

# EAST LONGMEADOW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES



## District Mission

"Our mission in the East Longmeadow Public Schools is to promote achievement and accountability in all endeavors as we educate today for the challenges of tomorrow"

DATE: January 22, 2019  
TIME: 6:00 P.M.  
WHERE: Superintendent's Conference Room

Meeting called to Order by: Richard Freccero, Chair

Chair stated that this meeting is being both audio and video taped, and asked if anyone else was taping the meeting.

Roll Call: Jake Brady, Student Rep, William Fonseca, Sarah Truoiolo, Gregory Thompson, Richard Freccero, Gordon Smith, Superintendent of Schools, Elizabeth Marsian-Boucher, Pamela Blair, Asst. Superintendent for Business, Kathy Celetti, Recording Secretary

### Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the January 7, 2019 executive session meeting minutes.)

**Sarah moved to approve the January 7, 2019 executive session meeting minutes , William seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5, those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

**Elizabeth: I need to abstain; I was not present for executive.**

**Gregory moved to approve the January 7, 2019 executive session minutes with modification that Mrs. Marsian-Boucher was not present and the vote should be (4-0), William seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (4), oppose (0), abstention (1), motion carries (4-0-1)**

2.2 Approval of the January 7, 2019 regular session meeting minutes

**William moved to approve the January 7, 2019 regular session meeting minutes, Sarah seconded the motion**

**Chair: Any further discussion?**

**Chair: Once again Ms. Celetti wonderful job capturing as much as you did.**

**All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

### Committee/Sub-committee Communications

Elizabeth: ELEE is having their gala coming up February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Richard: Is there a theme?

Elizabeth: I don't think that there is a theme this year. Maybe going with Winter Gala. They are not doing the smaller silent auction items. Mapleshade has some really cool stuff. If you do the auction, they have a couple of things. Principal for the day for some of the schools.

Mapleshade has weeklong activities using different technology that they have gotten, one of which is a laser printer. A couple of really neat experiences for kids from Mapleshade if their parents are willing to come. I really hope he get more families from MS, because they are always under represented.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Fredette does a really great job. I think we reported last year, he met with small groups of 5<sup>th</sup> graders through the entire year. He taught them all a little bit about the 3D printer and how to set that up and how to start a project. So they had an opportunity to some small projects throughout the year.

Elizabeth: It's called Makey Makey, it's a motherboard technology. Kids do a whole weeklong thing with it. To me that's specialized to think outside the box and other really great things too.

Gregory: How do we get tickets online?

Elizabeth: It's posted online. If you go either through Facebook or their website, you can purchase your tickets right online "eleaf.org"

Gregory: And they are \$75 a piece, how many folks per table?

Elizabeth: I think they will do 8-10 per table.

Gregory: Had some follow-up discussions on our discussion last week about the high school potential project. Certainly some interest out there to have some follow-up discussions. So I just wanted to bring that to the attention of the board in the near future.

Sarah: Similar conversations with stake holders wanting to have a conversation regarding the high school. I was also able to go to the Meadow Brook Bingo Night which was wonderful. Strong teacher presence, strong PTO presence. The kids were excited so, it was really a nice evening.

William: The MASC Board of Directors held a President's Retreat earlier this month at the Delaney House, setting goals for this year. There are two big goals that we are going to work on. Passing the Foundation Budget Review Commission's recommendation for increase funding across the board. There is some momentum in both the senate and house this year. It seems that we are awaiting the governor's budget which should probably be out next week. It's supposed to have some kind of education funding update. And in an initiative that I'm directly involved in is the marketing of MASC. A video was made at the conference.

What I will do is talk with the chair, it's a short video, maybe play it during one of our meetings. We will talk about that later. It shows what we are doing with the marketing initiative, getting MASC's name out there and exactly what we do, who we represent and inform everybody what our mission is. It's an endeavor that I am heavily involved in. We will continue to work on all that stuff.

Gregory: The governor, has he mentioned education as a priority?

