

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Tuesday, August 22, 2017
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA

Present:

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini; Vice Chair, Eileen Jay; Jessie Steigerwald;; Kathleen Lenihan Superintendent, Dr.Czajkowski;

Absent: Kate Colburn

The minutes were taken by Kristen Cronin, Executive Assistant to the School Committee and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

The meeting convened at 6:30 pm

Call to Order and Welcome:

Chair Alessandro Alessandrini called the meeting to order and introduced committee members.

At 6:30 p.m., in open session, the Chair moved that the School Committee vote to go into Executive Session under Exemption 3: To Discuss Strategy with Respect to Collective Bargaining pertaining to Technology Unit.

Lenihan – AYE; Jay – AYE; Alessandrini – AYE

6:45 move into open meeting

Public Comments:

Superintendent's Announcement:

Dr. Czajkowski welcomed everyone back from summer break. , We welcomed 75 new educators to Lexington at today's New Teacher Orientation. Thank you to Mr. Alessandrini for speaking at today's event on behalf of the School Committee. Wonderful event and thank you to our leadership team, and thank you to Kari Grossman, our Human Resource Manager, Kelly Chase, our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning, and Monica Visco, our Director of Human Resources, who organized the event.

Opening day for all staff is Monday, Aug. 28th at 8:30 a.m. in the Lexington High School Auditorium. The schedule for our students' return is published on the Lexington Public Schools website. It was also published in the Lexington Minuteman on August 10.

Transportation Update: Bus routes have been finalized except for students that are still registering and new to Lexington. Bus passes and letters have been organized by homeroom and distributed to all schools. As of today, there are 3,625 completed registrations and we have added three additional buses to accommodate the growth in enrollment. Special thank you to Transportation staff, Ian Dailey, and Central Registration Staff for a smooth transition into Lexington for our students and families.

Update on Diamond Middle School and Clark Middle School: Dr. Czajkowski met with Pat Goddard, Mark Barrett, Shawn Newall, Interim Facilities Director, Ian Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Jen Turner, Principal at Diamond and Anna Monaco, principal at Clarke, to discuss the building project status of both middle schools. Number one priority is to ensure that the buildings are safe for staff and students to enter. There is a list of things the contractor, Bond, needs to complete in order for the Inspector to certify occupancy. Inspectors will be going to Clarke on Wednesday for Thursday approval and Diamond on Thursday for Friday approval. Anna Monaco will update families via Blackboard Connect if the Clarke Open House on Thursday needs to be cancelled. Dr. Czajkowski will receive daily updates from the Facilities Department. Keep in mind that the most important and critical point tonight is the safety of staff and students.

Dr. Czajkowski announced the formation of the Diversity Advisory Task Force. The Diversity Advisory Task Force is a working group appointed by Town Manager, Carl Valente, and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Czajkowski. Anyone interested in applying to become a member of the Task Force is encouraged to read the Task Force Charge, and then complete the Task Force Application. Mail applications to the Town Manger's Office no later than Friday, September 29, 2017. The Task Force Charge and application can be found at <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/diversitytaskforce>

Dr. Czajkowski wanted to remind the community that the afterschool ridership program will be ending after this school year.

School Committee Member Announcements:

Kathleen Lenihan: Time to start thinking about the Debt Exclusion Campaign. Town wide vote that will allow the town to finance the money to build a new Hastings, LCP, and Fire Station (tentatively, Board of Selectman to make final decision). These campaigns need quite a bit of participation from the entire town, not just parents with children in the schools. If anyone is interested in joining this campaign, they can email Kathleen Lenihan, co-chair of campaign at kathleencampaign@gmail.com

Jessie Steigerwald: Will co-chair the Outreach Team for the Debt Exclusion Campaign, Jessie is up-to-date with school projects and fully supports the fire station, appreciates having a Selectman to join the Outreach team to help educate community members about projects on the town side. Moment of silence held for Diane Gallagher, teacher for over 30 years at Clarke and Diamond Middle Schools who recently passed away.

Jessie expressed deep appreciation to her colleagues for joining her for a Unity gathering at Emery Park following the events at Charlottesville. Over 160 people came together at an event pulled together by Deb Zucker, Valerie Overton, Fay Backert, Tanya Gisolfi, and Jessie. Thank you to Lexington Minuteman for getting the word out with such short notice and to Alessandro Alessandrini for expressing a few words on behalf of the School Committee.

Consent Agenda:

1. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes from June 29, 2017
2. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes from July 31, 2017
3. Vote to accept a check for \$300.00 from American International College to be deposited to the Student Gift Account for Fiske Elementary

Motion to approve consent agenda items 1 as amended.

The Motion was approved (4-0).

Agenda:

1. Liaison Re-Assignment for Finance Subcommittee

Motion to Appoint Kate Colburn to the Finance Subcommittee in place of Alessandro Alessandrini
Motion Approved (4-0) (Alessandrini/Steigerwald)

2. Homework Policy – Administrative Guidelines

Superintendent, Dr. Czajkowski, introduced Dr. Kelly Chase, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development, Louise Lipsitz, Principal at Hastings, and Andrew Baker to present the work of the Homework Implementation Plan Committee that was held on August 8 and 10.

Dr. Chase recognized and thanked all who participated in drafting the Implementation Plan. Teachers, administrators, Andrew Baker from LEA, came together in a short amount of time to pull together something that could be implemented and easy to understand across grade levels and by parents, teachers and students alike.

