

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 November 1, 2017

In Attendance: Brian Bourque, Chair
Christina Harrison, Vice Chair
Derek Barka, Board Member
John York, Board Member
Elizabeth MacDonald, Board Member
James L. O'Neill, Superintendent
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator
Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

(Agenda items may not be in the order in which they were addressed.)

II. PUBLIC SESSION

A. Call to Order

Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

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

Upon a motion by Mr. York, the Board entered non-public session at 6:00 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II (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. Barka seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. York, yes.

II. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Upon a motion by Mr. Barka, the Board returned to public session at 6:27 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. York, yes.

III. PUBLIC SESSION

A. Reconvene

Mr. Bourque reconvened public session at 6:27 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 October 18, 2017:

Mr. Bourque made a motion to exempt the two identified high school students from the Geometry requirement for graduation. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

E. Presentations and Recognitions

There were no presentations or recognitions.

F. Correspondence

Correspondence was received from Congresswoman Ann Kuster congratulating Dennis Perreault and the Campbell Recycling Program.

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G. Superintendent's Comments

- Enrollment Projections

Mr. O'Neill presented the October 2017 Enrollment Projections to the Board. He commented that we continue to look at declining enrollment. He mentioned the NHSBA will not be providing projections in the future; however, Mr. Michener agreed to provide projections for the district this year. Mr. O'Neill recommended using NESDEC for future enrollment projections or preparing projections internally.

Mrs. MacDonald inquired about the method for projecting future enrollment internally.

Mr. O'Neill explained that projections are made by taking the current enrollment in each grade level over the last 3 or 5 years and looking at what that cohort survival will predict. He noted it is more difficult in K-1 because live birth rates, new housing, immigration and emigration are taken into consideration. He commented that NESDEC noted in their report last year that there was an anomaly for grade 1, which could have been due to younger families moving into the community as older families move out.

- High School Exchange Student

Mr. O'Neill informed the Board about a request for an exchange student at CHS.

- Budget Update – Business Administrator

Mr. Izbicki provided a reconciliation of the FY19 School Board Recommended budget and a list of strategic items that were pulled out of the FY19 Recommended budget. He explained the reconciliation contained items that had to be either be added back into the budget or were removed to the strategic list.

Mr. Bourque asked Board members if they had any additional changes or recommendations for the FY19 budget. No additional changes were recommended by the Board.

Mr. Izbicki reported that there is an increase in Special Education transportation due to a rate increase. He indicated the district does not have a contract with that provider and a compromise in the rate was negotiated.

Mr. Bourque suggested Mr. Izbicki provide that update to the Budget Committee. He believes the Board is presenting the Budget Committee with a trim budget.

- ALICE Training

Mr. Izbicki reported that Mr. Lecklider attended the ALICE training at Alvirne and an overview was presented at all three Litchfield schools by an ALICE representative. He indicated a quote was provided for ALICE training in Litchfield schools for a full day drill in March at all three schools with online certification for all staff at a cost of \$14,000. He asked if the Board would support the training.

Mr. O'Neill commented there was an ALICE presentation at LMS that was well received by staff members. It was also presented to GMS and CHS and they were supportive of the training. He indicated that the Litchfield Police Department endorsed the training. Mr. O'Neill noted that ALICE training proved to be more effective than the passive lock down training. The vendor will bring in trainers and prepare live simulations. He mentioned that the district is working on the District Emergency Operations Plan. He indicated doing the training is well worth the cost and we will have done the best practices for these events. Mr. O'Neill recommended using some of the projected fund balance to pay for the training.

Mrs. MacDonald shared her experience with ALICE training. She commented that it is a 3.5 hour live simulation with a one hour online training. She indicated the training is eye-opening and supports spending the money for it.

Mrs. Harrison expressed her support for the training, but was concerned about how it would impact our younger children without frightening them. Mr. O'Neill indicated that we have to train people on how to respond, including children.

Mr. Izbicki suggested involving the Joint Loss Management Committee to work with the trainers.

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- Chromebooks for LMS

Mr. Izbicki indicated there has been some discussion about providing Chromebooks for 8th grade students. He noted that funds have been identified for that purpose.

Mr. O'Neill commented the goal is all high school and middle school students will be provided with Chromebooks. Mr. Izbicki indicated it is a total of 66 Chromebooks.

