

*LITCHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT*

*Our mission is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that challenge and engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. (2007)*

**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NO. 27**

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

**Approved Minutes for June 19, 2019**

**Location: LMS Library**

**In Attendance:** Brian Bourque, Chair  
Christina Harrison, Vice Chair  
Elizabeth MacDonald, Board Member  
Robert G. Meyers, III, Board Member  
Tara Hershberger, Board Member  
Dr. Michael Jette, Superintendent  
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator  
Mary Widman, Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
Devin Bandurski, Director of Special Services  
Scott Thompson, Principal, GMS  
Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

**I. PUBLIC SESSION**

**5:00 p.m.**

A. Call to Order

Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Review & Revision of Agenda

There were no revisions to the agenda.

D. Summary of Non-Public Actions from June 5, 2019:

*Mrs. Harrison made a motion to accept the nomination of Tammie Robie as part time GMS Computer teacher, at a salary of \$33,776 for the 2019-2020 year. Mr. Bourque seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

*Mr. Bourque made a motion to accept the resignation of Cody Heartz, CHS English teacher. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

*Mr. Bourque made a motion to accept the resignation of Kelsey Sullivan, CHS English teacher. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

E. Presentations and Recognitions

There were no presentations or recognitions.

F. Correspondence

Mrs. Harrison announced the receipt of a letter from Senator Soucy regarding an update on current legislation, specifically the Senate budget and additional education funding.

- Letter to Governor Sununu – School Funding

Mrs. Harrison drafted a letter to Governor Sununu regarding school funding. After receiving Senator Soucy's letter she stated that she received a letter of a call to action from the NHSBA to write to the State government to fund building aid and to adequately fund education. Mrs. Harrison drafted a letter from the Board to encourage Governor Sununu to support the budget and bring education funding to a more adequate level. She invited him to visit our schools and see the issues and needs of the buildings.

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G. Superintendent's Comments

- Capital Planning Meeting Update

Dr. Jette updated the School Board regarding the Capital Planning Committee meeting that was held recently. He reported that the meeting was organizational and groundwork was laid out for committee members. He noted the principals attended as well. He indicated that there is much work ahead and that the first task is to parse out what has been done and return to the committee.

Dr. Jette reported that Siemens provided a preliminary walkthrough of our school buildings to assess our energy use. He indicated they will pose solutions to the use of energy and systems to improve efficiency with updated equipment. He noted an initial meeting is scheduled for July 9 and findings will be brought to the Capital Planning Committee.

Mrs. Hershberger suggested they take into consideration that GMS is very old and that it may not be worth the investment.

Dr. Jette commented until we have that data we will not know. He indicated Siemens will have formulas and options and will list that out. He noted it is up to us to make the final decision.

- Agenda Preparation Memo

Dr. Jette reviewed and discussed a memo regarding Agenda Preparation that will address concerns some Board members have expressed relative to availability of supporting documents for agenda topics.

Mr. Bourque commented he would like the public agenda and materials to be posted late Monday morning.

Mrs. Harrison commented she reached out as well and the purpose to post earlier is to encourage more people to come to the meetings.

H. Community Forum

Robin Corbeil, LMS Computer teacher, commented that the LMS Lego League teams went to the Robotics competition on June 1 and received two awards. She indicated the team members did an outstanding job. She reported there are a total of 60 students involved in LMS Lego League.

Mr. Bourque commented that it is fascinating what has transpired in this avenue. He indicated the students always do well in this area.

Mrs. MacDonald expressed that she was pleased there is an activity for children that are not athletic.

Mrs. Corbeil indicated our students receive more awards on core values and they learn how to solve problems.

Marsha Finnergan, 147 Talent Road, asked the Board to start looking at the high school, specifically the attrition rate. She indicated that she heard over 25% of the staff is leaving CHS and that the problem has to be solved. She commented that some good staff members have been lost already.