William: He mentioned it; the Executive Director of MASC had a conversation with the Education Secretary. He didn't give any real specifics, but there are some benches in the house. One budget will be released by the governor that is aiming towards what the Foundation Budget Review Commission's recommendation are. We are just not sure what it's going to look like.

Student Rep: This past weekend a group of student's from ELHS attend the 1779<sup>th</sup> Annual Model Congress at AIC in Springfield. It was a spectacular performance. Two students from ELHS, Math Wilson and Sam Leone managed to pass a bill which is a huge accomplishment in terms of Model Congress. Great news to hear! Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup> the ELHS Art Program hosted their annual Art Show. It was great to see all the art work in the hallway throughout the day.

It really gave the students the opportunity to share their passion with the community. Last week was midterms at the high school. So that marked the end of semester one. Today was the start of semester two. It seems like the vibes and overall moral at the high school are good as we head into our final semester.

Mr. Smith: Do you know if the library got a decent amount of participation in the study nights?

Student Rep: Yes I heard about the study night, I'm not sure about the participation.

Richard: I did attend the Art Show, it was quite innovative. I was surprised with the different types of paintings and designs that I saw. It was really neat! I did attend the boys' basketball game; I'll just leave it at that.

### Opportunity for Visitors to Address the Committee:

Darlene Reese-Sittig - 159 Canterbury Cir.

I attended the last meeting and wasn't going to speak at that moment. I was still going through the stages of grief from the news about the SOI for a new HS being declined by the MSBA. I was somewhere between shock and anger. Those emotions were pretty raw, mostly directed towards MSBA and our state elected representatives for not supporting the efforts of this committee and the school district. I felt that the politicians did not support you guys. I wonder just how much they value the people and voters of East Longmeadow, despite them saying they support the SOI. I am remised that I failed to thank those of you that are in support of a new high school and those of you who have been working on this effort diligently. What I should have stated on record, but I did not, due to my

disappointment with MSBA's decision is that we do have a great faculty and we do have a great teacher staff here. I am thankful that another resident expressed that at the last meeting. My children personally have had a wonderful academic experience thus far. They are safe, they are comfortable and they are learning a lot. They are having a wonderful experience. They have had the most amazing teachers at Meadow Brook and Mountain View. I have been fortunate enough to volunteer both as a room parent at both schools and I serve on the PTO at Meadow Brook. I witnessed great things happening in those schools. I know many people are grateful for the efforts by the school district and from you as a committee. And yet, some of those same people are disappointed by the MSBA's outcome and their decisions to decline your SOI for five consecutive years. The high school in its current state is the first impression that many have of our town. When you have a family member involved in sports or extra-curricular activities and you are not in the high school yet, their first time coming here, their first impression by word of mouth is not great. The past few weeks, I have heard from some rec swim teams and other towns refusing to come to our site for swim meets because of our team facility. I have been at meets when, I overheard comments such as referring to our high school as a dump. This is the perception from other towns. Unfortunately, this has nothing to do with the efforts of anybody in here, nothing whatsoever. Doesn't mean we are not keeping the building safe. I want to make that very clear. Doesn't mean you are not doing your jobs with maintaining the building. Here is what I've been learning since the last school committee meeting. While more of us in the community have been engaging regularly about the situation with a sense of urgency is understanding that you have a short window to reapply should everyone here vote to approve the process to go forward again. I hope you do! Basically there is a need and a desire for this to happen by residents in the town. If you didn't feel that support, I am really sorry; we should have been here six years ago. A new school provides a new learning environment that opens many new possibilities and affords the school district the ability to add those programs or some of those programs that have been removed. Simply because you don't have the space anymore. A new learning environment retains your amazing teachers that are currently contributing, because it shows they are appreciated and allows them to reach their potential as educators. A new learning environment opens up new possibilities of bringing in new academic and athletic competitive programs to retain students and faculty, while attracting new individuals who are the best of the best. That's what we want, attracting new students, teachers, and coaches. Unfortunately, I knew a few families of talented athletes, coming up to the high school age soon, and they are looking at private schools. I hate to hear that because they are number one. I'm competitive; I want to see us win. I want to see the Spartan's win. I know academically, they are amazing and talented. We should be able to retain them in house. Other schools do not deserve your homegrown talent. I heard you guys mention at your last meeting, that there was an enrollment decline. Where are those students going, and why? If we could fine that research out as a group. I say as a group because I want us to collaborate with you guys as residents. I think a new high school is critical to the sustainability of our vibrant community. A new facility is going to help retain residents in the area. Our goals are simple; we hope they are shared with each of you. We want to attract new residents and retain existing ones, to retain a vibrant town and community. Grow enrollment by improving the learning environment of the high school by creating a space and a safe healthy green school while meeting the demands of today's technology. To compete academically in the state and enter the eligibility period granted by the MSBA for the new high school. Lastly, we want to help and support in receiving the Town Councils vote for funding a feasibility study should we be entered into the eligibility period. In closing, the new high school is a place for all generations of our town to come together to create family memories. It advances us academically, enriches the lives of all residents in East Longmeadow and contributes to everyone's property value. I ask you tonight to please vote YES this evening for our Superintendent, Gordon Smith, to submit a new SOI. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Chair: Could you submit a copy of your statement to the Chair

