

Lowell High School School Site Council Minutes: March 9, 2022

In attendance:

Mike Fiato, Jill Rothschild, Wayne Taylor, Kate Keefe, Bethany Sykes, Lynne Bond, Alice Mwangi, Amanda Ernst, Rose Mecdonca, Eric DeLorenzo, Vannak Theang, Ayla Trieu, Robbina Nyangai, Jason Silverberg

6:30 Greeting & Attendance

6:40 Previous Business

- Minutes from February accepted
- Discussion of budget projections and timeline
- SPED Dept. Chair has recommendations that will be presented at the next meeting.
- Consider new meeting times in March to meet March 27th deadline for budget presentation
- Highlights of February: Sports Highlights, BPA headed to Nationals in Anaheim, CA, Alice Mwangi and Joe Jussuame, Career Speaker Week; POG trip to San Diego

6:45 Budget Workbook Review:

- [Budget Tutorial Recording](#) presentation by Billy Jo Turner Menzies - CFO Lowell Public Schools. Any members unable to attend can review that here.
- Wayne Taylor presented the [QIP process](#).
- \$1,959,076 increase in funding
- Jill and Mike will meet with Dept. Chairs and House teams to review the budget and reconcile the amount of positions available.
- Coach Supplement? - ***Will get clarification on what the position is.***
- Noted that the high school does not have the same guardrails and elementary and middle school.
- Reviewed fair student funding formula and per pupil amount
 - ***Why is our per pupil funding \$10~ not \$17~; the budget meeting on 3/7 quoted a figure of \$17k.***
- Current Staffing and Stats Reviewed
 - Increased and filled a variety of positions including student support specialist in each house office; security; parent liaisons.

- Past Budgeting Pitfalls
 - Tutors and Paraprofessionals have been a challenge to fill.
 - Tutors are part time; 15 hours a week; no benefits; the staffing of these positions does fluctuate because oftentimes they step up to cover long-term leaves and other vacancies in the classroom.
 - Paraprofessionals in our building are predominantly in the SPED department.
 - Filling these vacancies is an issue that is widespread in LPSD and other districts.
 - Two positions not filled: Equity and Inclusion Specialist and Attendance Officer
 - Challenge was getting quality candidates for both positions
 - Swapped Equity Position for the PE position based on need.
 - School-based Attendance Officer is currently open. This is in addition to the district level attendance team.

- QIP Process
 - Needs Assessment has been done.
 - The committee needs to sign off and approve the QIP which will be presented at the next meeting.
 - ***Draft of QIP will be available prior to the next meeting to ensure that the data and the mission align and the committee can preview the information.***
 - Needs to be submitted and presented to central admin by March 31st
 - Findings were that ELL and SPED populations face challenges and increased numbers.
 - Dropouts has declined overall, but in the ELL and SPED populations are on the rise.
 - What supports have we implemented for these populations: specifically in the the 9th grade? Potentially looking at Newcomer Academy? 9R or 9 PLUS.
 - Discussion of the impacts class failure rates have on offerings

- Potential Defense of the budget in front of the School Committee - parent, teacher, student representation is needed. Date is TBD.

7:05 FOCUS GROUPS with Attuned

- Attuned is a partner in strategic planning to help with vertical alignment; running focus groups; helping to ensure we tie the pieces together to align with our vision.
- Meant to identify strengths and gaps in the implementation of our Portrait of a Graduate skills
 - Teacher groups, community groups, business community, parents, higher ed took part.
 - Initial findings:
 - Time for collaboration
 - Financial compensation for additional time
 - The skills are being developed in pockets but not the entire student body
 - Gaps in several of the skills
 - Some of these gaps may be attributed to the pandemic
 - Discussion of communication with all stakeholders and working to help align the partnerships.
- Full report will be shared out once the focus groups are completed

7:15 Priorities to Consider in 2023-2024 Budget

Based on dropout, suspensions, and chronic absenteeism rates

- SPED
 - To remain in compliance add inclusion teachers and paras
 - Increase co-taught courses
- Multi-Language Learners
 - Newcomer Academy
 - The ELL department resources are lacking
 - Dept. Chair shared between two departments
 - Time in a cohort model for co-planning
 - ***More supports for newcomers - models are being investigated***
- Grade 9R Students
 - 9R Academy - or 9R cohort - or 9 Plus

- ***How can we look down/look back to the younger grades to the predictors and start there?***
- Noted that this was a district issue - do we have any information on retention rates?
- Discuss evidence - based models for 9 plus students
- Potential Pilot 9 Plus this year
- Work with colleagues to determine middle school approaches

7:30 Dr. Howe Retirement

- Discussion of her role
- Potential to repurpose the role?
- Currently responsible for overseeing new construction; building and operations; security; business and culinary department head.

7:35 FUTURE MEETING TIMES

- Vote on start time for 3/16 & 3/23
- Change meeting date and time of 3/23 to 3/21 @6:00 pm until we are completed

7:38 NEXT STEPS

- Will send out the QIP for review to the committee prior to 3/16*
- 3/16 Meeting we will address any budget questions and/or clarify necessary items.
 - ***Coaching Supplement: Will get clarification on what the position is.***
 - Reviewed fair student funding formula and per pupil amount - ***Why is our per pupil funding \$10~ not \$17~; the budget meeting on 3/7 quoted a figure of \$17k.***
 - ELL Supports ***What are the new proposed supports for newcomers - what models are being investigated?***
 - Grade 9 Repeating Students - What would a 9R Academy - or 9R cohort - or 9 Plus look like?
 - ***How can we look down/look back to the younger grades to the predictors and start there? Do we do that? ***
- Change meeting dates and times on the website
- Post Minutes on Website

7:40 Adjourn

Next Meeting March 16, 2023 6:30

Minutes Submitted by Kate Keefe