



Greater Lawrence Technical School

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1788
January 5, 2021**

<u>Members Present:</u>	Leo Lamontagne	Lawrence	Chairperson
	Marilyn Fitzgerald	Andover	Vice Chairperson
	Frank Rossi	North Andover	Assistant Treasurer
	Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
	Anngybel Moreta	Methuen	
	Francisco Surillo	Methuen	

Members Absent:

<u>Others Present:</u>	John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
	Elizabeth Freedman	Principal
	Maria Silva	Business Manager
	Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
	Susan Lally	District Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lamontagne called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with a pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence. He asked members to remember those who protect us around the world.

2. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a.) Professor Allen Presentation

Supt. Lavoie thanked Professor Allen for taking the time to be here tonight. He introduced Professor Allen, who is the Director of the Health Building Program at Harvard University. He is also a consultant for the Department of Education advising on COVID protocols and procedures. He will give us a presentation on how the virus works in the building and some other information that will help make everyone feel better about the students attending in-person learning. Professor Allen introduced himself and shared a couple of remarks on the guidance we have been giving to schools related to risk reduction strategies and for background and described his approach and training relative to this. He reported that he directed the Healthy Buildings Program at Harvard. He is the Associate Professor with an expertise in exposure and risk science and a certified Industrial Hygienist. Industrial hygiene is the field focusses, anticipating, recognizing assessing and controlling hazards in the workplace. Before he was at Harvard, he led forensic investigations of sick buildings. This sometimes was at schools, cancer clusters, offices, disease outbreaks in hospitals. We know how to keep people safe in buildings from all kinds of hazards. While the pandemic was new to all of us, there were aspects that were familiar to those in my field. He has been advising for organizations since March, including k-12 schools, the special advisor to the MA Supreme Court of reopening Jury Trials, homeless shelters, universities, private sectors, commercial real estate, biotech, finance, arts, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and has been doing this across many sectors across the economy. All the science is the same, but how it is applied to the different location is different. Tonight, he spoke about the application of the science of risk reductions across schools, and started with the devastating costs of keeping schools closed. It includes virtual dropouts' tens of thousands in Massachusetts alone, food insecurity, a billion missed meals in the spring alone, reduced physical activity,

negative impact on learning and higher risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. The long-term individual and societal costs of keeping schools closed are consequential. We need to prioritize the reopening in a way that keeps students and adults safe. We do have to recognize that there are differences between student and adults. Although the virus has not spared us in anyways, we do have to recognize that kids are less likely to get infected than adults and less likely to suffer most severe consequences, the risk of kids dying of this year to date is one in a million. It does get much higher with age. That has been consistent throughout this. He reported what is updated is that we have a new variant. This new strain is more transmittable across all age groups and, in the UK, they went down to a full lockdown. How do we reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools? We wrote this sixty-page report in June and updated it in November. We broke it down into five parts, healthy activities, classrooms, building, policies and schedules. Let's focus on the Healthy Buildings. We have to think on how this virus is spread. We know it is from close contact, very limited from surfaces, and importantly, airborne transmission. Both close and beyond 6 feet. We know when we talk, sing, cough, breathe we are sending respiratory aerosols which travel beyond 6 feet and will stay aloft in a room, until they are diluted out of the air through ventilation or filtered out of the air through mechanical ventilation. Masking is an absolute must. The news reported that in the UK, they did not require masks in school. First, we have masks for source control and then the building can do, anything that gets out of the mask, you want to clean it quickly out of the air. Our team released a 5-step guide to checking ventilation rates in a classroom. Professor Allen showed a picture of his team measuring outdoor air ventilation rates outside a school this summer, using a Bolometer. If it is naturally ventilated, like opening windows, we have a couple of techniques to use a carbon dioxide as a tracer to measure how much air movement you are getting through ventilation. You can start to assess how quickly the Co2s will show how well the space is ventilated. In this test, we got five changes per hour. What goals should you be focusing on in schools? We believe it should be four to six air changes per hour through any combination of ventilation and filtration. Air changes are the amount of air from outside per hour. Typical home in the US is about a half of air change per hour which takes about two hours to replace the full volume of air. Four to six air changes per hour will clean out containments pretty quickly. Additionally, running your fans better with mechanical ventilation and opening windows can achieve this. If you have Merv13 filters, that will help capture more of the virus. We also recommend that you should also use portable air cleaners with hepper filters you can get the air change. Mr. Surillo asked how does the current procedures work with the new strains of COVID. Dr. Allen reported that we have not made any changes to our recommendations. What is happening with the strain is more transmissible, but the physics of the virus and the way masks and ventilations works are the same. What constitutes a good mask. A paper came out from a colleague of his, showing that they determined that maximum protection could be a surgical mask and a cloth on top. It is early, but the evidence looks like it is more transmissible and if the trend holds like the UK, then the prediction would be that the strain will be the dominant strain in the US. Mr. Surillo reported that four states have it. Will the procedures you have in place be efficient? Professor Allen reported that the controls in place really are similar to what is happening in hospitals. He did not guarantee anything, but felt confidence about the controls based on the science., yes. If you look at all the outbreaks in the world since this happened, every single one, the same risk factors are present. Time indoors, no masks, and low to no ventilation. The controls in schools in the UK are poor. We have to put in these controls in schools. Masks were not worn in the classrooms in UK, just the corridors. We know from the physics, from the lab studies, the single most important control measure is masking. What constitutes a good mask is really important. If we think about the number of areoles that are released when we talk, the power of universal masking is important. A surgical mask may be 70 percent efficient, 30 particles escapes and hits the second mask, that is also 70 percent efficient and knocks out another 21, 9 particles escaped, the universal masking gave you 91percent reduction in respiratory aerosols. Add in space, ventilation and filtration, you are reducing even further. You can reduce the exposure by over 99 percent by focusing on strict masking and good ventilation and filtration controls. Mr. Surillo asked how often should we change our masks? Professor Allen reported that in a school, low risk environment, you can wear the mask for the day. Outside of a health care high risk setting, the standard masking is sufficient. Supt. Lavoie reported that

