

*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 December 6, 2017**

**In Attendance:** Brian Bourque, Chair  
Christina Harrison, Vice Chair  
Derek Barka, Board Member (*excused*)  
John York, Board Member  
Elizabeth MacDonald, Board Member  
James L. O'Neill, Superintendent  
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator  
Dr. Nancy Childress, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Scott Thompson, Principal, GMS  
Tom Lecklider, Principal, LMS  
William Lonergan, Principal, CHS  
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

Revisions to the agenda included the addition of Committee Reports.

D. Summary of Non-Public Actions from November 15, 2017:

*The November 15, 2017 non-public minutes were sealed by the Board.*

From November 29, 2017: *There were no non-public actions.*

E. Presentations and Recognitions

Mr. Bourque announced that the Board received notice that Maxim Desjardins has attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

- Laura Therrien, LMS PTO

Mr. Lecklider mentioned that Mrs. Therrien is the cornerstone of the LMS PTO, a key coordinator for staff appreciation events, coordinates volunteers at many events throughout the year for staff and students alike.

- Christina Harrison, GMS PTO

Mr. Thompson mentioned that Mrs. Harrison that she has increased co-curricular opportunities for the students, coordinated Teacher Appreciation Week into a community event, ramped up after school activities with New Frontiers, and serves as co-chair of the PTO Fundraising Committee.

The School Board Chair awarded the two nominees the E<sup>3</sup> Award for extraordinary support of students and parents at GMS and LMS.

F. Correspondence

Mrs. Harrison announced that the Board received correspondence from Kathleen Follis expressing her opinion to place full day kindergarten on the warrant for voters to make the decision.

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G. Superintendent's Comments

- Memorandum of Understanding

The Superintendent presented the Board with the Memorandum of Understanding with minor revisions. The Memorandum of Understanding between the school district and police department was written in 2008. The Superintendent met with the Chief of Police to review the document. Approval of the Board is required. Mr. O'Neill thanked the Litchfield Police Department for their service to the district and community.

***Mr. York made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

- Enrollment Report – Nov 2017

The Superintendent presented the enrollment for November 2017. He indicated the report for November reflects there are 5 less students in the district.

Mr. Bourque asked if there are numbers for first grade enrollment. Mr. Thompson indicated incoming first grader and kindergarten enrollment typically begins in January.

Mrs. MacDonald asked when the district will have a School Resource Officer (SRO). Mr. O'Neill indicated that it is contingent on factors outside of the Chief's control.

Mr. Lonergan indicated that Heath Savage comes to CHS twice per week, meets with the administration and walks the building.

Mr. Lecklider indicated Officer Savage comes to LMS once per week as well.

Mr. O'Neill commented he does not believe anyone is designed to take the SRO position at this time. Mrs. MacDonald believes it should be a priority as it is good for students to have a police officer they can talk to and they can trust.

H. Community Forum

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, team coach for Lego Robotics, thanked the Board for supporting the program at LMS. She indicated she brought the program into the school as part of the school day as well as working with the teams after school. She announced that LMS has its first girl team and they made it to the state competition. Mrs. Corbeil indicated it is a great experience and the students are talented. She noted the program will run as a full year program and there are excellent volunteers. She mentioned that a young mentor was recognized at the state competition.

Students from the LMS Grade 7 Girls Robotics team announced they received the Core Values award at the competition because of way their team demonstrated core values.

Students from LMS Grade 7 Robotics team announced they received the Core Values award at the competition as well.

Mr. Lecklider thanked the coaches and volunteers for their hard work and congratulated the students on their successes. He announced that UNH wants to share some resources with the Lego Robotics teams and LMS Robotics received private grant funds from FIRST to build a program.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that programs such as these bring much learning and fun to the students and enhance education. He thanked the coaches and volunteers for the time and work.

I. School Board Comments

There were no Board member comments.

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**II. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Public Minutes:

- November 15, 2017

***Mr. York made a motion to approve the public minutes of November 15, 2017. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

- November 29, 2017

***Mr. York made a motion to approve the public minutes of November 29, 2017. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

- PERC Course Recommendations

Dr. Childress presented to the Board two course recommendations from the PERC Committee.

- Introduction to Statistics

Dr. Childress reported that there are currently 3 AP Statistics classes. She indicated one class will be eliminated and this course will be added.

