

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 November 2, 2016

In Attendance: Brian Bourque, Chair
Derek Barka, Vice Chair
Janine Lepore, Board Member
Christina Harrison, Board Member
Paula Izbicki, Board Member (*excused*)
James L. O'Neill, Superintendent
Frank Markiewicz, Business Administrator
Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

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

I. PUBLIC SESSION

6:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order

Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 6:00 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 19, 2016:

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve the non-public minutes of October 5, 2016 as written. Mrs. Lepore seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Barka abstaining.

E. Presentations & Recognitions

There were no presentations or recognitions.

F. Correspondence

Mr. Barka indicated correspondence was received from Betty Vaughn, regarding support for the LMS part time music teacher; Amy Goldstein, regarding support for the LMS part time music teacher.

Mr. Bourque indicated correspondence was received from Beckie Moore, regarding Tech Ed in Grade 6. He commented her concern is that we are focusing more on STEAM than Technical education. He noted that Mr. Lecklider responded and explained that although there is a focus on STEAM, as the semester progresses students and parents will see more of what was done in the past as well.

G. Approval of Draft Minutes:

- Public Session October 15, 2016

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the public minutes of October 15, 2016 as written. Mrs. Lepore seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0

H. Community Forum

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, expressed that the part time LMS music teacher position should be reinstated in the FY18 budget. She indicated it was removed once from the budget and became a detriment to the students' education and there are scheduling problems with after school programs. Mrs. Hirte commented that a full time music program at the middle school level is important to attract more high quality teachers, engage and interest more students, sustain programs throughout the grades, build self-confidence and help prepare our students coming to the

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high school. She indicated it has been five years since the program was removed from the budget. She noted that quality teachers do not want part time jobs. Mrs. Hirte commented that parents and students have little choice in programs other than athletics. She was concerned that there is a decrease in choral students at the middle and high schools. She noted that students that participate in a music program become better listeners.

Betty Vaughn, 19 Stark Lane, commented that Mrs. Leite is a wonderful role model to students and the band program continues to grow due to her dedication. She indicated when chorus was removed there was a negative impact on the middle school and high school. She noted that it affects teachers' abilities to help student progress. Mrs. Vaughn commented that the district needs to grow the music program as it is the district's best asset. She was concerned that other positions are being added and programs like this one are being reduced. She commented when the music teacher presented the request to add the position in the budget they should have been taken seriously.

Mr. O'Neill commented that he recognizes that there was an additional music teacher in district. He indicated we have wonderful music program and he would like to keep it going and growing. He clarified the part time LMS music position was not included in next year's budget. He noted there is currently a choral activity after school, but he agreed the numbers are not large and that having a position in the district would be a plus. Mr. O'Neill commented we are in an era of having to make tough decisions with regard to staffing.

Mrs. Vaughn commented she saw Mr. Lecklider say he was hoping the position could be added back into the budget next year. She indicated it bears consideration to go over the information again and make some adjustments.

Mrs. Hirte commented that if a student is not athletic, there are not many activities for them to participate in after school. She indicated there is large support for STEM, which is important, but the Arts are where so many children find a home. She noted if it was in the curriculum it would be open to more students who may discover a love for something they did not know they had. She commented it is up to us as a community to support and educate the whole child.

Mr. Bourque commented the budget has been passed on to the Budget Committee. He suggested if the community is looking to put items back into the budget it can be done at Deliberative Session.

Mr. Barka agreed Deliberative Session is the best place to add something back into the budget. He mentioned that a petition warrant article can be submitted as well.

Mr. Bourque explained the School Board decided to remove the position because other position are more needed.

Mr. Barka commented there are two contracts in negotiations and we could be looking at over \$1M in increases.

Mrs. Lepore commented that she appreciates what Mrs. Vaughn and Mrs. Hirte are saying and agrees with their comments. She indicated music impacts students in so many different ways and teaches valuable lessons. She noted she would support the position, but it is not only the Board's decision.

