

1 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
2 THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021
3 REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM
4 OPEN SESSION
5

6 Present: Tara Mitchell (Chairperson), Peter Borden (Vice Chairperson), Trintje Gnazzo, Adam
7 Hogue, Susan Taylor, Kim Mack (METCO Representative), Laurel Wironen (Hanscom
8 Educational Liaison)
9

10 Also Present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Jessica Rose (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner
11 Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Mary Emmons (Administrator for Student
12 Services), Robert Ford (Director of Technology).
13

14 LPS – Lincoln Public Schools District
15 DESE – Massachusetts Department of Early and Secondary Education
16 METCO - Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity
17 MCC – METCO Coordinating Committee
18 AIDE – Antiracism Inclusion Diversity Equity
19 LAAG – Lincoln Public Schools AIDE Advisory Group
20 IDEA – Inclusion, diversity, equity, antiracism
21 WIDE – Welcoming, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity
22 PTO – Parent Teacher Organization
23 MASC – Massachusetts Association of School Committees
24

25 **1. Greetings and Call to Order**

26 Ms. Mitchell, Chairperson, called the open session to order at 7:02 PM via remote participation.
27 *Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open*
28 *Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on*
29 *the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the School Committee will be*
30 *conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.*
31

32 Ms. Mitchell thanked the administration, faculty, and staff for their ingenuity, perseverance, and
33 dedication during this past year as we hit the one-year mark since the school shut down due to the
34 COVID-19 pandemic. She also stated the Lincoln School Committee has made a commitment to become
35 an antiracist community and will continue to support the AIDE work that the district has been doing
36 that will hopefully lead to a more just and equitable society.
37

38 **2. Chairperson's and Members' Reports**

39 Ms. Mack stated that there are families in our community that are hurting and afraid because of the
40 racism and violence against Pacific Islanders and Asian American peoples in this country this week.
41 She added that as the METCO Liaison and a member of the Lincoln METCO Parent Board she stands in
42 solidarity with people of Asian and Pacific Island descent.
43

44 Ms. Mack reported that the Lincoln METCO Parent Board together with the PTO and MCC will be
45 hosting the 3rd event in the Diversity and Dialogue Series on March 19th from 6:00 – 7:45 pm. Claudia Fox
46 Tree and Mark Liddell will facilitate a conversation about the Indigenous and Black experience.
47

48 Ms. Taylor reported on the following:

- 49 ● She continues to work at the Lincoln COVID 19 vaccine clinic and it is a joyful event.
- 50 ● She attended the Community Outreach Roundtable with Ms. Emmons and there was a lot of
51 positive feedback on the pooled testing and AIDE work that is happening in the schools.
- The first of three sessions being offered by the group WIDE will be held on March 25, 2021.

- Roughly 1,000 people attended the “I’m Not a Racist, Am I?” film viewing and discussion event. She congratulated and thanked all of those who coordinated the event.

Ms. Mitchell reported on the following:

- She attended the PTO core meeting held on March 5 and there was discussion on some fundraising options in regard to pooled testing costs and FF&E.
- She attended the MASC Lunch and Learn on effective meetings and came away with some good ideas that the School Committee could potentially use to help shape meetings going forward.
- She attended the EDCO School Committee Member Roundtable yesterday. Only 4 people attended but there was a great discussion focusing on the transition back to fully in-person school for some districts, vaccinations, and looking forward to next year.

Ms. Gnazzo reported that the second School Committee working session around AIDE work took place on March 11. She added that she and Ms. Taylor continue their AIDE work in the district. She thanked Dr. Rose and METCO Director Marika Hamilton for all of the work they have been doing.

Ms. Mitchell recognized Peter Borden who is leaving the board after many years serving on the Lincoln School Committee. He joined the Committee in 2014 and served as vice chairperson from 2017 until now.

Ms. Mitchell welcomed former School Committee members, Timothy Christenfeld and Jennifer Glass, who served on the Committee with Mr. Borden. Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Glass each spoke on Mr. Borden’s behalf and thanked him for giving his heart and so much of his time to the Lincoln School students and the community.

