

**Lower Merion Education Association**  
**Executive Council Meeting**  
**January 10, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: President A. Avellino called the meeting to order at 4:17.

Approval of minutes from December: V. Fedeli; 2nd D. Mandarino

**OFFICER REPORTS:**

President: Aimee Avellino

- Things have been a bit busy since returning from break as we navigate this phase of the pandemic. We don't know what is coming next and if plans will change at all, but we will continue to connect with admin to get updated information. There are plans for an updated communication based on the ever-changing guidelines for the pandemic and the different statuses for vaccinated and unvaccinated as well as quarantine vs isolation protocols.
- Members are dealing with many issues and we are in meetings with several to support them as we navigate the challenges we face.
- Staff pay a percent of premium for insurance and as premium costs go up, our payments go up. In early December, there was a meeting with admin to discuss ways to save money on those rising premium costs. They came to us with a savings plan that specifically applies to individuals (employees, spouses, dependents) who are currently on specialty medications. Some are quite costly and without generic versions. Prescription costs continue to increase so this program, from Savon, will help save money on these specialty drugs. It utilizes manufacturer discounts to lower copayments. It won't change the way anyone receives their medication. All members need to do is to complete the simple enrollment process. There is a call to make or an online form to complete. (This would affect 95 individuals...they just have to enroll) Other local districts already participate in this program and after speaking with many of them, they are pleased with the program and the goal to keep costs down. The plan is to have ready for July 1, but there is a chance that it may be ready by April 1 to begin saving sooner. Also, anyone on a maintenance medication has had to mail order or use CVS, and some have had issues securing their medications. E. Demkin has worked through that and now we are working to enhance the mail order and CVS options by now adding Walgreens. That would start in approximately 90 days. These are two new enhancements and savings options for members. Those impacted will be notified. Savings could reduce copays to \$0 for some members and save all of us from rising premium costs.
- The latest edition of the Apple Core will be shared after the meeting via the follow-up email from K. Salladino. There is information about the pandemic, an outreach announcement and reminders about important dates. Please be sure to share the Apple Core and the minutes with members in your location each month. Both the Apple Core and the minutes are also posted on the [LMEA website](#).

Vice President, Support: Victor Fedeli

- Reminder for members to vote for Debbie Williams by Feb. 3 @ 5:00 NEA Representative Assembly.

Vice President, Professional: Kelly Cenicola

- No report.

First Vice President: Andy Thomas

- Happy New Year! The following info is mostly for middle school & elementary staff in regards to plans for staffing for Black Rock and the district's plan for reconfiguring and redesigning the MS & ES programs as 5-8 and K-4. Despite the "Covid Chaos," admin are still on track to complete staffing BRMS by the end of the month, so between now and the next Executive Council meeting, people will know the plan for next year. The administration is optimistic that the plan will be well-received...not 100%, but overall positively received. The K-4 and 5-8 committees are presenting to the board tonight and copies of the presentation were shared with staff via email. Having worked in LMSD for as long as I have, I know that there are many of us that have been on committees that didn't go the way we hoped, but the K-4 and 5-8 committees seem to have been conducted with an eye towards inquiry and genuine desire to hear what staff has to say. If/when there are concerns with the district's plans for next year, please encourage staff to talk to members of the committee or to a building principal or other administrator who can speak to what the goals are and what the process was. We will all know a lot more a month from now than we know today. M. Tavani asked if people change their minds, will there be a process in place to reassign? A.Thomas shared that according to admin, they believe that almost everyone will get their first or second choice. After this round of staffing is done, there will be retirements, resignations, etc., so then if a spot opens admin will have to fill vacancies and there may be additional openings and staff movement. Also-admin doesn't want hostages, they want volunteers. They are working hard to make sure the process works and people are happy with their placement.

Secretary, Support: Lisa McDevitt

- No report.

Secretary, Professional: Karen Salladino

- No report.

Treasurer: Darlene Mandarino

- Approval of Treasurer's report requested by D. Mandarino; 2nd A. Thomas

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Outreach: Andria Johnson

- On behalf of A.Johnson, A. Avellino shared that there is an announcement in the Apple Core reminding members to share info about special events via email. Send details about the event to A. Johnson at [lmeaoutrach@gmail.com](mailto:lmeaoutrach@gmail.com)

Constitution:

- No report.

Elections: Kelly Cenicola

- If interested in becoming a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly, email K. Cenicola. LMEA elections are in May. A detailed list of openings will be shared in minutes after meeting and in the Apple Core in February and March. There are many opportunities to get involved including becoming a building rep or committee member on a committee like PR&R Professional Rights & Responsibilities) or CNC (Combined Negotiation Committee). Reach out to officers for more details. In addition, there will be elections for officer positions, too. Committees generally meet once a month...CNC may meet more frequently as bargaining nears and takes place. See specific positions below.
  - **2022 Elections**
  - **Executive Council Representatives:**
    - Administrative: 2 professional positions
    - Belmont Hills: 1 ESP
    - Cynwyd: 1 ESP
    - Gladwyne: 1 Professional; 1 ESP
    - Harriton: 2 Professional; 2 ESP
    - Lower Merion High School: 2 ESP
    - Penn Valley; 1 ESP
    - Penn Wynne: 1 Professional
    - Transportation Lower Merion: 1 ESP
    - Transportation Matsonford: 2 ESP
  - **Combined Negotiations Committee- 3 year term: The Combined Negotiations Committee shall negotiate for this Association as recognized by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board and as provided for by Act 195, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1970.**
    - Middle School- Professional
    - Elementary- 2 Professionals
    - Support- Technicians
    - Support-WV- Assistants (including instructional assistants, audio-visual assistants, and nurse's associates).
    - Support- Secretarial
    - Support- Transportation(drivers only),
    - Support- Custodians
    - Support- Building and Grounds
    - Campus/Bus Assistants and Food Service (including campus assistants, parking, and bus assistants, cafeteria and recess assistants and food service employees)
  - **The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee- 3 year term: The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee shall be responsible for the implementing the Association's Grievance Procedure Contract with the Lower Merion School District; shall provide assistance to all members of the Association with regard to grievances**
    - High School-4 Professional
    - Middle School- 1 Professional
    - Elementary-5 Professional
    - Support Staff- Building and Grounds
    - Support Staff- Transportation
    - Support Staff- Secretarial
    - Support Staff-Campus/Bus Assistants
    - Support Staff- Technicians
    - Support Staff- Food Service
  - **LMEA Officers:**
    - President
    - 1st Vice President
    - Vice President- Support
    - Vice President- Professional
    - Treasurer
    - Secretary- Support
    - Secretary- Professional