I. Superintendent's Comments

• NESDEC Enrollment Projections Oct 2016

Mr. O'Neill provided the enrollment projections from NESDEC for October 2016 to the Board. He reported that there is no data overall that stands out. He indicated that the district continues to look at an average 1.5 student per year decline in enrollment for the next 10 years. He noted one contradictory piece of information is the grade 1 enrollment. Mr. O'Neill explained that we usually get a good indication with live births, but the anomaly that occurred this year was there were 20 more students enrolled that were not born in Litchfield. He commented all projected enrollments are what is included in the first grade cohort and if births are not going to reflect the first grade cohort, we will have to monitor that cohort to see what is impacting the enrollment. He suggested that this could be due to younger families migrating into Litchfield. Mr. O'Neill reported that the NHSBA enrollment projections were just received today and the initial reaction is that that they are similar to the NESDEC projections. He indicated they are aware that the first grade glitch is something that has to be watched. He commented it would be a safe projection that we will lose 1.5 students per year, but the lower enrollment will impact middle and high

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schools over the next eight years. He noted we will continue to watch the enrollment and make decisions based on actual enrollment.

Mrs. Lepore asked if the district has consulted the real estate markets. Mr. O'Neill indicated that there is information regarding new home permits, which are off significantly.

Mrs. Lepore commented it would be interesting to know if home sales coincide with the influx in enrollment in first grade. Mr. O'Neill indicated we can contact the Board of Realtors to see if they have that information. He noted we will have that information by late winter or early spring. He mentioned that a comment from NESDEC reflects that if it seems families are moving into grades 1-8, then the path of projected decline may be wrong. He indicated that Deliberative Session is a critical meeting for educational plans for next year.

II. REPORTS

A. School Board Comments

Mr. Bourque commented both the Boys and Girls soccer teams lost this year.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned he was considering how to continue to elevate knowledge of our district. He asked if the Board would be interested in recognizing someone for outstanding achievement on a monthly basis by publicly recognizing them and giving them an award. He commented he will look into it and implement it next month.

• **Ski Club Discussion**

Mr. Bourque discussed the Pat's Peak Ski Club with the Board. He mentioned that brochures were sent out a week ago to register. He indicated the brochure states "not a school activity". He commented that he discussed this with the Superintendent and consulted legal counsel, who believe it is a school activity. Mr. Bourque explained that our transportation policies are not in alignment with the club's transportation practices as the middle school and high school student members are bussed, but elementary student members are not. He indicated that the understanding with the Ski Club was that this had to be a school activity to get a discount, but he was told by Pat's Peak that it does not have to be a school activity as they can get a discount if they say they are from Litchfield. Mr. Bourque believes the only resolution to the problem is that the Board officially acknowledge the ski club is not a school activity and for the club to arrange for their own transportation. He commented that currently the district collects the money for and arranges transportation for the club. He recommended returning the club's money to them and having them arrange for their own transportation.

Mr. Barka commented that he was under the impression Pat's Peak would not allow the club to participate as a non-school activity because they did not have insurance.

Mr. Bourque indicated they have to have their own insurance. He commented they can collect their own money, contact the bus company and pay for the transportation.

Mr. O'Neill commented that he and Mr. Bourque reached out to Pat's Peak and spoke with the person in charge who stated the club can get a discount without this being a school activity. He indicated we can inform the parents that we checked into it and that they can participate in the program on their own and get a discount.

Mr. Bourque was concerned that the district has been in a liability position and noted that this is the correct resolution.

Mr. Bourque made a motion for the Ski Club to be a non-school activity and for the Ski Club to arrange for their own transportation. It is the Superintendent's responsibility to notify LMS and CHS that the district will no longer accept funds for or arrange for transportation for the Ski Club. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Mrs. Harrison commented during the Saturday Budget Work session there were comments regarding more lunch choices and the possibility of opting out of the federal lunch program. She requested a committee be established to look at those options.

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Mr. O'Neill indicated that Londonderry has opted out at the high school level. He offered to contact them and other districts that have followed suit.

Mr. Bourque asked about the monetary impact of opting out of the federal program. Mr. Markiewicz indicated the impact would be \$100,000 district-wide.

Mr. Bourque commented that he does not have issue with a discussion of the topic, but cautioned the Board to keep the cost impact in mind.

Mr. Barka asked if the district would still be eligible for the federal funds if better food was served. Mr. Markiewicz indicated it is not just a matter of recovering the money, it is losing the opportunity to recover the money.

Mr. Bourque commented that the kitchen equipment would have to be updated to handle preparation of the meals. Mr. Markiewicz indicated it is a labor issue and must be vetted. He mentioned that he asked Mrs. Lawrence to look at the option and provide information regarding any issues that may result. He commented it is not simply changing food quality components. He noted that once the research is complete the information will be brought before the Board for recommendations.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that we will investigate what other districts are doing and make recommendations. He agreed that a committee could provide fresh ideas. He commented we will go through the procedures internally and see how we can improve things. Mr. O'Neill indicated that the district will report in one month (or so) about other opportunities and Mr. Markiewicz can prepare an analysis. He added that Londonderry opted out because they wanted to serve more food.