Mr. Lonergan explained this is a good course for some of those juniors who may not take the AP or Honors class.

Mr. York commented that the thought process of statistics is a different thought process of math and is useful for those looking for business management or administration degrees. He asked which students are targeted with this course.

Mr. Lonergan indicated students who need that fourth year of math, but this alternative is for those junior and senior students who do not want the rigor of the Honors or AP class. He noted this course is a fit for students who may not be engineering bound or along the bio-med path.

***Mr. York made a motion to approve the Introduction to Statistics course as presented. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

- PSAT/SAT Prep

Dr. Childress presented a proposal for the PSAT/SAT Prep course, which is a semester long, ½ credit elective course. She indicated the course will run in each of the two semesters and will provide access to 30 juniors. She explained the course will help raise test scores and teach strategies regarding what to look for when take the test.

Mr. York commented 120 students and only openings for 30, which impacts scheduling. He wanted to know how the 30 students are chosen. Mr. Lonergan indicated the program schedules the classes.

Mr. York was concerned that there are more than 100 juniors on average that will take the test. Dr. Childress indicated it will open to 60 of them. He indicated it is possible that parents would like the opportunity for their student to take the course instead of paying of private tutoring.

Mr. Lonergan commented that last year this was a self-funded after school program with approximately 30 students. He indicated it would not be an issue to offer an after school class as well.

Magdala Johnson, CHS math teacher, commented she would like the course to run both semesters to get to as many students as possible. She noted that CHS will not remove the after school prep course, but it is hard for some students to do it after school because of conflicts.

Mrs. MacDonald asked if the course would be open to sophomores. Ms. Johnson indicated juniors are the priority and the program can be open to sophomores the following year.

Mr. York believes that it is the right program, but should be offered to all students and try to open as many classes as possible. Mr. Lonergan indicated the challenge we will face is that it could require additional staffing.

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Mr. O'Neill commented that it is proposed to be offered both semesters. He asked if the fee based after school program is still being proposed as well.

Mr. Lonergan indicated the after school program would still be an option.

Mr. O'Neill asked if the initial course enrollment shows more interest than planned, will we accommodate those students?

Mr. Lonergan indicated we will try to offer some alternatives, but he would like to look at the numbers.

Mrs. MacDonald asked if the after school position can be made a stipend position.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that the district would have to work with the LEA on that. He noted that there is a good working relationship with the LEA. He suggested that it may be possible to look at a stipend position at the budget hearing. Mr. O'Neill explained that he is earmarking funds in co-curricular for new opportunities and for extending robotics to the elementary school. He asked the high school to bring back numbers for the PSAT/SAT course enrollment. He indicated the goal is to try to accommodate all students, but in a small school with so many singleton courses, students have to make difficult decisions.

Mrs. MacDonald believes it is not fair for students to pay for the after school course when it will be offered during the school day.

Mr. O'Neill indicated the CBA requires any stipend position to go through the LEA, administration and School Board.

Dr. Childress mentioned there are stipends available through Title IIA.

Mr. York suggested perhaps the high school can work on this and come back to the Board.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that he is hearing the Board is excited about the course, but would like a better look at how many students can be accommodated and to optimize that number through programs during and after school. He asked Dr. Childress and Mr. Lonergan to investigate how students would be accommodated and how the plan would work. He noted it will be revisited on December 20. He expressed appreciation to the Math department and Dr. Childress for their work on the proposal.

**III. REPORTS**

**A. Curriculum Report**

Dr. Childress provided a curriculum report to the Board.

**B. Principals Reports:**

**1) GMS**

Mr. Thompson provided his report to the Board. He reported the following activities and acknowledgements:

- The Veterans Day Committee coordinated a great ceremony this year;
- Teachers formed a Professional Learning Group and met periodically to present and discuss Google resources for the 1:1 initiative;
- The PTO had a great month with the Pumpkin Festival and Raise Craze surpassed the goal by raising over \$22,000;
- Thanks to all staff members that participated in the AOK Circus;
- Grade 4 Science students handled dissection maturely;
- There were professional development activities for paraprofessionals and teachers last month;
- Grade 4 will visit the State House December 7;
- The Winter Concert will start at 6:30 p.m. December 12.