our way of trying to address this, is we put measures in place with one thing in mind, can we prevent transmission from one student to another or student to staff? The goal is five air changes per hour, Merv13 filters which we are still waiting for air purifiers installed in the classrooms and offices, plexiglass at student and teacher's desks and throughout the building. We are installing an App to help contact trace and cleaning the building every night. We have had help developing these protocols with experts, but given Lawrence's transmission rate, can we bring in 200 students, separated into 18 different programs and having 12 students in a shop/cohort and traveling on a bus made for 45 students in their cohort? Supt. Lavoie reported that they will initially be tested and we also have the ability of testing in our school if the student feels sick in which we have a COVID-19 room which has their own ventilation. The only time they will leave their shop will be to have lunch. We have a cafeteria which is designed to have one student per table. We turned another room into a cafeteria. We have two cafeterias for 200 students which will be not more than 24 at a time. Every shop has to come up with protocols designed to have each student six ft apart, their own bench with plexiglass and in most cases their own set of tools. The goal is to not spread the virus when you are in the building. Professor Allen reported that he commends you all. He has spoken to a lot of schools and businesses and you have gone above and beyond on some of the things I am surprised that you are doing. He reported that he doesn't know any place that is contact tracing like you are and targeting five air changes per hour and has purifiers. The plexiglass is not something I recommend. The masks do a better job but it can not hurt. We don't have a documented case of fomite/surface transmission. It is a low risk and is not going to create a super spreader event. When you see a 90 percent spread rate, when one-person infects everyone in the room, that is air borne, not from surfaces. Most importantly to break the chain of transmitting through surfaces, is washing your hands and using hand sanitizers in and out of the classrooms. Many organizations are overcleaning, and made a lot of sense early on when we knew less about. It doesn't mean we should stop cleaning, but we are probably over doing it. Limiting students in the bathroom, is over and above from what people are doing. The minimum code for bathrooms is that you quickly eliminate any aerosols and for odor control and good bathroom hygiene. You can limit the amount and you are masked, this will not be a place for high transmission. You are limiting the number of students to parts of the building in cohorts is a good idea. As far as busing the students, you can open the window on a bus even when it is cold out (2 inches) which can give you 30-40 air changes. He reported that he doesn't have anything to add even for a stretch goal. The likelihood of transmission on a bus with windows down and masks on and 40 air changes per hour is very short. Supt. Lavoie and the District Committee thanked Professor Allen for coming and we really appreciate your time. Professor Allen reported that he will be happy to come back and if anything changes, we will update accordingly.

