



# Lunenburg Public Schools

**Loxi Jo Calmes**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Wednesday, April 6, 2016  
Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.  
**Minutes**

School Committee

Gregory Berthiaume- present  
Michael Mackin- present  
Colleen Shapiro- present  
Heather Sroka- present  
Wendy Bertrand- present

Superintendent

Loxi Jo Calmes-present

Recording Secretary

Liz Petersen-present

Student Representative

Sophia Holman-absent

Guests

Cynthia Rosancans-ESL Teacher, Laura Wyld-ESL Teacher, John Londa, Director of Facilities, Brian Spadafino, LHS Principal

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Call to Order: Dr. Berthiaume called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Chair's Report: Dr. Berthiaume read all proclamations and resolutions in regards to Paraprofessional Appreciation Day, Teacher Appreciation week, Bus Driver Appreciation Day, and Nurses Appreciation Day. Dr. Berthiaume stated that he appreciated all of the sacrifices and support of all groups mentioned above. Superintendent Calmes acknowledged to the public the difference that teachers, paraprofessionals and nurses make in the lives of children. She honored all bus drivers for their dedication, especially during times of weather related situations. Mr. Mackin was pleased to see comments praising the work of bus drivers on Facebook.

Review and Approve Minutes:

- March 2, 2016 Regular Session Minutes
- March 16, 2016 Regular Session Minutes

All minutes approved by committee.

Review and Approve Warrants: warrants were on the table for signature. No line item transfers were presented.

Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Calmes introduced LHS Principal Mr. Spadafino who briefly discussed a proposal to eliminate class rank. He explained the overall philosophy for students was to have a challenging course load, be happy and healthy and take a "just right" schedule that is individual to their needs. Some students have been taking certain courses because they are hoping to be accepted into college, but the current system of class rank may be working against them. Rank based on unweighted GPA. If level of coursework is over challenging a student, then it is counter-productive. Students are sometimes being excluded from acceptance of an honors college or scholarships, because they are not qualifying to be in the top 10% of class due to how class ranking is being calculated even if their overall grades are high. Mr. Spadafino stated that he has looked at the decline of class rank in terms of college requirements, and most colleges will calculate their own rankings based on their specific requirements. He explained that we want students to make choices in their class selections for the right reasons without hurting their overall ranking in the process. Over 75% of LHS staff are in favor of eliminating class ranking. A more detailed presentation will be given at the next meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Primary School Presentation: Ms. Blaisdell discussed social/ emotional learning. This summer the central administration, Primary School Principal, and faculty from the Primary School have been accepted to attend the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence summer institute to learn about evidence based approach to greater social

emotional skills. The Lunenburg Gems curriculum began in 2007-2008, now we need to update curriculum. The goal is to pilot the Yale Center program at the Primary school to broaden behavioral supports. Superintendent Calmes added that she heard the director of this Yale program speak and was impressed by the research based program as well as the support the center provides to teachers. The Lunenburg Administrative team investigated this program further and felt this was important to pursue for the school community. She commended the faculty at the Primary for stepping up to implement the program. Due to increasing pressures of daily life, feel this program has evidence of a way to provide support to families.

