

LEXINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE
Board Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2020

The Lexington County School District One Board of Trustees convened in executive session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, in the Lexington County School District One's Central Services Building One located at 100 Tarrar Springs Road in Lexington, South Carolina. At 6:30 p.m. the Board of Trustees met for General Session in the Auditorium. The meeting was livestreamed on the Lexington One YouTube channel and a video of the meeting has been uploaded to our YouTube channel and our LexOne video website. It is also on the Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes webpage.

Board Members: Cynthia Smith, Anne Marie Green, Brent Powers, Mike Anderson, Tim Oswald, Jada Garris, Kyle Guyton

1.0 Call to Order 6 p.m. Executive Session

Chair Smith called the meeting to order.

2.0 Executive Session

Chair Smith called for a motion to enter into executive session to consider employment recommendations for 2020-2021. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Motion	Second	Action
Anderson	Powers	Approved Unanimously

3.0 Adjourn Executive Session

Chair Smith called for a motion to adjourn executive session and begin open session. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Motion	Second	Action
Powers	Anderson	Approved Unanimously

4.0 Call to Order General Session of the July 21, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting

4.1 Notification of Compliance with S.C. Freedom of Information Act

Chair Smith called to order the general session of the July 21, 2020 board meeting at 6:30 pm - an exception to the standard start time of 7:00 p.m. and this was communicated in the Public Notice.

She said the Board was meeting in compliance with the Governor's orders, CDC recommendations and Town of Lexington ordinance. The auditorium has been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before the meeting and will be after the meeting also. District staff will also sanitize the microphone before and after staff presentations or individuals speaking during Citizens' Participation. All board members, employees or other individuals in attendance are encouraged to social distance and wear a face covering at all times.

There is limited seating to comply with social distancing. Once that seating is filled, attendees would be rotated out to allow others to participate in Citizens' Participation and maintain social distancing guidelines.

The public is encouraged to watch the meeting on our YouTube channel. After the meeting, the district will follow its previously established process by posting a video of the meeting to the district's YouTube channel, LexOne Video site and our own website.

The district is in compliance with S.C. Freedom of Information Act by notifying the media of the date, time and place of the meeting.

4.1 Notification of Compliance with S.C. Freedom of Information Act (continued):

The district tapes the meeting for accuracy in preparing the minutes.

Chair Smith called on Mrs. Anne Marie Green for the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

5.0 Approval of Agenda

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mrs. Green called for a motion to move Action Item 9.1 - Changes to 2020-2021 Academic Calendar after Report Item 10.3 as it ties into the Stronger Together back to school presentation. A motion was made to move the agenda item, seconded and approved.

Motion	Second	Action
Green	Powers	Approved Unanimously

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve the amended agenda. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Motion	Second	Action
Green	Anderson	Approved Unanimously

Discussion: Ms. Garris asked why there was not an agenda item to approve the ratification of the Online Learning Academy as mentioned in a Board email. Mrs. Green explained that after researching Board policies, there already exists a policy for the Online Learning Academy. That policy is IJNDAA.

6.0 Approval of Minutes of the June 2, June 8 and June 23, 2020 Board Meetings

Minutes of the June 2, June 8 and June 23, 2020 board meetings were included for approval. Chair Smith asked for any additions or corrections to the minutes, other than those that had already been received. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as presented.

7.0 Reports and Action Items from Executive Session

Employment Matters

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve 13 certified recommendations for the 2020-2021 academic year. A motion was made to approve the recommendations as presented. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Motion	Second	Action
Powers	Oswald	Approved Unanimously

Discussion: Mr. Stacey reported there were 26 open positions which is comparable to the same time last year. He was asked about any resignations due to COVID-19. He explained that there had been six resignations and four contracts declined. Human Resources reached out to those six teachers to see if they would reconsider teaching in the Online Learning Academy. Some had reservations about the requirement of teaching virtually from the school building. Mr. Stacey indicated there could possibly be accommodation made to socially distance or isolate those individuals in the buildings.

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve two administrative recommendations for the 2020-2021 academic school year. A motion was made to approve the recommendations as presented. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Employment Matters (continued):

Motion	Second	Action
Powers	Oswald	Approved Unanimously

8.0 Citizens' Participation

Chair Smith read the guidelines for Citizens' Participation.

Prior to any speakers, Mr. Anderson said the Board of Trustees does not vote on the reentry plan. He asked Dr. Little to review the Board policy that gives the Superintendent authority to make reentry decisions. Dr. Little explained that the Board of Trustees gives the Superintendent and his team the authority over instruction and operations of the district. The Board votes on the calendar which is an integral part of the Stronger Together plan which will be explained further during the Superintendent's Report.

