

**LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**LINCOLN, RHODE ISLAND**  
**MINUTES**

**DATE:** January 8, 2018

**PLACE:** Lincoln Middle School  
152 Jenckes Hill Road  
Lincoln, RI 02865

**TIME:** 6:00 PM – Large Group Room

Executive Session (Closed) pursuant to R.I. General Laws Section (42-46-5(a))

a. Discussion of Personnel Issues 42-46-5(a)(1)

1. Consideration of benefit request from employee

2. Legal advice regarding the Superintendent's retirement and Superintendent's search.

b. Adjourn from Executive Session

7:00 PM Open Session - Auditorium

School Committee Members Present: Kristine Donabedian, Chair; Joseph Goho, Vice Chair; Staci Rapko-Bruckner, Clerk; John LaFleur, Mary Anne Roll, Julie Zito

Absent: John Picozzi

Others Present: Georgia Fortunato, Superintendent; Alec Ciminello, Marc Cobb, Caroline Frey, Patricia Gablinske, Mark Gadbois, Kevin McNamara, Armand Milazzo, Lori Miller, Reza Sarkarati, Rosemary Stein

Convene Into Open Session

a. Consider and Vote on Motion to Seal Executive Session Minutes

Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

b. Notification to Public of Compliance with R.I. General Laws 42-46-4 & 5 as to Votes Taken

The Chair reported no votes were taken.

Opening Ceremony

Right to be Heard – None.

I. Consent agenda

Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

1. Salary Warrants

2. Expense Warrants

3. Approval of Disposition of Obsolete Textbooks

4. Out of State Field Trip Requests

5. Personnel Recommendations

**Leave of Absence**

a. Yvette Mongeon

From: Math – High School

Effective: January 22, 2018 – end of school year  
(extension)

**Interim Dean of Students**

- a. Frederick Hoppe, Jr.
  - To: Interim Dean of Students
  - Effective: January 9, 2018 – end of school year
  - Salary: \$6,930.00 (Interim Dean of Students Stipend)

**Support Staff Appointments**

- a. Michele Daveluy
  - To: 19 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hr./wk. PT Teacher Assistant – Northern
  - Effective: 1/9/18 – end of school year
  - Salary: \$13.00/hr.
- b. Jennifer Ando
  - To: 1:1 Teacher Assistant – Saylesville
  - Effective: 1/9/18 – end of school year
  - Salary: \$18.05/hr.

**Coaching Appointments**

- a. Brian Grant
  - To: Boys Outdoor Track Assist Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract
- b. Brandon Lahoud
  - To: Boys Tennis Assistant Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract
- c. Matthew Pavao
  - To: Boys Tennis Head Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract
- d. Mark Barrett
  - To: Boys Lacrosse Head Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)
- e. Elizabeth Brennan
  - To: Girls Outdoor Track Asst. Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)
- f. Sue Carlson
  - To: Girls Outdoor Track Head Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract
- g. Stephen Crawford
  - To: Baseball Assistant Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)
- h. Luke Gadbois
  - To: Boys Lacrosse Goalie Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)
- i. Nicholas Maresca
  - To: Golf Head Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)
- j. John Menna
  - To: Boys Outdoor Track Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract
- k. Kevin Palumbo
  - To: Softball Head Coach – High School
  - Effective: 2017-18 Spring Sports Season
  - Salary: Per contract (*pending certification*)

- |                    |            |   |
|--------------------|------------|---|
| l. Susan Renzi     | To:        | Girls Lacrosse Head Coach – High School       |
|                    | Effective: | 2017-18 Spring Sports Season                  |
|                    | Salary:    | Per contract ( <i>pending certification</i> ) |
| m. Charlene Snyder | To:        | Girls Lacrosse Asst. Coach – High School      |
|                    | Effective: | 2017-18 Spring Sports Season                  |
|                    | Salary:    | Per contract ( <i>pending certification</i> ) |

**Information Only**

- a. Teacher Assistant Assignment Change (for 2018-19)