Ms. Blaisdell introduced Ms. Favreau and Mr. Sparks, Primary school teachers to speak about looping. Looping is an instructional model designed for classroom teachers to remain with their class for two consecutive school years. Ms. Favreau stated that she is interested in approach and was pleased to find a similarly minded educator in Mr. Sparks. Currently both her and Mr. Sparks both having inclusion classes, which provides the perfect opportunity to attempt this. Proposed idea to Ms. Blaisdell who asked the teachers to find research to support. Found there were many benefits, and worked out logistics. Developed a letter to send home to parents last week, received good feedback. Mr. Sparks relayed that they plan to do for four years and two cycles, and will look at DDM and common assessment data to see the impact on student achievement. This will provide evidence to make the decision to continue or not. Research based evidence that Ms. Favreau found to support looping was: relationships with students from first year continued, trust and respect was increased, greater knowledge of students strengths and weaknesses and their needs, as well as helping to tailor the curriculum to make more accessible. Reduces anxiety for students that have these concerns as there is a comfort level and emotional piece in being with the same teacher. Relationships with parents build as does communication. Classroom management and expectations are well known by students which in turn increases the time focused on learning. Will provide surveys to parents for feedback at the end of the first year. Letters were sent home to give parents the opportunity to opt out if they chose to do so. Ms. Bertrand asked if Ms. Kenney had provided any guidance as she had tried a similar program a few years ago. Replied yes. Superintendent Calmes acknowledged that this provides another option for students; however this may not necessarily work for all students. Look forward to this piloted program and can work to identify students who need this environment in order to make progression. Ms. Shapiro asked what happens when students move to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and still may need this looping situation, how do they transition or prepare them for that? Ms. Favreau said that was part of what they need to investigate, but the maturity of going from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and beyond normally took care of that.

Presentation-English Language Learners- Superintendent Calmes introduced Cynthia Rosancrans and Laura Wyld, districtwide ESL instructors. Ms. Rosancrans explained that a good program is all about differentiation and getting to know students and families. Explained that there are far too many acronyms, but the essence of ELL's is academic English and content for students to be proficient. The Lunenburg profile of these students is rapidly growing and is predominantly still Spanish at this point. ESL teachers' role is consultation and support to colleagues, and direct service to students. Inclusion practices are required by law, and here they are part of the Special Services Dept. Most important benefit of inclusion is for instructors to get to know students and families. Lunenburg identified as low incidence, which is less than 100 identified ELL students. Currently have 28 students, which has doubled within one year. 84% are born in the US, and are not just immigrants. It takes 7-9 years for a student to become proficient in the English language. Asset and advantage to learn more than one language and linguistic differentiation. Identification of these students begins with the home language survey presented during the registration process. Ms. Wyld reported that Massachusetts was found to be in violation of civil rights a few years ago in regards to these students, so now every classroom teacher is required to earn their SEI endorsement (Sheltered English immersion). This course is available at no cost. WIDA testing assesses comprehension and communication in English state-to-state for English Language Learners. Teachers are required to have 15 PDP's Resources available in district and DESE-provides guidance of trainings, workshops, glossaries, etc. Massachusetts is first state to pilot WIDA standards for children as young as 2 years old-now need to identify young students that may need support. Collaborating with Ayer-Shirley in trainings that help to guide teachers. Population that is growing the most currently is SIFE students (Students with Interrupted Formal Education) such as refugees, farm workers, etc. Ayer and Milton have had a growing student like this. Provide a lot of staff PD for options available to colleagues including Paraprofessionals also working directly with students. Ms. Rosancrans stated that both she and Ms. Wyld are exploring the need to look at compliance with enrollment-DESE requiring the home language survey with assessment. An additional need is for translation services- both interpreters and forms. Currently provide both interpreters through UMASS translation services and translation of forms through ESPED and other means. Electronic translations are sometimes not appropriate.

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Completed ACCESS testing 2.0 recently Dan Nadareski, Network Administrator was an invaluable asset during testing. Large undertaking even with only 20 students.