Following the remarks by Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Glass, each of the School Committee members and Lincoln School Administrators thanked Mr. Borden for his many years of service and for the passion and dedication that he gave to the school and the Lincoln community. They wished him luck in his future endeavors.

Mr. Borden remarked that he is overwhelmed by all of the kind words and added that it has been his honor and pleasure to serve on the Lincoln School Committee.

Ms. Mitchell presented Mr. Borden with a framed picture of the proposed new Lincoln Public Schools building as a token of appreciation for his years of service to the schools and the community. She also thanked Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Glass for taking the time to come back and share thoughts on Mr. Borden’s behalf.

3. Public Comments

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Accept Gifts Totaling \$11,878 to the Lincoln School Tree Fund

Ms. Mitchell stated that there was a correction to the Consent Agenda amount sent out earlier in the week. Only donated gifts, not pledged gift amounts, could be accepted. The new total is \$11,878.

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve the consent agenda items totaling \$11,878 to the Lincoln School Tree Fund. Mr. Borden seconded.

Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor - yes. Mack – concur. Wironen – support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

5. Review of COVID-19 District Dashboard Documents: COVID-19 District Dashboard

1 Ms. Mitchell reviewed the district dashboard and noted that it is nice to see that everything on the chart
2 is green and cases in the surrounding communities are trending down. She reported that there are no
3 positive cases in the schools at this time. She also reported that 73 pools were tested from this week and
4 no positive pools were reported.

5
6 School Committee members discussed the following:

- 7 ● Mr. Borden shared a spreadsheet from the COVID Dashboard Charts and noted trending data in
8 Lincoln and the surrounding districts. He added the data presented was information that was
9 already known from other sources and he recommended to not continue with the district
10 dashboard given that the data is available in other places.
- 11 ● Mr. Hogue and Ms. Mitchell agreed that information from the Dashboard is no longer useful.
- 12 ● Mr. Hogue asked if the schools are collecting data on who has been vaccinated and would
13 having a fully vaccinated faculty and staff change our practices?
- 14 ● Dr. McFall responded that we can ask if people have been vaccinated and having the
15 information would be very useful and that could have a big impact on some of the protocols and
16 practices we have in place. She will make a decision within the next week on how we will be
17 gathering that information. She will update School Committee at the next meeting.
- 18 ● Mr. Borden added that it is important to note that the vaccine is not a cure and a vaccinated
19 person can still get COVID-19. The vaccine reduces the likelihood of requiring hospitalization
20 and potentially the severity of the symptoms.
- 21 ● Ms. Mitchell stated that in future School Committee agendas we will not include the District
22 Dashboard. She noted that it was not voted in so it does not need to be voted out.

23 24 **6. Superintendent's Report**

25 **Documents: Guidance on In-person Learning Requirements**

26 Dr. McFall presented information on the new guidance that was put out by Governor Charlie Baker and
27 DESE Commissioner Jeffrey Riley. She added that families can choose to opt out of in-person
28 instruction and remain in remote learning for the remainder of the year.

- 29 ● On March 5, 2021, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to give
30 Commissioner Riley authority to determine when hybrid and remote models will no longer
31 count towards meeting the required student learning time hours.
- 32 ● The Board recommended a phased reopening process: Phase 1 for K-5 on April 5; Phase 2 for 6-8
33 on April 28; High School timeframe TBA. Lincoln is already meeting the requirement.
- 34 ● Parents will still have a choice for their children to learn remotely through the end of this year.
- 35 ● The assumption is that all students will be in person next fall, likely with some mitigation
36 measures and that DESE will no longer require districts to provide a district-wide remote option.
- 37 ● Next steps include meeting with principals and providing surveys to families regarding the
38 return to in-person learning and bus transportation. The administration also will need to meet
39 with representatives of the Lincoln Educators Association to discuss the changes. The
40 administration, faculty, and staff will begin planning and implementation with distancing
41 reduced as needed in classrooms and on buses.
- 42 ● The administration will also need to consider updates to our protocols based on the guidance.
- 43 ● The goal is to maintain consistency and stability for students and provide more in-person
44 instruction to meet student needs.
- 45 ●

46 School Committee members and the district Administrators discussed the following:

- 47 ● The possibility of retaining a remote learning option after seeing some students thrive in that
48 setting this year. The district would need to apply to be a virtual school.
- 49 ● Identifying pieces of the learning models from this year that we want to keep and aspects that
50 we want to change. More information will be presented later during this meeting.