CNC: Larry Giaquinto & Tom Ricker

- No report. There is a meeting on 1/27. Also, just a note that K. Hughes has been appointed to replace T.Ricker on the committee and a special election will be held in March.

Financial Advisory Committee: Aimee Avellino

- No report.

Health and Safety: Aimee Avellino, Larry Giaquinto

- No report, just a reminder to follow the chain of command for concerns, beginning with head custodian at the building level. If that doesn't work, reach out to A. Avellino or L. Giaquinto.

Legislation:

- No report.

Minority Affairs Committee:

- Shared on behalf of J. Gaines: Registration for the Minority Leadership Training opened today. This conference, held in Lancaster on March 11 & 12, is free to all members willing to stay with a roommate. Visit the [conference page](#) for more information and to register. The MLT has been planned and designed to assist members and leaders in developing inclusive and efficient locals. To that end, our sessions are leadership based and specifically focused on equipping our BIPOC educators and staff with the skills necessary to be effective and transformative leaders. For allies interested in participating in other concurrent tracks, you can find details for the Women's Leadership Training, the Urban Conference, and the Education Justice Conference [here](#). This conference fills up quickly, so don't delay!

PACE: Andy Thomas

- No report other than to note that Cynwyd continues to lead all other locations with percentage of participation in PACE. LMHS leads all other locations as far as the highest dollar amount contributed to PACE.

PR&R: Victor Fedeli, Andy Thomas

- No changes to report and there continue to be "behind the scenes" actions happening to support our members.

Social: Lisa McDevitt, Aimee Avellino

- No report.

Special Services: Aimee Avellino

- No report.

Sunshine: Debbie Williams

- No report....just remember to share with D. Williams when there is happy news, or sad, so that she can share a means of support to our members.

Membership: David Grumbine

- K. Salladino will share reports in the Executive Council follow-up email.

#### **REPORTS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

CARE: Jackie Gaines

- No report.

Education Foundation: Andria Johnson

- No report.

#### **BUILDING AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Administration: No report.

Belmont Hills ES: No report.

Cynwyd ES: There are concerns about some not using sick days and zooming in to work while others cannot do that.

Gladwyne ES: Concern about Friday's email coming out after the end of the school day on Friday and being presented tonight at the board meeting...not enough notice. There are also concerns from specialists if classes are combined, as described in the proposal, and numbers increase to a point where quality of education is impacted.. A. Avellino asked that those concerns from the specialists be shared with committee reps and building administrators. Also, there is a question if there is an operational closure, can teachers on quarantine or isolation teach from home so as not to use sick days. A. Avellino will check. Some are sharing concerns about the type and quality of masks staff and students are wearing...should there be guidance on what is expected as there are reports that N95 and KN95's are best against this variant. A. Avellino asked that the mask concern be shared with building Health & Safety committee and building admin. A. Avellino will share with the district Health & Safety committee.

Merion ES: Is it possible to get a list of the K-4 committee members to share concerns? A. Avellino will check.

Penn Valley ES: Many concerns are the same as what Gladwyne reps shared. There are also concerns about virtual instruction disparities for reg ed, spec ed and special area teachers. A. Avellino asked that those individuals with concerns share them with the building admin.

Penn Wynne ES: Question was asked IA's covering classes while teacher zooms in...will IA's be receiving additional compensation. There are also concerns with some families using the zoom option for travel and not for covid concerns. A. Avellino shared that family vacations are not approved for zoom and that staff should report such occurrences to the principal.

Bala Cynwyd MS: There was a question about attending the MAC conference in March. A. Avellino will reach out to V. Millard, our PSEA Uniserv rep., for details.

Welsh Valley MS: No report.

Harriton HS: There is a general complaint from support staff about why some are allowed to zoom in and some aren't when quarantining or isolating. There are also concerns about testing positive during the work day, having to leave and being docked pay. Staff are also concerned about running out of sick days for following quarantining and isolating guidelines for themselves and their children. A. Avellino will get clarification.

Lower Merion HS: No report.

Building & Grounds: No report.

Transportation: No report.

At Large Reps: No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: T. Butler asked for clarification on the process if staff do run out of sick days. A. Avellino asked that staff reach out to F. Hanks or K. Jones in HR. V. Fedeli reminded members that they need to see if their situation might qualify as a long-term health issue and/or if they may qualify for FMLA. A. Avellino reminded members that Kronos must be checked on site-not at home-to get an accurate account of your sick days. Reach out to officers if there is a concern about nearing the end of the allotted amount of days. This is not a problem new to pandemic....these situations happened before Covid, too, and options can be explored with building and district admin.

ADJOURNMENT: V. Fedeli; 2nd D. Mandarino at 5:19.