6. Approval of Regular Session Minutes  
a. December 11, 2017
7. Approval of Executive Session Minutes  
a. December 11, 2017

II. Superintendent's Report

- a. Citations

Superintendent Fortunato reported these students auditioned in December for the 2017 RI All State Band. Julie Zito presented the following with Certificates of Recognition:

**Jason Huang** (11<sup>th</sup> in State) – Flute

**Yiru Li** (4<sup>th</sup> in State) – Clarinet

**David Motta** (8<sup>th</sup> in State) – Trumpet

**Matthew Richard** (2<sup>nd</sup> in State) - Clarinet

- b. High School Showcase

Principal McNamara reported they have been focusing on deeper learning which is reinforced with their coaching institute, professional development and instructional initiatives. He referenced their Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Safety, Engagement, Unity and Product. The video recognized broadcast journalism. Three students were present to give a live demonstration of a robot they designed and built. McNamara stated they are trying to develop a calculus academy. Mr. Schofield and two students talked about AP Language and Literature.

- c. Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve 2018 RI Student Survey

Motion to approve by Roll. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. On a roll call vote, the motion FAILED with a tie vote. Rapko-Bruckner, Donabedian, Goho voting NAY; LaFleur, Roll, Zito voting YEA.

- d. Approval of Exhibition Early Release Snow Date 1/12/18, if needed

Motion to approve by Rapko-Bruckner. Seconded by Goho. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

- e. Presentation of 2018-19 Budget

Superintendent Fortunato read the following letter to the School Committee:

Enclosed herewith is the 2018-19 Superintendent's Proposed Operating Budget for the Lincoln Public Schools. The 2018-19 proposed operating budget totals \$56,491,936 which is a 5% increase over the 2017-18 operating budget of \$53,723,742. The funds requested in the proposed budget generally support current service levels.

The 2018-19 Superintendent's Proposed Operating Budget was developed using a zero based budgeting methodology which requires that every budget request be analyzed independently while incorporating the goals in the school improvement plan and the district's strategic plan.

There are changes for professional staff in the 2018-19 proposed operating budget. Lincoln's student population is changing. Many students are coming to school each day with significant needs in the area of behavior. These students require additional social/emotional supports. Accordingly, I am recommending an additional occupational therapist, social worker and speech and language therapist. These professionals will provide the appropriate supports to both students and teachers to facilitate teaching and learning.

The 2017-18 budget also provides a Dean of Students at Lincoln Middle School. This new administrator will work closely with the new middle school principal and assistant principal and middle school professional staff to provide supports to students and staff at the middle level.

Two elementary classrooms, one in grade 2 and one in grade 4 will close and will reopen as grade 3 and grade 4 classrooms. There is no net increase in certified staff as a result of these personnel changes.

Currently, these are two (2) retirements for fiscal 2019. One of those positions, grade 6 at Lincoln Middle School, will not be replaced. For fiscal 2018, there were seven (7) retirements. The salary breakage number decreased significantly in 2018-19 to reflect this change.

Currently, the support staff contract will expire on June 30, 2018. The negotiations line in the fixed charges portion of the budget was decreased by \$173,500 to allow for good faith bargaining with the support union and administrative staff. The amount for these negotiations is \$115,000.

Other areas showing increases include medical benefits, charter school and special education tuitions. Fiscal 2019 claims are budgeted at \$5,508,779 which is a .8% increase over the fiscal 2018 working rate. The significant savings in this line can be directly attributed to the change in plan benefits. Certified staff will now have a Health Savings Account with deductibles of \$1,500 for the individual plan and \$3,000 for the family plan.

Tuitions, both charter and special education, show increases, of \$391,000 and \$315,000 respectively. There are currently 35 students projected to be out-of-district for fiscal 2018-19. Additionally, 2018-19, pension expenses increased by approximately \$250,000, primarily due to salary increases for the certified staff.

