

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 May 24, 2017

In Attendance: Brian Bourque, Chair
Derek Barka, Vice Chair
Christina Harrison, Board Member
Paula Izbicki, Board Member
John York, Board Member
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 6:05 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Review & Revision of Agenda

Revisions will be mentioned under School Board Comments.

D. Summary of Non-Public Actions from May 10, 2017:

Mr. York made a motion to approve the nomination of Cory Izbicki as Business Administrator. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Mr. Barka made a motion to accept the resignation of Jeanne Schratwieser, CHS science teacher. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

E. Presentations and Recognitions

The School Board recognized two community members for their outstanding commitment to the school community.

- E³ Award Presentations:
 - Rich Lascelles

Mr. Lascelles has made several contributions to the school district and community by serving as a Selectman, school board member, budget committee member, senior mentor, coordinating adult education, and serving as a state representative.

- Douglas Adams

Mr. Adams assists the LMS recycling team by loading the recyclables, taking them to the transfer station and sorting them.

F. Correspondence

Mr. Bourque announced the Litchfield School District received recognition from the Hudson/Litchfield VFW for Loyalty Day Award essays.

Mrs. Harrison announced that the Board received a resignation letter from Paula Izbicki effective July 1, 2017 as her husband will be beginning employment as Business Administrator for the district.

Mr. Bourque commented it is a loss to the Board and Budget Committee, but a gain to the district. He indicated the Board will advertise shortly for a replacement member for a one year position.

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G. Superintendent's Comments

Mr. O'Neill commented the district is having a great year. He mentioned that he attended the Academic Awards last night, which were excellent. He complimented students and teachers on a superior job. Mr. O'Neill commented he has been with the district for two years and has enjoyed the time. He shared that he looks forward to the next year and completing some of the work we started. He mentioned that next year will mark the end of his term with the district. He indicated it is a wonderful district and it is a pleasure to be here. He noted we will find an outstanding educational leader to lead Litchfield and he wished the town nothing but success.

H. Community Forum

There was no public input.

I. School Board Comments

Mr. Bourque indicated he wanted to begin a dialogue regarding the search for a new Superintendent.

Mr. York commented that the NHSBA offers a search mechanism that the Board has used in the past. He indicated in the past, the process started around November/December, resumes were sent to the Board and Board members graded the resumes to narrow down the candidates. The remaining candidates were vetted by a committee and narrowed to three finalists who were interviewed by the Board, who made the final decision.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned that NESDEC also offers searches for a fee. He indicated the applicant pool is always a challenge. He commented the NHSBA searches seem to be focused in NH, while NESDEC offers more of a New England focus. He noted if properly advertised, Litchfield will attract a good pool from both inside and outside the state.

Mr. York suggested asking each organization come in and provide a presentation.

Mrs. Izbicki suggested it is worth touching base with districts that have gone through this kind of search. She explained see who is moving up in other districts and think about what our district can offer. She commented she would like to see a vetting process that involves a personal meeting venue. She indicated it is worth it to have someone to help expand the pool as it is shallow and inexperienced.

Mr. Bourque commented that it was suggested to have an open meeting and ask residents what they are looking for in a superintendent and provide them with an opportunity to voice their concerns.

Mr. O'Neill suggested having the candidates spend a day in the district and meet with faculty, students, residents, staff and Board members. He noted evaluation forms can be provided for each group to gather information on each candidate for the Board.

Mr. York indicated the Board utilized that process the last time along with a number of questions that each candidate was required to answer.

Mr. Bourque commented he likes Mrs. Izbicki's suggestion of a more personal venue as sometimes face to face reveals more information.

Mr. O'Neill suggested during the candidate vetting process, it would be beneficial to visit the district where the candidate is serving in current capacity, which can provide a good sense of the culture of that community and the kind of person that will be in front of you. He commented the challenge with visits is consistency. He noted you need a valid data set to use in analyzing the potential for the district.

Mr. Bourque recommended adding public input for the superintendent search to the agenda so that community members can provide feedback.

Mr. York suggested starting the process by drafting an announcement for the newspapers as those that seem to apply have their timeframe.

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Mr. O'Neill commented when he shared with fellow superintendents that he would be leaving next year his colleagues suggested people that would fit in the position. He indicated the Board does need to think about the timeline. He noted he was involved in a process where one of the candidates was from Michigan. Mr. O'Neill commented the Board would have to think about questions such as: will the district pay for their transportation so they can participate in the process; if chosen as superintendent will the district provide a place for them to live; what is it worth to get the right person for the job.

Mr. Bourque directed to place public input for the superintendent search on a June agenda.

Mr. Bourque provided some information in response to statements made by Mr. York at the last Board meeting with regard to students leaving CHS. Mr. Bourque indicated that in December enrollment at CHS was at 472 and in April 466, which is a difference of six students. He noted that many students listed on the "outgoing" list for CHS were transferred to another grade level and did not leave CHS. He commented since January 2017, two students graduated from Londonderry Adult Education, one student graduated from NHTI and one exchange student left the district.

