

**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: May 10, 2021

TIME: 6:20 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.

Roll Call: Elizabeth Marsian-Boucher, Antonella Raschilla, Gordon Smith, Superintendent of Schools, Greg Thompson, Sarah Truoiolo, William Fonseca, Pamela Blair, Asst. Superintendent for Business, Kathy Celetti, Recording Secretary (Remote)

Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the April 26, 2021 executive session meeting minutes.

Elizabeth moved to approve the April 26, 2021 executive session meeting minutes, Sarah seconded the motion.

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

2.2 Approval of the April 26, 2021 regular session meeting minutes.

William moved to approve the April 26, 2021 regular session meeting minutes, Antonella seconded the motion.

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

Opportunities for Visitors to Address the Committee:

Leah Dow: I noticed that you put out the tentative schedule for 2021-22. I noticed that there are only two half days which are before vacations for both staff and students and that there are no professional development days built in. Is that something you do later on or is that the final schedule for right now?

Chair: You are correct, we haven't set those dates yet, but there will be some PD days.

Leah Dow: I do ask, because I know, some beliefs on the table that professional development during the school year should be eliminated.

Some people have this belief that it should be moved potentially before the school year oppose to having half days. Is that something that will be on an agenda in a future school committee meeting? Something that you will be deciding before I go further?

Chair: Yes, it will be on a future agenda both points.

Leah Dow: Excellent, that was pretty much what my concerns were going forward. I will be looking for that on the agenda. I appreciate time.

Chair: Thank you Leah

Committee/Sub-committee Communications :

Elizabeth: I went to the Awards Night and National Honor Society Induction. It was really lovely to be able to go to an event at the school. I feel really bad for parents who couldn't be there for it. The kids were fantastic, really proud of them what they have accomplished this year and the years before even all of this. Just nice to have something normal happening.

Sarah: We were able to meet with the Financial Sub-committee for the Town Council Oversight Committee. That was a meeting that occurred this week. I think we have some positive attraction around our budget. We will be looking forward to some further information regarding that.

William: We have some Student of the Month from the Collaborative.

Student of the Month: Vadim Lissitsine (Info Support Service & Networking II); Colby Law (Landscaping Technology/Horticulture I)

Outstanding Vocational Student 2021: Juanita Sahr (Twain)

Most Improved Vocational Student 2021: Kristopher Boutin (Advanced Manufacturing Technology III); Nathaniel Bissonnette (Carpentry II); Jacob Rice (Cosmetology II); and Esperanza Gomez (Integrated Occupational Preparation. Congratulations to all the students

Presentations

Superintendent 's Report

5.1.1 Recognition of the Teacher's in Excellence Winners (Grinspoon) was presented by Mr. Smith

Mr. Smith presented to the committee the (4) Grinspoon Winners:

Brendan Abad is a new (Health Teacher) at ELHS. He has been with us for the past two years

Alex Lennon is a 3rd grade teacher at MV.

Anne Lungarini is a 2nd grade teacher at MB and

Abby Steiner is the ELL Coordinator at MB.

5.1.2 Wrestling modifications and spectators guidelines was presented by Mr. Magee, Athletic Director

MIAA Wrestling Modifications:

- Face coverings are required at all times by all in attendance
- Dual meets or tri-meets (schedule would include: Agawam, Minnechaug, Holyoke, Westfield, and Longmeadow). All those schools have been approved for indoor competitions
- ELHS wrestling staff would prefer to do the same as other schools and have our competitions indoors.
- Disinfecting of mats will occur after each MIAA match
- Limit the number of athletes training together to (4-5) wrestlers. Keep wrestlers in clusters/pods which will allow contact tracing
- Develop plans to wrestle with the same drilling partner during practice throughout the year.

Elizabeth moved to accept the modifications to the Spring wrestling for 2021 as outlined by Mr. Magee, 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)

Current ELPS Spectator Policy for home outdoor athletic events: (4) adults spectators per home team participant, (2) visiting spectators per visiting team participant.

MIAA/EEA Spectator Guidelines:

The cap of (2) adults and (2) siblings per participant attending has been lifted, however, capacity guidelines must be followed. The expectation of six feet social distance and wearing a mask remains.

