

DRAFT
 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023 – OPEN SESSION
 HYBRID MEETING

In-person Attendance: John MacLachlan (Chairperson), Tara Mitchell (Vice Chairperson), Adam Hogue, Kim Rajdev, Susan Taylor, Becky McFall (Superintendent), Jessica Rose (Assistant Superintendent), Mary Ellen Normen (Administrator for Business and Finance), Lisa Berard (Administrator for Student Services), Robert Ford (Director of Instructional Operations and Technology)

Virtual Attendance: Kim Mack (METCO Representative)

Absent: Laurel Wironen (Hanscom Educational Liaison)

LPS – Lincoln Public Schools District

DESE – Massachusetts Department of Early and Secondary Education

METCO - Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity

AIDE – Anti-racist Inclusion Diversity Equity

SEL – Social Emotional Learning

1. Greetings and Call to Order

Mr. MacLachlan, Vice Chairperson, called the open session to order at 6:00 PM via hybrid participation. Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, as further extended on June 15, 2021 by the Governor's signing of Bill #2475, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted as a hybrid meeting with both in-person participation and remote participation via Zoom.

2. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Taylor reported on the following:

- She thanked Lisa Berard and Principal Sarah Collmer for their participation in the parent and caregiver forum. The discussed bullying discipline and SEL supports.
- She attended a climate action forum. They provided translations in mandarin and Spanish. She suggested that other groups and committees might want to consider offering translations. It felt welcoming.
- She attended the Outreach Roundtable with Ms. Berard. The COVID and flu rates are down but tests are flying off the shelves. Now part of a 7 town regional program that will offer mental health training. Ms. Berard will work with Trish McGean to get it subsidized. Other topics discussed include:
 - April vacation busy bags available at Lincoln Public Library.
 - Opportunities online to share reaction to 21-Day AIDE Challenge.
 - Marked increase in folks losing their home. Ms. Berard asked if any of the homes have children to reach out to.
 - Lots of hiring going on through various departments and town boards.
- IDEA meeting is analyzing data from the survey that went out.
- On Tues March 21 the LPTO is holding a candidate forum for the contested elections for School Committee and the Planning Board.

3. Public Comments - none

4. Consent Agenda - none

5.0 Time Scheduled Appointments **Finalist Withdrew**

5.1 Interview ~~Dr. Roy D. Sermons – Finalist Candidate for Lincoln 5-8~~

~~Documents: Dr. Roy D. Sermons Resume and Cover Letter~~

1
2 **5.2. Mid-year Literacy and Math Data Roll-up**

3 **Documents: Lincoln Public Schools Winter Literacy and Math Data Roll-up**

4 Dr. Rose and Math Content Specialist Kathy O'Connell presented the iReady math data roll-up. They
5 highlighted a few points in the entire data report that was sent to School Committee members and is now
6 included in the packet and available on the LPS website:

- 7 • Monitoring our data 3 times per year: Fall, Winter, Spring
- 8 • First time rolling data up in this high level way across the district
- 9 • Trying to understand patterns and trends happening across a school or grade or the whole district
- 10 • Literacy: comparison data from Lincoln and Hanscom campuses
- 11 • Snapshot in time
- 12 • We are growing our ability to collect this data and analyze what we are seeing.
- 13 • Differences across demographic groups are very varied.

14
15 The School Committee members discussed the following with Dr. Rose and Ms. O'Connell:

