

**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: August 23, 2021
TIME: 6:00 P.M.
WHERE: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Meeting called to Order by: Sarah Truoiolo, Chair
Chair stated that this meeting is being both audio and video taped, and asked if anyone else was taping the meeting.

Roll Call: Elizabeth Marsian-Boucher, Antonella Raschilla, Gordon Smith, Superintendent of Schools, William Fonseca, Gregory Thompson, Kathy Celetti, Recording Secretary. Absent: Pamela Blair, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Gregory moved to amend the agenda to move up item 5.1.3 up to 2.4, William seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the June 21, 2021 executive session meeting minutes

William moved to approve the June 21, 2021 executive session meeting minutes, Elizabeth seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0) motion carries (5-0)

2.2 Approval of the June 21, 2021 regular session meeting minutes.

Antonella moved to approve the June 21, 2021 regular session meeting minutes, Elizabeth seconded the motion
Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0) motion carries (5-0)

2.3 Approval of the July 1, 2021 regular session meeting minutes

Gregory moved to approve the July 1, 2021 regular session meeting minutes, William seconded the motion
Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0) motion carries (5-0)

2.4 The Silver Award LGBT + Bench Project was presented by 9th grader Susannah Cooper. This project will be two painted benches (the rainbow and trans flag) in front of the carline at Birchland Park Middle School. EL, despite of its acceptance, has nothing that openly shares the LGBT + pride in our town, especially for schools. I feel it’s important to remind people they have a place here. I want the benches to be a clear dedication to all of the LGBT+ members of our town, in an area anyone can see them.

Gregory moved to accept the benches as presented evening, Elizabeth seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion, hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose say nay (0) motion carries (5-0)

Opportunities for visitors to address the Committee:

The Chair read an excerpt from the Friday, August 20th press release that came from the Commissioner of Education office from Commissioner Riley: Education Commissioner Riley to ask the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to grant him authority to mandate masks for all K-12 students, educators, and staff through October 1st, to ensure schools fully reopen safely and to provide time for more students and educators to get vaccinated. After October 1st, the Commissioner’s policy would allow middle and high schools to lift the mask mandate for vaccinated students and staff only if the school meets a certain vaccination rate, at least 80% of student and staff in a school building are vaccinated. Unvaccinated students and staff would still be required to wear a masks. This meeting is moving forward tomorrow which is October 24th and that can be live streamed starting at 10 A.M. I just wanted to make sure that individuals were aware of the current context within which this board and other boards across the Commonwealth will be operating underneath. We look forward to tuning in to that tomorrow and hearing from the Commissioner and seeing where his work guides and leads us as we move forward.

Numerous parents came forward to share their concerns on masking in schools.
Chair: I thank everyone for their time and sharing their statements with us this evening.

Committee/Sub-committee Communications

Gregory: I just want to acknowledge our health consultants again. The Chair and I met with the health team again today and I know that we certainly appreciate all their information and expertise. I’m talking about Ms. Labombard, Head Nurse; Ms. Petrosky, Health Director for the Town and Dr. Clarke, we certainly appreciate her information and Ms. McNally, Town Manager who has been joining us lately. So it’s good to be in coordination at least with the town side on what we are all doing together. So I just wanted to acknowledge the time that those folks put in to give us advice and to help us move the district forward safely. I’m also grateful for their time this evening. Thank you!

Superintendent’s Report:

5.1.1 Update on Birchland Park Middle School was presented by Mr. Smith. I would like to announce to you and anyone watching that Dr. Allen who is forever on our minds and consistently sending out positive thoughts and prayers to both him during his recovery from a heart attack that took place in late July and to his family who is certainly supporting him in Boston. That won’t change, ELPS and the greater East Longmeadow and Springfield community is always going to have Dr. Allen as he continues to make progress. Good news this week, he is out of intensive care and on our minds. The best thing we can do is put together an incredible opening of school for our students and staff at Birchland and Mr. Martin is taking that lead. So I’m going to name him Acting Principal during this time while Dr. Allen is recovering. He is already doing an exceptional job, so I just wanted all of you to that is happening. I know that Mr. Martin will lead Birchland Park forward in a positive way.
Chair: The community has really rallied behind Dr. Allen and his family. We wish him the best and continue recovery.