Mr. York suggested Chromebooks be provided to students in Algebra I and Spanish I students who are taking high school courses in grade 8.

Mr. O'Neill asked the Board to approve the expenditures to purchase the Chromebooks and to pay for ALICE training.

The School Board was in agreement to approve the expenditures to purchase the Chromebooks for 8th grade students and to pay for ALICE training for the district.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned that there was a recent weather event where the schools were closed. He expressed his appreciation to the Fire Chief for his communication and to Mr. Izbicki who was the key point person during the event.

Mrs. MacDonald asked if the district can apply for a waiver for the two days. Mr. O'Neill indicated the Governor has not made the decision yet. He noted we will have to revisit this if we have more snow days.

Mr. Bourque asked when it is anticipated that LMS will receive the Chromebooks. Mr. O'Neill indicated that it could be around the first week of December.

H. Community Forum

Claire Chew, 19 Newstead Street, asked if the district will ask parents to purchase a Chromebook for their 8th grader prior to purchasing the devices.

Mr. Bourque indicated that would not be necessary since the district is supplying them.

Mrs. Chew asked if student keep them over the summer. She commented that AP students are assigned work over the summer and would need the device to use during that time.

Mr. O'Neill indicated we can look at assignment of Chromebooks to students over the summer.

Mr. Bourque commented that he was to understand the Chromebooks are turned in at the end of the year for cleaning any upgrading, etc. and returned to the students at the beginning of the year.

Mrs. Chew asked if the student is supplied with the same machine he or she turned in. She mentioned there is also a health reason for asking since some people have peanut allergies and can have an episode if they touch the device after someone has handled it and had peanut oil/residue on their hands.

Mr. York commented that we have had two years of a pilot program and that practices that occurred are not a precedent or trend. He indicated we have not had this program long enough to make those statements.

The Board discussed the Chromebook program further.

I. School Board Comments

Mr. York shared an article regarding a bill to reallocate adequacy aid to parents who are homeschooling or to other different types of schools with the Board. He mentioned Litchfield could lose up to 5% of adequacy aid. He encouraged the public to contact state representatives to ask them to vote no on the bill.

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Mr. O'Neill asked if we lose current students to private schools will we lose 5% of funding from adequacy? He indicated if we have a significant loss of aid and we have to increase our budget to make up the amount for local taxation. He commented this bill would have a dangerous impact on public schools and it seems this is slippery slope. He believes that public schools and local taxpayers will be penalized with the passage of this bill. Mr. O'Neill does not believe that it would be fair for the state to give adequacy aid that is funded by the local taxpayer to private schools that should be going to public schools. He indicated it is not an appropriate use of taxation on local citizens.

Mr. York was disappointed to read that the Superintendent in Northwood will resign at the end of the year because of the busing issue. He indicated they were struggling with school schedules because of the transportation issue.

Mr. O'Neill commented his understanding of that situation is they could not hire bus drivers and could not run some of the routes so they had to make accommodations of times and routes. He indicated that it was not within the control of the Superintendent.

Mr. York mentioned the bus company went out of business.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned that the Commissioner of Education provided information regarding the status of the transportation issue. He explained the Commissioner contacted New Hampshire and Massachusetts transportation companies to see if they had excess capacity for bus drivers and found there was none. He indicated it is more enticing for a driver to get a full time driving job with benefits at a private company than it is to work a part time with less pay and no benefits on a split shift driving a school bus.

Mr. York shared an article in the Union Leader that reported Manchester received a grant for \$300,000 for the implementation of a 1:1 program in their schools. He suggested it may be something to look into to see if there is money left in the grant for which we can apply. He noted that the article mentioned Manchester schools were lagging in the computing process.

Mr. O'Neill commented that the district will look into it.

Mr. Bourque congratulated both CHS and LMS athletics teams for their successes in their tournaments and championships.

Mr. O'Neill commented that Litchfield is not only doing well athletically, but academically as well. He indicated that recently received testing results were encouraging.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Public Minutes:

- October 18, 2017

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve the public minutes of October 18, 2017. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

IV. REPORTS

A. Curriculum Report

The November Curriculum report was provided for the Board.

Mr. O'Neill announced that he asked the Board Chair if the Admin Team could be excused from the meeting this evening since they will be attending the Budget Committee meeting tomorrow night.