Anthony Bertone, Lexington, SC, a former teacher in the district expressed concerns about schools reopening. He said he has been tracking COVID-19 cases over last week, sighting percentages as high as 33.6%. He is concerned about opening schools with these current numbers and supplied articles to the Board supporting his concerns. He asked questions regarding arrival of students to the building, parent entry to the building, plans for mask non-compliance, special services plans, building sanitization, and teacher salary and sick leave due to COVID-19.

Shannon Sharpe, Leesville, SC, a Gilbert High School parent advocated for a five day face-to-face option. She did not agree with the two options given and felt parents should be given a five day option. Her concerns for seniors were about academic shortfalls, potential loss of scholarship opportunities - sports and academic based, and the social-emotional aspect of the senior class missing out on milestones and memories if they are not able to attend school. She is fearful their entire senior year will be wiped out. She believes in the school system and considers teachers essential workers.

Rebecca Hogan, Lexington, SC, a Beechwood Middle School parent, said she was disappointed in the lack of communication and discussion regarding special needs and IEP students and felt these students should be priority. She is concerned about the skill loss for special needs students. She advocated for one-on-one instruction and believes virtual is not adequate for children with disabilities. She would like to know how the district's CARES Act money will be used for students with disabilities. She said teachers are critical to the development of our children and the special needs community needs their educators. With the Governor and our legislature's support of a five day schedule, she believes the district should give a five day face-to-face option or 100% virtual option.

Dr. Jeffrey Travis, Lexington, SC, a New Providence Elementary parent, advocated for a five day face-to-face option. He said it is important for children and that the spring virtual experience was difficult academically and socially. He believes the number one priority of the district is education. He would like to see a five day face-to-face option or a 100% virtual option, and that parents do not want a hybrid option. He believes that children going to childcare on virtual days is not as safe as the children being in our schools. He believes the risk of keeping children out of school outweighs health risks. Virtual education is not the same as bringing children to school.

Charlotte Robertson, Lexington, SC a River Bluff High School parent, advocated for a five day face-to-face option. She said it is in the best interest for seniors to have a five day option so they are better educated and prepared for college.

LaMyron Jenkins, Lexington, SC, a River Bluff High School (RBHS) parent and President of RBHS Gator Nation booster club was introduced and accompanied by Michelle Faust and Walter Hutto, both RBHS parents. Mr. Jenkins indicated he was speaking on behalf of RBHS Gator Nation, the booster clubs of Lexington High School, White Knoll High School, Gilbert High School and Pelion High School. He gave full support to athletic programs and the administrative staff during the pandemic and appreciated the support of Superintendent Little

8.0 Citizens' Participation (continued):

in his comments to the South Carolina High School League (SCHSL). He said the booster clubs request that the district continue to allow students to practice and compete unless otherwise cancelled by the Governor or the SCHSL. He stated that students do better mentally and physically when engaged in athletics. The organizations appreciate the safety protocols that have been implemented in Lexington One. Mr. Jenkins said that as a collective group they pledge financial and volunteer support to continue athletics this school year.

Rome Lindler, Lexington, SC, a Lexington Middle School parent, spoke on the district's plans to address students with learning disabilities. He said there is a population of students who cannot learn online and that this should be considered a learning disability. This population hasn't been tested to see if they can learn online and asked if it would be done. He quoted Public Law #94142 which includes all disabilities and recited the six pillars of learning disabilities which he feels the district is failing to do with the hybrid model. He said the district should address the risk assessment of students being at home versus in the classroom. It is safer to be in the classroom than at home. He asked the district to consider this risk and offer a five day face-to-face option.

Kellie Benedict, Lexington, SC a River Bluff High School parent, was advocating for hundreds of parents for a five day face-to-face model. She said not offering five days puts their children at a greater risk for mental health and academic decline than the symptoms of COVID-19. She requested the board direct the administration to offer a five day option and send another survey to include such. She would like the survey results to be published so that everyone is informed.

Erica Lynn Barnes, Lexington, SC, a River Bluff High School parent, advocated for a five day face-to-face option. She said the eleventh grade year is critical for scholarship opportunities and challenging workloads. She doesn't feel virtual learning at home is as safe as being at school. She said most parents with student athletes want their children involved in athletics despite the risks. She feels that if students aren't in school, they are facing more exposure because they aren't practicing social distancing nor keeping up with their school work appropriately.