ELPS Athletic Directors recommendation for Spring season:

Home Team: (4) total spectator passes distributed to each home participant. Passes should be used by family and close family friends. Siblings will be

required to have a pass.

Visiting Team: (Increase from 2 to 4). Four spectators will be allowed for each away team participant and spectators should be the participant's immediate family member. The visiting teams AD will provide a roster of the visiting team and socially distance on the visiting side.

ELHS Student Fans:

100 student fans can safely socially distance at the stadium. Fans would stay out of the bleachers. Fans will be outside the track fence post closest to the lake at stadium field. Fans will be required to stand at each fence post. ELHS fans will need to sign in at the entry gate, walk behind the bleachers to find their designated area. No re-entry of fans will be allowed. Fans will only be allowed at athletic events in the stadium.

Home indoor events (Boys Volleyball and Wrestling):

Home team (4) spectator passes distributed to each participant, to be used by immediate family members. Home team fans would socially distance and wear masks during entire event. AD comfortable with (24) spectators in each half of the gymnasium. Visiting fans, keep at zero for indoor away spectators.

Elizabeth moved to accept the recommendations from the Athletic Director including outdoor events that would allow (4) home spectators per participant and (4) visitors spectators per participant; and offer (2) home spectator per participant for indoor and (2) visitors spectators per participant indoor. Along with allowing 100 EL home fans as describe by the Athletic Director, William seconded the motion.

Chair: Any further discussion?

Sarah: I have a question about the student fans. For the families for both visiting and home, it's either a pass system or rosters provided? How are we being notified as to what student fans are going to be in attendance? Is there a sign-up sheet, are they requesting passes out of your office?

Mr. Magee: My initial plan was, if it's not a playoff game to allow the first 100 student fans attend, and for playoff games, when I know that it would be highly attended event, I would open it up to seniors first, then juniors, sophomores and freshman. Do a sign-up, that way for the playoff games. I think the 100 for regular season games, if we have 100 student fans that would awesome. I think the 100 is a safe number, if we get 100 in the regular season, I think we have to cut it off at that point.

Sarah: Are they signing in as they sign up.

Mr. Magee: As they come in they would sign in, keep a tally and there would be no re-entry. We don't want the student leaving the facility and coming back, so no re-entry. If another student fan was waiting, they would come in, but we would cap it at 100.

Elizabeth: What about the outside, especially for the (4) home visitors if you have a student go to school and they are part of that family, do they have to stay with their family or can they go with the other kids?

Mr. Magee: If it's a sibling of a player and there's probably about ten siblings in the school that play lacrosse or participate in the stadium event, I would allow them to go with the student fans.

Chair: Are you or the school administration that monitors the field?

Mr. Magee: I'll always be there, if I'm not, there would be a site supervisor and in addition to a site supervisor it would be another staff member that would be monitoring the field and the student fan. At Lacrosse events, we would always have two staff members and we will be hiring a police officer for the night games just to be extra cautious.

Chair: We have a motion made and seconded, any other discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

5.1.3 Discussion with Local Health Data with Director of Public Health, ELPs Nurse Leader and ELPs School Physician.

Ms. Petrosky: The town continues to move in the right direction with our COVID numbers. In March we had 167 total cases, and in April we are down to 108 total cases. It's mostly the parent demographic that's driving that number. In April we had (25) that were 51 years old and over; (33) that were 36-50 years old and (22) in the 20-35 years old, with (28 cases in the 0-19 year olds. In May, our numbers are looking good. There was a big jump in pediatric cases, I think that was post vacation, we are starting to see it level off a bit now. So far (9) pediatric cases for the month of May and a total of (19) in the other age demographics.

Ms. LaBombard: Since April 5th, we have identified 87 close contacts which were students, and two close contacts that were staff members. Out of the (87), all have been negative so far, and we are waiting for (4) results. There is no in-school transmission at this point.

