



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 20, 2026

Time: 6:30PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852

Members of the public can view the meeting via LTC. Those wishing to speak about a specific agenda item must register in advance by emailing the Superintendent. Please include the agenda item, as well as your phone number and email address so we can provide a Zoom link for access. The email address is skeo@lowell.k12.ma.us. If you do not have access to email, you may contact us at 978-674-4324. All requests must be submitted by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a call at 6:31 p.m., members present were, namely: Mayor Gitschier, Mr. Lay, Ms. Martin (on Zoom), Ms. McFadden, Mr. Bahou and Mr. Conway. Ms. Delrossi arrived at 6:32 p.m. and Ms. Delrossi left the meeting and participated by Zoom at 7:58 p.m.

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

3.1. Public Hearing Inter-District School Choice Program

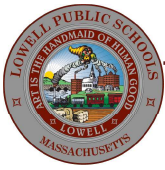
The Public Hearing on Inter-District School Choice Program was held and no spoke in favor or in opposition of the Inter-District School Choice Program.

3.2. Spotlight on Excellence – Knowledge Bowl Winners 2026

The first Spotlight on Excellence recognized the 2026 Knowledge Bowl Champions. The coaches and team members addressed the Committee, sharing their pride and experiences throughout the preparation process and competition. The Committee congratulated all participants on their outstanding achievement and a job well done.

3.3. Spotlight on Excellence - The Seal of Biliteracy

The second Spotlight on Excellence recognized students who earned the Seal of Biliteracy. The teacher spoke about the assessment process and the students' successful completion of the exam. Each student then addressed the Committee, sharing their experiences and reflecting on the language in which they earned the Seal of Biliteracy.



4. MINUTES

4.1. The Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Lowell School Committee Meeting of May 6, 2026.

Mr. Bahou moved to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and Regularly Scheduled School Committee meetings that were held on May 6, 2026, and May 11, 2026 ; the motion was seconded by Ms. McFadden. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

4.2. The Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of May 11, 2026.

Mr. Bahou moved to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and Regularly Scheduled School Committee meetings that were held on May 6, 2026, and May 11, 2026 ; the motion was seconded by Ms. McFadden. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter - May 20, 2026

Mr. Conway moved to send a letter to the State and Federal Delegation regarding the cost of transportation for homeless students; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

Ms. Delrossi moved to approve the Permission to Enter; the motion was seconded by Ms. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

6. MOTIONS

6.1. [By Dominik Lay]: Request an update from the Superintendent regarding financial education initiatives in middle schools and encourage consideration of making financial literacy a mandatory component of the curriculum. The goal would be for students to leave middle school with a foundational understanding of personal finance, including but not limited to investments, credit, taxes, budgeting, mortgages, interest, and basic financial calculations.

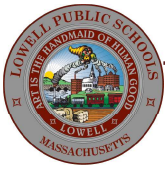
Mr. Lay moved to approve; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

Ms. McFadden moved to suspend the rules to take agenda #9.3. Retirement Plus Enrollment out of order; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

6.2. [By Dominik Lay]: Request the Superintendent to review the staff dress code policy, particularly for teachers, who serve as professionals and role models for hundreds of students, and to consider prohibiting the wearing of T-shirts and shorts during school hours.

Mr. Lay moved to approve; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway.

Bridget McNulty Davila registered and spoke in opposition to this motion.



Several members expressed their concern about this motion and believe it should be handled at the school level as opposed to the Superintendent.

Mr. Conway moved to amend the motion to request the Superintendent review the staff dress code policy; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion failed with 3 yeas, 4 nays (Ms. Delrossi, Mayor Gitschier, Ms. Martin, Ms. McFadden).

7. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

7.1. Strategic Plan Initiatives - Supportive and Efficient Systems

Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services, provided the Committee with an update on the initial phase of implementation efforts, noting that the district has made meaningful progress in laying the foundation for this work. During the previous school year, in preparation for broader implementation activities scheduled for the current year, the district began planning to establish a cross-functional initiative team to review current enrollment, assignment, and transportation procedures through an equity-focused lens. Surveys were also conducted with school staff and administrators regarding existing registration and enrollment policies. Based on the feedback received, the district sought approval from the Lowell School Committee in January 2026 to move from three separate Kindergarten lotteries to a single lottery system. The new policy was implemented for the most recent Kindergarten registration process, which opened in February 2026. The Kindergarten Lottery was held on May 4, 2026, and parents were notified of school placements on May 4 and 5. School principals also received Kindergarten enrollment lists for students who had completed registration and submitted all required documentation. Ms. Brown-LeGrand noted that feedback regarding the new process has been positive thus far, although evaluation of the system remains ongoing and will continue into next year. Another key focus of the initiative has been the review of the district's current enrollment and zoning patterns. An important early milestone was the selection of Cropper GIS to conduct a comprehensive enrollment analysis. This work is expected to provide Lowell Public Schools with critical data and recommendations to guide future decision-making and support potential system redesign efforts, including the exploration of possible rezoning options. Preliminary enrollment findings and potential zoning scenarios are expected to be presented to the Lowell School Committee in May 2026.

