



Lunenburg Public Schools

Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Superintendent of Schools

MEETING MINUTES
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, May 20, 2026
LMHS 7:00 – Hybrid

School Committee

Anthony Sculimbrenne Chair - Present
Laura Brzozoski, Vice Chair - Present
Mandy Gilman, Secretary – Present
Emily Young, Member - Present
Member, TBD

Superintendent

Dr. Jodi Fortuna

Recording Secretary

Courtney Fuller

Guests: Christopher McNamara – Business Administrator

In accordance with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, please be advised that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast live over the Lunenburg Public Access channel, on Facebook Live on the Public Access Facebook page.

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The agenda lists all the topics which may be discussed at the meeting and those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Votes may be taken as a result of these discussions. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by Open Meeting Law

1. Call to Order at 7:00 by Mr. Sculimbrenne

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- 3. Public Comment Jane Hall** I've been a resident of Lunenburg for 47 years. Not quite an old-timer yet, only in age. But I just I want to say to all of you how much I appreciate all of the work that you have done on the override, the school committee, our administration, all of you, the teachers, everybody. I'm sorry that it failed. Truly am, one of our town members at the town meeting brought up a little bit of history from overrides in years gone by. And my children went through those years. So, they're in their late 30s, middle to late 40s, and they all suffered through overrides because their mother was usually either the chair or the co-chair of the override committees. Some we won and some we lost as you have experienced. But what I wanted to just share, if you will, is that we will get through this. As you know, we will. The losses are deep. There's no question. But I've heard that there'll be a call for volunteers, for people to come in and help in the lower grades with reading. And I think that's wonderful. The more public awareness we can bring to all age groups, the better, it is not the solution. Believe me, I don't think that's the solution to the problem. But I think having support in the schools from community members who, you know, with some training would be really wonderful. It can help in many ways just even with helping the students, but also to see what goes on in the school. So, I applaud that and I will be one of them for sure, I just I can't say enough. We will get through this. Our kids will be okay and they will all go on and be successful upper grade level students, if you will, and colleges. And I look at my children and as hard as those struggles were, and they were difficult, some years really difficult, they all did okay. So again, thank you for all of the work that you've done and that you will continue to do. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Fortuna, for all of your work and your beautiful letter that went out after. I don't think I've ever seen that before.

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Chris Sullivan 108 Highland Ave I want to thank you for all of your efforts, regardless of opinion there is a lot of work that went into the entire budget season and I am grateful for the effort and extra time. I also wanted to talk about the fifth grade bus release, I was that family that was doing this seven years ago with two other moms, we collected data, and we ran surveys we did not prevail at the time. At the time my son was in the fourth grade. Oddly enough I could have signed my fourth grader out as a walker and he could have walked home, but he couldn't get off the bus by himself, there was a lot of interesting logic there. I am hoping that common sense prevails tonight at you take on that article again.

4. **Chairs Report** – Mr. Sculimbrene reports the outcome of the override vote was disappointing, but not unexpected. We knew and stated on public record as early as September 2025 that the override effort was always going to be a true battle. The combination of the surplus and the general difficulty of selling an override means that this time was from the very beginning a hard sell. As the chair of this school committee I am committed to making sure an override passes as soon as possible. The next time we have the advantage of the lessons from this failure. In particular, we will make sure that the financial house is in order and has been for a substantial period of time. We are well on our way to meeting this mark. Second, we will only ask for what we actually need, which is what we did this around in the tier one budget. Third we will ask for an override on our own, to make sure we can better control the message. Fourth we will have a clearer set of options for voters. We know what is at stake and we will continue to fight for the future of the children of Lunenburg. The result of the vote was a delay not a defeat. America fought for 8 years four months and 15 days to obtain its independence from Great Britain, we owe it to our children to fight for at least one more year. I also want to give a commendation to one person. Everybody here has worked really hard this year. Every teacher here, every member of the staff, all of the administration, they have worked incredibly hard. And so accommodation for one person seems somewhat unfair, but in this case, I think it is deserved. So I wanted to point out the work that Yanina Burns has done. And I want to say this year, Miss Burns didn't do just the basics, showing up, spending money as authorized, making sure that logistics associated with the job were taken care of daily. She made huge strides in keeping kids on the field, and teams competitive. She was at literally every sports event I attended this year, whether it was a football game in the fall, a random basketball game in the dead of winter, or spring track. She was working, helping, and leading, not with a bullhorn or quote unquote supervision, but with roll up her sleeves hustle. I told her when she came before the school committee about the budget this year, and it remains true today that Miss Burn's hallmark is excellence. Everything she did this year, she did with grace, insight, and skill. Her decision to remain on as the AD is huge for both the kids of the town, the kids of Lunenburg, and the town itself. It is critical as we approach the severe austerity measures imposed because of the failure of the override that we make sure to recognize and deploy Miss Burns. The future is uncertain, but we should always bet on people like her. For all of these reasons, I want to highlight Miss Burns as the person that aided the district most in 2025 2026 school year from the perspective of the chair of school committee. The last thing I want to say is this. I'm not going to be chair anymore. It is too much work. It is very difficult. I also think that it's important that we have new ideas and so when she gets here my plan is to nominate Laura to be the chair of school committee. I think she will do an excellent job. She has different strengths than I do and I think that she will do things her way and that way will go very well. One thing that I think we all need to work on is the length of the meetings, we need to make them shorter and more to the point.
5. **Student Representative Report** – District wide there is no school on May 25th, June 6th there is a bake and book sale at the library. The primary school has their field day on June 11th, Turkey Hill has their field day on June 9th. The middle school has a jazz concert next Wednesday, a concert band and chorus concert next Thursday, eighth grade graduation is June 18th. The high school has graduation on June 6th, this Friday is the honors and AP art thesis show