Darleen Reese-Sittig: Yes certainly

Chair: We are voting on this tonight, a lot has transpired in the past two weeks, so I think you will hear we are progressing forward, taking it step by step. Our next target date is February 12<sup>th</sup>; we will meet with the Chair of the Town Council. That is when the Town Council will vote on the SOI. We will be touring the building with Town Council a week from today at 4:30, so that the Town Council members know what they are voting on. So that's our first step of sending the information out. We are looking at doing some kind of information session, feedback from the residents what we can do, what they can do together. Your own comments were well received.

#### **Superintendent's Report:**

5.1.1 Mr. Smith presented the MSBA Statement of Interest vote for the new high school. There are a number of formal steps that need to be taken for the SOI each year. One of those steps are the School Committee has to vote in favor of submitting a new SOI. They have very specific language which is in your packets. The Town will also have to vote in favor of submitting the SOI. After the tour we are hoping to get on the Town Council agenda for February 12<sup>th</sup>. The SOI is now up on our webpage under District Information (MSBA SOI for ELHS 2018). The group that submitted an email addresses all received copies of the SOI along with steps that we will be taking over the next couple of weeks. We will work with SMMA on a consultation basis; they are very experienced with the MSBA process. There are a number of steps to be taken: Get your SOI approved, get it in and then eventually invited into the eligibility period. Then we would have to go through what they call "initial certification compliance". Form a building committee. Work with MSBA on a Feasibility Study Funding Agreement. That would involve both School Committee and Town Council. Then you are eventually invited into Feasibility Study Phase, at that point we would be appropriating money for a Feasibility Study. There are a number of structured steps. That would be the next big moment for the town in terms of appropriating funding towards the project.

William moved having convened in an open meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the East Longmeadow School Committee of the Town of East Longmeadow, in accordance with its charter by-laws and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated on or before April 12, 2019 for East Longmeadow High School located at 180 Maple Street which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

- Priority 3 - Loss of Accreditation;
- Priority 5 - Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility;
- Priority 7 - Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full-range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements;

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the East Longmeadow Public School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority, Elizabeth seconded the motion.

Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none,

Roll-call Vote: William (Yes); Sarah (Yes); Gregory (Yes); Elizabeth (Yes); Richard (Yes)

Chair: So one week from today we will be meeting Town Council to tour the high school, and on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>, Town Council to vote.