- 16 • Ms. Mack asked what are we doing to improve the numbers for black students who are performing
17 lower than white students? Dr. Rose responded that we already knew that we had gaps across races
18 particularly with our black students. Are we seeing data that we are closing those gaps? We have
19 data that shows some of the work we are doing is having an effect on black students.
- 20 • Kathy O'Connell presented vignettes on 3 students: 2nd grader, 3rd grader, 4th grader to show what it
21 means for supporting students.
- 22 • Mr. MacLachlan asked if iReady is helpful in moving our students forward? Dr. Rose responded that
23 iReady and Internal Data can work in tandem to create the best supports for our students. We will
24 need to be really deliberate in the way we are administering and the way we are analyzing.
- 25 • Mr. Hogue asked how this data correlates with MCAS data? Dr. Rose responded that i-Ready
26 correlates closely with MCAS results but the instruction that our teachers provide is what will make
27 growth for our students.
- 28 • Dr. Rose noted that for the first time ever pulling up spreadsheets because we have never done this.
29 Other districts are piloting i-Ready without sharing data or reports. We have been very transparent
30 and would caution anyone to expect to see immediate impact.
- 31 • Ms. Mack stated that we are spending a lot of time focusing on the data collection. She asked for
32 specifics on what is being done in the district to make improvements. While the data is being
33 collected students are falling behind. Dr. Rose responded that this is not just a collection of data.
34 Grade level team meetings are coming together to look at it and identify the students that need
35 intervention. Specialists are partnering with teachers to work with specific students. Those
36 conversations help to create individualized plans.
- 37 • Dr. McFall added that the district has had intervention support and intervention specialists for years.
38 The i-Ready data helps to make sure the right students are getting the right supports. The
39 interventions treat the fish but it is not treating the groundwater. Which is why the administration is
40 proposing instructional coaching to make sure we have high quality instruction in every classroom
41 every day.
- 42 • Ms. Mack asked if the administration has reached out to faculty to come up with other initiatives in
43 addition to what we are doing now? The district has a long way to go so we should see what others
44 can come up with. Dr. McFall replied that she thinks the administration is pretty attuned to best
45 practices but it's a matter of making sure that they are occurring in every classroom every day. A
46 great deal of work occurs in order to determine which students get the needed support.
- 47 • Ms. O'Connell offered examples of interventions happening in the classrooms. Students come off
48 interventions and then some have interventions added. It happens about 6 weeks at every grade level.
49 The intervention can only go so far but trying to reach the wider group is also where we are trying to
50 make some improvements.
- 51 • Ms. Mack asked if the district is aligning the curriculum to i-Ready? Ms. O'Connell replied that the
52 curriculum is aligned to MA state standards and i-Ready is aligned to the MA state standards.

- 1 ● Ms. Taylor asked about students on IEPs. Dr. Rose responded that if given the modifications that are
2 required it should be aligning with students that have IEPs. Ms. Berard added that it is tricky when
3 looking at students with disabilities. Every single one of the kids should be making targeting progress
4 toward their specific goals. Ms. O'Connell added that there is also a process to learning how to take a
5 standardized test on an electronic device and on paper.
- 6 ● Mr. MacLachlan asked if teachers are embracing i-Ready? Dr. Rose replied that some are embracing it
7 and some are still trying to get comfortable with it.
- 8 ● Mr. MacLachlan thanked Dr. Rose and Ms. O'Connell for bringing all of the information forward. He
9 noted it is an incredible foundation of data and information.

11 5.3 Interview Jason Peledge – Finalist Candidate for Lincoln 5-8

12 Documents: Jason Peledge Resume and Cover Letter

13 Mr. Peledge introduced himself.

- 14 ● Feels a sense of comfort because he was a part of the Lincoln Public Schools faculty for 7 years at
15 Hanscom Middle School.
- 16 ● The only Principal position he applied for.
- 17 ● A place he can effect change and would be comfortable.

18
19 Ms. Taylor: As a middle school principal, tell us a few specific actions you would take to foster a sense
20 of belonging for all students, families and staff?

21 Mr. Peledge:

- 22 ● This is critically important. It's about connections and relationship building.
- 23 ● Enacting and supporting student advisory council.
- 24 ● Helping students navigate how to make those connections and skills-building. Help them to build a
25 bridge.
- 26 ● Setting up ways that the schools can serve as a hub for people in the community.
- 27 ● Helping parents to find ways to connect outside of school.
- 28 ● Making sure the school can also serve as a place where community members can use the building to
29 connect.

