



# Lunenburg Public Schools

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Wednesday, October 5, 2016  
Town Hall- 7:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

School Committee

Michael Mackin, Chair-present  
Heather Sroka, Vice-Chair-present  
Dawn-Marie Ayles, Secretary-present  
Wendy Bertrand-present  
Meredith Weiss-present

Superintendent

Loxi Jo Calmes-present

Recording Secretary

Liz Petersen

Student Representative

Ron Hyatt

Guests

Tim Santry-Lunenburg Middle School Principal, Heidi Champagne-Turkey Hill Elementary School Principal, Elaine Blaisdell-Primary School Principal, Julianna Hanscom-Director of Special Services

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Call to Order: Mr. Mackin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He indicated that the meeting was being recorded for future broadcast.

Public Comment: none discussed.

Chair's Report: Mr. Mackin welcomed the students in attendance from Ms. Foyles Service Learning class. Proclamation for America's Safe Schools Week was read in its entirety by Mr. Mackin for the record. Safe Schools Week takes place October 16<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> .

Review and Approve Warrants: warrants were not presented for signature as town financial manager is closing the books for FY16. Next warrant will be large due to curriculum ordering.

- Line Item Transfers: Two line item transfers were reviewed for approval: Special Services requested transferring \$7,000 from contracted related services line to the Special Services equipment line. This is needed to cover audiological systems for students. Recommend approval by Superintendent. No questions by committee. Second line item transfer consisted of multiple adjustments to several lines including personnel as placeholders, since individuals have not been currently hired. The budget bottom line will remain the same, and only change is individual amounts. These adjustments include district wide transportation which will be less than projected. Funding from kindergarten grant is now incorporated into overall budget. Line item transfers passed to committee for signatures.

Review and Approve Minutes: September 21, 2016 minutes were presented to the committee for approval. No corrections noted, all approved by committee.

Superintendent's Report:

- Superintendent Calmes introduced Ron Hyatt, and asked him to provide a student representative report. He reported that the LHS student council was planning for homecoming. Themes are: Seniors- Jurassic Park, Juniors-Jaws, Sophomores-Indiana Jones & Freshman- ET. Students are excited for new field to be sodded. Library now fully open with media café. Project room is being utilized well for meetings. Today field hockey clinched title of district champions as they are undefeated. Question by Ron- can the construction trailer gravel lot be used for parking during

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Homecoming? Mr. Mackin explained that this will remain a gravel area for snow removal purposes during large storms, but if there are special events, they prefer the public park on the gravel area rather than grass. Ron asked if the parade route will be through the construction site. Mr. Mackin replied that he will defer this decision to the principals.

Superintendent Calmes discussed the timing of bus departures for students at LMHS. Principals made a slight adjustment in time for a few students, but it is important for buses to keep timing-extended to 6 minutes instead of 5. Thank you to principals.

- Congratulated Blue Knights for receiving a sportsmanship award for having no suspensions presented by the MIAA.
- MCAS Results & Building Updates : Superintendent Calmes indicated that Mr. Spadafino would present at next meeting, as he is representing the district at the Shine Initiative gala for safe and supportive schools tonight. Relayed to Ms. Luck the information she requested previously regarding where the cameras were located on the buses. All cameras are mounted inside the buses.
- Mr. Santry, Ms. Champagne, and Ms. Blaisdell joined together to present results. Spring 2016 MCAS results were based on previous configuration of schools last year, now grade level configuration has changed. Mr. Santry explained the main focus is the median student growth percentile scores. These were used in the past to determine if students were making growth if their scores fell between 50-60%. These are reviewed to measure how students are progressing through the grade levels and where students were over a two year period as compared to their peers. 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the past was targeted for improvement. Have now increased by 54%-64% growth with 12% increase in advanced/ proficient. Adding a teacher last year has directly impacted these scores. 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades showed 64% growth percentile in math. Seventh grade ELA showed 77% student growth, which is a bragging point according to the Dept. of Education which classifies this as extremely high growth. Increase in 7 of 10 areas, with all scores over 50%. In grades 4 and 6, three out of four areas saw an increase in advanced/ proficient range. State has indicated a decrease in some grade levels of advanced/ proficient scores, however this is based on 2015 numbers. The test in the spring was different and incorporated some PARCC questions.
- Ms. Champagne stated her numbers at the elementary school were simpler, as no student growth percentile is reported. Declined 5% in ELA scores from 60-55%, but in Math increased from 66% to 75%. Training on Everyday Math incorporated by Ms. Blaisdell for faculty seemed to impact. In Language Arts there will be Great Books training this year for professional development. This critical thinking program has been part of the curriculum for 7-8 years. A specialist from Chicago will consult with teachers and have observation training. Will take place November 1-4 at LMHS. Superintendent Calmes added that she appreciated the school committee and community support for the new teacher, and of updating instructional materials so that teachers will have the curriculum aligned. Mr. Santry relayed they had only received 3 report cards for the 3 school configuration last year. Former THMS was rated a level 2 school. State provides a 1-5 ranking. Currently not closing the gap as quickly as aggregate in sub groups. Utilizing Title I services to provide additional supports, as well as paraprofessionals to support students in the classrooms. Percentile rank is in comparison to the schools with similar grade levels. We are in the 75 percentile which is in the top quarter of all schools. Ms. Sroka asked when parents can expect to see results. Mr. Santry indicated Friday or Tuesday. Due to cost of mailing, these are put in sealed envelopes to be brought home by students. Principal calls parents to inform them. Parents have option of picking up results if they prefer. Mr. Mackin congratulated the principals for great results. .
- Ms. Hanscom provided an update regarding Title I. Last year produced positive growth used to support Response to Intervention, two reading specialists, literacy and math supplies, and other supports for staff. Direct services provided for literacy support services to 115 students, and all but one demonstrated positive growth. In Math 42 students. 227% growth, and transportation for before school program was utilized. This year will fund same services and before school support as this showed the most positive growth. Both programs will start by end of October at the Primary school and Turkey Hill Elementary School. In grades K-5, 100% of students falling behind will