Dr. Clarke: The rate of infection is dropping. We have done very well over the past few weeks. I don't think we have seen more than one positive case in our office. Testing is readily available. There are still multiple site for the PCR and Rapid testing. The turn-around time is still forty eight hours to get the results back. We are waiting for final approval for the 12-15 year olds for the Pfizer vaccine. I think that was expected today. I think it will be cleared this week for emergency use. In my office I am seeing a lot of parents getting ready to vaccinate there 12-15 year olds. We are seeing a 10-15% of our older teens getting vaccinated that we know of. People are getting out there and getting vaccinated. They can get vaccinated at the state sites and CVS.

Chair: So the Pfizer vaccination is for 16 plus. Do those students and younger students go the normal channels that we all would go for vaccination?

Dr. Clarke: Yes, the 12-15 years will go to the state available sites and sign up there and probably have access to the pharmaceutical companies was well. CVS is giving it, so I think they will be eligible to go there as well.

Chair: The DESE guidelines are now at three feet for quarantining as direct contact, currently we are running at six feet, what are your thoughts going forward now as we are not seeing transmission in the schools in terms of going to a three feet standard for quarantining direct contact?

Ms. Petrosky: I think we have a pretty good sample size after vacation seeing zero transmission either within that three feet or six feet range. The mitigating strategies that we are using are working. If the school committee felt like dropping down to that three feet range, the data shows that would still allow for a safe school environment.

Chair: So in the past, your committee has set the standard, would you prefer that we changed that standard to three feet as a collective vote or will you go to the three feet in terms of quarantine recommendations.

Mr. Smith: I think we would probably have to set it. The reason I am saying this is because the definition of close contact has not changed, but what has changed in the guidance, is that DESE said three feet and in are where we need to quarantine. Those at six feet in up to that three feet point, may still be close contact so we would inform, but not ask them to quarantine.

Chair: Amy, does that make since to you.

Ms. Petrosky: Yes, the reason why it's different is because it's DESE specific criteria. The key thing there is that it's important for parents, you are still considered a close contact even in that six foot range. You will be notified, you just won't be restricted from school. There are only two places that DESE allows that change: Classroom based education and the bus. After school events and sports is still six feet.

Mr. Smith: We are still going to inform anyone who has been six feet or closer, and to ask them to quarantine or get a test.

Chair: Dr. Clarke, based on the numbers that we quarantined the 87 since we've been back, and not seeing any transmission in the schools, does it make sense. In your opinion, is that the right thing to do, to go the three feet quarantine, and six feet notification?

Dr. Clarke: I think that's fine.

Chair: Kelly, in terms of your staff it would still be the same procedure, although now instead of six feet it will be three feet. Although parents would be notified your student was within six feet but not within three so you may want to go get tested, that would be up to parent. If you see symptoms that would mean quarantine automatically. Anything else that would change?

Ms. LaBombard: Enforce that we still need to wash our hands, wear our masks. That's why we are not seeing the in-school transmission because we are following the protocols. We can't get lacks now.

Chair: If we do move to three feet and we start to see in-school transmission, we could change that back to six feet, if we saw any issues. As of now we are not seeing any in-school transmission.

Elizabeth: I like that they can make the decision and we don't have to wait for us to meet again.

Mr. Smith: So we will continue to inform anyone who's been six feet or closer to a positive case. But as we've been discussing we won't mandate a quarantine unless they have three feet and closer.

William moved to change the guidance to a three feet mandatory quarantine and inform families of a six foot or less direct contact,
Elizabeth: As long as our staff feels that the six feet need to get quarantined, that they can they can do it.
Mr. Smith: Are you talking about staff making a decision for themselves?
Elizabeth: If Amy, you know the rest of our health team feel, that three feet, we had a couple of cases that maybe we do want to go back to quarantining, kids at six feet.
Chair: You would give the authority to revert back to the six feet if they saw transmission in the schools.
Elizabeth: Yes
Sarah: I understand wanting to not have a feeling as body, but at the same time, I feel it 's very confusing to families.
Chair: If we see transmission in school, then we will go to six feet, what Beth is saying is she doesn 't want to have to wait two weeks for a school committee meeting to do that.
William: You can waive the 48 hours for emergency conditions. Send out a zoom link and it 's a ten minute meeting.
Chair: Motion was made by William, seconded by Elizabeth, a ny further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye (5), those oppose nay (0), motion carries (5-0)
Chair: On the horizon, I see a discussion on vaccinations. Mandatory versus non-mandatory vaccinations, specifically as we get into the fall season. We will keep that as a topic as we move forward, not for tonight, that would be our next discussion I would say. Appreciate all the work that you do, we rely heavily on your knowledge and helping us keep our kids safe. So we are thankful for all your time and efforts.