9.0 Action Item

9.1 Changes to 2020-2021 Academic Calendar - Gloria J. Talley, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve revisions/adjustments to the 2020-2021 academic calendar. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Motion	Second	Action
Oswald	Powers	6 in favor; 1 opposed (Garris)

Discussion: Dr. Talley presented the revised calendar. She said the first day of school would be pushed back to August 31, 2020, giving the district two additional weeks to prepare for instruction and implement school safety measures. The first four weeks of school will be conducted utilizing the hybrid model with the intent of moving to a five day face-to-face model on September 28, 2020, if all conditions are favorable. Dr. Talley said the changes presented are the least disruptive, providing time to get more data about COVID-19 spread, allowing natural monthly breaks and intentional breaks in the second semester. She reported first semester will end on January 15, 2021, second semester will end on June 9, 2021, and the teachers' last day of work will be June 15, 2021. She said this calendar also provides for five LEAP days for pre-assessments for students in grades 4-K through 8th grade. Dr. Talley discussed two e-learning pilot days in September which are designed to help assimilate students for potential e-learning days for inclement weather. Dr. Talley shared other district start dates in the Lexington/Columbia area. Dr. Talley was asked about input received for this revised calendar. She responded that while the Calendar Committee did not meet in-person to discuss changes, it was shared electronically and gave them the opportunity to provide feedback. Feedback was favorable.

10.0 Superintendent's Report

10.1 Superintendent's Update - Superintendent Gregory D. Little, ED.D

Superintendent Little updated the Board on another *Together Talk* session called Mask Chat that had been released. This session addressed questions regarding the mask requirement for students and staff. He said the district will continue future *Together Talks* to keep parents and staff informed. Dr. Little introduced Ms. Mary Gaskins who would explain the approach used to develop the school reentry plan, and, Dr. Natalie Osborne-Smith who would present updates to the plan since the June 23, 2020 Board Meeting.

10.2 Report - Stronger Together Back to School Planning Process - Mary Gaskins, Leadership Development and Continuous Improvement Director

Ms. Gaskins said the district's goal is to start school in a safe and meaningful way staying true to the Lexington One mission. She explained the Reentry Task Force. The task force focus is on the big picture of reentry planning while creating cohesion across divisions and schools. She said the fifteen member task force has been meeting twice weekly. The first major task was determining scheduling options. A scheduling drafting team presented the schedule and instructional models to the Board on June 23, 2020. Working groups were formed to work through processes and details of implementing these models. She defined the four working group categories including Health and Safety, Teaching and Learning, Staffing and Evaluations and Logistics and identified each committee within the categories. Ms. Gaskins said there are approximately 220 employees involved in these working groups at all employee levels, across schools and divisions. Some divisions have members on multiple committees and facilitate conversations across working groups. The working groups submitted recommendations to senior leadership on July 9, 2020 and these recommendations are being evaluated and implemented through the task force. The task force continues to work on details, tasks and other needs that are identified throughout the process.

Ms. Garris asked for the names of the committee members and also asked for the number of substitutes that might be returning. Mr. Stacey explained that Human Resources held virtual town hall meetings with substitutes to answer questions about the new school year and they were in the process of completing their substitute training. Ms. Green asked for an explanation of distance learning, online and virtual terminology. Ms. Gaskins explained the online learning academy is for families that have committed to 100% online learning and virtual learning will happen on days when face-to-face is not offered to students.

10.3 Report - Stronger Together Back to School Plans - Natalie Osborne-Smith, ED.D., Professional Learning Coordinator

Dr. Osborne-Smith presented an update on Reentry plans since they were presented on June 23, 2020. The reentry instructional models have evolved to include two options for all grade levels - a transitional hybrid model, and a 100% online learning model through the Lexington One Online Learning Academy. Dr. Osborne Smith told the Board the district's goal has always been to maximize instructional time in a safe environment for all students and staff.