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receive services and supports by Sue Charpentier and Karen Rash. More in depth information can be found on the website under special services/title I program.

- 8th/9<sup>th</sup> Football proposal brought forth, football team has lower enrollment. Varsity team using most of their players during the week, haven't been able to have games for JV. After working with Bengals, could arrange 4-6 games. \$100 fee would be reduced and would allow for the students to play some games. Superintendent Calmes acknowledged that the School Committee had approved a waiver previously with the intent to not include 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Mr. McCauliff is working through this with the MIIA. Ms. Bertrand asked knowing field time is at a premium, how would this be scheduled to include additional games? Mr. Mackin feels that the way the field is progressing so quickly, we should be able to accommodate games both here and away. Did not see this as a barrier. Ms. Sroka asked why they didn't foresee this when applying for waivers in September? Did not know how this situation was going to play out with condition of fields and number of players. Sequencing of games and number of injuries are factors that influence these numbers. At this point no action from School Committee is required, this is a recommendation. Question as to how many Bengals players will be playing? Stated that eighteen 8<sup>th</sup> graders will participate. A citizen clarified that the Bengals season was not over, and there were 3 more weeks of games and possibly playoffs.
- Turf field update: Pads and infill are arriving. Moving along, expect field to be useable one week prior to Homecoming. Goal was to be complete for homecoming. Refinishing of track in spring per Mr. McCauliff. Have protected turf while pulling up field. Clarification that this is purely a repair of track, not replacement.

School Building Committee Report : Mr. Mackin reported that the project was still on schedule. Grass fields being installed, 80% complete on rolling of sod. Lights and irrigation installed, goalposts soon. Bleachers 95% complete. Press box utilities coming in, elevator is in process of being installed next week for handicap accessibility. Hydro- seeding areas. Additional plantings will be planted after first frost. Binding pavement next week for student parking. After homecoming will lay final pavement. Greenhouse beautiful, expecting November 1<sup>st</sup> completion. Will begin to wind down School Building Committee as well. Substantially under budget. Dedication ceremony moved to 12:45 p.m. Invite all community members to enjoy. Will school be open to public for viewing? School will be open from 11am until Homecoming parade for Open House. Refreshments served at reception following ceremony.

#### New Business

##### Action

- a. Resolution-Charter School Ballot Question: Mr. Mackin asked committee if they could respectfully open public comment before discussion. Ms. Ayles respectfully recused herself from the discussion. Mr. Mackin explained that the Massachusetts Teachers Association had hoped there would be charter school reform with a smart cap. Legislature failed to do this. Ballot question 2 would add 12 charter schools per year. Mr. Mackin read aloud information provided within the booklet sent to Lunenburg residents. Mr. Mackin is proposing a resolution that the School Committee opposes the ballot question. Mr. Mackin opened comment to the public. Ms. Foyle, faculty member, clarified that this is not impacting current charter schools. Her concern is that this doesn't change funding formulas for districts, and there is the potential for several new charter schools to form if this ballot question passes. This could severely impact the quality of education. Christy Blake introduced herself as the mother of 2 children, one in our district and one attending Sizer. She commented that her children are not similar as to how they learn. Daughter struggled in traditional school setting, but is now flourishing in a charter school. Charter schools and community goal should be to use all resources available to educate students. Asked voters and School Committee to please consider voting in support of ballot question 2. Mr. Mackin provided a background of the ballot question. MASC has grave concerns about this proposition. In 2015 statistics showed that in non-urban charter schools enrollment showed less than ¼ of all students had disabilities, while public schools served a large amount of this population. Mr. Mackin expressed his opinion that this is not about opposition to charter schools but rather to create legislation for reform so that charter schools will serve a student population similar to public