30
31 Ms. Mitchell: One of the challenges of being a principal is holding teachers accountable for the implementation
32 of the district strategic plan (Portrait of a Learner) while also providing autonomy for teachers. What do you
33 do to deal with this push and pull and what have you done to find a balance in your current school?

34 Mr. Peledge:

- 35 ● Bring 21 years of education experience in 3 different districts. So having that perspective is helpful.
- 36 ● Try to be an empathic listener.
- 37 ● Teachers are often worried that they will be forced to do something that they are not prepared for or
38 have the knowledge to do.
- 39 ● Sometimes the leader has to be direct.
- 40 ● The challenges for teachers have changed over the last few years. The environment has as well.

41
42 Ms. Rajdev: Can you describe your definition of quality and effective instruction?

43 Mr. Peledge:

- 44 ● Making really strong connections to your students.
- 45 ● Kids will understand if you really care about them.
- 46 ● Effective instruction will allow you to get to know them. Their strengths and weaknesses and interests.
47 Making sure you are assessing appropriately.
- 48 ● Making sure that kids have ways to show you what they learned and that they feel invested.

49
50 Mr. Hogue: Over the years we have noticed test scores in classrooms have varied greatly between
51 grades as well as between different sections within a grade. How would you go about getting the test

1 scores/results closer among grade levels and sections? How would you get teachers to work together
2 to close some of those gaps?

3 Mr. Peledge:

- 4 • Work on making sure we have an established sense of trust and safety.
- 5 • It's also about accountability. It's about all of us making each other better. If we're better then
6 our students will get better.
- 7 • Looking at some of the data and asking teachers what they are doing in the classroom.
- 8 • It really starts with getting people together and understanding that we all have strengths.

9
10 Ms. Mack: How should a school use data to ensure equitable outcomes for students?

11 Mr. Peledge:

- 12 • Data is an obvious barometer. It can be looked at on a fairly consistent basis.
- 13 • Looking at teams or individuals that need more support.
- 14 • Differentiate for the student.
- 15 • Data can feel deflating when students don't meet their goals. Scores can tell us that we are doing a great
16 job and students are growing but it changes. Not all students are the same.
- 17 • Data can help us figure out what we need to tweak to make improvements for students.

18
19 Mr. MacLachlan: There has been a national uptick of social and emotional issues including depression and
20 anxiety with adolescents over the last ten years. What are your thoughts on what has caused this crisis and
21 what would you propose doing to address it within our middle school?

22 Mr. Peledge:

- 23 • Have gone up significantly over the last few years particularly with pandemic.
- 24 • Students have access to so much more connection to one another.
- 25 • Something a person says or does can have a negative impact on relationships with people
26 because of social media.
- 27 • Feeling judged. It puts an incredible amount of pressure on students. Not an acceptable level
28 unless we ace the test every time. A feeling of not being good enough.
- 29 • Would advocate for additional counseling.
- 30 • Helping teachers understand some different strategies that they can use to help and work with
31 their students to build up some success.

32
33 Mr. Peledge offered closing remarks noting that he appreciates the opportunity to meet with the School
34 Committee and feels humbled and honored to potentially become the next principal at the Lincoln 5-8.

35 36 **5.4 School Building Committee Membership Conversation**

37 **Documents: Memo from Buckner Creel Re: Composition of the School Building Committee,** 38 **March 8, 2023**

39 Ms. Kim Bodnar and Mr. Buckner Creel joined the meeting virtually. They thanked the School Committee for
40 allowing them to be part of the meeting.