Mr. Bourque provided some information regarding non-profit organizations in Litchfield. He provided a list of organizations, such as the Litchfield Firefighters Association, the Lions, Boosters, PTO, Lacrosse, Litchfield Baseball Association, Litchfield Soccer Association, and the Litchfield Basketball Association.

Mr. York commented that he has his own questions regarding Destination Imagination. He indicated that the Board supported DI in the budget and it is still supported in the budget as it is still funded at LMS. He noted that the rationale that the district cannot afford to support DI is not a valid reason. With reference to CHS Robotics, Mr. York expressed concern there is no teacher listed in the budget for the co-curricular position, yet we give the program \$10,000.

Mr. Bourque clarified that no one stated the district cannot afford it. He noted the monies assigned to DI will not be spent on DI.

Mr. York commented the Board passed a budget and somewhere between passing that budget and the beginning of April something changed in the reasons for not support a STEM program for our students. Mr. Bourque clarified that changed somewhere in the November timeframe and was an oversight in the budget.

Mr. York commented that Mr. Bourque was adamant that the program not be part of the budget. Mr. Bourque clarified that prior to that he brought DI to the Board to include it in the budget.

Mr. York asked what happened. Mr. Bourque indicated DI became a non-profit organization.

Mrs. Harrison commented that we have been over this several times. Mrs. Izbicki commented that the budget can be "cleaned up" moving forward.

Mr. O'Neill explained that DI wanted to continue the practice of doing the work at their homes, but wanted to use the district's tools to do that work. Primex pointed out it is a liability for the district. When we explained to DI they would have to bring everything into the district and then we explained our transportation policy and situation to them, they decided DI could not serve as a school sponsored function and they did not want to run it the way we needed them to run the program. When we met with the Budget Committee, we announced that DI was going to be dropped and all lines for DI should be removed from the budget, which the Budget Committee reduced. Mr. O'Neill commented that was the process and he did not feel that there were hard feelings when he met with them. He was pleased that the teams made it to the globals, but commented at that point DI was no longer a school sponsored activity.

Mrs. Izbicki indicated they (DI) were very clear with expectations for funding from parents.

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With reference to substitutes in the district, Mr. Bourque commented we need to attract more substitute teachers to the district. He noted that in Litchfield substitute teachers are paid \$60 per day and \$70 per day after 40 days. He indicated if a substitute teacher works under 4 hours they receive half the daily rate. Hourly and custodian substitutes are paid \$10 per hour, food service substitutes are paid \$8.75 per hour and nurse substitutes receive \$90 per day. Mr. Bourque noted that he and Mrs. Harrison discussed raising the substitute rates and making them hourly rates with Mr. O'Neill.

Mr. O'Neill indicated the district will be implementing the time clock for next year and test it over the summer

Mrs. Izbicki commented it is a valid suggestion to increase substitute pay, but it does not solve the problem of getting substitutes.

Mr. O'Neill agreed it does not solve the problem, but it makes Litchfield more competitive.

Mr. York asked if it would not make more sense to hire a professional substitute at the teacher rate who is benefit eligible so that the district can have more control.

Mr., Bourque commented it would be more costly and one person is not enough to make a difference.

Mrs. Izbicki commented Hollis tried it, but it was more expensive and did not work. She indicated Hollis began reaching out to local colleges who have teachers in training.

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve new substitute hourly rates as presented, effective July 1, 2017. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes:

- Public Hearing Minutes May 10, 2017

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the public hearing minutes of May 10, 2017. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mrs. Izbicki abstaining.

- Public Minutes May 10, 2017

Mr. Barka made a motion to approve the public minutes of May 10, 2017. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mrs. Izbicki abstaining.

- Budget Transfers Apr/May 2017

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the budget transfers presented on May 24, 2017. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

III. REPORTS

A. Business Administrator's Report

Mr. Markiewicz provided a financial report to the Board. He reported that the general fund unassigned fund balance is projected to be \$595,086 at this time. He recommended that the Board approve items identified to spend ahead for FY18 in the sum of \$146,350, which would reduce the projected unassigned fund balance to \$448,736.

Mr. Bourque asked for an explanation regarding the majority of monies in the unassigned fund balance. Mr. Markiewicz explained, with regard to the unassigned fund balance, regular education funds are separated from special education funds. He indicated that in this budget there have been an overwhelming amount of expenditures in special education, which is at this point reflecting an underspend of \$50,402. He noted the majority of the unassigned fund balance is from salaries and benefits.

Mr. York commented that the details of the report reflect that less of the underspend is from salaries and more from benefits, with the remaining underspend coming from operations. He asked why the Food Service fund balance is projected to end with \$50,023 when the beginning balance was \$109,253.