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Mrs. Harrison mentioned the top 3 earners for Raise Craze were James Algeo, John Algeo and Ben Rakiey; the Most AOK's (Acts of Kindness) were completed by Hunter Joseph, Kate Silver, and Ethan Bellino.

Tina : top 3 earners for Raise Craze James Algeo, John Algeo, Ben Rakiey; most AOKs: Hunter Joseph, Kate Silver, Ethan Bellin.

2) LMS

Mr. Lecklider provided his report to the Board. He reported the following activities and acknowledgements:

- Successful Veterans Day Ceremony and Breakfast;
- Lego Robotics achievements for Girls Grade 7 Team and the Grade 7 team;
- Several students were recognized at the Do Your Best breakfast;
- LMS collected 800 items for the Make a Difference Food Drive;
- Mrs. Leite recommended 11 students to audition for NH Honors Band;
- Ms. Guerrette was asked to make full day presentation on StudySync;
- Parent Conferences were successful;
- Presentation on Resiliency by Cassie Yackley on Professional Development days;
- PBIS is focusing on a resiliency-integrity theme this month;
- Grade 8 will receive Chromebooks January 4;
- Teachers are doing much collaborating around different apps and digital resources;
- Tour of SNHU Learning Commons resulting in some ideas for LMS model;
- Staff at LMS will complete a 1 hour online ALICE training course and on-site training will take place on March 13.

3) CHS

Mr. Lonergan provided his report to the Board. He reported the following activities and acknowledgements:

- 21 students were inducted into the National Honor Society;
- Congratulations to Rachel Goldstein making All State Chorus;
- 2 students are members of the Alvirne FFA team which earned a gold medal at the FFA National Convention in Veterinary Science;
- CHS football team won the Division III State Championship and was undefeated;
- Girls Cross Country won the Division III State Championship;
- Make a Difference Food Drive was successful;
- Parent Teacher Conferences went well;
- Principal Lecklider allowed the CHS Volleyball team to practice in the LMS gym during the power outage;
- Justin Ballou and Nate Cooper are doing creative experiments in Psychology classes;
- Administration reached out to the Nashua Health Department who trained administrators in the delivery of Narcan;
- Staff appreciation for end of NEASC self-study;
- CHS is using the 22 minute advisory to recognize unique student accomplishments.

Mr. Bourque mentioned that both Veterans Day celebrations at GMS and LMS were excellent. He congratulated the CHS Cross Country team and the Football team for their championship victories.

C. Committee Reports

- Budget Committee

Mrs. Harrison reported the Budget Committee met on November 30 to discuss and vote on the FY19 School Board Recommended Budget. She indicated reductions included costs allotted for full day kindergarten.

Mr. Bourque commented every member of the Budget Committee was in favor of full day kindergarten, but wanted it to be placed on a warrant article.

Mr. York made the following statements:

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In 2005, the community voted to implement kindergarten on the warrant. The Budget Committee Chair was the senior spokesperson for the School Board through all of that. Mr. York expressed his disappointment that the Budget Committee Chair did not recognize that fact. The Budget Committee typically says “if the voters voted, then the voters voted”. The 2005 vote was an actual vote of the citizens of Litchfield. The five Budget Committee members who voted strongly against the other two members did not allow themselves to have enough information to make an informed decision. It was not until Dr. Cutler was Superintendent and the state mandated the kindergarten program. The School Board discussed implementation of full day kindergarten at numerous times in 2010 and for some years after and because the state was not funding it as full time student aid, they would not support it. The School Board did not feel compelled to present it as a warrant article.

Mr. York suggested the Board representative to the Budget Committee inform the five members who decided to vote against the will of the citizens that the kindergarten program is no longer something the citizens want because five members voted to discontinue the growth of kindergarten. He commented we now find ourselves in the bottom 15% in the state that is not implementing full day kindergarten. Mr. York does not agree that we should put positions we need on the warrant anymore because the Budget Committee is not upholding the 2004 warrant article. He believes the Budget Committee truly changed the direction of our path. He acknowledged the rationale for placing the proposal on the warrant, but indicated that students who attend full day kindergarten are better prepared for grades 1 and 2.