#### **Assistant Superintendent of Business Report :**

5.2.1 MV gift beneficiary of \$200 from a family for the MV gift account was presented by Ms. Blair

**Elizabeth moved to approve the MV gift beneficiary of \$200, Sarah seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

5.2.2 MV gift beneficiary of \$50 from School Tool Box for Student to the MV gift account was presented by Ms. Blair

**Gregory moved to accept the MV gift of \$50 from School Tool Box for Students to the MV gift account, William seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

5.2.3 MS gift beneficiary of \$50 from Diane Tiago to purchase library books at MS in honor of Jaime Tudryn was presented by Ms. Blair.

**Gregory moved to accept the MS gift of \$50 from Diane Tiago for the MS library in honor of Jaime Tudryn, Sarah seconded the motion.  
Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

5.2.4 Ms. Blair presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Quarterly Financial Report. On page 4, Salary Account - A few salary line items have a large balance due to outstanding payments such as: athletic coaches, advisors, dept. heads, retirement benefits and a few leave of absences.

Gregory: LOA, those are teachers

Ms. Blair: Yes

Chair: Healthy balance

Ms. Blair: The Athletic Revolving Account has a deficit due to deposits not being posted into munis, same for Circuit Breaker. School Lunch Account, did speak with Lori Pahl, even with the government shutdown, programs will be funded until March.

**Gregory moved to accept the Quarterly Financial Report for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, William seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

**Old Business :**

6.1 Mr. Smith presented the preliminary budget request. Mr. Smith said that this is a preliminary request from the Admin Team. The total amount of the budget request is \$266,000. This does not include contractual money.

- Meadow Brook first priority is a Social Emotional Teacher - \$68,965
- ELHS first priority is Special Education Teacher to help with a Social Emotional Program - \$68,965
- ELHS second priority is Anti-Defamation League's Peer Mentor Program - \$13,500 (1<sup>st</sup> year \$8,000; 2<sup>nd</sup> year \$5,500)
- ELPS first priority is 1:1 School District (grades 2-12) utilizing Chromebooks - \$64,715
- ELPS second priority is Increase the budget line for Curriculum Renewal by \$50,000

The Leadership Team tried to stay with the theme of their goals.

Sarah: I want to commend the team: everything you've presented so far in terms of the district's priorities and goals is aligned with the next tasks in terms of the budget process. So I think that going back to that graphic you showed back in October, you can see the alignment which speaks to the communications with us and speaks communications with administration at the buildings in terms of what the districts priorities are and how best to achieve them by working together to moving forward, that's great.

**New Business:**

7.1 HS Science Team to Scituate HS VEX Robotics Tournament, North Scituate, RI on February 3, 2019 was presented by Mr. Smith

**Gregory moved to approve the Science Team to Scituate HS Vex Robotics Tournament in North Scituate, RI on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, William seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

7.2 HS Science Team to VEX Robotics World Championship in Louisville, KY on April 24-27, 2019, pending successful performance at the VEX Robotics New England Championship in March 2-3, 2019.

Sarah: They are comfortable given that this is April 24<sup>th</sup> in terms of the kids being able to make-up MCAS testing.

Mr. Smith: In order to do that they have to set an educational plan before they go. So basically, Mr. Van Buren, the guidance department, administration and a team of teachers have to figure out what does that mean.

**Gregory moved to approve the Science Team VEX Robotics World Championship in Louisville, KY on April 24-27 pending successful performance at the VEX Robotics New England Championship in March 2-3, Elizabeth seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion?**

**Elizabeth: Do we have younger kids that might in this situation?**

**Mr. Smith: We may have the same type of request coming from the middle school, Mapleshade and Mountain View. Each year more of our students are getting involved. We are sending more teams.**

**All those in favor say aye (5), those oppose (0), unanimous (5-0)**

**Chair: Thank you Ms. Rooke, Thank you Jake**

**William moved to adjourn at 7:05 P.M., Elizabeth seconded the motion.**

**Chair: Any further discussion? All those in favor say yes (5), unanimous (5-0)**

Minutes Recorded by: Kathy Celetti

Respectfully submitted by: Superintendent Smith

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Signature