B. Enrollment Report Oct 2016

Mr. O'Neill provided October 2016 enrollment information for the Board.

C. Committee Reports

- Budget Committee

Mr. Bourque reported the Budget Committee met last week and completed the town budget. He indicated they will vote on final reductions to the town budget in late December as they are waiting for the final warrant articles and looking at the tax cap. He noted the town budget is approximately \$180,000 over the tax cap. Mr. Bourque commented the article that was approved last year is not legally binding because the town failed to hold a special hearing within the required timeframe, but they are honoring the wishes of the voters. He reported the Budget Committee will begin reviewing the FY18 School Board Recommended Budget tomorrow night.

III. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Policies:

- 1) 1st Reading: EEA Student Transportation Services

The Student Transportation Services policy was revised and provided to the Board for a 1st Reading.

Mr. O'Neill commented language was added regarding the requirement that responsible parties will have to meet K-1 students when they arrive at their bus stop at the end of the day.

Mr. Bourque asked if First Student was apprised of the changes. Mr. Markiewicz indicated they were advised and are waiting for final approval of the policy and changes.

Mr. Bourque asked with whom the responsibility lies. Mr. Markiewicz indicated it lies with the bus company as they have to abide by school district policies.

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve EEA, Student Transportation Services, for a 1st Reading. Mrs. Lepore seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

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2) 1st Reading: IIAE Acceptable Use Policy

The Acceptable Use policy was provided to the Board for approval as a 1st Reading.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that there has been good input from the Board regarding the redrafted policy. He commented we are trying to focus on a more "catch all" policy for all kinds of electronic technology uses.

Board members discussed areas where the policy could be more concise and requested Mr. Pelletier attend the next meeting to comment on areas in the policy for which the Board has questions and/or concerns.

3) Review: JLCJ Concussions and Head Injuries

The Concussions and Head Injuries policies were provided to the Board for approval as a 1st Reading.

Mr. O'Neill indicated the original draft policy was vetted through legal counsel who suggested that two policies be drafted: one for athletic concussions and one for concussions that occur outside of athletics. He commented there was a question about who allows a student athlete to return to play and it was suggested the athletic trainer should make the decision. Mr. O'Neill indicated that a certified physician should make that decision as a physician's approval is required to return to competition.

IV. MANIFEST

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

V. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Community Forum

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, commented about the food served in the schools. She agreed that more and better choices are needed. She indicated she understands the financial impact and would be willing to pay more for her children to have a hot, healthy lunch rather than what they are served currently. Mrs. Hirte commented that there are never enough main meals left for third lunch at the high school as athletes are buying two or three meals.

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

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

Upon a motion by Mr. Barka, the Board entered into non-public session at 7:08 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. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Lepore, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes.

VII. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Upon a motion by Mrs. Harrison, the Board returned to public session at 8:05 p.m. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Lepore, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes.

VIII. ADJOURN

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board

From: Betty Vaughan - SAU27 Website <sysadmin@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: October 29, 2016 at 5:29:33 PM EDT
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>
Subject: Litchfield School District: 1/2 time music teacher

Litchfield School District

This is an enquiry email via [Litchfield School District](#) from:
Betty Vaughan

Name: Betty Vaughan
Subject: 1/2 time music teacher

Message:

I'd appreciate it if you can put the 1/2 time music teacher position back in the school budget and work to cut other areas of your budget. The music program in the schools is an important part of our kids education. The participation in band is continuing to grow while chorus participation is declining because there is not an in school class with a teacher who can inspire kids the way Mrs. Leite does. Mrs. Leite has been an important role model in so many kids lives through her work with them in the LMS band. She is asking for help and I feel it is essential that it is provided. Having Mrs. Labelle come up from GMS is not a well thought out solution. I understand that the IT budget is going to be large this year but computers and the STEM program are only part of the learning experience. The music program should also be valued and helped to grow. Betty Vaughan

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The user has requested a copy of this email

From: Beckie Moore
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2016 7:41 PM
To: Tom Lecklider; Brian Bourque
Subject: 6th grade tech ed

Dear Mr Lecklider and Litchfield School Board,

I am writing to express my extreme disappointment to the changes in 6th grade tech ed. Not only are the kids no longer making cool projects like lamps and bird houses, it seems it is more of a drafting class. I understand the push for STEAM and/or STEM but couldn't this have been incorporated into some hands in woodworking projects like what was done in the past. I can't see where anyone would think learning how to make a foot brace would be anywhere near as interesting to a 6th grader as making a lamp! Couldn't electricity been worked into a project such as this so that the children could learn while still producing something with there hands and all the tools and machines we as a district already own. And what about exposing kids to the trades, the world needs more than just engineers!