41 Summary: The School Building Committee (SBC) was formed in 2017. Twelve people make up the team and
42 there have been some changes to the composition of the SBC. As the SBC heads into the final few months there
43 is now an issue of quorum. The Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) meets on Wed. nights, same
44 night as the SBC. There are some changes in people and roles. Tara Mitchell is rolling off the School
45 Committee later this month. She has accepted the offer to remain on the SBC to the very end. The School
46 Committee needs to accept the reconstituted SBC. The second ask is that School Committee make a motion to
47 appoint Ms. Mitchell as a School Committee appointee.

- 48 • Mr. Creel noted that the SBC is asking that Ms. Mitchell stay on and execute the change orders on behalf
49 of the School Committee.
- 50 • Ms. Taylor asked if there is any conflict of not having an actual serving SC member on the SBC? Dr.
51 McFall noted that the SBC is coming to the tail end but there are still some financial pieces that we are
52 working on. Consistency is most important at this point with someone who has the historical
53 knowledge.

- 1 • Mr. MacLachlan asked when the SBC might wrap up? Mr. Creel replied that the committee hopes to
2 wrap up in August. We have a few issues that we are working out with the contract. The goal is to
3 wrap up in the early part of the summer.
- 4 • Ms. Bodnar added that Select Jennifer Glass has served on this board since 2017 and she rolls off in
5 March. She is running uncontested for a select seat. Ms. Glass and Ms. Bodnar cannot serve together on
6 this board.

7
8 Ms. Taylor motioned that the School Committee move forward with the recommended SBC list as stated in the
9 memo from Mr. Creel. Mr. Hogue seconded.

10 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – yes. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.

11
12 Mr. MacLachlan motioned to appoint Tara Mitchell to the School Building Committee. Ms. Taylor seconded.

13 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – yes. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.

14 15 **5.5 Interview Benjamin Niles – Finalist Candidate for Lincoln 5-8**

16 **Documents: Benjamin Niles Resume and Cover Letter**

17 Mr. Niles introduced himself as a lifelong educator.

- 18 • Teacher for 10 years before becoming the head of the school.
- 19 • Would love to join the LPS community especially after his visit to the district.
- 20 • Public school experience but also includes the progressive environment.
- 21 • Watching students come into the class with buckets of sap “sang to my soul.” Looking for a small
22 community and excited about Lincoln’s community commitment to education.

23
24 Ms. Taylor: As a middle school principal, tell us a few specific actions you would take to foster a sense
25 of belonging for all students, families and staff?

26 Mr. Niles:

- 27 • The students are at an age where they are questioning who they are and the relationships they have.
- 28 • Critical to make sure that school is where they can feel seen, heard and welcomed. We have a kindness
29 club at my current school that is student driven.
- 30 • The sense of belonging that goes on with the AIDE work. Work that LPS has already laid out in your 5
31 year plan.
- 32 • Trying to create an equitable environment.
- 33 • Sense of belonging is the key to having a successful middle school.

34
35 Ms. Mitchell: One of the challenges of being a principal is holding teachers accountable for the implementation
36 of the district strategic plan (Portrait of a Learner) while also providing autonomy for teachers. What do you
37 do to deal with this push and pull and what have you done to find a balance in your current school?

38 Mr. Niles:

- 39 • It can be difficult for a principal to try to find that balance.
- 40 • Make sure you are not set apart physically as a principal.
- 41 • Move throughout the school so you are seen throughout the school by students and teachers.
- 42 • Try to build teams of students and teachers.
- 43 • Need to hold teachers accountable and figure out how to gain their trust.

44
45 Ms. Rajdev: Can you describe your definition of quality and effective instruction?

46 Mr. Niles:

- 47 • Quality instruction has clear goals. There should be a variety of experiences happening but also a sense
48 of predictability.
- 49 • Have touchstones in our classroom environment.
- 50 • Have a pace that is correct for the classroom.
- 51 • A mismatch of personality and pace can lead to problems. A balance of conversation and activity.
52 Finding that balance is important.