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schools. The opportunities and educational services students are entitled to should be the same. Mr. Mackin stated charter schools have a financial responsibility, but currently are only overseen by a Board of trustees, not a public body. Mr. Mackin entered the resolution for consideration by the committee. Read aloud entire resolution. Expressed that many school committees within the Commonwealth have supported a similar resolution. Mr. Mackin motion for committee to approve resolution. Ms. Sroka strongly expressed that she was uncomfortable as a public body with taking a position and indicated that this should be a personal decision by the voters. Ms. Sroka asked if Mr. Mackin had reviewed the email sent to committee members from the Town Manager encouraging them not to take a position regarding this ballot question. Mr. Mackin replied that he had not received this email and believed the Town Manager was in error, and it was inappropriate to guide the School Committee in this way. Ms. Weiss commented that she felt uncomfortable taking a position due to legal ambiguity. Mr. Mackin asked the committee to make a decision whether they would move forward with the resolution. The committee decided that no vote should be taken. Mr. Mackin being displeased with the committee's decision, asked to include this item in the next meeting agenda.

- b. Donation: Superintendent Calmes reported a recent donation brought forth to Mr. Santry for Lunenburg Middle School of an Olympus microscope and several boxes of gloves to utilize within the science dept. This was donated by Mr. McCormack through his company Hologic. Committee accepted and acknowledged with gratitude. Will recognize donation from Mr. McCormack with a thank you letter.

### Old Business

#### Action

- a. Life Long Learning Advisory Member Appointments: Superintendent Calmes indicated we have had four individuals interested in this appointment. Ms. Bertrand is appointed as the School Committee representative for this advisory. Read aloud names of the four community members. The advisory charge outlines advisory members as 1 member of School Committee, 2 educators (can be from chosen from community), and 4 community members. Still room for 2 more community members to join. Motion to appoint slate as presented by Ms. Sroka, seconded by Ms. Bertrand. Vote: unanimous. Exciting opportunity for communities and schools.

Public Comment : Ms. Luck commented that she was pleased with the improvements in MCAS scores especially after adding the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Ms. Foyle expressed that she was concerned with misinformation to public regarding ballot question 2, encouraged the community to please research and be well informed before a vote. Voter registration continues until October 18<sup>th</sup>, can register with your smartphone and only need your driver's license.

### Reports

- a. Finance Committee: Mr. Mackin attended, getting ready for budget development.
- b. School Councils: Primary school met, overview of how school year is off to great start. Teachers shared, beginning of year assessments, how teachers spent PD- working on social/emotional goals, and the mission for staff as to how they like to feel-inspired, appreciated, and accepted. Utilizing mood meter. School Improvement Plan discussed. Talked about School Committee goals, answered questions about bussing and possibility of having teachers attend meetings.
- c. PTO: Ms. Weiss reported the next meeting to be held October 17<sup>th</sup>. Final preparation for Miles for Myles event, hope that a reminder email can be sent to all parents/staff. Superintendent Calmes mentioned that this event is in remembrance of a special life and honors Miles in educating everyone about safe practices when driving. Thanks to PTO for carrying this event forward.
- d. Policy Sub-Committee: has not met.
- e. Capital Planning Committee: Ms. Sroka reported the committee met yesterday, and meets every other Tuesday. Chief Sullivan presented his plan yesterday. Mr. Londa will be back with capital plan first meeting in November.
- f. Wellness Advisory Committee: has not met.
- g. PAC/SAL: has not met.
- h. Reuse Committee: has not met.
- i. Start Time Sub Committee: has not met.

j. Town Manager Selection Committee: Ms. Sroka said they have finished the screening process. Mr. Murphy will attend the Board of Selectmen meeting next week to present recommendations. Have chosen 3 possible candidates.

Topics for Future Discussion: none discussed.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Weiss seconded by Ms. Ayles. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Liz Petersen, Recording Secretary