Additionally it seems the students are not getting adequately prepared for the tests they are being given. I understand they are not allowed to take this folders home with them? This makes no sense to me! I don't understand how so many students are doing so poorly in this class while maintaining high grades in other classes.

I know I am not alone in my feelings on this topic. It most appreciated if this can be reviewed. It will be too late for these students but hopefully it can be a fun class again for future LMS students.

Sincerely
Beckie Moore

From: Tom Lecklider <tlecklider@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: November 1, 2016 at 11:10:39 PM EDT
To: Beckie Moore , Brian Bourque
Subject: RE: 6th grade tech ed

Hi Mrs. Moore,

Thank you for the email. I would love to chat more with you about Tech. Ed.

As you probably know, teachers with credentials and experience in traditional technical education are hard to find. This is classified as a "critical shortage area" in the State, which we lived through this summer. The vacancy was posted through July and into August with no applicants. The District made the decision, in an effort to attract a pool of candidates and be able to continue to offer the class, to broaden the approach to the class to a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) focus, including the engineering component. Once we did this, Mrs. Lepauloue applied and came to us with this background in her last two schools (they had experienced a similar transition due to a lack of applicants). While there will be some integration of the components and concepts from

the past, with this increased focus in our District in STEAM, we feel that this aligns well with the Board and District goals to this end and can be somewhat of a hybrid model between the old and the new. With that said, I hear and understand your concern to allow students the opportunity to learn about the woodworking trade. There are many of these concepts working into the current class through Project Lead the Way, also a District initiative. I think you will see as the semester moves along that there will be an increase in the hands-on tasks.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss the course further. I will follow up with a phone call this week.

Have a nice night.

Sincerely,
Tom



Tom Lecklider

Principal

☎: 603-424-2133 | 📠:603-424-1296

✉: tlecklider@litchfieldsd.org

Twitter: @tlecklider_lms

SAU 27 – Litchfield Middle School

19 McElwain Drive

Litchfield, NH 03052

From: Amy Goldstein - SAU27 Website <sysadmin@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: October 31, 2016 at 8:27:42 AM EDT
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>
Subject: Litchfield School District: PT music teacher at LMS

Litchfield School District

This is an enquiry email via [Litchfield School District](#) from:
Amy Goldstein

Name: Amy Goldstein

Subject: PT music teacher at LMS

Message:

Dear school board members,

I am writing to express my disappointment with the elimination of the part time music teacher position at LMS from the budget. While trying to educate myself on this subject I found from the NH Department of Education Minimum Standards for Public School Approval the following statement: Pursuant to ED.306.26 and Ed. 306.27, the local school board shall require that a sequential and comprehensive Arts Education Program be provided for EACH K-12 student in Music AND visual arts. Does the board believe that this standard has been met at LMS since the part time music teacher position was cut 5 years ago. If a student is not in band, and does not participate in after school chorus, are they receiving music ed in grades 6-8? What is the plan if Mrs. Labelle's schedule does not allow in providing music ed to each student this year? I would argue that music ed is as important as the other UAs(gym, tech ed, art and FACS) in providing a complete and well rounded curriculum. I appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter. I sincerely hope there is a way to reconsider your position to include a music teacher to meet the standards required by the DOE. Best Regards, Amy Goldstein

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From: Betty Vaughan - SAU27 Website <sysadmin@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: October 23, 2016 at 9:32:31 PM EDT
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>
Subject: Litchfield School District: LMS music teacher

Litchfield School District

This is an enquiry email via [Litchfield School District](#) from:
Betty Vaughan

Name: Betty Vaughan
Subject: LMS music teacher
Message:

I watched the budget meeting you had recently and saw that LMS is hoping to get a part time Music/chorus teacher. I want to let you know that Mrs. Leite and the music program had a huge impact on my son positively. At that time a former student was teaching chorus after school and I saw how important this was for his friends who were involved with the program. I saw my son and his friends just blossom and grow through being part of the music program. Music, reading music, being part of a band or chorus impacts all learning in a positive way. I want all the children who are at LMS in the future to be able to have the opportunity to take chorus in school as well as band. It will be money well spent. Betty Vaughan

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