



Town of Littleton School Committee

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JEN GOLD, Vice Chair
STACY DESMARAIS, Member

JUSTIN MCCARTHY, Chair

BRAD AUSTIN, Clerk
BINAL PATEL, Member

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES November 17, 2022 7:00PM

PRESENT: Justin McCarthy
Jen Gold
Brad Austin
Stacy Desmarais (7:02PM)
Binal Patel

ALSO PRESENT: Kelly Clenchy
Steve Mark
Bettina Corrow
Dorothy Mulone

NOT PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER

Justin McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m.

On a motion by Brad Austin and seconded by Stacy Desmarais it was voted to approve the Oct. 27, 2022, and Nov. 10th, 2022, agendas with a minor change to the Oct. 27th minutes as presented. (AYE: Unanimous).

INTERESTED CITIZENS

None

RECOGNITION

1. Student Representative(s) Report: Student Representative, John Feltus, gave an update of the events happening at each school.
2. Superintendent Clenchy congratulated the Girls Varsity Soccer High School team on their accomplishments this season.
3. Superintendent Clenchy also mentioned that the District held a very productive Full PD day in collaboration with Ayer/Shirley and Harvard School Districts on Nov. 8th.

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Our mission is to foster a community of learners who strive for excellence and prepare each student to be a successful, contributing citizen in a global society.

4. Another vaccine clinic was held on Nov. 15th, which was well attended.
5. The district is offering free Covid tests to our community. They will be passed out at the individual schools, but families are also welcomed to come by the Central office on Tuesday to pick up their test.
6. Dedication to Millie McGovern: Discussion to make a motion to vote on a dedication to Millie McGovern to be memorialized with a plaque or similar recognition on the ticket booth at Alumni field.

On a motion by Brad Austin and seconded by Stacy Desmarais it was voted to approve a plaque or similar recognition on the ticket booth at Alumni field. (AYE: Unanimous).

PRESENTATIONS

1. **School Start Times:** Information updates from School Start Time Committee. The survey results were included in the packet. 1,354 people responded, 786 parents, 150 staff and 418 students. The survey included 5 options, which were surveyed. One of the options was to keep the current schedule. Survey results were shared to the public, by participants, by school, by staff and by students. The survey also included the responses to the most important factors influencing the decision-making process. How challenging it would be to change the current schedule, or whether you preferred to change. Lastly, included questions about transportation. Parents, staff, and students' comments were also included in the survey packet. Neighboring towns' start and end times were also included. Athletic competitors' start times were also discussed.

Justin McCarthy – It looks as if we make a change, we could potentially upset about 60% as they would not get their first choice, but if we don't make any change we would upset about 80%.
Binal Patel – Option 4 does seem to meet the most people's choice but yes, there is not any perfect solution.

Brad Austin – With the slides and information presented I am trying to figure out which choice does have the most votes.

Jen Gold – As a school committee board we have to look at the future and what is best for our student's well-being. Change is always hard but sometimes necessary.

John Feltus – A lot of the comments do show some of the concerns my peers are feeling. It is dark in the morning when I am driving to school.

Brad Austin – I would like to see if we can get some data from other districts who have changed their start times and see how they are doing. What data they have collected.

John Harrington – I believe we can get this data from other surrounding districts.

Binal Patel – I do not think we can measure our success strictly through student performance. There are too many variables.

Kelly Clenchy – I agree, we need to look at soft data.

Next steps:

A NEW OPTION

One option was suggested by the community to potentially solve several challenges. While this was originally on the list explored, it was initially deemed not viable. After further conversations with our bus company, it was discussed this option could be viable with some shifts in logistics.

Option 6

HS/MS – 7:50/8:00 – 2:20/2:30

SL/RSS – 8:50/8:55 – 3:15/3:15

Jen Gold – Our bus company assured us that this option would be viable.

Justin McCarthy – Our 3-tier system has been working up until now, but it might not work in the future.

Brad Austin – We do have to take into account our students' mental health. Not that budget and money isn't a factor, but we should look at student well-being and sleep patterns.

Binal Patel – We did discuss with our bus company the options for adding more buses or keeping the number of buses as is. It could require additional buses or an increase in bus fees to offset the cost. It all depends on which option we choose.

Steve Mark – About 70% of all our students are registered to ride the bus to school.

Justin McCarthy – I feel there is as little more parental oversight and ability to control a sleep schedule of a middle school child than you as a parent has when you have a high school student.

Kelly Clenchy – Our schedule is working for the middle school students but that does not mean we shouldn't explore all options.

RECOMMENDATION FROM SCHOOL START TIME SUBCOMMITTEE:

1. Focus on top 3 options: (one 3 tier, one 2 tier, current)
 - Option 3: shift 25
 - Option 4: two tier
 - Option 5: current schedule
2. Replace option 4 with option 6 as a better two-tier option
3. Conduct a follow up community survey with top 3 options only
 - Compare each option to each other
 - List the challenges each option addresses as shared by the community

Brad Austin – This recommendation makes a lot of sense.

Justin McCarthy – Do you think we will get some better data if we sent out another survey.

Binal Patel – Yes, I believe we will be addressing some more concrete data and I believe it would be helpful and useful.

Jen Gold – I do believe that we need to give the community a chance to voice their option on Option 6, which was not included in the first survey.

Kelly Clenchy – We do need to ensure that we have the funds to move forward.

Stacy Desmarais – It seems we have a lot of parents who are very concerned about the before and after school care.

Kelly Clenchy – It is a challenge and last we checked we do have 25 children on a waiting list.

Binal Patel – Any options will cause a change in people’s lives. Families have created their daily schedule around our school schedule at this time. If we make a change they will have to adjust. There isn’t another option.

Justin McCarthy – Thank you for all the work. Please send out the second survey.

INTERESTED CITIZENS

None

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. PMBC:** None
- 2. Budget Subcommittee:** Presented the FY2024 Preliminary Budget increase. The overview was included in the packet.
- 3. SEPAC:** We continue our regular monthly meetings. We keep the conversation open. A meet and greet meeting is scheduled in December and a workshop is scheduled for January 10th, 2023.
- 4. Policy:** None
- 5. Shaker Lane building:** We are meeting our timelines and submitting paperwork as required.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Brad Austin and seconded by Binal Patel it was voted to adjourn at 9:05PM. Roll Call Vote: Brad Austin, AYE; Justin McCarthy, AYE; Jen Gold, AYE; Binal Patel, AYE; and Stacy Desmarais, AYE.

DOCUMENTS AS PART OF MEETING

School Start Time

FY2024 Preliminary Budget

NEXT MEETING DATE

December 1, 2022

7:00PM