Mr. Bourque thanked Mrs. Finnergan for her comments and invited her to contact him on his cell phone. Dr. Jette commented that he is always accommodating if she would like to have a discussion.

I. School Board Comments

Mr. Bourque commented that CHS graduation went smoothly and all speakers did an excellent job. He indicated that GMS Grade 4 move up day was a nice celebration as well. He noted that the staff in all schools are doing a great job.

Mrs. Hershberger indicated that she sent an email regarding her concern to the Board of Selectmen because a minor was asked to provide his address and phone number during public input.

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Mr. Bourque indicated that the Cable Commission edited the information.

Mrs. Hershberger asked if the Board asks students to give their address when speaking to the School Board.

Dr. Jette indicated that the Board only asks which school they attend.

**II. GENERAL BUSINESS**

A. Public Minutes:

- June 5, 2019

*Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the public minutes of June 5, 2019. Mrs. Hershberger seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- Budget Transfers

*Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the May-June 2019 Budget transfers. Mrs. Hershberger seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

**III. REPORTS**

A. Business Administrators Report

Mr. Izbicki reviewed the district financial report with the School Board. He indicated at this time the fund balance \$331,845.77. He noted that the fund balance is as of June 19 and is prior to the processing of final purchase orders.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Overview and Discussion of Kindergarten Enrollment

Dr. Jette discussed kindergarten enrollment and staffing for 2019-2020 with the School Board. He commented that last year the district budgeted for a fifth Kindergarten teaching position in anticipation of the potential for higher enrollment. He indicated there is approximately \$90,000 in the FY20 budget for a fifth Kindergarten and the Board committed to the Budget Committee that money would be returned if it is not needed. Dr. Jette commented the Board looked at the class size policy and reduced Kindergarten class sizes from 20 students to 18 per class, which means that if enrollment for Kindergarten reaches 76 or above, the Board would have to consider adding a fifth class.

Mr. Thompson provided an analysis of enrollment and projection using actual numbers. He indicated that currently there are 68 children enrolled in Kindergarten. He commented history shows we gained at most 3 students over the summer; however, looking at actual numbers we see an anomaly and are considering if it is actually an anomaly.

Mr. Thompson indicated the question is do we make the decision to add a fifth class or stay with the current enrollment and see how many more students enroll. He commented that what is included in the budget is a teacher, paraprofessional and \$28,000 to set up a classroom.

Mr. Thompson explained that if a fifth class is added, it will most likely be placed in the PK portable, moving PK back into the building and relocating tutors and the ESOL teacher. He indicated we are planning to have additional computers at GMS, but we can make the computer lab mobile if we have to do so.

Dr. Jette commented that \$28,000 worth of materials cannot be ordered on August 25 as there is a time factor with the beginning of school. He explained he wanted to make the Board aware of the situation and see what the Board recommends. He emphasized we do not know what will occur this year.

Mr. Bourque asked how long it would take maintenance to move the classrooms if we have to add a fifth Kindergarten class at the last minute.

Mr. Thompson indicated last year when a fifth Grade 1 class was added, they rallied with the teachers.

Mr. Bourque asked how long it would take to hire a teacher. Dr. Jette indicated that it would take at least a few weeks to be vetted through the process.

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Mrs. Harrison commented she is not ready to say no to a fifth class.

Mr. Meyers suggested to send out a reminder for Kindergarten registration.

Mrs. MacDonald indicated we can make a decision on July 17.

Dr. Jette suggested making a presence on Facebook and checking in with realtors to see who may be moving to Litchfield.

Mr. Thompson commented that the knowledge of full day Kindergarten has been out for some time and hopes that there is not an influx of students.

Mrs. Harrison suggesting putting word in the newspapers.

**V. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Curriculum Documents**

- Math Curriculum and Grade 5 Math Program

On June 5, 2019, Ms. Widman shared the K-8 math curriculum documents with the School Board, as well as a change to the Grade 5 Math Program. The Math Curriculum and Grade 5 Math program change require approval from the School Board.