Mrs. MacDonald asked if there were any decisions regarding competency grading and overriding competencies if they were failed. Mr. O'Neill indicated that Mr. Lonergan is looking into it. He mentioned that CHS is going through the NEASC process and is focused on accreditation.

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Mr. York commented that the Homeland Security audit with regard to vestibules at GMS and LMS was mentioned in the curriculum report. He asked if that will be something that will be brought to the Capital Planning Committee.

Mr. Izbicki commented there was a question about grant funding or local funding with regard to the audit.

Mr. O'Neill reported that the Commissioner of Education made it clear at the meeting on Friday that security was a very high priority. He indicated the Commissioner explained grants are first come, first serve and if a district has multiple projects it is best to write individual grants for each project.

Mr. York commented that Dr. Childress mentioned in her report about the No Grades model. He requested a discussion with the principals and Curriculum Director regarding that model. He asked if there was a possibility Dr. Childress could observe math classes and instruction. He indicated it was good to see improvement on the math scores.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned that the Curriculum Director will provide a report regarding teaching practices in the math curriculum.

Mr. York commented that we have been working on math for a long time and he believes another set of eyes may determine if all the things the Board wanted to occur are occurring.

B. Principals Reports

Principals reports were provided for the Board.

Mr. York commented on the CHS Principals report. He was concerned that out of 122 students that took the Science NECAP test 80 are partially proficient or below.

C. Committee Reports

- **Budget Committee**

Mrs. Harrison reported that the Budget Committee met on October 26 and discussed and voted the 2018 Town budget. She commented the goal for the town budget was to get it below the tax cap. She noted the Budget Committee has approximately \$15,000 remaining to reduce so that they can make recommendations on warrant articles. She reported that the town is experiencing a 17% increase in health insurance and a significant increase in fire hydrants due to additional hydrants installed in the town.

Mr. Bourque commented that the town should “piggyback” the school for healthcare. Mr. O'Neill commented that they did not reach out to the district.

Mr. Bourque announced to the public that the Budget Committee is meeting tomorrow night to review the FY19 School Board Recommended budget.

The Board briefly discussed preparation of warrant articles. Mr. O'Neill indicated the district will propose a minimal number of articles. Mr. Izbicki provided some information about the contingency funds article.

- **Capital Planning Committee**

Mr. York reported the Capital Planning Committee met on October 24, addressed the building assessment matrix and made changes. He indicated that the Committee removed everything that was above \$500,000 and then marked off what was not a life safety item. He reported that the recommendation is to combine the results on a bond. Mr. York noted there was a conversation about rekindling the elementary school as most of the costs are associated with GMS. He commented he would like to have enough information to make a recommendation to the School Board for November 15. He indicated that he asked the SAU to prepare an RFP to solicit bids for some of the work that needs to be done.

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V. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Policies:

- 1st Reading:
 - IKF, Graduation Requirements

Mr. O’Neill commented the policy language was revised with regard to the waiver procedure and reflects that the School Board has the final approval of waivers. The policy is ready to be approved for a 1st Reading by the Board.

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve IKF, Graduation Requirements, for a 1st Reading. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- Review:
 - BEDC, Quorum

Mr. O’Neill commented this is a policy required by law. It is straightforward and addresses quorum requirements for various situations.

Mr. York made a motion to approve BEDC, Quorum, for a 1st Reading. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- GBAA/JBAA, Sexual Harassment

Mr. O’Neill indicated there are changes to the report form only that eliminates redundant wording.

Mr. York made a motion to approved amendments made to GBAA and JBAA, Sexual Harassment. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- ILD, Student Surveys, Non-Educational Surveys, Questionnaires and Research

Mr. O’Neill commented this is a policy required by law. During the 2017 legislative session, RSA 186:11, IX-d, which requires districts to adopt a policy governing the administration of non-academic surveys or questionnaires to students, was amended. SB 43 was signed by the Governor in July 2017 and became effective September 16, 2017. The law was amended to eliminate the “opt out” provision of the surveys/questionnaires and now requires the written consent of a parent/guardian on the behalf of the student. This is a new policy for Litchfield.

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve ILD, Student Surveys: Non-Educational Surveys, Questionnaires and Research, for a 1st Reading. Mr. York seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

VI. MANIFEST

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Community Forum

There was no public input.

VIII. ADJOURN

Mr. York made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board