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6. Review and Approve Minutes

- a. **Regular session 3/23/26 Ms. Gilman makes a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Sculimbrene seconds the motion all approve via roll call with 1 abstention**

7. Review and Approve Line Items, Transfers, Warrants

- a. **Line Item Transfers** none
b. **Warrants 5/4/26-5/18/26 \$263,707.25**
c. **Donations – Scholarship awards Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to accept donations, Ms. Gilman seconds the motion, all approve**

8. Superintendent Report Dr. Fortuna shares gratitude for Tony and his work as the chair for the past year. Dr. Fortuna reports the plan to continue to work together to support our students during this tough financial time.

9. New Business

Action

a. Committee Reorganization

- i. **Election of Officers & Appointment of Sub-Committee Members** Dr. Fortuna accepts nominations for the Chair position of the School Committee. Mr. Sculimbrene nominates Ms. Brzozoski as chair, Ms. Young seconds the nomination, Ms. Brzozoski accepts - **Ms. Brzozoski is the new Chair** Mr. Sculimbrene is nominated as Vice Chair, Ms. Young seconds, all approve, Mr. Sculimbrene accepts. – **Mr. Sculimbrene is the new Vice Chair.** Ms. Brzozoski is provisionally nominated as secretary, Ms. Young seconds all approve. Ms. Gilman will be asked at the next meeting if she would like to accept. The committee goes through subcommittee positions and decide on which member will be appointed. **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to accept the reorganization of committee responsibilities as proposed, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve.**
- ii. **Authorize Policies & Procedures to Remain in Force** Ms. Young makes a motion to authorize policies and procedures to remain in force for the 26/27 school year, Ms. Brzozoski seconds the motion, all approve
- iii. **Annual Student Activity Account Authorization** Ms. Brzozoski makes a motion for the annual activity account authorization of \$2000 for the Primary School, \$2000 for Turkey Hill, \$5000 for the middle school and \$10,000 for the high school, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve
- iv. **Annual Town Meeting – Auditorium Waiver** Ms. Brzozoski makes a motion to allow drinks with lids and food at the annual town meeting in the LMHS auditorium, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve.

- b. **Next Steps after Override** Dr. Fortuna shares some of our options, we could call a special town meeting and election for a school only override, the town manager would not stand in the way if we choose to go this way. We could call for a special town meeting election for a smaller level services override, or we could stand firm on the balanced budget. My recommendation to the committee is that we implement the balanced budget and launch a community task force given that the override was defeated resoundingly that the margins were not close in vote. Attempting option one or two right now carried extreme political risk. Returning to the voters immediately may be perceived as tone-deaf or dismissive of their decision. A second defeat would severely fracture our community and damage the districts credibility for years to come. I am recommending that the school committee charter for future Lunenburg Schools community task force be focused on only the schools, and should include parents, educators, town officials, and vocal opponents of the recent override.

- c. **Resolutions of Appreciation** the committee takes turns reading the paragraphs and declaring appreciation days.
- d. **Revisit 5th Grade Consent Procedure** this is tabled for the next meeting.

10. Old Business Action

- a. **Third Read Policies: 3303 Handling of Cash Receipts**, The policy is read out loud, discussion as to whether to change the amount from \$50 to \$100 is had, the committee decides to stay with \$50. **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to accept this policy, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve. 5503 Student Data Privacy and Security**, this policy is read out loud, discussion for AI and Chat GPT is had. **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to approve this policy, Ms. Young seconds the motion, all approve. 5701.01 Administration of Medications**, this policy is read out loud, there is no public feedback, **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to approve the policy, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve. 1303.1 Advertising in the Schools** the policy is read out loud, no public feedback **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to accept the policy, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve.**
- b. **Superintendent Evaluation** the evaluations use a DESE form. Mr. Sculimbrene shares some of the comments made regarding Dr. Fortuna and the process of and approach for the evaluation **Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to accept the composite evaluation for Dr. Fortuna, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve**

11. **Public Comments for issues discussed tonight Mr. Sculimbrene** thanks Mandy for being the spearhead of the political side of what we do, not just with the legislature, but also here in town. She puts herself out there, she organizes things, and she is the lady with the checklist and clipboard. There is no one more tireless or committed advocate for our kids in the town. She is a good team player. **Matt Nazarenko 79 Robbs Hill Road** with the middle school sports budget just shy of \$15,000, what would the legal option be for raising that money and restoring that? If a sport is not offered, what are the student athlete's options to pursue that sport if it is not offered at the school? Dr. Fortuna responds with the option of playing the sport for the town of Lunenburg **Kara Harunkiewicz** to the superintendent, this is the first year I have felt my opinion actually mattered, and I just want to thank you for that. **Chris Sullivan 108 Highland Street** thank you for being present throughout this academic year, I have seen you at sporting events and activities, thank you for being engaged. There have been some ski team parents having a discussion on what we can do to keep these kids participating in their sports choices

12. Reports from Sub-Committees

13. Topics for Future Discussion Sports, bus waiver

14. **Adjournment Mr. Sculimbrene makes a motion to adjourn at 9:36, Ms. Young seconds the motion all approve.**

Submitted Respectfully,

Courtney Fuller

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