For fiscal 2019, projected state aid is showing a reduction of \$419,547 in the funding amount. As you know, 2017-18 was the last year for state increases in aid to Lincoln. Part of the decrease in state aid is attributable to an increase in property values in Lincoln. As a result, the presumption is that Lincoln has the ability to fund an increase in the local appropriation.

The schools requested updated technology in the form of Chromebooks. As you may recall, the district spent \$2.2 million dollars with updated technology and classrooms in the 2013 fiscal year. Those devices are old in terms of technology and need to be updated. Regretfully, those requests in the amount of \$294,430 were removed from the budget. We anticipate a Chromebook purchase with surplus funds at the end of the year, if our medical claims stay favorable.

Like last year, the 2018-19 budget is presented in a format using the Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCOA) mandated by the State of Rhode Island. There are still a few alignments that must be made between the UCOA and the budget. The UCOA format will ensure that the financial information presented is transparent and easy to understand.

The 2018-19 Superintendent's Proposed Operating Budget is a work in progress and contains everything that we believe is necessary to provide the best education to Lincoln's students. We realize that significant cuts will be made. Public discussion of these reductions is valuable and will lead to a clear understanding of Lincoln's fiscal direction and requires your thoughtful input so that scarce resources will be used to maximize student achievement while remaining compliant with the Basic Education Plan (BEP) required by RIDE. The Lincoln Administrative Team is ready, willing and able to assist you in this difficult task and we look forward to working with you to provide a financial plan that will support the quality education Lincoln residents appreciate and expect.

#### f. Financial Report/Charter School Update

The Business Manager reported she is still projecting a zero variance. The extreme cold will impact the utility accounts. Special Education tuition is still an issue. Medical claims are only 47% spent to budget. That bodes well for the technology purchases.

The Chair announced a request for a moment of silence in memory of Fred Doura, a custodian at Lincoln High School.

III. Correspondence

- a. Letter from Ms. Dion, Lincoln Little League, Requesting Waiver of Facilities Fees for Little League Registration on 1/27/18, 2/3/18 and 2/15/18

IV. Civic Use of Buildings

- a. Lincoln Little League Registration 1/27/18, 2/3/18 and 2/15/18 @ LMS, *including waiver request*  
Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner.  
Julie Zito questioned the waiving of custodial fees as the letter requested all fees.

Motion to amend to not include waiving the custodian fees by Goho. Seconded by LaFleur. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

All in favor of the amended motion. Motion carried 6-0.

- b. Lincoln Sports Camps – Fastpitch Frenzy Softball Clinic @ LHS – Sundays, 1/28/18 – 3/4/18, *pending insurance*  
Motion to approve by LaFleur. Seconded by Goho. All in favor. Motion carried 5-0, with Rapko-Bruckner recused.

V. New Business

- a. Discussion of and Vote on acceptance of Superintendent’s Retirement and Separation Agreement  
Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.  
The Chair requested Superintendent Fortunato read her January 5, 2018 letter of resignation to the Lincoln School Committee:

After much deliberation and consultation with my family and friends I am tendering my retirement effective June 29, 2018.

I can say without reservation whatsoever that my thirty-seven years in Lincoln, the last eleven years as Superintendent of Schools, has been rewarding, enjoyable and fulfilling. It has been a distinct privilege to work with excellent and dedicated teachers and staff, outstanding administrators and public-minded school committee members.

My greatest thrill, of course, has been to work with Lincoln’s amazing students and their parents and witness their excitement and joy during their educational journey.

Thanks to the cooperation and support I received from the entire Lincoln school community – I can say also without any reservation – that the Lincoln Public Schools, by any objective measure, is second to none. I truly believe this, otherwise I would not say it repeatedly, as many of you know.

I want to thank the School Committee Chair and members of the School Committee, as well as past School Committee Chairs and School Committee members, for their unwavering support for me and for my vision of the educational mission of the Lincoln Public Schools. It truly has been my honor to work with all of you, and I am very proud of the accomplishments we attained together.