Mr. Mackin asked about languages currently represented within our district-Chinese Korean, Russian, Portuguese, Dr. Berthiaume asked as we begin to explore the young students and identify, what is our role or responsibility? Is it similar to Special Services students? Superintendent Calmes stated that if we have knowledge of these students they need to be involved in some type of educational program whether it is through School Linked Services, Early Learning Center, etc. Ms. Shapiro curious as to how we are finding interpreters. Ms. Rosancrans stated that it has been a challenge using translation services from UMASS Amherst. Need to continue to look for additional resources. Does DESE offer support in this effort? They provide generic translated forms, but do not provide interpreters or translation services. Financial piece of hiring interpreters needs to be addressed. Dr. Berthiaume suggested to Ms. Rosancrans and Ms. Wyld that a workshop showing how an ELL program is being implemented in our district or how they are creating something unique would be valuable. Ms. Gilman, reporter for the Lunenburg Ledger asked if students are taught direct English instruction. Yes, the current model provides direct explicit language instruction depending on the student's level. The teachers provide the curriculum and content. Ms. Gilman asked if students are being taught by the classroom teacher. Response was yes, with direct services from the ESL teacher in class. Ms. Gilman asked what DESE meant? Ms. Rosancrans provided clarification. Dr. Berthiaume asked Ms. Gilman to please contact the ESL teachers for further information as they needed to proceed with the rest of the meeting.

Student Representative's Report: none discussed.

School Building Committee Report: Mr. Mackin relayed that both high school wings completed, deep cleaning of rooms taking place. Much off auditorium complete, assembling seats and installing. Important tests and building scan April 15th will use infrared to detect any leaks or defects. FF & E for furniture and equipment May 17<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> delivery. Expect Certificate of Occupancy after that. Programming bell schedule into system this week. At last meeting of School Building Committee, they voted and approved several scope items including air system for classrooms, digital sign for Mass. Ave., and maintenance garage. On line with spending for several million dollars left at completion of project. Concentrating on site work, have lost a couple days because of cold and precipitation, don't think this will change master schedule. On schedule and under budget currently.

New Business:

- a. Solar Project: Mr. Londa discussed solar project, had opportunity to access a Massachusetts assistance grant which he applied for last summer and received in September. Used the company Robert Patterson for RFP. Went out for bid in February, received response in March. Two responses received, Robert Patterson provided analysis and recommended. Proposal to install a 361 kilowatt system PV array on roof of MS/HS that will generate 400 kilowatt hours of energy. 48% of what we will need. Terms would be it would be leased to another company and they would own and maintain array for a 20 year period. This would be a cost of 8.3 cents/KWH and a \$1,000 a month lease payment. Haven't locked anything in yet. Projecting a substantial savings. 1.7 million dollars over 20 year period for this system. Next step to process is to obtain School Committee approval to move forward to allow the MS/HS to host the solar array under a power purchase agreement. If the School Committee agrees, Mr. Londa will forward to the Town Manager for her consideration as this would require Board of Selectman approval and a vote to be taken at Town Meeting. Dr. Berthiaume stated he was not comfortable considering this without an artist rendering. Asked about the areas of roof this would impact. Mr. Londa explained that this would be put on Areas A and D, as well as flat roofs. Dr. Berthiaume asked about the aesthetics. Mr. Londa stated that if you were on Mass Ave looking towards the school, the first roof would be the south facing roof where the array would be placed. Flat roof arrays would not be seen. Flat roofs wouldn't have attachments for arrays on roof, shingled roof would be attached. Mr. Londa explained that this had been marked on the original building plan showing 2 south facing pitched roofs, have added flat roofs not visible from ground. Superintendent Calmes recommending the School Committee to move forward for consideration. Mr. Londa mentioned that they have had good success with the solar arrays at THMS, with subsequent low energy costs, would like to take

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every opportunity to lower utility costs. Dr. Berthiaume asked Mr. Londa in future to make sure that School Committee is involved in these types of discussions and proposals earlier and in stages in order to make an informed decision. Will only provide a tentative vote to move forward, until a visual is brought forth. Mr. Londa relayed that in regards to bringing these discussions to the School Committee, they had previously been discussing this during School Building Committee meetings, and had to keep moving forward as they did not have access to additional capital. Dr. Berthiaume stated that in the future if there are discussions that ultimately impact the schools; it needs to be brought forth in stages. Dr. Berthiaume would like to put on record that this is a power purchasing agreement rather than purchasing these ourselves. In addition, there is the lingering question of Unitil fixing the grid-do we have a timeline of when. Wendy asked by years end? Need confirmation. Question if we can accommodate additional solar panels on maintenance garage. Mr. Londa explained that this would be difficult as you would be trying to link this to a system that is already in existence at THMS, and he does not think additional weight load on the maintenance garage roof would be possible.