5.1.4 Update on the ELPS Learning Model was presented by Mr. Smith.

5.1.5 Update on the MSBA Eligibility Process was presented by Mr. Smith
We are in the 270 eligibility phase with MSBA. This started last October and will end in late June. There are eight requirements that we need to complete. Some of the things we needed to supply was: Data on Capital Projects (maintenance process and procedures) that we use; what our enrollment currently is and what our projection is out ten years; looking at active building permits; recent move-ins. We have completed everything to date. We are looking at our final step, the eighth requirement (vote from Town Council) to appropriate funding. We sent out the Vote Language from Town Council to MSBA, however, Town Council will be voting on the amended Vote Language. There was one minor error. Exhibit A, funding agreement will work with Bruce Fenney, Joe Dunn and the MB Project Manager. The money has been appropriated, it's on the Town Council's agenda for vote for funding. There is a 56% reimbursement for eligible cost. Next step is the Feasibility Study. I will reach out to the Building Committee, which has been sitting idle, but now can move forward. Appreciative of the Town Council, Town Manager, Town Finance Director, Town Clerk helping us organize the vote and making sure it happens. We will appreciate the amended vote tomorrow and mail that off and close out the eligibility period.

5.1.6 Update on the ELPS Summer Programming/Summer Academy was presented by Dr. Welch and Ms. Brown, Dir. of Curriculum
Dr. Welch presented Special Ed Summer Programs:
There are about 130 students. We started the process for the summer program. We posted the positions today. We provided information to Ms. Becker in transportation. This is a six week program, four days a week (Mon-Thurs). Classes will take place at MB, MV, ELHS and BP. We will be contacting parents about the program and asking for a commitment for staffing and transportation. We will have nurse coverage, para's and 1:1 health care. The program runs from July 6th through to August 12th.

Ms. Brown presented the Summer Academy:
The Summer Academy will be for grades 1-12 at MB, BP and ELHS.
Meadow Brook: Literacy, Math and SEL - 4 times a week, 3 hours a day (100 plus students)
Birchland: ELA, Math and SEL - 3 times a week, 3 hours a day
High School: "Bridge Program" - 8th grade Academy/SEL - 4 times a week, 2 hours a day
High School: "Credit Recovery" Academy - 4 times a week, 2 hours a day
Spartan Academy - grades 8-12 - SEL - 4 times a week, 1 hour a day
This is open to all student, even those in Special Ed. Summer Academy starts July 6th.

Assistant Superintendent of Business Report:

5.2.1 Ms. Blair presented the FY21 3rd Quarterly Financial Report ending on March 31, 2021

Elizabeth moved to approve the amended grant amounts as presented by the Assistant Superintendent , Sarah seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none, a ll those in favor say aye (5), those oppose nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

William moved to accept the FY21 3rd Quarterly report 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 Mr. Smith gave an update on the FY2022 Budget Development

5.2.3 The Student Opportunity Act Evidence Based Grant was presented by Ms. Brown, Director of Curriculum

Elizabeth moved to accept the Student Opportunity Act Evidence Based Grant for \$24,240, Antonella seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none, a ll those in favor say aye (5), those oppose nay (0), motion carries (5-0)

Old Business:

New Business:

7.1 The 8th Washington D.C. trip on Thursday, May 19, 2022 - May 21, 2022 was discussed.

William moved to approve the 8th grade field trip to Washington D.C. on Thursday, May 19, - Saturday, May 21, 2022 with the final details to come forward to school committee, 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 The transfer of the Data Information and Specialist position from the ELPS department to the Town IT department was discussed.

Antonella moved to approve the transfer of the Data Information and Specialist position from the School Department to the IT department along with the salary line item, 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)

William moved to adjourn at 8:35PM, Sarah seconded the motion.
Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none, a ll 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