- Determining the impact on the space and faculty based on the number of students who will return to in-person learning. Will the schools need to collapse some cohorts and pull back some of our remote learning coaches?
- It could be difficult for students to transition at this point in the school year. It could be helpful to put out some pros and cons for families to help with their decision-making without pushing one way or another. Families will determine what is right for their child.
- Surveys will be going out to families, and the administration will come back to School Committee with more information. The transition for families who choose to return to in-person learning this spring will be made after April break.

7. Curriculum

Documents:

Dr. Rose reported that she has spent the last two weeks working with the administration, content specialists, and other faculty members to draft plans for MCAS testing. However, DESE has changed the dates for MCAS. The dates for K-5 were moved to May/June and grades 6, 7, 8 are TBD. The team has decided to pause at this time instead of doing additional work that might need to be changed. She noted that one of the more complicated pieces is that the district will need to offer an in-person option for remote families who would like to come in to test.

8.0 Time Scheduled Appointments

8.1 Family/Student/Staff Surveys

Documents: Survey Feedback on 2020-2021 Model

Dr. Rose reported that families, students, and staff completed surveys reflecting on the year, school learning models under COVID-19, and the AIDE work being done in the district. She noted that the feedback on the surveys will help as the administration considers potential adjustments for the spring and planning for the 2021-2022 school year. She added that more information about the AIDE-centered components of the survey will occur in the future, though race and community certainly will be two of the lenses with which to consider tonight's data.

Dr. Rose noted that there was a strong response rate to the survey: 456 families, 586 students grades 3-5 and 6-8, 196 faculty and staff. She highlighted key trends in responses from students grades 3-5 and 6-8, from families and from faculty/staff across all grade levels on the following topics:

- What are two things your school should keep doing during COVID (in person)?
- What are two things your school should keep doing during COVID (remote)?
- What two things should your school consider changing (in person)?
- What two things should your school consider changing (remote)?

She reviewed responses from additional questions asked to specific groups:

- Students were asked about their excitement about classes in grades 3-5 and 6-8
- Families were asked to what extent they believe their child is getting what they need in order to be successful
- Faculty members were asked to reflect on what the district should keep doing and what it should consider changing

School Committee members and the administration discussed the following:

- Faculty and staff have been working with students throughout the year regarding the trauma and stress that children feel because of the pandemic and will continue to work with them.
- The administration has been working with the mental health group to continue to take the pulse of students from the social-emotional standpoint.
- There will be students and faculty coming back into the buildings for the first time since last year and they may have a range of responses to that transition.

- Dr. Rose reported that there is much more data to look at particularly regarding the AIDE work, and the Administrative Team will present more information to School Committee at a later meeting.
- Dr. Rose reported that DESE is expecting all students, remote or in-person, to take MCAS this year and recognizes there will be challenges in testing students who are remote.

8.2 Shift to Summer Work Hours

Documents: None

School Committee was asked to approve the shift to summer work hours for full-year employees only. The custodial staff will remain on a five-day workweek schedule. Beginning Monday, June 28, 2021, and continuing through Friday, August 20, 2021, the School Department will shift to a four-day workweek with office hours from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Thursday, and closed on Fridays.

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve full-year employees to shift to summer work hours starting Monday, June 28, 2021. Mr. Borden seconded.

Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor – yes. Mack – concur. Wironen – support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

8.3 Update on Lincoln School Project

Documents: None

Mr. Creel reported on the following Lincoln Project updates:

- The construction will now include digging across Lincoln Road in the next week or two.
- Interior finishes are moving forward.
- The roofing is moving along.
- Work is being done on top of the auditorium as well as inside the auditorium. The acoustical ceiling clouds have been restored.
- He encouraged everyone to take a look at the photos on the Lincoln School Building Project website.

