

**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: February 3, 2020

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

WHERE: Superintendent's Conference Room

Meeting called to Order by: Gregory Thompson, Chair

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

Roll Call: William Fonseca; Richard Freccero; Sarah Truoiolo; Gregory Thompson; Gordon Smith, Superintendent of Schools; Antonella Raschilla; Pamela Blair, Asst. Superintendent for Business; Kathy Celetti, Recording Secretary

Absent: Student Rep

Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the January 21, 2020 regular session meeting minutes.

Richard motioned to approve the January 21, 2020 regular session meeting minutes, William seconded the motion.

Chair: Further discussion? Hearing none, a ll those in favo r say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), that carries (5-0)

2.2 Approval of the January 21, 2020 executive session meeting minutes.

William moved to approve the January 21, 2020 executive session meeting minutes. Richard seconded the motion.

Chair: Further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), that carries (5-0)

Committee/Sub-committee Communications

Antonella: ELEFT Gala this weekend, February 8th.

Gregory: Sell-out

Antonella: Yes, should be a good time.

Sarah: I forgot to mention at our last meeting that the library hosted one of our second graders Layna Calandruccio. I was able to go, she actually wrote a book and was there reading it too many of the teachers and the community room was packed. So, she is a second grader over at Meadow Brook. It's a wonderful story that she wrote. It really talks about her life and what she's already overcome at such a young age. It's a great book.

Mr. Smith: She's really impressive.

Ms. Blair: We happen to be there as well for a construction meeting.

Mr. Smith: They had a school-wide assembly; she read it to the school "My Lucky Fin". What an incredible young lady.

Richard: I went to the first annual Mazzariello Invitational Youth Wrestling match. It was quite a dedication to him and also a bittersweet dedication to Carol Driscoll, who passed away tragically, one of the mat moms. Do you remember that we had a request to have 7th and 8th graders on the wrestling team, I can tell you; it's impressive watching this coach Basile. Right out of my own heart, suit coat and tie on, the lights on, the whole music, he's really doing a wonderful job. I just wanted to compliment him. I bumped into Ryan Quimby; I took the advantage of asking him how the 1:1 program was going. And he was surprisingly positive. No anticipated problems, minimal damage he said. He said the biggest plus has been the student helpdesk. It's our own students. He said that they handle most of the complaints and questions. So this whole 1:1 program is going smooth, as we kind of hoped it would.

William: We managed to get the posting up for the LPVEC Executive Director on Friday. It is currently posted on Job Spring, MASS, and MASC website. I did have one of the secretaries at MASC send it out to the MOEC, which is the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaborative; they sent it out to their population. So we are going to get a wide range of postings and see what we get for candidates. The posting will be up for the entire month of February. I have developed a schedule to screen the interviews and have finalist interviews in the first week of May, with an appointment beginning July 1st. So we've got it all together, it's a lot of work. It's tough this board, because it only meets once a month. So it's a lot of text messages and phone calls.

Gregory: Along those same lines, we have a posting going up tomorrow for the high school principal. We have a resignation in that position. So tomorrow February 4th, it should be up on School Spring.

Mr. Smith: On School Spring and the possibility of also being on Education Week on their website.

Gregory: Stay tuned for that, and at our next meeting we will talk about how the process will go forward for selecting a new principal. Also a couple of us meet with Mary McNally last week for a tour of the high school. Mary McNally is now the permanent Town Manager. I think it went pretty well. We walked her through the school, had her take a gander at the conditions we're under and we talked about some other town-wide things as well, so that went well.

Superintendent's Report: NONE

Assistant Superintendent of Business Report :

5.2.1 Ms. Blair presented her FY20 2nd Quarter Budget Report as of January 29, 2020.

Ms. Blair mentioned that the two out-of-district placements are in the negative. There have been several unanticipated out-of-district tuition expenses that have occurred during the second quarter. There have been five new out-of-district placements, three have been through DCF and five existing out-of-district placements had program changes, increasing the tuition for each. The unanticipated expenses are 24.8% increase, over what was projected for the out-of-district placement. This is a unique situation; we will continue to work with our Leadership Team to resolve this budget challenge. For the time being purchasing will be limited to essentials only.

Richard: I know you both are working in house with this, but I think we as a school committee may have to take a step and maybe relay some of this communication with Town Council and Town Manager. That's quite a bit of money we are talking about, \$300,000-\$400,000.

William: I have been on this committee for fifteen years and never seen anything like this happen in this district. It's unpreventable; we can't anticipate something like this happening.

Mr. Smith: It's really the five unanticipated out-of-district placement that all of a sudden adds up.

William: It would be wise to let the Town Council, Town Manager and town account know prior to our meeting with Town Council.

Richard: Ms. Blair, I do want to compliment you on the specificity of the numbers here and it's kind of shocking to see on Feb 3rd, we've got \$34,000 to run the school system for the next six months. Thank you for the specificity.

