



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
OPEN MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1848
September 27, 2022**

Members Present: Leo Lamontagne Lawrence Chairperson
Thomas Hatem Methuen Vice Chairperson
Marilyn Fitzgerald Andover Assistant Treasurer
Zoila Disla Lawrence
Vivian Marmol Lawrence
Francisco Surillo Methuen

Members Absent: Frank Rossi North Andover

Others Present: John N. Lavoie Superintendent-Director
Susan Zielinski Principal
Melissa Martel Director of Finance
Susan Lally District Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lamontagne called the meeting to order at 6:00PM
Roll Call by District Recorder: Ms. Fitzgerald (present), Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Hatem (absent), Mr. Surillo (present), Ms. Marmol (present), Mr. Rossi (absent), Mr. Lamontagne (present).

2. MINUTES

a. Minutes from September 13, 2022

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the September 13, 2022 minutes as presented.

2ND: Mr. Surillo

Vote: Unanimous

#18311

3. FINANCE REPORT

a. Cash Balance

Ms. Martel read the Cash Balance report into the record.

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

2ND: Ms. Marmol

Vote: Unanimous

#18312

b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

No Discussion

c. Revolving Fund Report

No Discussion

c. Budget Report

No Discussion

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Donations

- 2006 Cadillac DTS, valued at \$4,475.00, donated by Ms. Joyce Kfoury, Lawrence, MA

On behalf of Greater Lawrence Technical School, particularly the Automotive Technology Department, thank you for your generous donation.

b. Articles

None

c. Public Participation

None

MOTION: Ms. Marmol moved to take a five-minute recess at 6:05PM

2ND: Mr. Surillo

Vote: Unanimous

#18313

5. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a. Busing Update

Supt. Lavoie reported that this evening we invited a representative from North Reading Transportation, Ms. Lisa Alterisio to address the District Committee on busing.

Ms. Alterisio thanked the Committee for having her. She updated the District Committee on the late bus issues that have been occurring, especially in the afternoon. She reported on how there is a national labor shortage and ways they are working on recruiting. They opened up a recruiting center in Lawrence in which Governor Baker and Commissioner Riley were there for the ribbon cutting ceremony. It is a walk-in bi-lingual center right in the downtown. We are partnering with the Lawrence Community and focusing on EL Training. We have around 85 people that are in the process of learning English to be able to communicate on the buses. We launched community outreach events that are building referral networks within the community. We have increased funding to 1.7 million dollars from FY22 to FY23. GLTS has three drivers who are waiting to take the test. They have been doing test runs so they will be ready after the test to be placed on a route. This will solve three of our ten late bus issues. We are offering sign on bonuses, and bonuses for current employees who will upgrade their licenses. We are offering paid training and also looking at route adjustments. Within the next three-four weeks, we will have everyone picked up by 2:50-3:00 timeframe. That is where we are with the update on our investments.

Chairman Lamontagne wanted to clarify if it is the lack of drivers, not busses. Ms. Alterisio reported that that is correct. Chairman Lamontagne wanted to clarify if you are also teaching applicants Spanish. Ms. Alterisio reported that we are focusing on getting applicants to pass the test. We have advocated in getting the tests in both Spanish and English. The 7D test is now in Spanish. However, the CDL test is not. Ms. Surillo reported that he attended the opening of the recruitment center. Students are waiting between one hour to 90 minutes to get picked up on ten buses. This is unacceptable. Students waiting that long causes bigger problems such as not being able to go to work or watch a sibling or do their homework. Ms. Alterisio reported that you should begin to see some improvement. It is a long process to obtain a license because they need 60 hours. This could take up to six weeks. Mr. Surillo asked how many people are being trained for GLTS? Ms. Alterisio said most are for 7D licenses and monitors. She does not know the numbers. Ms. Fitzgerald wanted to clarify why most communities are back to being on time and GLTS is not. Ms. Alterisio reported that a lot of drivers pick a district and their routes when they sign on. With GLTS, there were eight open slots. If they are coming on as

new employees, we can assign them their routes. Once the three drivers take their test, we will assign them to GLTS to fix the later buses first. Three buses will be on time, three will still be late and three will be around 2:50. Ms. Marmol wanted to clarify when you started the process on recruiting? Ms. Alterisio reported that we started looking at this during COVID. Most people were making more money than working. We need to have more drivers upgrade their licenses to CDL. Ms. Alterisio reported that we met with the district during the summer and reported that there was an issue with the afternoon pickup, but we were anticipating that we would be able to cover those routes. We could have done a better job in updating the district with what the numbers were. Ms. Alterisio reported that she speaks to Mr. Vogel every day. We are doing everything we can to now communicate. We are actively working on it and I apologize to the community. Chairman Lamontagne reported that he would like an update to Supt. Lavoie at least once per week. The District Committee and Chairman Lamontagne thanked Ms. Alterisio for attending.