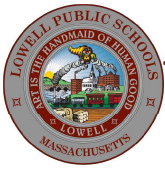
Ms. McFadden moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.5 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

7.2. Report on Motions

Superintendent Skinner provided the Committee with an updated report on the status of outstanding motions and asked the Committee if they had any concerns or questions.

Mr. Bahou requested M176 be marked ongoing until a policy is established.

Mr. Conway asked that the anti-bullying motion be ongoing. He also asked for information about some of the safety concerns he has shared.



Ms. McFadden moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.5 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

7.3. Response To Motion (By Fred Bahou, 04/01/26) Regarding recruiting efforts for students attending Lowell Public Schools.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services, provided the Committee with a report that informed them that during the 2025-2026 school year, Lowell Public Schools has redoubled efforts to recruit and inform families of the benefits of attending Lowell Public Schools. This has been done in numerous ways including presence at a variety of community and cultural events, outreach through social media, and a series of other initiatives including cultural ambassador events. Lowell Public School staff have also increased their presence at local community and cultural events throughout this school year. Details of these efforts and a list of events were included.

Ms. McFadden moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.5 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

7.4. Career Academy Innovation Plan

This proposal outlines the 2026 renewed vision of the Career Academy's Innovation Plan, pursuant to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 603 CMR 48.00. The Innovation School, hereafter referred to as the Career Academy, serves Lowell youth by fostering a supportive, responsive learning environment that puts students in the driver's seat to their success. Through continued full-school implementation of its originally approved student-centered Innovation tenets:

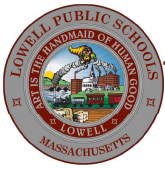
- Personalized Learning: Student-led inquiry & work-based learning
- Redesigned Student and Teacher Time: Flexible scheduling & positive adult mentors
- Wraparound Services: Community school partnerships

The Career Academy has significantly improved student outcomes since transitioning to a community and innovation school in School Year 2015-2016. Participation in innovative competency-based and wraparound programming at the Career Academy was associated with higher credit earning. From 2015 to 2025, the annual graduates of the Career Academy (day students) increased from 3 to 17 and the Engagement Center's graduates grew from 17 to 84. In total, 101 students graduated in SY2024-2025, representing nearly a 500% increase in graduating class size. It is clear that the Innovation School design change has worked.

Ms. McFadden moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.5 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

7.5. Adie Day School Renovation and Construction Update

Mr. Haley, Watermark Project Manager, provided the Committee with updates on the three-week look-ahead schedule, four-month project outlook, construction fencing layout, and the location of the new elevator. Mr. Haley informed the Committee that the project is currently on budget and stated that the school is scheduled to open in September 2027.



Mr. Bahou asked about the project timeline.

Mr. Haley responded that the project remains on schedule for completion and opening in September 2027.

Mayor Gitschier requested that a thermal energy drone inspection be conducted over the roof to ensure the roof's reliability and identify any potential issues.

Ms. McFadden moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 7.1 through 7.5 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

7.6. Students with Autism Presentation

This presentation will be given at the next School Committee meeting

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Approval to Accept and Expend Allocated FY26 Awards

The grant funds provided in the report have been secured by the Lowell Public Schools through Project Bread.

Mr. Bahou moved to approve, accept and expend the allocated FY26 awards; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

8.2. Vote of Inter-District School Choice

Mr. Conway moved to not participate in the Inter-District School Choice for the 2026-2027 school year; the motion was seconded by Ms. McFadden. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

Ms. McFadden moved to cancel the June 3, 2026 School Committee meeting due to the Lowell High School graduation; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway 7 yeas.

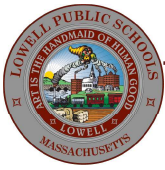
9. COMMUNICATIONS

9.1. Lowell High School Graduation SY2026 Information

Withdrawn.

9.2. Abisi Adult Education Graduation SY26 Information

Withdrawn.



9.3. Retirement Plus Enrollment

Ms. Bahou moved to have the Superintendent send a letter to the State Delegation expressing support for Retirement Plus; the motion was seconded by Ms. McFadden. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. McFadden moved to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

Respectfully submitted,

**Liam Skinner, Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

LS/mes