Dr. Chase reviewed the Definitions of Types of Homework including; reading, completion, practice, preparation, extension and creativity. Dr. Chase and Andrew Baker reviewed the calendar of “no homework dates” around legal and religious holidays. The planning committee had a few questions and long discussions regarding Advanced Placement (AP) students. In looking at the current High School Handbook, it was recognized that there are implementation guidelines already in place. (Parameters around AP students already exists) All students are not assigned homework during certain portions of the school year.

The planning committee is looking for guidance/feedback from School Committee regarding when homework assignments about a holiday weekend. For example – the Labor Day holiday falls on Monday, September 4, which means students would not be assigned homework on August 31, nor would homework be collected on September 5. Another example: For Columbus Day/Indigenous People’s Day on Monday, October 9, no homework assigned on Friday, October 6 and no homework collected on October 10.

Jessie Steigerwald suggested including the wording “All Students” to clarify including AP students. Discussion continued to focus on AP students in particular over summer break with reading and science. Andrew Baker communicated to members it was clear School Committee’s intent was for all students not to have homework on said dates, regardless of AP classes or CP1 classes. Other like communities did have exceptions in their policy around AP courses. After going back to our own documents it became evident that it applies to all students now and has applied to all students.

Dr. Czajkowski expressed that with a change this significant it is going to take some time to adjust for teachers and parents. Need to be clear when asked why this policy had to change. Looking for feedback this year from parents, students and teachers. Suggested to have a mid-year evaluation on the homework implementation plan. Want to make sure that by reducing homework not adding

stress to students taking AP courses. Further questions going forward, knowing this will be a bigger conversation over the long term.

School Committee provided their feedback and suggested edits on the Implementation Guidelines to be incorporated for printing and to be presented to staff on Opening Day. It was agreed that at the end of October, Dr. Czajkowski would update the committee on feedback from staff and administrators on the Homework Guidelines.

3. School Building Projects Update

Shawn Newell, Interim Facilities Director, provided an overview of multiple school projects in progress and what will be completed in time for the opening of school.

- Elementary Modular Classrooms
- Bridge and Bowman school paving
- LHS Nurses Renovation
- LHS NVR/Camera upgrade
- Middle School Construction

4. FY19 Budget Guidelines and FY19 Budget Calendar

Annually the School Committee reviews and approves the Budget Guidelines at the beginning of the budget development process. These guidelines provide the administration with the framework to develop the Fiscal Year 2018-19 budget.

Ian Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, reviewed the draft guidelines, in consultation with the School Committee's Finance Subcommittee, for School Committee review and feedback. Feedback at tonight's meeting, August 22, 2017, will help shape the guidelines further. School Administration plans to return at the September 5, 2017 School Committee meeting for a vote to finalize and formally begin the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 budget process with priorities. Mr. Daily recommended an additional meeting in October to review the FY18 Capital Budget Request which will then be forwarded to Capital Expenditures Committee for review.

It was agreed by the committee to add an additional meeting in October, as well as dates in January in the event that the Public Hearings on the budget need to be cancelled due to snow. In addition to a placeholder for debt exclusion vote on December 7.

Mr. Daily went on to review the FY18 Budget Guidelines and FY19 Budget Guidelines.

The committee suggested the following be added to FY19 Budget Guidelines:

- To identify funds necessary to provide Health Education at the elementary level to support District Wide Wellness Goals for Youth.
- To identify funds necessary to support changes in Graduation Requirements and/or changes in Science course offerings and sequencing at the secondary level; expenses might include any necessary professional learning needs or teacher certification expenses.

5. Vote to Approve Estabrook Elementary Traffic Plans

Mr. Ian Daily, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, updated the committee on the Estabrook Elementary Traffic Plans.

The School Administration at Estabrook Elementary School seeks to make minor adjustments to the on-site traffic plan to improve safety. These adjustments include striping changes and additional signage to reinforce the one-way direction pattern of the parking lot on site. This will be achieved by updating striping (in the lot) and by adding two do not enter signs (at the south end of the lot). Upon receiving this request, the members of the Transportation Safety Group were assembled to promptly review the request and provide feedback. This meeting occurred on Monday, August 7, 2017. The proposed changes were shared with the full Transportation Safety Group to determine if there was any additional feedback. None was received.

School Committee policy requires approval of the School Committee before traffic plans are formally changed. There were questions and comments from the committee.

Move to approve the changes included in Estabrook Traffic Plan beginning in the 2017-2018 school year as shown attached, per School Committee Policy EEAC.

Motion Approved (Alessandrini/Steigerwald) 4-0

6. Vote to Approve Middle School Traffic Plans

Mr. Ian Daily, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, gave a brief summary on the Middle School Traffic Plans.

Move to approve the Clarke and Diamond Middle School Traffic Plans beginning in the 2017-2018 school year as shown attached, per School Committee Policy EEAC.

Motion Approved (Steigerwald/Alessandrini) 4-0

Motion to adjourn.

The Motion was approved 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Meeting Materials: Agenda; A.1 - none A.2- Homework Policy Implementation Plan Draft A.3- Powerpoint on School Construction Project A.4- FY2018-19 Budget Calendar; FY2017-18 Budget Guidelines; FY2018-19 Budget Guidelines A.5- Estabrook Traffic Plan A.6 – Clarke Traffic Plan; Diamond Traffic Plan