5.1.2 Discussion on opening of the school year presented by Ms. LaBombard and Ms. Petrosky.

East Longmeadow COVID Data:

14-Day period ending on August 14, 2021 - 38 cases with positivity of 4.02%
14-Day period ending on August 7, 2021 - 41 cases with a positivity of 4.6%
14-Day period ending on July 31, 2021 - 26 cases with a positivity of 4.07%
For Comparison: End of School Year
14-Day period ending on June 5, 2021 - 8 cases with a positivity of 1.38%
14-Day period ending on June 12, 2021 - 6 cases with a positivity of 1.34%
14-Day period ending on June 19, 2021 - 5 cases with a positivity of .84%

April, 2021 Data when ELPS returned to in-person learning with a mask requirement
State Report on April 1, 2021 - 14-Day case count = 70 with a positivity rate of 4.13%
State Report on April 8, 2021 - 14-Day case count = 89 with a positivity rate of 5.26%
State Report on April 15, 2021 - 14-Day case count = 74 with a positivity rate of 4.40%

East Longmeadow Current Vaccination Rates:
Fully vaccinated percentage for 12-15 year olds - 51% (427 individuals)
Fully vaccinated percentage for 16-19 year olds - 68% (581 individuals)

Ms. LaBombard: Students in grades 7-12 at 31%, with 12 grade at 54%.

Ms. Petrosky: We are trending up.

Gregory: I have a concern with how long is too long with a mask, when we stop wearing mask.

Ms. Petrosky: We look at the trend, masking works.

Elizabeth: Now that we are going back to school we have to mask, the community should also have to mask indoors. Why do kids have to wear to protect adults, but adults don't have to wear to protect kids?

Mr. Smith: I think the town is going into that direction. They have a meeting on Wednesday to address this

William: I think we should give the opportunity to host at each school for vaccination. We need to get back to close to normal.

Sarah: The metrics to 80% is students and staff.

Ms. LaBombard: Need to reach out to parents whose students only received the one dose and needs to get the second vaccine.

Mr. Smith: A lot of work going on over the summer. Staff, administration, custodians, we are strongly recommending mask. All schools have mask, hand sanitizer in each room, halls and sinks for hand washing, practice distancing. For lunches, we will achieve distance/safety and reduce sizes. HS is adding a 4th lunch schedule, outside space. Hiring lunch/recess supervision at each grade level. Schools will be sending out information. Bus passes went out today. Kindergarten is starting on Thursday.

5.1.4 Convocation reminder. Convocation is on Monday, August 30th at BPMS. We are starting with some refreshments at 8AM. The assembly starts at 8:30AM.

5.1.5 Ms. Brown gave an update on Professional Development. We had a Summer Academy (grant funded); History mandates; ELPS University to align with our SMART Goals; PSAT common assessments grades 9-11; Social Emotional/Academic Support

Assistant Superintendent of Business Report :

5.2.1 FY2021 End of Year transfers was presented by Mr. Smith

Elizabeth moved to accept the FY2021 End of Year transfers as presented, Antonella seconded the motion

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

5.2.2 Education Grant for FY2022 from (July 1, 2021-August 31, 2021) was presented

This is a Proficiency-based Outcomes for Languages other than English in the amount of \$11,000.

Gregory moved to accept the Proficiency-based Outcome for Languages other than English Grant in the amount of \$11,000, William seconded the grant.

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

Old Business:

New Business:

7.1 Policy IJNDD "Policy on Social Media and Electronic Communications with students was presented by Mr. Smith.

Gregory moved to forgo a second reading and accept the revised policy on Social Media and Electronic Communication with Students as presented, Elizabeth seconded the motion.

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

7.2 Stipend for Acting Principal at Birchland Park Middle School.

Gregory moved to approve the stipend for Acting Principal at Birchland Park as presented in executive session, William seconded the motion.

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

Chair: Thank you everyone, thank you Jaime

William moved to adjourn at 8:00 P.M. Elizabeth seconded the motion.

Chair: 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