

**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 4, 2021
TIME: 6:00 P.M.
WHERE: Superintendent's Conference Room

Meeting called to Order by : Gregory Thompson, Chair
THIS MEETING IS BEING HELD REMOTELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS' MARCH 12, 2020 ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW MA G.L.c. 30A, SECTION 20.

PER THE GOVERNORS' ORDER THE PUBLIC WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PHYSICALLY ACCESS THIS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN ACCESS THE MEETING VIA LIVE STREAM AT:

As a preliminary matter, this is Gregory Thompson, School Committee Chair. Permit me to confirm that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda are present and can hear me. Members, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative

- Sarah Truoiolo - here
- William Fonseca - here
- Antonella Raschilla - here
- Elizabeth Marsian-Boucher - here
- Gregory Thompson - here
- Gordon Smith, Superintendent - here
- Pamela Blair, Asst. Supt for Business - here
- Kathy Celetti, Recording Secretary - here
- Heather Brown, Dir. of Curriculum - here

Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the December 15, 2020 executive session meeting minutes.

William moved to approve the December 15, 2020 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), that motion carries (5-0)

2.2 Approval of the December 15, 2020 regular session meeting minutes.

William moved to approve the December 15, 2020 regular session meeting minutes, Antonella seconded the motion

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

2.3 Approval of the December 21, 2020 regular session meeting minutes

William moved to approved the December 21, 2020 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), that motion carries (5-0)

Opportunities for Visitors to Address the Committee: None

Committee/Sub-committee Communications : None

Presentations

Superintendent 's Report

5.1.1 Discussions on local health date with EL Dir. of Public Health and Medical Advisors

Ms. Petrosky : In October we had (122) cases; November (172) cases (31) of those cases were pediatric; December (351) cases (44) of those cases were pediatric. The last three weeks, EL community has been in the red. I don't think that that was unexpected due to the holidays.

Chair: We are scheduled for in-person learning at the end of the month. What do we know about transmission within the schools?

Ms. Petrosky : Only (1) known transmission case in our school system. With prompt contact tracing we were able to keep that at a minimum.

Dr. Clarke : In the surrounding school districts and in our district there hasn't been a significant amount of transmission within the schools in the hybrid model.

Chair: Our plan is to maintain social distancing within the schools at least (6) feet; mask will be mandatory throughout the day, there will be an opportunity for mask breaks and lunch break; hand washing highly encouraged; we will have hand sanitizer. Knowing all that, are we on track in terms of bringing back the staff and students. Knowing we are in a pandemic, but relatively as safely as possible with our plan.

Ms. Petrosky : The School Committee made a tough decision in August, we didn't know what this virus was going to do to children. The safest decision for our community was to get more data, see what's working and not working around Western MA and across the country. With the data we have now, we are able to see that school-based transmission is not a major source of infection. With the strategies that you guys have discussed, the masks, distance, and hand washing, I think we are bringing students and staff back to a situation that is much safer than we would have thought in August. The number one cluster we are having are household clusters. That is because we are not wearing our masks in our homes. Our job together, is to make sure people don't start getting the virus within the school system. We can do that with proper contact tracing, testing, and parents following the same protocol that we have in school. If sick, be honest with the contact tracing. We are having a hard time with that, parents don't want to share the names of their kids friends who may have been around. We can't be successful if parents aren't a part of that process. Quarantining was (14) days, now it's (7) days assuming certain criteria has been met. After (5) days post exposure, a negative test, still remain asymptomatic they are allowed to return after day (7). Teachers, staff and students will be coming back to a less disruptive situation even if there are exposures. If parents choose not to test their child, there are different time frames from there. (10) days would be if individual has no testing, no symptoms through (10) days, they can come back on day (11).

Dr. Clarke : Symptoms are: fever, cough, sore throat, headaches, running nose, fatigue, if you have asthma, contact your primary care on what symptoms they would use. Self-isolate until you receive your test results.

Chair: Once they receive a negative test result, is it fair to say that they can come back to school?

Dr. Clarke : They can, unless they are high risk transmission, somebody in their family. It might be warranted that they get a second test.

Ms. Petrosky : If there was exposure, they would still follow the quarantine, but if it's symptom-based only then yes.

Ms. Petrosky : If someone test positive, the CTC calls them and ask them to let us know all of their close contacts. They review close contact as 10-15 minutes, less than six feet, mask or no mask. The parent would list all those people that their children have been around. People are reluctant to share that information.

Chair: We have PPE's for both staff and students.