Chairman Lamontagne reported that Governor Baker announced on March 12, 2020 that District Committee Meetings can be held virtually. It needs to be stated what members will be virtual and what members will be in person. Chairman Lamontagne reported that member, Ms. Fitzgerald, Mr. Rossi, and Ms. Moreta will be attending virtually. The members present in the room are and Ms. Disla, Mr. Surillo and Chairman Lamontagne.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the vote to bring back high need and exploratory students to a later time in the meeting.

2ND: Ms. Disla

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17584

Chairman Lamontagne reported that he would like any person that would like to address the District Committee to give us your name and your affiliation with GLTS. Supt. Lavoie reported that any parent or any staff member that would like to address the District Committee can do so, but we will not be answering any questions. We will be having a parent Question and Answer session on Thursday at 6:00PM

3. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Public Participation

Supt. Lavoie reported that the Assistant Secretary will call out the name and if you wish to participate, please let her know.

Ms. Hubbard, parent of GLTS student reported that she would like to have her son speak at this time. Tucker Hubbard, a senior at GLTS, reported that remote learning is ineffective for him and other students. The morale is pretty low. It is not benefiting him and other students. For him, academically and mentally he is struggling. He reported that remote learning is unstructured and we are expected to sit in our house for six hours and complete work. A lot of students do not have those skills to do this yet. Thank you. Supt Lavoie thanked Tucker for his courage

Ms. Angelyz Ihefeld, parent of GLTS student in 11th grade reported that she is concerned about remote learning. Her son is struggling and it is very hard for him and has to stay on top of him.

Ms. Jean Willoughby, parent of a GLTS student in the 11th grade that is a high need student. She reported that she is 100% of going back to school and I appreciate all your efforts.

Ms. Kelly Lara reported that she works in the field and is always in clinics, hospitals, homeless shelters and schools. Her concern is the same thing. She appreciates everything you have done to keep the students safe. She is a graduate of the school, and has children that have attended the school. She has a child in the school now and a child that hopefully be attending next year. She reported that she would like to know what the exact protocol is if one child does come down with it. Are you dismissing the entire class and the teacher for two weeks? She works in this field and doesn't think it is safe. She reported that she knows that it is hard mentally and emotionally and agrees with all the parents that the students need it, but she doesn't feel safe right now.

Supt. Lavoie reported that on Thursday, we will have a parent Question and Answer session in which I will answer your question. I will also email the parents this to. Our protocols and procedures will be on our website.

Eleni Varitimos, lives in Methuen, parent of a 9th grade student at GLTS. She supports the Superintendents plan. She has emailed all of the District Committee members to let you know that she supports Supt. Lavoie's return to school plan and especially after hearing from Dr. Allen. She believes this plan is thorough and well designed and multi-layered and I believe it can mitigate risk to the point that we can return our children in small cohorts, safely. If we returned 400 freshman all at once or all 1600 students she would not support this plan. But as presented in small cohorts she believes this will work. She has a child that has been in school since September in small cohorts and has been very successful, five days a week from 32 communities. She reported that she doesn't think this plan should be compared to other high schools in our area that has had hundreds of students come back to multiple buildings at multiple times. We need to look at other vocational schools in high COVID positive areas to see what they are doing to safely return students back to school. She knows that there are several people who don't want to return the students until the numbers are low, but I feel that if we go by that, our children will never return this year. To me it comes down to some choice. Everyone's family and staff member can carefully examine their own individual circumstances and decide that returning to school is right or not right for them. For those of us who feel confident in the Superintendent's plan we should be able to send our students to school. We can't do that without the District Committee's approval. Those who wish to stay home can do so and those who want to send their children to school can do so. She respectively asks that you approve the plan to bring back the high need and exploratory students back to in-person learning in these cohorts in a timetable approved by you.

Joanne Torres, a parent of a GLTS student. She reported that she has the same concerns of Ms. Lara. She would like to know what the protocols would be if a student became infected? Is everyone in the classroom going to be sent home as well as the teacher. My child needs to be in school for the social and emotional aspect. I work in this field and I am concerned.