Words can never describe how honored and grateful I am to have served as Superintendent of the Lincoln Public Schools.

As I begin my next adventure, I will always think fondly of this district. I will always have Lincoln in my heart.

Superintendent Fortunato commented on starting her career in Lincoln as a long-term sub at Lonsdale Elementary School January 4, 1982. Chairwoman Donabedian commented on Fortunato’s dedication, energy and bringing continuity to Lincoln. Joseph Goho, Mary Anne Roll, Julie Zito and John LaFleur commented on Fortunato’s tenure and wished her well.

Motion to approve the Superintendent's Separation Agreement by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

b. Discussion of and Vote on Retirement Incentive

Motion to approve by Zito. Seconded by LaFleur.

The Motion was WITHDRAWN.

Motion to Table by Rapko-Bruckner. Seconded by Goho. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

c. Discussion of and Vote on Process for Superintendent Search

The Chair noted there is no process in place for this. She envisioned a third party to assemble resumes and facilitate a process. Mary Anne Roll stated the Negotiation Subcommittee will meet with the attorney.

Motion to table by Roll. Seconded by Goho. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

d. Approval of Budget Workshop 1/24/18 - 6 PM @ Lincoln High School Library

Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

e. Second Reading Gender Identity and Gender Expansive Students Policy

Mary Anne Roll reported the single comment on the website raised an issue of needing a policy for employees as well. They will discuss this with the attorney.

Motion to approve by Goho. Seconded by Rapko-Bruckner. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

f. Increase in Stipends for School Committee Members

The Chair reported Mr. Picozzi requested this be on the agenda. Kristine Donabedian suggested the Budget subcommittee research this and get information from RIDE. Julie Zito noted any increase would go to the next person, not the person currently sitting on the Committee.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

Chairwoman Donabedian reported the Budget Subcommittee will meet January 10, 11 and 18<sup>th</sup>. There is a Negotiation Subcommittee meeting before the Budget Workshop on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The Chair noted there is a lot work coming up with the Principal Screening Committee which Joseph Goho has expressed an interest in; Staci Rapko-Bruckner has expressed an interested in the Special Education Screening Committee; John Picozzi and the Chair are interested in the Finance Director Screening Committee; Staci Rapko-Bruckner is interested in the Superintendent Search and Mary Anne Roll and Julie Zito are on the High School Reno Committee. Mary Anne Roll noted Mr. Gadbois is working on a policy regarding the internet filtering. She suggested the Policy Subcommittee could meet on January 18<sup>th</sup> if the Budget Subcommittee meeting isn't needed.

VII. School Committee Reports

Julie Zito reported the Reno Committee is in full swing with SMMA working on design and doing geological research. The next meeting is Thursday at 6:30.

VIII. Community Comment

A representative from the RI Dept of Health commented on the failing vote of the student survey, stating the survey helps them demonstrate the effectiveness of their preventions. She said there is a contract with the Town of Lincoln for a \$140,000 Partnership in Success award. Joseph Goho clarified this is a four year grant in its final year. John Zangari commented on being present at the meeting when Georgia Fortunato's name was suggested as Superintendent. Every school committee member was in agreement that Georgia was the one to be the new Superintendent. He is sorry to see her go and thanked her for her years of service.

A PTA member, Helene Gugel, also thanked Superintendent Fortunato for her service. She also stated she was disappointed the School Committee didn't approve the survey because it encourages discussions. She also commented she was sorry to see a stipend increase for a position the members all volunteered for. Principal Stein thanked Fortunato for devoting her entire adult life to others and presented her with flowers on behalf of the administrative team. Fred Hoppe commented on some of the kids imitating Georgia Fortunato cancelling school. He thanked her, stating she was tireless and attended so many events.

IX. Adjourn

Motion to approve adjourning at 8:40 PM by Goho. Seconded by Roll. All in favor. Motion Carried 6-0.

---

STACI RAPKO-BRUCKNER, CLERK

---

DATE