Dr. McFall reported that the FF&E Team has been going through all of our proposed costs and is reviewing potential operating budget funds that can be applied to FF&E. EDCO is selling off some furniture due to its closing. The district will be purchasing some of their furniture at 50% of the 2014 invoiced price. LPS was the first to bid and today reserved the desired furniture.

9. Facilities and Financial

9.1 Reporting of Warrants

Mr. Hogue reviewed and approved the warrants:

Payroll = \$768,450.11 A/P = \$162,272.44 Total = \$930,722.55

Ms. Mitchell thanked Mr. Hogue for reviewing the warrants. She added that Ms. Taylor will be reviewing the warrants, in place of Mr. Hogue, for the next few months.

9.2 Review Warrant Approval Process

Documents: None

Mr. Creel encouraged the Committee to adopt permanently the method of designating one committee member to approve the warrants, as the Selects have done. It allows the warrants to be approved in a timely manner. He noted that it allows for a more streamlined process, and the Town Accountant is happy with the process. He added that the MA general law that permits this process has been in place for several years and was not adopted due to the current state of emergency.

1 Ms. Mitchell stated that Mr. Hogue is unable to approve warrants for the next few weeks, and Ms.
2 Taylor has graciously agreed to fill in for him while he is unavailable.

3
4 Ms. Mitchell moved to authorize Susan Taylor to sign the warrants until Mr. Hogue is available again,
5 or through the end of the summer on September 1, 2021, whichever event occurs first. Ms. Gnazzo
6 seconded.

7 Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor – yes. Mack – concur. Wironen –
8 support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

9 10 **10. Policy**

11 **Second Readings: Policy IJNDB**

12 **Documents: Policy IJNDB, Student Use of Third-Party Software Services**

13 Mr. Ford reviewed the revised language change in policy IJNDB to include more specific language
14 regarding the use of software services.

15
16 Ms. Mitchell moved to approve Policy IJNDB Student Use of Third-Party Software Services as amended.
17 Mr. Borden seconded.

18 Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor – yes. Mack – concur. Wironen –
19 support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

20 21 **11. Unfinished Business**

22 **11.1 Communications**

23 Ms. Mitchell spoke with Tim Christenfeld and Roy Harvey regarding their March 4 presentation on
24 electric vehicle charging stations on the Lincoln campus. Mr. Harvey is helping to put together a short
25 survey for staff regarding the charging stations. He is also working with the town’s Green Energy
26 Committee and helping to create an overall Town plan.

27 28 **12. New Business**

29 **12.1 Communications.**

30 Ms. Mitchell asked Committee members to hold open the dates of May 4 and June 1 from 9 – 11 am to
31 meet with Administrative Council to discuss the District Strategic Plan.

32
33 Ms. Mitchell also reported that at the next meeting on April 1 the Committee will need to do some
34 reorganizing as Mr. Borden is leaving and a new School Committee member will be voted in.

35 36 **13. Approval of Minutes**

37 **13.1 Approval of Revised Draft Minutes of the November 12, 2020 School Committee Meeting.**

38 **13.2 Approval of Draft Minutes of the December 17, 2020 School Committee Meeting**

39 **13.3 Approval of Draft Minutes of the February 25, 2021 School Committee Meeting**

40 Ms. Gnazzo moved to approve meeting minutes from November 12, 2020, December 17, 2020, and
41 February 25, 2021 as revised. Mr. Borden seconded.

42 Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor – yes. Mack – concur. Wironen –
43 support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

44 45 **14. Adjournment**

46 Ms. Mitchell moved to adjourn at 9:37 PM. Mr. Borden seconded.

47 Roll call vote: Borden – yes. Gnazzo – yes. Hogue – yes. Taylor – yes. Mack – concur. Wironen –
48 support as presented. Mitchell – yes.

49
50 The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 1, 2021, at 7:00 PM.

51
52 Respectfully submitted,

53

- 1 Amy Pearson
- 2 Recording Secretary
- 3
- 4 *Approved at School Committee meeting of*
- 5