Ms. Fitzgerald wanted to clarify if we got in touch with Ramon Transportation as outlined at the last meeting. Supt. Lavoie reported that we met with Ramon Transportation along with NRT. As a result, it was determined that Ramon Transportation will not be able to provide the services that we need. Ms. Fitzgerald reported that NRT has not met their obligations as outlined in their contract, therefore, should we be getting a reduction. Supt. Lavoie reported that in terms of our contract with NRT, we will do an evaluation to determine what we should be reimbursed for. I have contacted our attorneys. Ms. Fitzgerald wanted clarification what the students are during the period of time they are waiting for their buses. Principal Zielinski reported that most of the students are gone by 3:00. Mr. Vogel, Ms. Gillis, Security and many Administrators are out there helping. We now have clubs and activities in place and many students have made alternate arrangements. The late students are currently in the cafeteria. When a bus arrives, we radio up to the cafeteria. Mr. Surillo wanted to commend the staff for their communication. Supt. Lavoie reported that some of the homeless children have not been picked up which would be a violation of the law. We have been using a limo service in which you need a 7D license. Supt. Lavoie thanked Ramon Transportation for trying to help and his staff for going above and beyond.

b. Supt. Lavoie's Self-Assessment

Supt. Lavoie reported that he has two documents for the District Committee. His goals and his self-assessment which is step 1 on his timeline. His self-assessment is for the Committee to take home and review. Supt. Lavoie reported on Goal 1, which is to develop a five-year GLTS Strategic Plan which includes all standards. Each standard includes: Instructional Leadership, Management and Operations, Family and Community Engagement and Professional Culture. All will be addressed in the five-year strategic plan. He reported on the focus indicators, goal actions and timeline of each action. Mr. Surillo reported that this indicates that the final draft will be September, 2023. Does this mean you will not meet the June submission to DESE? Supt. Lavoie reported that he will do a report on his progress in May. You will be receiving monthly reports and ongoing communication so you can evaluate me in each standard. Goals sometimes can be over a two-year period. I will give you more specifics on what you should expect early May. Ms. Fitzgerald wanted to know when our current strategic plan expired. Supt. Lavoie reported that it expired at the beginning of last year. Ms. Fitzgerald suggested having a three-year plan. Supt Lavoie reported that a five-year plan is required by DESE.

c. FY2024 Budget Timeline of Events

Supt. Lavoie reported that Ms. Martel and myself came up with a calendar that we made to keep track of the GLTS FY2024 Budget. Some adjustments were made.

d. MassHire State Workforce Board Meeting Update

Supt. Lavoie reported that Ms. Almono, Coordinator of Grants, Workforce Development and myself were invited to this conference on September 15, 2022 to learn more about our programs. We were asked because our programs are being used as a model for other schools.

e. Admissions Policy Update

Supt. Lavoie reported that the Admission Policy is still being worked on. There have been some changes that were provided to the District Committee tonight. One standard we are trying to improve is acceptance of our EL students. Our numbers are going down. We need to look at our criteria to make sure it is equitable and fair to all students. We were given a grant to continue that work and I believe we are close to finalizing. Ms. Marmol reported that she does not see changes under late applications. Some students who apply late can be moved up because of their scores, even after a student applied on time. Are we not addressing that? Supt. Lavoie reported that our policy is an open enrollment. One concern about putting a hard deadline is it may have a bigger impact on EL and Special Ed students. It is being looked at more closely. Ms. Marmol reported that there is a level of unfairness with this. Ms. Marmol also commented on the other changes that were marked in the Admission Policy document, such as school discipline points, employability and the appeal process. Supt. Lavoie reported that any thoughts or changes should be emailed to the myself so I can pass it along to the Admissions Committee. Ms. Disla wanted clarification if we are to continue with having open enrollment. Supt. Lavoie reported that the Admissions Committee is still working on this issue. Mr. Surillo wanted to know if we are in discussion with DESE? We do need DESE approval. Supt. Lavoie reported that DESE has no requirements but has expectations and they outlined some of the things we need to do. The policy is up to the District Committee. If there is something in the policy that DESE does not like, they will get back to us. Ms. Marmol reported that the appeal process and the letter needs to be addressed. Supt. Lavoie reported that he will have the Director of Admissions attend a meeting to be able to answer all of your concerns and questions. Mr. Surillo wanted to clarify if there is anything online that shows a parent that a student was waitlisted. Additionally, should be able to appeal on line. Supt. Lavoie reported that he is not sure but will check. If not, it could be something we want to consider.

f. Aquatics Handbook

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the policy with date as submitted

2ND: Ms. Marmol

Ms. Fitzgerald thanked Ms. Dube and Ms. Gioia for this. If this is approved, I would like to have today's date put on the handbook as the date it was approved and adopted.