Ms. LaBombard : I have re-usable masks for staff and students, students should be bringing in their own mask; we don't approve of the gator mask because it doesn't fit snug over the nose; we don't want the vented masks; medical rooms are equipped and ready. Nurses are available to staff if any questions; If parents have a medical issue, Mr. Smith and I want around the school doing presentations.

Chair: What do parents do if they have questions, should they contact the school nurse?

Ms. LaBombard : They would call the school nurse or myself. We also have the contact tracing number if they want to talk with someone in the contact tracing. We can give them the number to the Health Dept. But I would start with the school nurse.

Dr. Clarke: Test results are about 3-5 days, hopefully the numbers will go down now that holidays have passed.

Chair: How would someone go about getting tested. Are you still recommending the Stop the Spread site, by appointments, referrals?

Dr. Clarke: All of those options are good. Stop the Spread sites: Eastfield Mall, HCC and UMASS and in the Berkshires. Doctor referral is easy, we do not have to see the patient to give a referral. We will make that appointment within (24) hours for somebody who is symptomatic or asymptomatic who has been exposed get them within the time frame, five to seven days after exposure. Self-referral sites (Baystate), you can call and schedule an appointment without a doctor's referral.

Chair: If we want to make this successful, we need the community, staff and families to make an effort to maintain social distancing, to wear masks when they are outside their pod and for contact tracing be aware of who you've been with over the past week or so. Are numbers being high right now, we can lower those if we follow the guidelines.

5.1.2 Update on ELPS learning Models Quarantining Quarantining

The reduced number of students in the building each day will allow for safety protocols to be implemented in each school

- Spacing in the classrooms; procedures in the hallway can be implemented
- Cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day in every building will take place
- All classrooms will have a hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes

Students will be placed in Cohorts alphabetically (Cohorts A and B). Each school will be working with families to ensure that family members in different schools are in the same Cohort.

Each Cohort (A and B) will have a full week of in-person learning followed by a week of remote learning, attending classes through live-streaming. This will provide a five-days of in-person learning over two weeks.

Students who have chosen to remain in a fully remote learning model (Cohort C) will connect to their classes via live-streaming

Families may change the learning model for their children by alerting the school on or before the 15th of each month. The change would take place on the first school day of the next month.

The ELPS Cohort Calendar for 2021 was presented by Mr. Smith

- The calendar showed Cohort A and B weeks as well as vacation weeks

The ELPS Daily Symptom Checklist was presented by Mr. Smith

- If you have a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher in the past 24 hours stay home
- If you have the following symptoms: Cough (not associated with allergies); shortness of breath; chills; fatigue; muscle or body aches; congestion or runny nose (not associated with allergies); sore throat; headaches; loss of taste or smell; nausea/vomiting and diarrhea.
- Been in close contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days

Ongoing planning:

- Transportation - Safety Protocols force ELPS to reduce ridership to only the students whom we are legally required to transport
- Staffing may become a challenge if quarantining is needed in a given classroom building (ELPS continues to work with the EL Health Dept. to conduct quick and effective close contact tracing; families, if contacted, can help assist in this process by providing as many specific details as possible.
- Families will need to have a contingency plan should a classroom building or the District needs to close temporarily, go remote

Assistant Superintendent of Business Report:

5.2.1. Early Childhood Targeted Special Education Program Improvement Grant in the amount of \$2,524 was presented by Ms. Blair

Elizabeth moved to accept the Early Childhood Targeted Special Education Program Improvement Grant in the amount of \$2,524 , William seconded the motion.

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

Old Business: None:

New Business:

7.1 The 8th grade Waiver for the ELHS Ski Team was presented by Mr. Smith

- The coaching staff, Athletic Director, HS Principal and Dr. Allen support this waiver
- Girls team has (7) members signed up in grades 9-12. There is approximately (2) BP girls interested in playing
- Boys team has (4) members signed up in grades 9-12. There is approximately (1-2) PB boys interested in playing
- The MIAA is suggesting we apply for this waiver if there are less than (8) players on a team.

William moved to accept the 8th grade Waiver for the ELHS Ski Team, Elizabeth seconded the motion

Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (4), those oppose say nay (1), that motion carries (4-1)

William moved to adjourn at 7:00 PM, Elizabeth seconded the motion.

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

For a more detailed version of this meeting , go to: www.eastlongmeadowma.gov (ELCAT)

Minutes Recorded by: Kathy Celetti

Respectfully submitted by: Superintendent Smith

Signature