1
2 Mr. Hogue: Over the years we have noticed test scores in classrooms have varied greatly between
3 grades as well as between different sections within a grade. How would you go about getting the test
4 scores/results closer among grade levels and sections? How would you get teachers to work together
5 to close some of those gaps?

6 Mr. Niles:

- 7 ● Focus on how to maximize our classrooms.
- 8 ● Observe where things are going well and where we need improvement. Have conversations
9 about best practices with our teachers.
- 10 ● Gather data to present to teachers to help guide their next steps.
- 11 ● Focus on identifying the skills that we need to boost.

12
13 Ms. Mack: How should a school use data to ensure equitable outcomes for students? Looking for
14 specific actions that would come from data outcomes.

- 15 ● We should be looking at demographic information and pairing it with outcomes and behavioral
16 data.
- 17 ● Look at how that data matches up with our goals.
- 18 ● Make sure that consequences are equitable.
- 19 ● Work with staff to reset the policies and procedures.
- 20 ● Attack why you are seeing discrepancies in the data points.
- 21 ● Working on biases within the staff.
- 22 ● Data can be useful for uncovering things that are hidden. So bringing daylight to who we are as
23 a school and how our intentions are meeting up with our reality.

24
25 Mr. MacLachlan: There has been a national uptick of social and emotional issues including depression and
26 anxiety with adolescents over the last ten years. What are your thoughts on what has caused this crisis and
27 what would you propose doing to address it within our middle school?

28 Mr. Niles:

- 29 ● You can see it every day in schools no matter what grade level. The way you tackle it is with a
30 sense of belonging.
- 31 ● Develop an environment of care and understanding.
- 32 ● Anxiety is exasperated if it is met with a punitive approach.
- 33 ● Make sure staff is trained. Bring in professionals who can work with your staff.

34
35 Mr. Niles offered closing remarks and thanked the School Committee for the opportunity to speak with
36 them.

37 38 **5.6 Update on Lincoln School Building Project**

39 **Documents: None**

40 Ms. Mitchell reported that there is no new information because the SBC has not met.

- 41 ● FOMA held an event and panel discussion celebrating the School Revitalization at 6:30 in the Lincoln
42 Learning Commons.

43 44 **6. Superintendent's Report**

45 Dr. McFall reported on the following:

- 46 ● The 21-day AIDE Challenge has helped the Central Office/Hartwell team to come together and get to
47 know each other on a different level. She noted that she will miss the weekly conversations, she
48 thanked everyone who has shared their experiences.
- 49 ● Tonight's interviews ended the public process part of the Principal Search. She is collaborating with
50 Parry Graham. The search committee has given Parry summaries and raw feedback data. He will
51 conduct reference checks. Once completed we will meet again and review all of the information. She
52 and Dr. Graham will make the final decision together. She expects a final decision in about one week.

- Ms. Taylor asked about participation in the process. Dr. McFall replied that there was great participation from faculty and families. The feedback from the student group was incredible.

7. Curriculum

Dr. Rose reported on the following:

- It is the final week of the 21-day AIDE challenge. She thanked everyone who has already participated, specifically community leaders in the various town organizations. The website will remain up though she won't be able to continuously check to make sure the links work. Dr. McFall has been leading work at Hartwell in bringing together staff members who don't often get to work together.
- All of our Responsive Classroom training is complete for the year. It has been a significant amount of work to get everyone trained. It will likely be a big part of strategic planning for the coming year.
- Families have received an invitation on some upcoming webinars that she and Literacy Specialist Gwen Blumberg will be hosting. This will help gain some understanding of how we can support literacy in the classrooms.