Christina Lopez, parent of a freshman student at GLTS. She reported that she is all for the Superintendent's plan to send the students back to school especially for exploratory. I attended the school and I cannot imagine a student not getting the chance to explore the shops before deciding. I think it is important to go back to school as soon as possible for the social and emotional aspect. My daughter is struggling with the remote learning part. She feels that the plan that the Supt. has put in place is something that will keep our students safe. The building is big and should be able to accommodate the number of students the Superintendent wants to bring in. Thank you.

Doug Leaffer, parent of senior of GLTS. He reported that he is a professor of Engineering at Northern Essex Community College. Many of his students are from the Lawrence community and are graduates from GLTS. As an Engineering Instructor, we need to have in-classroom instruction for many of our courses. NECC roughly has 80 percent of our courses on-line but the other 20 percent are shop base classes and it has worked out extremely well to have the students return to the classroom for the lab-based classes. We have cohorts of about six students, depends on the class size and room size and one instructor. We operate in shifts, so for a 3-hour class, for an enrollment of 12, there will be six students for the first shift which is an hour and half, we then clean and the next half of six come in, repeat the course, repeat the lecture. It has worked out very well and students have had the contact they needed and have been able to keep most students safe. Almost all students have finished the course. There have been a couple of reports of a few exposures at home and they report that to me and I report it up to the chain of administration and ask the student to quarantine. If the student was in the class, then the entire class needs to test if the student tests positive. I also get tested too. It has worked out well and he is in favor of GLTS returning to classrooms in a cohort-based curriculum matter.

Bill Vogel-Administrative Deans at GLTS and president of MAPSA, the union for Administrators at GLTS. He reported that he is representing the executive board. We recognize the extraordinary efforts of the district, Superintendent-Director Lavoie, Maintenance Department, administrators, teachers and staff in preparing the building for in-person learning. We believe it is one of the best in the Commonwealth for in-person learning. That said it does not address all the aspects that are needed to ensure a safe and supportive teaching and learning environment and one that specifically aligns with our number one guiding principal which we will prioritize the social emotional, and physical wellness and safety of students and staff. We respectfully request that the District Committee review and respond to concerns outlined in the GLTS teachers Local 1707 resolution. The MAPSA executive board recognizes the need to reconcile the gaps between the efforts that have been made to prepare the buildings infrastructure and those needed to ensure the comprehensive social and emotional and physical wellness and safety of students and staff. It is our commitment to support the efforts to return to in-person learning and we welcome the opportunity to work with the district and federation to do so. We will expand upon our concerns identified in the Federations r\Resolution in the next week sharing with them with Superintendent-Director and the District Committee for further discussion and collaboration with hopes of being partners in developing an appropriate response for the re-opening of school. Thank you
Chris Burke-History teacher at GLTS, grade 10 and the president of Local 1707 teacher's union. He thanked the Hubbard family, and reported that he had the pleasure of teaching your older brother and he would be proud of you advocating for yourself. It is obvious there is no perfect answer. Everyone is looking for the best and safest outcome. That is what we are focused on. He thanked MAPSA and Mr. Vogel for their candor as well. The resolution that was passed by Local 1707 which represents all of the cafeteria workers, teachers, paraprofessionals, clerical this was a resolution that was presented to them on December 18th and 95 percent of Local 1707 to support this. We represent 167 members and 139 were present. We believe this resolution is reasonable and provides a common-sense approach that will best serve the students, staff and families of our sending communities. We do look forward in working collaboratory to come up with a plan that is safe for everyone involved to come back to in-person

learning. Our resolution outlines a couple of points which starts off with that their approximately 4,000 confirmed cases in the last 14 days throughout our sending communities. This is certainly concerning and shocking and as much as we agree that the building is perfectly safe, as Dr. Allen said but we are talking about human behaviors. If that was not a factor, then we wouldn't continue to have a problem with COVID. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to all parents and staff.
Chairman Lamontagne closed the Public Participation.