Vote: Unanimous

#18314

g. ALICE Alert Update

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to move this agenda item into Executive Session

2ND: Ms. Marmol

Vote: Unanimous

#18315

h. Principal's Report

Principal Zielinski reported on Back to School Night, Summer Reading SY22-23, September Staff Professional Development and Hispanic Heritage Family Game Night. Our BTS Night was exciting and the first time since 2019 in person. It was to introduce parents/guardians to teachers and to connect them with the curriculum. Ms. Fitzgerald reported that it was so nice to hear many positive comments on the parent page. Ms. Maureen Wright, student representative will be joining the District Committee on October 11, 2022. Supt. Lavoie wanted to congratulate Principal Zielinski and the team that put the BTS night together. It was the best one and very exciting. Principal Zielinski reported on our school wide summer reading program which was a jeopardy theme. Thank you to the District Committee for providing funds and making the books available which gave us a great turnout this year. We had our September PD which was themed, "Unlearning", which reflects on change. She reported on the Hispanic Heritage Month in which Spanish food will be served on Thursdays in the cafeteria for the month as well as a door decorating contest and game night.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. *District Committee Priorities*

No discussion

b. *Policy*

Section B: BDD, School Committee-Superintendent Relationship

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the policy as submitted

2ND: Ms. Marmol

Supt. Lavoie read the policy. Ms. Marmol wanted to clarify if the Supt. feels that the Committee oversteps with their responsibilities. Supt. Lavoie reported that he does at times, especially with job postings. Postings are a process that the Supt. determines what the needs are for personnel and requirements. The line is crossed with regards to that all that time. We have more arguments and discussions regarding job descriptions. There have been other issues as well, however, I do respect the Committee's need to understand and do things. It has gotten frustrating when I am trying to move the school in a direction in a timely manner and something doesn't get approved by the Committee and is out of the realm of the Committee's responsibilities. Mr. Hatem reported that you have always had an open-door policy and thanked him for letting us be heard. Supt. Lavoie reported that if the Committee is unhappy with something, I would always prefer it to be resolved that way, unless the District Committee feels it should be discussed in a public session. Ms. Disla reported that she feels that there are inconsistencies of information that we receive with regards to job postings and as a Committee we need to make decisions. Supt. Lavoie reported that the bottom line is that postings are not for the District Committee to decide. What the requirements are for a job is for the Superintendent to decide. It is not a policy. The District Committee deals with policy and budget. If the position is in the budget, there is no need for the District Committee to vote again. If there is a new position and is not in the budget, then it will be brought to the District Committee for a vote

Vote: Unanimous

#18316

8. NEW BUSINESS

No discussion

9. TABLED MATTERS

- *Admissions Policy Update*
- *MCAS Strategies*

Mr. Surillo wanted to clarify what was being done to help the students with the new MCAS Scores. Principal Zielinski will update the District Committee at the next meeting.

- *Ongoing Projects*

Mr. Hatem reported that he went on a tour with Supt. Lavoie and a lot of the projects have progressed. We still have a lot of work to be done. Chairman Lamontagne reported that he would like under future agenda items an update on all projects.

10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

a. *Resignations*

- *Executive Assistant to the Principal*

b. *Leaves of Absence*

None

c. *Retirements*

None

d. *Appointments*

None

e. *Job Postings*

• **Director of Facilities:**

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to approve the job posting with removing trade license out of the job description as submitted

2ND: Mr. Hatem

Vote: Unanimous

#18317

• **Early Childhood Teacher:** \$50,000-\$60,000, SY2022-23, *New Position.*

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

2ND: Ms. Fitzgerald

Vote: Unanimous

#18318

• **Executive Assistant to the Principal:** \$80,000-\$90,000- (non-rep, SY22-23, replacement position.

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

2ND: Ms. Fitzgerald

Vote: Unanimous

#18319

11. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEM**

12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:11PM.

2ND: Ms. Marmol

VOTE: Unanimous

#18320

Enter Executive Session

Enter Open Session

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Surillo moved to adjourn at 9:12PM.

2ND: Mr. Hatem


VOTE: Unanimous

#18323

Respectfully Submitted:

Minutes Reviewed:


Susan Lally
District Recorder


John N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director