8. Community Center Building Committee Update

Documents: 230301 CCBC Report

Ms. Taylor reported on the following:

- The CCBC voted to recommend that the Select Board hire ICON Architecture to prepare schematic building designs and cost estimates for next November's Special Town Meeting.
- One team is working with infrastructure and one team working on how the programs work.
- There will be 3 versions of cost. Most of the cost will come from the site work.
- 3 very different concepts with 3 different approaches.
- Assistant Town Manager Dan Pereira will be conduit for the architects and the community.
- The School Committee needs to make sure we have the spreadsheet of the current programming, including LEAP and Magic Garden. Facilities Director Brandon Kelly will be looking at the spaces.
- Dr. McFall noted that we have the information from the past meeting.
- Mr. Ford added that we will be able to fit into their data and how they are collecting it.
- Ms. Taylor stated that she will come back in April and May with additional information on the surveys and feedback.
- Dr. McFall noted that it would be helpful for the administration to have 2 week's notice because everyone's calendar is full.

9. Facilities and Financial

9.1 Warrant Approval

Mr. Hogue reviewed and approved the warrants from the following dates:

Date	Payroll	AP	Total
2/21/2023	\$ 861,997.69	\$ 210,300.40	\$ 1,072,298.09
3/7/2023	\$ 780,631.89	\$ 1,023,133.62	\$ 1,803,765.51

9.2 Lincoln Bus Transportation Contract

Documents: Recommendation for Contract Award – Bus Transportation Services 2024-2028 dated March 3, 2023

Ms. Normen stated that the request for tonight is for the School committee to award the contract to Doherty's Garage and not include the 2 option years and not exercise the performance bond.

- Doherty's Garage is a responsive, responsible bidder who has offered a reasonable price.
- The bid increase is approximately 5.5%.
- Doherty's accepted the fuel adjustment clause so it will be incorporated in the final document.
- Mr. MacLachlan and Dr. McFall would have that document on Monday.

1 Ms. Mitchell moved to approve awarding Doherty's the contract for bus transportation for FY24, FY25 and
2 FY 26. Mr. Hogue seconded.

3 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – ye. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.
4

5 **10. Policy**

6 **10.1 Policies in Section C of the School Committee Policy Book**

7 Ms. Rajdev reported that she and Ms. Mitchell made the changes that were suggested at the last School
8 Committee meeting, and added that there was one minor change to CHCA. The word Principal was changed
9 to Principals. Mr. Ford noted a change to CBI-R as well.

10
11 Ms. Mitchell moved to adopt and approve the policies in section C as presented tonight. Mr. Hogue seconded.

12 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – ye. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.
13

14 **11. Unfinished Business**

- 15 ● Mr. Hogue suggested adding a new member orientation on the calendar. There is an orientation
16 scheduled for after the March election.
- 17 ● Ms. Taylor suggested that having one meeting in February and one meeting in April left too much of a
18 gap between meetings.
- 19 ● Ms. Mitchell brought forth the idea of making the April 6 meeting a work session and then moving the
20 open session on April 13. The members agreed. The open meeting was moved to April 13th and the
21 work session is scheduled for April 6th.
- 22 ● Ms. Mitchell added that the School Committee AIDE debrief will be held on Monday.
- 23 ● Mr. MacLachlan added that the School Committee will have an executive session at 6:00 with an open
24 session immediately after.

25 26 **12. New Business - none**

27 28 **13. Approval of Minutes**

29 **13.1 Approves Minutes of the January 30, January 31, February 1, and February 2, 2023 School Committee** 30 **Meetings**

31 Mr. MacLachlan moved to approve the January 30, January 31, February 1, and February 2, 2023
32 School Committee Meeting minutes. Ms. Taylor seconded.

33 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – ye. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.
34

35 **14. Information Enclosures**

36 - 2023 Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Award Letter
37

38 **15. Adjournment**

39 Mr. MacLachlan moved to adjourn at 8:43 PM. Ms. Taylor seconded.

40 Roll call vote: Taylor – yes. Mitchell – ye. Rajdev – yes. Hogue – yes. MacLachlan – yes. Mack – concur.
41

42 The next School Committee open meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM.
43

44 Respectfully submitted,
45

46 Amy Pearson
47 Recording Secretary
48

49 *Approved at School Committee Meeting of ...*