Auditor's office to reclassify \$180,000 of general fund operating expenditures to this fund. The only supporting documentation for this reclassification was a reference to the school budget. There was no direct correlation to the facilities use receipts. As a result, we consider the expenditure non-compliant with the MGL
- b. The school department charged the annual district-wide alarm system bills (\$46,197) and locker repairs (\$6,200) to the fund. We consider these expenditures non-compliant with the MGL as they are general operating expenditures.
- c. School Choice (Fund 1119) – per MGL, these funds are to be used for “expenses incurred in providing education for school choice students”. More than \$50,000 was reclassified to the school choice account from the state hurricane relief grant. The supporting documentation provided (explanation only) was that these costs related to transportation. As noted above, expenditure reclasses should have supporting documentation; otherwise they should not be approved by the City Auditor's Office.
- d. How the Auditor allowed the Superintendent to submit a full year budget that was never voted on by the Lowell School Committee and why he never notified the City Council, Mayor or City Manager?

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 yeas APPROVED



7.VII. [By Gerard Nutter]: Request Mayor to explain why the existing Lowell School Committee Policy BDF - Advisory Committees to the School Committee was not followed when naming the Blue Ribbon Panel? Noting on the following last line of that policy. The school committee possesses certain legal powers and purgatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the school committee. The committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve the members of the Blue Ribbon Committee; seconded by Ms. Martin. 6 yeas, 1 nay APPROVED

Mr. Nutter made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 7 yeas APPROVED

8. SUBCOMMITTEES

8.I. Finance Subcommittee: Report and Approval of the Meeting of Wednesday, March 20, 2019 [Gerard Nutter, Chairperson]

Mr. Nutter, Chairperson of the Finance Subcommittee moved to accept this report as a report of progress. The Finance Subcommittee meeting addressed the outlook for the FY20 budget.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

9. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

9.I. Response to Jacqueline Doherty's Motion of March 20, 2019 regarding Lowell High School Dual Enrollment Program

Marianne Busted, Lowell High School Head of School provided a report that detailed student enrollment in the dual enrollment courses for 2019. The report also included a list of the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Middlesex Community College Dual Enrollment courses offered to Lowell High School students each semester for the 2018-2019 school year.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.II. Response to Robert Hoey's Motion of February 6, 2019 regarding Cell Phone Usage at LHS

Marianne Busted, Lowell High School Head of School provided a report that informed the Committee that the Lowell High School Staff Voice group was formed this school year to discuss and address issues that impact our staff and our school. The Student Voice Group was also formed this year for similar purposes. She has also been working with consultants Leslie King and Andi Summers in conjunction with Project Learn. Their role is to objectively guide the high school in this important work. The cell phone usage group has met and discussed concerns regarding the use of cell phones. They sent out a survey to



all staff members to get a better understanding of how the staff felt about student cell phone use. The report also included the survey that was sent out about cell phone use and the results.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.III. Response to Connie Martin's Motion of March 6, 2019 regarding Pre-School and Kindergarten Admission Policies

This report was deferred to the next scheduled School Committee meeting.

9.IV. FY 2020 Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments Award

Lisa Van Thiel, Early Childhood Coordinator provided a report that informed the Committee that the Department of Early Education and Care awarded Lowell Public Schools the Inclusive Preschool Learning Environment Grant (IPLE). This is the final year of this grant funding. The grant currently provides the district with \$112,817.00. These funds will be used in FY20 to pay salaries and fringe for three (3) preschool paraprofessional salaries.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.V. Planning for FY20 - Grade 5 Pilot and 5/6 Alternative Program

Acting Superintendent Durkin provided a report to the Committee that informed the Committee that due to budget constraints this year, the alternative classrooms were not created at the Sullivan, expansion of the BRIDGE Program did not occur and the Coordinator and Case manager was not hired to support the Alternative Programs. Due to pending budgetary constraints for FY20 school year the administration cannot recommend the Grade 5 Pilot continuing in FY20. Equity cannot be guaranteed across all grade 5 classes district wide and adding all grade 5 classes to elementary schools is not feasible for the next school year given our current building capacity.

Mr. Nutter made a motion to follow the recommendation of the administration and return the 5th grade to the Sullivan School and to discontinue the Pilot Program; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 yeas, 2 nays APPROVED

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.VI. LEAP Grant Update

Phala Chea, Coordinator of English Language Education Program and Rosa Segarra- Morales, District Support Specialist provided a report to the Committee informing them that Lowell Public School has been awarded an FY19 Fund Code 231 Leading Education Access Project (LEAP) DCP Incentive Grant for \$10,000 by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.



The LEAP Grant will support the district's ongoing efforts to meet the needs of all students by systemically strengthening the knowledge and skills of educators in building inclusive environments and delivering culturally responsive instruction and improving outcomes for all students.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.VII. Update on LPS Technology Plan

Robin Desmond, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment provided a report to the Committee that informed them that the Lowell Public Schools Long Range Technology Plan for 2015 through 2018 needs to be reviewed and updated for the next three (3) years. The original Long Range Technology Plan was created with the support of the Center for Educational Learning and Technology (Celtcorp). The Lowell Public Schools Technology Department is seeking assistance during the 2019-2020 school year to develop a timeline and plan to assess the progress made towards the completion of the 2015-2018 plan and the development of a new Long Range Technology Plan for 2019-2022.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.VIII. Business Office Update

Assistant Superintendent Turner provided an update to the Committee that addressed the following areas:

- Financial Audit Findings
- Food Service
- Facilities Review
- Transportation
- Year to Date numbers on Sick Leave Buy Back/Retirement
- Chief Human Resources Officer Search
- Photocopier Services

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.IX. Lowell TeleMedia Center Proposal

Robin Desmond, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment provided a report to the Committee that informed them that on March 19, 2019, Acting Superintendent Durkin, Assistant Superintendent Desmond and LTC Executive Director Wendy Blom met to review a proposed partnership between Lowell TeleMedia Center and Lowell Public Schools. It was determined that due to limited funding and general public access restrictions to Lowell High School Colleen Creegan Television Studio, the district is unable to support the partnership at this time.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED



9.X. Report on Motions

Acting Superintendent Jeannine Durkin provided the monthly report on the status of outstanding motions and asked the Committee if they had any concerns or questions.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.XI. Enrollment Figures

The district enrollment report provided to the Committee showed the breakdown by school and grade through March 29, 2019.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.I through 9.XI with the exception of 9.III as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

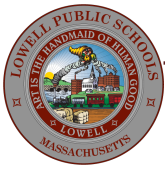
10. NEW BUSINESS

10.I. Resolution-School Committee Support Massachusetts Senate Docket 101, The Education Promise Act

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to approve the Resolution-School Committee Support Massachusetts Senate Docket 101, The Education Promise Act; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 7 yeas APPROVED

10.II. Food Service Management Contract

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve the Food Service Management Contract with Aramark Educational Services, LLC; seconded by Mr. Nutter. 5 yeas, 2 nays APPROVED



11. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Martin made a motion to adjourn at 8:56 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Nutter. 7 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

**Jeannine M. Durkin, Acting Superintendent and
Acting Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

JMD/mes