Dr. Osborne-Smith said in order to return to face-to-face safely, a three-fold approach would be implemented including the use of face coverings, maximizing social distancing and practicing hand sanitization. Taking a more measured approach to returning to school is critical to a five day return, therefore the district will implement a transitional hybrid model for the first four weeks of school. This will allow children and staff to become well versed in safety practices and distance learning models in the event we need to switch between in-person and virtual learning throughout the year. She explained the transition period will include an AA/BB hybrid model for all students 4K - 12th grade for the first four weeks of school. After four weeks the district will evaluate the ability to return to five days face-to-face. This model allows one cohort of students to attend face-to-face

10.3 Report - Stronger Together Back to School Plan (continued):

on Monday and Tuesday, and, the second cohort to attend on Wednesday and Thursday with the other three days of the week respectively being virtual learning days. She showed sample schedules including service and program offerings for all grade levels. Fridays are virtual days for all students to allow for virtual office support, collaboration and professional learning for teachers. Elementary school hours will be 7:50 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., middle school hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. and high school hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

Dr. Osborne-Smith explained the hybrid instructional model. During on-campus school days, students' instruction includes active student-teacher classroom engagement and preparation for e-learning. On virtual days, students will receive e-learning asynchronous instruction. Students will also have access to teachers for support through pre-scheduled sessions. E-learning will complement the instruction students receive during face-to-face time. Students will learn how to structure their work and schedule support time if needed. Dr. Osborne-Smith discussed student accountability on virtual days. She emphasized check-in times with teachers.

Dr. Osborne-Smith explained the Online Learning Academy. The academy allows students flexibility in their schedule along with accountability for weekly learning goals established by teachers. Students in the academy will be graded according to the district's grading guidelines. Instruction in the online learning academy depends on grade level. Elementary and middle school students will have a set daily schedule. They will have online sessions with teachers and peers. High school students will have a more flexible schedule but will also have synchronous online sessions with teachers and peers. All grade level work will be as rigorous as if they were attending in-person. She said coursework is being scheduled now but it is imperative that the district receives parent commitments quickly so all scheduling can be completed.

Dr. Osborne-Smith took questions from the board and explained that students will be taught the same standards, however teachers do have different teaching styles and may offer different online opportunities for their class. She explained that the virtual Fridays will be critical for teachers to collaborate and plan their lessons for e-learning. She addressed attendance and student accountability by discussing advocacy and teacher check-ins. Dr. Guyton asked for a projection of students enrolled for the Online Academy. Mr. Caldwell reported it was approximately 5,000 students consisting of approximately 2,300 elementary, 1,563 middle and 1,403 high school students. Mr. Stacey reviewed staffing calculations for not only teachers but support employees and administrators. Human Resources asked teachers to apply to the online academy to set staffing numbers. Ms. Osborne-Smith said it was critical that parents complete their scheduling option surveys so that the academy could be staffed appropriately.

Superintendent Little took questions about the data that would be used to evaluate changing models. Dr. Little said the four week transition period is two infection cycles and during that time the district would monitor the number of students and staff that may test positive, the number of students and staff impacted by quarantine, and the number of students and staff excluded based on symptoms. Dr. Little pointed out that DHEC numbers on community COVID-19 spread could also be an impact but a community trend does not necessarily mean there is a school trend. By monitoring these benchmarks, the district can make determinations based on a particular building or hotspot in the community and that it allows flexibility instead of shutting down an entire building.

Dr. Little reported that the district's plan had been submitted to the South Carolina Department of Education for approval and was pending approval.

10.4 Report - Operations Update - Jeffrey S. Salters, Chief Operations Officer

Mr. Salters began the update by reviewing safety equipment for the district

10.4 Report - Operations Update (continued):

including plexiglass dividers and personal protective equipment for students and staff. Mr. Salters showed photos of the new Centerville Elementary School scheduled to open in August. He showed photos of Pelion Middle School building progress and reported that construction is ahead of schedule for PMS. He provided renovation photos of the former Gilbert Primary School building which becomes the new Gilbert Elementary School. He pointed out new entrances, a new playground for the older grades and improvements to the cafeteria. He showed an aerial photo of the new Lexington Middle School site that delineated the footprint of the three wings and drives/entrances. Mr. Salters gave updates on improvements and additions to Pelion High School, Lexington Elementary, Lexington Technology Center, Oak Grove Elementary, Red Bank Elementary, White Knoll Elementary, White Knoll High School and White Knoll Middle.

11.0 Items for Board Information

The remaining items were for board information only.

11.1 Monthly General Fund Budget Transfers - June 2020

11.2 Monthly Capital Projects Report - June 2020

11.3 Monthly Unauthorized Procurements Report - June 2020

12.0 Adjourn Open Session

Chair Smith said the Board of Trustees has provided Citizens' Participation time throughout the pandemic. She encouraged any constituents that might be uncomfortable attending a meeting in-person, to contact any Board member or the Superintendent by phone, email or mail.

She called for a motion to adjourn open session. A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

Motion	Second	Action
Anderson	Green	Approved Unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Brent Powers