

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
James Leo McGuinness Administration Building
100 Bennett Street
Lynn, Massachusetts

Committee of the Whole Meeting
Monday, May 7, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Castellanos, Ms. Coppola, Mr. Ford, Ms. Gately
Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Satterwhite, Mayor McGee

In Attendance: Attorney Mihos

Mayor McGee presided.

The Mayor opened the meeting with a salute to the flag.

Item 1: Superintendent Interviews

Mayor McGee introduced the first candidate Dr. Jessica Huizenga.

Committee members asked the following questions:

Question 1:

Mr. Castellanos - Social Emotional support is very important in this district. What is your experience with the Social Emotional component? How will you manage high risk students with the involvement of parents and teachers to address their needs?

Mr. Satterwhite - In your cover letter you stated, "As the Assistant Superintendent for the Cambridge Public Schools, I led the development of a strategic teaching and learning plan that included a robust response to Intervention System, a new Curriculum Review Cycle, the development of a district-wide professional development framework and a new teacher induction program." How involved were you in these developments? What types of negative and positive feedback did you receive?

Mr. Nicholson – How would you spend your first few months as Superintendent? Specifically, how would you learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the Lynn Public Schools and identify new opportunities for improvement, particularly with regard to student learning? How have you done that in the past?

Ms. Gately - What experience do you have with before school and after school programs in your district (For Working Parents)? Are you a proponent for expanding these programs? If so, how would you expand these programs?

Ms. Coppola – ELL and Drop Out – At the meet and greet there were concerns around recent decisions of dismantling and main streaming class sizes of 40 students at English and Classical placing them at a disadvantage of getting into a TECH/program they want. How would you help turn our ELL student’s dropout rate around?

Mr. Ford – There is criticism that our students are not active enough. What practices do you see that can be implemented to improve upon this?

Mayor McGee – Have you ever dealt with a problem in which opinions were polarized? What did you do and what did you learn?

Question 2:

Mr. Castellanos – According to a recent NPR article, “High-Paying Trade Jobs Sit Empty, While High School Grads Line up for University.” Lynn needs high paying jobs and we have a vocational school. What does Vocational Expansion mean to you? How would you achieve this as Superintendent?

Mr. Satterwhite – In our 2018 – 2019 proposed school budget presented by Superintendent Catherine Latham, there was an increase in salaries covered by grants. Grants are an important tool we must use to provide the tools and personnel our students and educators need to succeed. What experience do you have with grants? Provide an example of a grant you searched out and applied for and the outcome you received? What did you learn from the experience?

Mr. Nicholson – What was your vision for Southbridge that you would have pursued had you stayed beyond the initial year and why did you leave? What did you learn from that experience that you would bring to Lynn?

Ms. Gately – In 2017 the School Committee adopted a policy to affirm Lynn Public Schools as safe and welcoming Sanctuary for all students. Do you have a policy in your district that provides for a safe and welcoming sanctuary for all students? If so, what kind of professional development was provided to staff in your district to assure proper compliance with the policy?

Ms. Coppola – What kind of working relationship/style would you use to keep the School Committee informed?

Mr. Ford – What strategies would you implement to make our buildings more accessible after the school day ends, without incurring a dramatic cost increase?

Mayor McGee – What kinds of questions would you ask candidates for principalships that you would have to fill? What kinds of questions would you ask your principals about the teachers they bring forward to you to approve for hiring?

Question 3:

Mr. Castellanos – School Safety Strategies and how to implement.

Mr. Satterwhite – You have 20 years in the education profession while many of your subordinates have years on that. What do you believe will be your challenges? What will be your subordinate’s challenges dealing with you as the Superintendent?

Mr. Nicholson – How do you build meaningful partnerships with community partners, tapping into the partner’s strengths and expanding Lynn Public School’s capabilities while avoiding pitfalls like challenges in sustainability or undermining Lynn Public School’s role and the role of our teachers? Please provide an example of a partnership you have built.

Ms. Gately – Lynn has been a Level 3 school district and has made great gains this past year. Do you see Lynn achieving a Level 2 status in the near future? How would you go about implementing the changes needed to achieve this goal? What is your timeline with implementation of these proposed changes?

Ms. Coppola – Our Special Education Department (SPED) needs a leader. As a district, we have had difficulty recruiting a director. If you became Superintendent, what should we look for in a SPED Director that would support your goals and vision?

Mr. Ford – Fecteau-Leary is an alternative school that educates students who have been removed from the mainstream setting. Do you feel that there is a need to remove even more students to keep classrooms more settled?

Question 4:

Mr. Castellanos – Lynn is a diverse and urban district, what are your ideas and plans to promote diversity inclusiveness in professional development and also with current stakeholders?

Mr. Satterwhite – In 2014 the Lynn School Committee voted to cut ties with Gordon College because of the College’s opposition to federal hiring protection for gays and lesbians, ending a collaboration that saw dozens of student volunteers in the city’s public schools for more than a decade. What would you have recommended to the School Committee regarding this decision? Keeping in mind, Erskine College did not support the coming out of two male players on the college’s volleyball team, releasing a statement that students are expected to “follow the teachings of scripture concerning matters of human sexuality.”

Mr. Nicholson – Technology in the classroom - What is the right role of technology in the classroom? How can you tell if teachers and students are using technology effectively and to its full potential?

Ms. Gately – After researching Lynn Public Schools, could you share your vision for our District?

Ms. Coppola made a motion to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. Seconded.
Motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

THOMAS P. IARROBINO
Secretary of the School Committee

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Adopted: May 31, 2018