

LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 17, 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: Ms. Martin (on Zoom), Ms. McFadden, Mr. Bahou, Mr. Conway and Mayor Gitschier. Mr. Lay arrived at 6:34 p.m. Ms. Delrossi arrived (on Zoom) at 6:32 p.m.

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

3.1. Spotlight On Excellence: Recognition of the 2025-2026 Retirees

The Spotlight on Excellence honored the Lowell Public Schools 2026 - 2027 retirees. Earlier in the evening, Mayor Gitschier hosted a reception in the Mayor's Reception Room, where he congratulated the retirees, thanked them for their dedication to the students, and wished them all the best in their future endeavors.

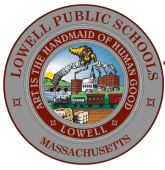
4. MINUTES

4.1. The Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee of May 20, 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 20, 2026; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

4.2. The Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Lowell School Committee Meeting of May 20, 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 20, 2026; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.



5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter - June 17, 2026

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

6. MEMORIALS

6.1. Timothy Joseph Keane, Son of Catherine Keane, Retired Teacher and Attendance Monitor.

6.2. Andrea Van Thiel, Mother of Lisa Van Thiel Early Childhood Coordinator

7. MOTIONS

7.1. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the superintendent to report on the procedure in place to alert schools to put flags at half-staff as ordered by the governor.

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

7.2. [By Fred Bahou]: To have proper departments work, conjunctively this summer call and reach out to parents or caretakers to ask how their homeschooling is going for their student, and to inform them of all the good news and benefits, as well as support systems in place to consider resending their student back to Lowell Public Schools.

Mr. Bahou moved to take agenda item # 10.4 out of order; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

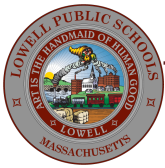
Sean Cooper, Erin Pirrotta and Shiela Guevara, Elizabeth Tighe and Diana Kapaldo registered to speak and spoke against this motion as well as agenda item # 10.4. The Committee addressed both the motion and item # 10.4.

After a lengthy conversation around the pros and cons Mr. Bahou requested that his motion be withdrawn.

8. SUBCOMMITTEES

8.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting of May 28, 2026

Ms. Martin, Chairperson of the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee provided an overview of the evaluation of literacy instruction across 47 K-8 classrooms using the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) PRISM observation tool. She stated that findings showed notable improvements in text quality and the use of evidence-based instructional practices between the initial and follow-up visits. The data were drawn from 35 observations in grades K-4 and 12 observations in grades 5-8, focusing on foundational skills, complex texts, and writing instruction. She also stated that a landscape analysis conducted by TNTP indicated that implementation across the Lowell Public Schools is



progressing well, with evidence demonstrating positive results. The analysis also identified student groups that continue to show growth and progress in literacy learning. She stated that the district is implementing the ARC K–4 curriculum in our schools. Currently, five schools have adopted the ARC Foundational Skills curriculum, while the remaining schools chose to delay implementation until the following year. The schools currently implementing ARC are the McAuliffe School, Murkland School, Moody School, Pyne Arts School, and Shaughnessy Elementary School. Ms. Martin added that the subcommittee heard the concerns regarding the need for a stronger professional development plan and emphasized the importance of continuing to support educators throughout the implementation process. She informed the public that an additional Curriculum & Instruction subcommittee meeting would be taking place Thursday, June 18th at 5:00 p.m. to continue the discussion around professional development.

Ms. McFadden moved to accept the report as a report of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 7 yeas.

9. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

9.1. Students with Autism Presentation

Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, provided a presentation to the Committee highlighting the significant increase in the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) over the past 30 years, noting that rates have not yet plateaued. She explained that this growth is driven by improved identification practices, systemic changes, and other factors that are not yet fully understood. Ms. Brown-LeGrand emphasized that the long-term implications of this trend are structural rather than temporary. The presentation included historical and epidemiological data on autism, trends in the number and percentage of students with disabilities (SWD) in Lowell Public Schools over time, autism prevalence within the district, projected CSA programming needs for the 2026 - 2027 school year, unanticipated additions to the CSA and Adie programs during 2025-2026, Adie enrollment and associated cost savings, the educational placement of students with disabilities within Lowell Public Schools, out-of-district placement rates, and the district's ongoing implications, initiatives, and planning efforts.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.2. Response to Motion (By Fred Bahou 09/03/25) Regarding Proposed Changes to the K-12 School Assignment Policy

Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, provided a report informing the Committee that the current Lowell Public Schools student enrollment and assignment policies already accommodate the request made in the motion to provide sibling preference in school assignments. Family Resource Center oversees enrollment and transfers for all students in Lowell Public Schools. The process of enrollment and transfer at any grade level including kindergarten is governed by School Committee policy. Upon enrollment, parents are required to identify three preferred schools at the time of registration. For students entering kindergarten, registration begins in February. During the

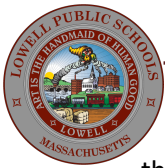


first week of May the kindergarten lottery occurs. Which schools become lottery schools is based on the number of requested registration placements for that school. If the number of registered students requesting a school exceeds the number of available seats, that school becomes a lottery school for that year. As a result, the schools that are identified as lottery schools can vary from year to year. Only families who have a completed registration packet prior to the lottery date will be included in the lottery. The district's student assignment process for oversubscribed schools utilizes an electronic weighted lottery system that considers several factors when ranking students for available seats. These factors include sibling preference, proximity to selected schools, and demographic considerations that support the district's goals for equitable access and diverse school communities. Sibling preference is a main component of the lottery and helps support family stability by providing opportunities for families to attend the same school when space is available. The weighting system is designed to balance multiple priorities, including prioritizing sibling preference while maintaining diversity balance and considering distance from home to the school. As a result, student assignment decisions are based on a combination of factors rather than any single criterion. The Lowell Public Schools transfer policy also provides families with school options through an annual process that allows parents to request placement in another school when seats are available. The process is designed to ensure that available openings are filled in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner while maintaining balanced enrollment across the district. The weighted electronic transfer lottery process is utilized when requests for a school exceed allotted seats. This process is the same system as the kindergarten lottery which assigns weights to factors such as diversity balance, sibling preference and distance of school to home. This allows the district to maximize opportunities for students seeking placement in a preferred school while ensuring that class size, staffing, programmatic needs, and equitable access considerations are maintained. Transfer placements begin after July 1st and continue through the 20th day of school. No transfer placements are made from the waitlist after the 20th day of school, and waitlists are not maintained beyond that date.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.3. Response To Motion (By Fred Bahou, 04/01/26) Regarding District Efforts on Educating Students on Marijuana Risks

Dr. Fox Roye, Assistant Superintendent for Academics & Instruction, presented a report to the Committee on Lowell Public Schools efforts to address marijuana and substance use prevention through a standards-aligned health curriculum, community education partnerships, and expanded mental health and wellness supports for students in grades 5-12. The Committee was informed that the district follows the 2023 Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education (CHPE) Standards and is continuing to develop and refine its grades 5-12 health curriculum. At the middle school level, substance use prevention is taught through the Michigan Model for Health curriculum, which focuses on the risks and effects of marijuana and other substances, while building students' decision-making, refusal, and help-seeking skills. At the high school level, instruction is provided through the Health 1 course and emphasizes the short and long-term effects of substance use, including addiction, health consequences, and social influences. The curriculum also encourages students to reflect on personal values and develop



the skills needed to make informed, healthy decisions.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.4. Response To Motion (By Eileen DelRossi, 05/06/26) Regarding Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Crocker-Roberge, Assistant Superintendent for Schools & Leadership provided a report to the Committee that informed them that in a query of school principals, 22 out of 28 schools, or 79%, reported doing the Pledge of Allegiance during morning announcements at school. The remaining schools either do not have an intercom or do their announcements in the afternoon. In these schools, the Pledge of Allegiance is recited in classrooms as part of the morning meeting or first-period classes. In our PK-8 and K-8 schools, there are two morning start times. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited over the intercom for the start of the middle school day and recited in classrooms as part of morning meeting for the start of the elementary day, so as not to disturb the first-period classes in progress for middle school students. School leaders will receive reminders again at the start of the 2026-2027 school year to ensure full compliance with this state law.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.5. Response To Motion (By Danielle McFadden, 05/06/26) Regarding School Site Councils

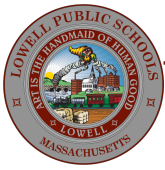
Ms. Crocker-Roberge, Assistant Superintendent for Schools & Leadership provided a report to the Committee that informed them that during the month of May, principals and members of the Executive Cabinet reviewed the current policies governing school councils in the Lowell Public Schools, as well as the updated Massachusetts General Laws that outline the requirements for school councils and their key functions. Greater consistency of practice with school councils throughout the district will be enhanced by the use of standardized templates for such items as a parent representative nomination form, a school budget and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) annual sign-off form, and a standardized meeting agenda that covers the scope of the responsibilities of the school councils. Monthly Administrator meetings will include a review of upcoming tasks for school councils and tracking the posting of agendas and minutes from meetings on the individual school websites to ensure optimal transparency.