Mr. York encouraged the School Board representative to the Budget Committee to speak strongly to the members about this proposal. He commented the School Board now has to determine the best way to move forward. He indicated the Budget Committee members are elected to present what is fair to the taxpayers. Mr. York believes that the full day kindergarten proposal is fair to the taxpayers. He believes the State’s goal is to have full day kindergarten in all districts. He commented eventually this will be a mandate or a strong directive.

Mr. Bourque mentioned the Budget Committee also reduced money from athletics. Mrs. Harrison noted they reduced \$10,000 from pre- and post- season athletic transportation, \$30,000 from vacant co-curricular/athletic positions, and \$11,500 from building services for sewer/grease traps and GMS/LMS electric based on three year averages.

Mr. O’Neill clarified that \$200,000 was already reduced from this budget during development to try to reduce the fund balance at the end of the year. He indicated out of the \$494,000 reduction in kindergarten, \$150,000 was reduced internally to try to reduce the fund balance, so without doing anything more we have already reduced our fund balance by \$350,000. He noted the total fund balance was \$550,000 and it has been reduced by \$350,000. Mr. O’Neill commented that in a \$24M budget it is barely 1% of the total budget and to not have that 1% buffer in the budget is precarious. He noted that the budget is becoming extremely tight.

**IV. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. List of Qualifying High School and CTE Math Courses

The Superintendent acknowledged that Policy IKF, High School Graduation Requirements, was recently approved by the School Board. He indicated the policy reflects that beginning with the Class of 2019, students must take four years of math to qualify for graduation. He noted the state has approved non-math courses that are eligible to count toward credit for the required math credits. Mr. O’Neill commented a list of qualifying courses has been revised and vetted and was presented to the Board at the November 15 meeting. He indicated the Board deferred discussion and approval of the list of courses so the CHS Principal could provide more information.

Mrs. MacDonald asked how the courses are determined to be eligible and asked if this is what all high school use. Mr. Lonergan indicated that he reached out to principals and worked with them.

Mrs. Harrison commented Pinkerton requires that 30% of the course has to be applied math. She suggested the list be culled since some courses should not be applied. Mr. Lonergan agreed that the list should be trimmed.

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Mr. York asked who is presently on the team reviewing the courses. Mr. Lonergan indicated that he and Mrs. Callinan are reviewing the courses. Mr. York suggested that Dr. Childress be on the team. Mr. Bourque suggested involving someone from the Math department as well.

Mr. Lonergan indicated it will be a comprehensive review and that departments have already provided feedback.

Mr. O'Neill indicated the proof is math embedded concepts and the criteria you define that meet the embedded concepts. He explained a set of criteria must be developed and then it is up to individual courses to present math embedded concepts that meet that criteria. He commented that it is necessary to define what that means to CHS and what other criteria the teachers have to present. Mr. O'Neill also believes there is a lot of math in music and art, but in specific courses in those subjects, as well as a lot of math in practical applied courses. He recommended specifically defining the criteria and determining what embedded math concepts are in those courses. Mr. Bourque suggested the Board will revisit on December 20 with the expectation of an updated list of courses that qualify.

**B. Finance Update**

Mr. Izbicki provided a district financial update for the Board.

**C. FY19 Budget Changes**

Mr. Izbicki provided changes to the FY19 Recommended Budget that were made by the Budget Committee on November 30. He noted that he provided a budget update on November 15 that added \$13,150 into the kindergarten costs that was not included in Budget Committee's reduction. He further indicated there was a reduction in Property and Liability insurance. He commented at this time the FY19 Recommended budget is \$461,000 below the default budget and \$35,000 above the FY18 budget.

**D. FY19 Default Budget**

Mr. Izbicki provided a draft FY19 Default Budget to the Board that included requested clarification of major increases and/or decreases.

Mr. Bourque commented that the Board has two options: to support the proposed budget or the default budget.

Mr. York commented that the Board has not supported the proposed budget in the past.

Mr. O'Neill commented the decision of the budget to support hinges on the direction of the Board regarding full day kindergarten. He asked if the Board wants to present full day kindergarten on the warrant or in a budget that favors kindergarten. He mentioned it is a complex question that the Board has to make a decision about, as well as how to handle kindergarten next year.