Ms. Blair: I just want to say, there are other items that Circuit Breaker reimbursement, we could get "Extraordinary Relief" for the Circuit Breaker, now that's a possibility. Last year we received \$51,000 it's not guaranteed it just came out and Dr. Welch is going to bring it forward, so those are expenses that way above.

Gregory: Is that additional Circuit Breaker

Ms. Blair: Yes, "Extraordinary Relief", it is possible to change. As I always say, this is a snapshot in time.

Mr. Smith: The threshold is approximately \$41,000, once you have spent \$41,000 on programming, you can start to claim eligible cost above the \$41,000, up to 75% currently.

Ms. Blair: Dr. Welch said that once you start receiving "Extraordinary Relief" I think the threshold the following year is a little bit higher. It's not a part of my presentation. Again, just a reminder that this is a snapshot in time, it's always changing. I will be monitoring this as you can imagine extremely closely.

Richard moved to approve the presentation by our Asst. Superintendent for Business on the 2nd Quarter Budget Report dated January 29, 2020, William seconded the motion.

Sarah: As much as it is concerning, it does still speak to the fact that Pam you do a great job monitoring these accounts, and that you are ensuring that

we are not in a much worse situation. Salaries are being paid, kids are receiving services that they need, so as much as we had a huge shift to what has typically been a typical budget, we are still able to provide the types of services and experiences and instructional programming and educators are still going to get paid, custodians are going to continue to get paid so we could have been in a much more serious situation, we just have to watch our expenses going forward.

Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), that carries (5-0)

Old Business:

6.1 Discussion of the FY21 budget that was presented by Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith: The unanticipated increase in the out-of-district placement tuition does have an effect when you start to look at level services for the next fiscal year. Last week we started to go through those projections and as you can see last year level services was 2.63%. Given the current information we have, we are now looking at level services at over 4.2%. We are looking at all accounts.

- Contractual salary increases - \$561,849 (1.8%)
- Out-of-district Placement Tuition - \$675,371 (2.2%)
- Out-of-district Placement Transportation - \$83,750 (.3%) (could change if monitor is needed)
- Total Level Services Increase - \$1,320,970 (4.2%)

- Plus Additional new request - \$291,276 = total increase - \$1,612,246 (5.2%)

Gregory: Transportation, is that something we can apply to Circuit Breaker?

Mr. Smith: That is something new, The Student Opportunity Act, so we are learning more about that, how we can start to recover or request reimbursement.

Ms. Blair: So what I can tell you, is that it's brand new, still need to figure it out. I checked our special needs transportation and it ups about \$800,000.

Gregory: Circuit Breaker is the following year; it's based on the prior year.

Ms. Blair: That is correct; we can legally roll-over one whole year's worth of Circuit Breaker. We won't have Circuit Breaker to roll-over on the 30th.

Gregory: Can we project an increase in the Circuit Breaker to offset part of that so that it's not truly 4.2%

Ms. Blair: We could collectively as a School Committee make that decision.

Gregory: I think we should do that based on the increase this year.

Richard: I like what you are thinking, we have to go a calculated risk next year, and this is not anticipated.

Mr. Smith: Would you like for us to compile a couple of scenarios or estimating Circuit Breaker at the different levels?

William: What percent did you use Pam?

Ms. Blair: I'm comfortable with 68%.

William: What if we go up to 72%, see what that looks like.

Mr. Smith: We have to make sure that the Student Opportunity Act allows us to put in potential number this year for next year's calculations.

Sarah: I still think we need to strategize. When you look at the request that we are making above and beyond the 4.2%, all those request are meant to help possible not to have out-of-district, that's on us to educate the people. None of these requests are meant to do anything but to give the students across the district the services that they need. So they can remain in the building where their families want them to be. The cost of running a school has grown. I don't think we should leave off that additional 1%, because by leaving that off we are not doing right by the kids.

Richard: I'm with Sarah, go with the 5.2%.

Gregory: Go to Town Council with additional cost for this year; come forward with contractual increases for next year.

New Business:

7.1 The high school Science Dept. field trip to Costa Rica on April 16-24, 2021 was presented.

Richard moved to approve the high school Science Dept. field trip to Costa Rica on April 16-24, 2021, with them coming back to us with a final decision, Sara seconded the motion.

Chair: Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

7.2 The high school Science Team trip to Rochester Institute of Technology for a VEX Robotics Tournament on February 15-16, was presented.

William moved to approve the high school Science Team to RIT for the Vex Robotics Tournament on February 15-16, 2020, Richard seconded the motion.

Chair: Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

7.3 School Committee meeting calendar for 2020-2021 was presented.

William moved to approve the School Committee meeting dates for 2020-2021, Antonella seconded the motion

Chair: Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

Chair: ELEEF Gala this Saturday

William moved to adjourn at 7:05 P.M. Sarah seconded the motion.

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

Minutes Recorded by: Kathy Celetti

Respectfully submitted by: Superintendent Smith

Signature