Supt Lavoie reported that on Thursday at 6:00 we will have a Q&A for parents. The invite we sent out to parents and staff inviting them to a zoom meeting for those who have concerns on in-person learning and procedures and protocols. We also added some documentation on our website. We do have protocols on what happens to someone who does get the virus. It is stated in several documents and our team is working on compiling it into one easy document. It is addressed in our Reopening Plan.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the vote to bring back the staff to the building for later in the meeting

2ND: Ms. Disla

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Absent
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17585

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

f.) Workforce Development Grants

Supt. Lavoie reported that recently we were awarded a Workforce Development Grant in which we will be offering four different programs to under employed people within our district. It includes Advance Manufacturing, CNC training, CTI instruction in biotechnology, carpentry, electrical and HVAC. Many of our citizens will be trained and offered a new opportunity in their lives.

g.) Meeting with District Superintendents for After Dark Programs

Supt. Lavoie reported that we are starting to think about next years After Dark Program. We had some interest in Andover and Methuen. I have a meeting set up to meet with the Superintendent to discuss the next steps. I will reach out to North Andover as well. Ms. Disla reported that she thought we already had an After Dark Program. Supt. Lavoie reported that it is currently only offered to Lawrence High Students. We are trying to expand this to other sending communities other than Lawrence. Ms. Fitzgerald reported that there is someone that asked to speak that didn't get acknowledged.

h.) Admissions Report

i.) Co-op Report

4. FINANCE REPORT

a.) Cash Balance Report

Mr. DiStefano read the report into the record.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Cash Balance Report as presented.

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Absent
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17586

b.) Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

No Discussion

c.) Revolving Fund Report

No Discussion

d.) Facilities Rental Budget

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the Facility Report.

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Absent
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17587

COMMUNICATIONS

a. Public Participation (Continued)

Jessica Pitman, parent of two students at GLTS, grades 9 and 10 and a nurse. She reported that she stands by Supt. Lavoie's plan and believes our students need to go back and they need to go back now.

Watching my children once or twice a week, there are very little student to student interaction. I will tell her freshman has mentioned one shops that he had to draw toilets and doors. They need their hands-on experience so that they can pick a career. She works with children every day and sees children as young as two wearing masks and they will follow directions if you ask them to. We all need to do our job. The children want to be in school so they will do what you ask them to do. I would get a COVID test for my children weekly if she needed to do that to keep them in school. They would do better mentally and get a better education being in school and hands on.

4. MINUTES

a. Minutes from December 8 and December 15, 2020

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to approve the minutes of December 8 and 15, 2020

2ND: Ms. Disla

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17588

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Donations
- b. Articles

6. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. District Committee Priorities
- b. Policy

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

- a. Resignations
 - Chemistry Teacher, Effective January 2021
- b. Leave of Absences
- c. Retirements
- d. Appointments
- e. Job Postings

The following positions are for Evening Adult Programs, all positions will be supported through a contract with the Mass Hire Metro North Workforce Board, Contract supported with a MA EOHED Grant (see attached for details):

- Advanced Manufacturing Instructor, CNC Machining Training
- Advanced Manufacturing Math Instructor
- OSHA 10 instructor (for Advanced Manufacturing and for CTI trainings)
- CTI instructors in Biotech, Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC
- New Balance Microsoft Office Instructor
- Medical Assisting Training instructor

Ms. Disla asked why some of the jobs are new positions and some say are replacement positions. Supt. Lavoie reported that some of these positions we have had in the past. These are not the After Dark Programs. These positions are for adults for evening school. Ms. Fitzgerald asked if New Balance is paying for us to do the training. Supt. Lavoie reported yes.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the job postings as presented

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

- Ms. Disla Yes
- Ms. Fitzgerald Yes
- Ms. Moreta Yes
- Mr. Rossi Absent
- Mr. Surillo Yes
- Mr. Lamontagne Yes

#17589

- Chemistry Teacher, Teachers Local 1707, Effective Date: January 2021

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to approve the job posting as presented

2ND: Ms. Fitzgerald

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17590

10. FUTURE ADGENDA ITEMS

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to go into Executive Session

2ND: Ms. Disla

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17591

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

ENTER OPEN SESSION

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the motion to bring in the high need and exploratory students

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17594

Chairman Lamontagne reported that is was the decision of the District Committee to wait on voting until after this Thursday's Q&A with parents. I will be having a Special District Committee meeting next Tuesday, January 12th at 6:00. There will be no public participation at this meeting

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the motion to bring in the staff to the building

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17595

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to adjourn at 8:30PM

2ND: Mr. Surillo

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Surillo	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17596

Respectfully Submitted:



Susan Lally
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed:



John N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director