Discussion item to add for April 27<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Londa responding to some concerns with proposed line item transfers for needs of future projects brought forth. School zone warning lights, proposal to change out existing lights currently supporting THMS. School Building Committee cannot use funds to support this from the building project. Will need \$20,000 for three school lights. Have two current vendors as a possibility One light to be 300 feet south of entryway to school. Place two additional on Northfield Road. Have specs prepared but have not sent out yet. Second proposal is for disposal of THMS portables. School Committee has determined excess, attempted to sell with no responders, attempted to give to Town with no success. Currently experiencing leaking and vandalism, mold growing, lights hanging. Potential hazard. Third item proposal would be for a ceiling project. THMS experiencing issues with ceilings around the gym area and front hall. Would like to move forward with some type of energy measure-\$30,000 for a project to partner with National Grid to deal with ceilings. Fourth proposal would involve painting of the Lunenburg Primary main entry steel. Currently losing paint and will need \$10,000 to strip, re-prime and paint. Have prepared specs but not sent out. All proposals for projects due to excess funding from utilities due to the mild winter season. Ms. Shapiro asked for the amounts of excess. Mr. Londa said the total amount was roughly \$83,000 with the breakdown being natural gas \$33,000, and electricity being \$45,000 Ms. Shapiro asked Mr. Londa to prioritize the above proposals for the Committee's future consideration.

- b. Donation: Superintendent Calmes presented two donations for approval. The first was for special education transportation to the Special Olympics on April 29<sup>th</sup> at FSU. This was generously donated through the Association of Professional Administrators by the McCluskey Family for \$345.00. Recommend to accept with gratitude. Motion to accept by Mr. Mackin, seconded by Ms. Shapiro. Vote: Unanimous. The second donation was from the PTO towards the playground fund made possible by their recent Zootopia movie fundraiser. The donation totaled \$504.00. Superintendent Calmes recommended accepting with gratitude. Motion to accept by Mr. Mackin, seconded by Ms. Bertrand. Vote: Unanimous.

Old Business:

- a. Second Reading Revised Policy 1202 Facilities Use: Proposal to waive second reading, no feedback received. Mr. Mackin made motion to waive the second reading, seconded by Ms. Shapiro. Vote: Unanimous.

Public Comment: none discussed

Reports:

- a. Finance Committee-no report
- b. School Councils-no report
- c. PTO-Ms. Sroka reported Parents Night Out netted approximately \$5500, good food, lots of great auction items, several new faces.
- d. Policy Sub-Committee-Dr. Berthiaume reported that they were meeting tomorrow night.

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- e. Capital Planning Committee-have not met.
- f. Wellness Advisory Committee-have not met
- g. PAC/SAL-have not met
- h. Reuse Committee-no report
- i. Transition/Reconfiguration-Superintendent Calmes reported the appointment of Heidi Champagne as principal for Grades 3-5. Faculty continues to pack boxes, appreciates Mr. Londa's continued efforts. Opened bids today for relocation services. Continue to work on communication to staff and parents regarding reconfiguration. Will have move up day for students in new building. Welcome any questions from public.
- j. Diversity Advisory Committee-served its charge, will now meet in same manner as the Wellness Advisory.
- k. Start Time Sub-Committee-have not met
- l. Reconfiguration Advisory- Ms. Shapiro reported they will be meeting on Tuesday.

Topics for Future Discussion- Dr. Berthiaume provided guidance as to the Superintendent's Evaluation. Forms will be sent to the School Committee to complete.

Adjournment: Mr. Mackin motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Sroka. Vote Unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Petersen, Recording Secretary