Mr. York suggested appealing to the Budget Committee over the next few meetings to realize how their vote goes against the will of the voters. He recommended drafting a full day kindergarten warrant article as well. He suggested at the first meeting in February, the Board would move to add the cost for full day kindergarten back into the budget and see if the voters agree. He believes that the Board needs to be prepared to have a good presentation. Mr. York suggested reaching out to members of the community and hope there is a strong showing of citizens at Deliberative Session. He commented if that does not work, we will have to talk to citizens through other means.

Mr. O'Neill agreed with the analysis, but indicated that is the Board's decision.

Mr. York commented the Budget Committee removed kindergarten even though the budget was level with staffing. He indicated that it now becomes an emotionally charged issue instead of 14 educated people making a sound business decision.

Mr. Bourque commented we level funded the budget to incorporate full day kindergarten, expanding a program the voters approved.

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Mr. O'Neill indicated he would like the Board to have any conversations about this with experts in the room in the event there is a motion to reopen that decision. He noted he would like to see community member support at that meeting as well. He reminded the Board the Budget Committee cannot direct the School Board where to make a reduction in the budget. He believes money spent on early childhood is the best money that can be spent as a public school.

**E. FY19 Warrant Articles**

The Board was provided two drafts of the FY19 Warrant Articles. Warrant Article #1 reflects the addition of an article for full day kindergarten and the removal of the fund retention article by the Board. Warrant Article #2 consists of the FY19 Operating Budget article and the full day kindergarten article. Mr. O'Neill asked the Board for guidance regarding presentation of warrant articles to the voters for March 2018.

Mr. Bourque commented his initial thought is to place full day kindergarten on the warrant.

Mrs. Harrison indicated that the Special Education Coordinator is still a critical need.

Mr. York believes it may be important to have a Capital Reserve Fund article for Building Maintenance on there since budget reductions make the budget tight.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned the town is looking for voter support for a new fire station. He noted the existing station is inadequate. He indicated there will be a zero fiscal impact in 2018 as the interest payment on the bond will not be due until 2019. He suggested that this is the optimum year to get kindergarten approved so the taxpayers do not feel the financial impact of both projects.

Mr. Bourque indicated the district can send the warrant articles to the Budget Committee so they can provide their recommendations.

Mr. O'Neill expressed his deepest appreciation to the Administrative Team and others that have attended the Budget Committee meetings. He noted they have carried an intense load, but having the team at the meetings was a very important component of the Budget Committee debates.

**V. MANIFEST**

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

**VI. PUBLIC INPUT**

**A. Community Forum**

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, commented the PSAT/SAT Prep course is a great idea, as is the Intro to Statistics. She asked if the PSAT/SAT Prep course takes the place of Study Hall.

Mr. York commented this class should be treated as an extension of Study Hall.

Mrs. Corbeil mentioned when she attended high school SAT prep filled a math class. She commented many students in Litchfield are prepared to take that test.

Mr. Bourque commented results from the last two years were not very encouraging.

Mrs. Corbeil asked if the students were scoring enough to get into college. Mr. Bourque indicated they are, but not a higher level college.

Mrs. Corbeil commented most of our students are not going to get into that higher level college.

Mr. Lonergan commented that the course will qualify for a math-enabled course.

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Mr. O'Neill commented our goal in high school should be to have 0% study halls. He realizes that would be a significant financial accomplishment for the community. Mr. York agreed.

Amy Goldstein, 1 Spicebush Circle, disagree with the study hall recommendation. She asked if everyone is participating in the 1:1 program now, do we still have to have a computer requirement? Mr. O'Neill indicated that is part of the State requirements.

Mrs. Corbeil commented that State would like students to be programming more as it teaches students how to solve problems.

Nate Cooper, LEA President, indicated he is not speaking for the LEA membership. He mentioned there is a concern among the teaching staff regarding the reduction in the budget of a half million dollars. He indicated there is much support for kindergarten. He commented he would like to work with the district and the community to ensure that money is returned to the district budget. He believes the LEA membership will get behind that. Mr. Cooper indicated the LEA is interested in what goes on with the budget process. He commented the LEA will be involved and will have an internal discussion about supporting the district on getting the money back to implement full day kindergarten.

**VII. ADJOURN**

***Mrs. Harrison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Mr. York seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
Administrative Assistant to the School Board