Ms. McFadden stated that she would like to see the school site council agendas/minutes posted on a timelier basis.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.6. Personnel Report

The Personnel Report officially informs the Committee of all retirements, resignations, promotions and new hires.



Mayor Gitschier asked Dr. Hall if letters would be sent out to the recent retirees congratulating them and thanking them for their service.

Dr. Hall responded that those letters will be sent in the summer.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

9.7. Food Service Meal Highlights and Summer Programming Update

Dr. Hall, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Operations, provided a report to the Committee highlighting the recent work and accomplishments of the district's cafeteria staff. The report included updates on summer meal programming, noting that approximately 56 feeding sites that are expected to operate throughout the summer. A new partnership with the library's Bookmobile is also scheduled to launch in July. The Committee was informed that 48 food service staff members will support summer programming by providing breakfast, lunch, and dinner to an estimated 3,800 students. The report also highlighted June's Harvest of the Month feature, strawberries, which will be incorporated into a strawberry shortcake made with fresh strawberries sourced from Pell Family Farm. In addition, the district will continue its commitment to serving locally sourced produce, including lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, kale, and apples when seasonally available.

Mr. Lay moved to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.7 as reports of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1. Approval to Accept and Expend Allocated FY26 Awards

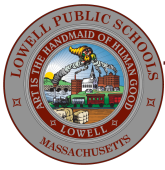
These grant funds have been secured by the Lowell Public Schools through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Early Education and Care, and Wellpoint Life and Health Insurance Company.

Ms. McFadden moved to approve, accept and expend the allocated FY27 awards; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

10.2. 2026-2027 School Committee Meeting Dates

Ms. McFadden moved to cancel the February 27, 2027 School Committee meeting due to February School Vacation; the motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

Ms. Martin moved to approved the School Committee meeting dates; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).



10.3. Budget Modification Request

Mr. Bahou moved to approve the budget modification in the amount of \$1,928,338.99; the motion was seconded by Ms. Ms. McFadden. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

10.4. Proposed Home-Schooling Policy

Mr. Bahou moved to accept the report as a report of progress; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

11. CONVENTION/CONFERENCE REQUESTS

11.1. Overnight Out of State Travel Request - LHS Boys/Girls Cross Country Team in Yonkers, NY

Mr. Bahou moved to bundle and approve the convention/conference requests; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

11.2. Overnight Out of State Travel Request: LHS Business Professionals Conference of America in Denver, CO

Mr. Bahou moved to bundle and approve the convention/conference requests; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

11.3. Overnight Out of State Travel Request - LHS Compass Poetry Team to San Francisco, CA

Mr. Bahou moved to bundle and approve the convention/conference requests; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

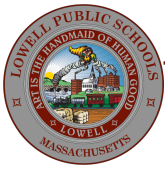
11.4. International And Overnight Travel Request: LHS Students & Chaperones to travel to Italy and Greece.

Mr. Bahou moved to bundle and approve the convention/conference requests; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

12. PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

12.1. The Members of the United Teachers of Lowell hereby donate twenty-three (23) sick leave days to Christina Dixon, a teacher at McAuliffe Elementary School. In addition, seventeen (17) sick leave days are donated to Maureen Keene, a paraprofessional at the Morey School, and twenty (20) sick leave days are donated to Courtney Toombs, a teacher at the STEM Academy.

Ms. McFadden moved to approve the professional personnel; the motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).



13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

13.1. An Executive Session may be called to discuss collective bargaining, strategies and/or possible litigation under Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Section 21 (A) (B), 2, 3 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws. Open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body. Items:

1. Negotiations update consideration of renewal of MOA with UTL related to Lowell Teacher Academy positions.
2. Negotiations and discussions related to the adjustment of duties in the Principal's contract on interim basis.

Mr. Conway moved to recess at 8:18 p.m. and to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining, strategies and/or possible litigation under open meeting law, Chapter 30A, Section 21 (A) (B), 2, 3 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws for negotiations update consideration of renewal of MOA with UTL related to Lowell Teacher Academy positions and negotiations and discussions related to the adjustment of duties in the Principal's contract on an interim basis, of which open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body, and to adjourn from Executive Session; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Conway moved to recess at 8:18 p.m.; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 1 absent (Ms. Delrossi).

Respectfully submitted,

Liam Skinner, Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee

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