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Mr. Markiewicz explained there will be additional revenue. He indicated that there were two unanticipated equipment purchases that were not budgeted.

Mr. O'Neill commented that the balance in the special education budget is only \$50,000 at this point in time. He indicated that a placement was added into the budget, but we are concerned about two more placements. He has requested Mrs. Bandurski meet with the Board in non-public session at the next meeting to discuss some potential placements that will impact the budget next year.

The Board discussed changing the June 7 meeting to June 14 and scheduling a non-public session at 5:30 p.m. It was recommended moving the H.L. Turner Building Assessment presentation to the June 21 Board meeting.

- **FY18 Budget Spend Ahead**

Mr. Markiewicz presented an update regarding the items budgeted in FY18 that will be covered with FY17 end of year funds in the amount of \$146,350. He explained that recommendations from building projects, severance and textbooks will be paid ahead with FY17 funds. He noted that the district encumbered \$166,904 in FY17 for technology items budgeted in FY18.

Mr. Bourque asked about training for teachers to utilize the 1:1 technology. Mr. York mentioned there will be a Google Summit this summer.

Nate Cooper, CHS teacher, commented that many of the staff are attending the summit. He explained that we get a certain amount of spots up front for free and a discount on the rest.

Mr. Bourque asked if there is any other training they should have that we can pay for now. Mr. Cooper indicated when prior training was done it was a smaller setting. He noted that as we move forward there are monies to send people to training.

Mr. York requested that Mr. Perez provide an update on the 1:1 process.

Mr. Markiewicz commented the Board is required to vote on the recommendations presented.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to encumber \$146,350 from the FY17 fund balance for identified recommendations from the FY18 budget in the areas of building projects, severance and textbooks. Mr. Barka seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned after the discussion on Project Lead the Way, he met with Mr. Lecklider regarding what would be offered next year. He indicated that Grade 8 Science and Technology, Grade 7 Automation Robotics, and Grade 5 Automation Robotics will be offered next year at LMS. He commented that the latter is not included in the budget next year and we will need an additional \$10,241 to go forward with the courses. Mr. O'Neill indicated he will bring more information and cost items to the next meeting. He commented there is upcoming training on the courses and there are only two seats left. He asked for Board guidance.

Mrs. Izbicki commented she would like to move past Project Lead the Way because it does not cover all the curriculum.

Mr. O'Neill commented he will put the individuals on the training list and make a decision after the discussion at the next meeting on June 14.

IV. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Facility Use Policy

The policy has been revised and updated. Changes to the policy have been provided to the Board.

Mr. O'Neill commented Board members should have had an opportunity to read through the policy, which was revised for consistency and updated fee categories.

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Board members discussed the changes and suggested edits.

Mrs. Izbicki made a motion to approve Policy KG for a 1st Reading. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. York suggested that Policy ECAB, Building Access and Security, be revised to reflect exceptions and procedures for allowing access without custodial supervision for the Litchfield Recreational Basketball League and Work Camps.

Mr. O'Neill indicated the policy will be revised and presented to the Board at the next meeting.

B. Air Quality Report

Mr. O'Neill commented that research regarding air quality testing in the schools has been collected, reviewed and analyzed. The practice of testing has consisted of a 3 year rotation cycle for the school buildings, as well as individual concerns that have been reported and those areas tested. He indicated that overall there has not been any major findings in the air quality sampling that was completed. He noted the policy requires a sampling done on a three year rotating basis. Mr. O'Neill reported that air quality sampling has been done on a biennial basis at GMS because that is basis for most of the complaints. He commented more recent air quality results were good. He indicated that LMS has had sporadic sampling and CHS has had two samplings and a moisture study. He reported that it was discovered at CHS the slab was inappropriately constructed resulting in moisture issues in two main areas of CHS, which have since been addressed and resolved. Mr. O'Neill indicated that the district will expend \$1,170 for air quality testing at LMS and GMS prior to the end of this fiscal year, with GMS slated to be completed prior to the fall. He reported there have not been any issues or findings that were health related.

C. Food Services Meal Charging Policy

Mr. O'Neill presented a draft policy to address requirements and regulations from the USDA to define how students/parents are charged for meals in schools and how students will be treated who do not have cash, a check or a positive balance in their meal payment account to purchase food.

Mr. York commented that the policy was very well written.

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve Policy EFAA for a 1st Reading. Mrs. Izbicki seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

V. MANIFEST

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Community Forum

There was no public input.

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

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

Upon a motion by Mr. York, the School Board entered into non-public session at 8:10 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 (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. Izbicki seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Izbicki, yes; Mr. York, yes.

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VIII. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Upon a motion by Mr. Barka, the Board returned to public session at 8:59 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. Izbicki, yes; Mr. York, yes.

IX. ADJOURN

Mr. Barka made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board