Dr. Jette asked Board members if they had any questions for Ms. Widman. Hearing none, the Board made the following motions:

*Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the change to Big Ideas curriculum for the Grade 5 Math program at LMS. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

*Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the K-8 Math curriculum as presented. Mr. Meyers seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- Work Study Practice Rubrics

On June 5, 2019, Ms. Widman shared Work Study Practice Rubrics with the School Board. Ms. Widman indicated that the Work Study Rubrics were revised following concerns raised by the Board regarding consistency in the language relative to student assignments. She indicated that the committee will need to review and approve the revised Work Study Practice rubrics prior to Board approval.

**VI. MANIFEST**

The manifest was circulated and signed by the School Board.

**VII. PUBLIC INPUT**

**A. Community Forum**

Shaun Elliot, GMS teacher, made comments regarding the class size impact on individual students. She indicated that Kindergarten is the hardest grade she has ever taught because there are so many aspects to teach the students. She noted that the children are not independent and interrupt teachers often to tie their shoes or fix something and it is difficult to keep them focused. Ms. Elliot commented that smaller classes are more manageable. She asked the Board to consider adding another Kindergarten class if the numbers increase. She indicated it is important that we are able to teach the whole child.

Mr. Bourque commented that the Board does not want to have class sizes of 21 or 22 in Kindergarten. He indicated the Board felt that 20 students was too high and changed the policy to 18. He noted that the Board told the public we want to educate these children before they move on to the higher grades.

Margaret Norton, 24 Woodhawk Way, made statements regarding teachers that are leaving the high school. She commented that she spoke with Dr. Jette because something needs to be done.

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Mrs. Norton indicated she has seen firsthand what is going on and it is alarming. She believes the teachers need more support from the School Board. She stated that the Board has good intentions, but it does not get through to the faculty. Mrs. Norton commented that the community failed the teachers with the failure of the contract article. She indicated public opinion of the School Board is not good and believes something big is coming. She noted that she is getting her information from parents and students at the high school. Mrs. Norton commented that she did not realize how much teachers do for the students until she was immersed in it. Mrs. Norton suggested that the School Board show support for the teachers. She commented the Board did not show support by not allowing the teacher at the high school to let her child attend CHS. She indicated the Board should put that support in the budget and let the Budget Committee bear the negativity of the community. She noted there are so many people in the high school that are so upset and something will happen.

Mrs. Harrison commented that the Board worked tirelessly to show teachers and staff support. She indicated that the Board encourages the public to come forward with their concerns as the complaints are not coming to the Board. She noted that the Board cannot fix a problem without the input. She pointed out that the teacher that requested a tuition waiver is a separate issue.

Mrs. Norton commented that the Board needs to offer all teachers a tuition waiver to allow their children to attend our schools. She indicated the contract impasse has been very bad. She asked Board members what else they can do for them to make them want to stay in the district. She commented enrollment is going down and it does not cost any more to fill those empty seats.

Mr. Bourque commented if tuition waivers were granted, teachers who already have maximum enrollment in their classrooms may see an increase in students in that classroom. He indicated at that point the district would be forced to hire an additional teacher.

Mrs. Corbeil, LMS teacher, commented most of her colleagues do not come to the School Board meetings. She indicated that if the teachers do not get a contract, it would be beneficial to have a closed door session with the faculty, which would prove to teachers that they have a connection to the Board. She suggested having an open and honest discussion with the staff.

**VIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3II (a-c)**

*[Minutes of Non-Public Session are written under separate cover.]*

*Upon a motion made by Mrs. Harrison, the Board entered into non-public session at 6:26 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. (c) Matters, which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. Mr. Bourque seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. Meyers, yes, Tara Hershberger, yes.*

**IX. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

*Upon a motion made by Mr. Bourque, the Board returned to public session at 6:51 p.m. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. Meyers, yes; Mrs. Hershberger, yes.*

**X. ADJOURN**

*Mr. Bourque made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
Administrative Assistant to the School Board