

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 August 22, 2018

In Attendance: Brian Bourque, Chair
Christina Harrison, Vice Chair
Robert G. Meyers, III, Board Member
Elizabeth MacDonald, Board Member
Tara Hershberger, Board Member
Dr. Michael Jette, Ph.D., Superintendent
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator
Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

I. PUBLIC SESSION

6:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order

Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 6:10 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 July 18, 2018:

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the non-public minutes of June 20, 2018. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mrs. MacDonald abstaining.

Mr. Meyers made a motion to accept the nomination of Cody Hertz as CHS English teacher at a salary of \$56,598 for the 2018-2019 year. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mrs. MacDonald made a motion to accept the nomination of Margaret Brady as CHS Special Education teacher at a salary of \$55,538 for the 2018-2019 year. Mr. Meyers seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the increase of a Special Educator position from part time to full time. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mrs. MacDonald made a motion to accept the resignation of Lesleigh Grant, CHS Special Educator. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

E. Presentations and Recognitions

Dr. Jette asked Board members if they would like to continue with the E3 (Empowering Excellence in Education) Award program. The School Board affirmed they would like the program to continue.

F. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

G. Superintendent's Comments

- Opening Day Schedule

Dr. Jette reviewed the schedule for the opening day for staff, which includes a welcome back presentation, staff recognition, a Welcome Back luncheon, and professional development. He invited Board members to the opening day presentation. He indicated that there will be training for all special education staff prior to lunch. Dr. Jette reminded Board members students arrive for their first day on September 4. He mentioned there may be a special guest in Litchfield due to the addition of full day kindergarten.

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- Kindergarten and Grade 1 Enrollment

Dr. Jette reported enrollment for Kindergarten as of August 20, 2018 is at 79; Enrollment for Grade 1 as of August 20, 2018 is at 89. He noted that the numbers have been monitored closely over the summer. Monitoring the numbers closely over the summer as K and 1 are the two most unpredictable numbers.

Dr. Jette commented with the current enrollment numbers, kindergarten will have four teachers with three classes of 20 and one class of 19. He noted each class will have a program paraprofessional in each room. He indicated at this time, Grade 1 has four teachers with two classes of 22 and two classes of 23 students. He noted the policy guidelines for grade 1 is 20 students per classroom. Dr. Jette indicated there are no classroom paraprofessionals assigned, but there are 1:1 paraprofessionals and shared paraprofessionals in three of those classrooms.

Mrs. Harrison commented it is a good trend that enrollment is increasing, but it is not good that the numbers are over the policy cap. She indicated she is concerned with the numbers in grade 1 and suggested the district consider hiring program paraprofessionals.

Dr. Jette agreed that the district can look at hiring program paraprofessionals as there are a number of slots unfilled at this point. He noted all teaching slots have been filled.

Mr. Bourque commented that Grade 1 is six students over the enrollment guidelines at this point.

Mrs. Hershberger commented there is a paraprofessional in every room except for one. She suggested doing something for that one classroom.

Mrs. Harrison commented a 1:1 paraprofessional is not the same ratio as having two teachers.

Dr. Jette commented the last of the large classes are moving through grades 7-12. He was unsure if anything could be done.

Mrs. Harrison suggested consideration for more staff for grade 1 and give the students as much support as possible.

Dr. Jette indicated that while providing as much support as possible for the students is recognized, choices will have to be made in the budget and direction from the Board is required.

Mr. Bourque commented the class size is larger than what we would like, but it is not uncontrollable. He suggested asking Mr. Thompson and the Grade 1 team about their needs.

- CHS Program of Studies: Graduation Requirements

Dr. Jette indicated that an inquiry regarding graduation requirements that were included in the CHS Student Handbook was made by a Board member. It was noted that in the 2018-2019 Student Handbook, a graduation requirement was added (Senior English) that was not included in the policy (IKF) or in the 2018-2019 CHS Program of Studies under Graduation Requirements for a CHS Diploma. Dr. Jette explained that he spoke with the CHS Administration and was informed that the Senior English course is listed in the Program of Studies as a required course unless the student is enrolled in Honors English or AP Literature and has been in the Program of Studies since 2014. He asked that the policy be amended to reflect the requirement.

Mr. Meyers asked why that particular course was chosen as a requirement for graduation.

Mrs. MacDonald explained that the idea was it would help students with their college essays, letters and resumes.

Mr. Bourque suggested we can confirm the rationale for the course requirement with Mrs. Callinan and update the policy if necessary.

H. Community Forum

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Amanda Lessard, 14 Deerwood Drive, commented on the enrollment numbers for Kindergarten and Grade 1. She indicated that the numbers for first grade, as a foundational year, are worrisome. She commented that the students come from different sources (eg. private kindergartens, families that move into the community, etc.). She was not convinced that shared paraprofessionals would actually help.

I. School Board Comments

Mrs. Harrison acknowledged Phil Martin's untimely passing. She commented that he gave much to our school and was one of the founding members of our music department.

Mrs. MacDonald commented on the number of people that attended his service. She noted he was wearing his Hawaiian shirt, holding a baton. She indicated it was a testament to how much he was loved by this town.

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, indicated that there is discussion about renaming a scholarship in Mr. Martin's name and renaming the CHS auditorium.

Mr. Bourque commented that he is looking forward to the first day of school and is excited about this year. He indicated Dr. Jette will steer us in the right direction.

II. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Public Minutes:

- July 18, 2018

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the public minutes of July 18, 2018. Mr. Meyers seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- Budget Transfers

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the budget transfers for July and August 2018. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

III. REPORTS

A. Business Administrator's Report

- Financial

The Business Administrator provided a written financial report for the Board. He reported the Kindergarten modular classrooms are getting set up and the electricity is being completed, with final inspection occurring next week.

Mr. Bourque asked about the information Mr. Izbicki received regarding the sprinkler system.

Mr. Izbicki indicated that the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief and Building Inspector told him that sprinklers are not required and if the structure is 20 feet off the main building it is not required to be sprinkled.

Dr. Jette commented sprinkler systems are meant to protect structures not persons.

Mr. Izbicki indicated if the fire alarm is activated inside GMS it will also be activated inside the modular classrooms. He indicated there are multiple exits out of each classroom and students can be out of the building in under two minutes.

Mr. Izbicki reported the secure entryway at GMS is nearing completion; a response from the CHS Librarian was provided with regard to questions about the expenditure for the drone for the CHS Library; a proposal from Windy Hill Associates was provided with regard to the reconfiguration of the entry at LMS. He asked the Board for their input regarding the design work and cost proposed by the architect. Mr. Izbicki reported the audit was completed with no significant findings, with an exception for student activity funds. He indicated the auditors recommended parking fees be taken out of the student activity account and a revenue fund be created and reported as a restricted fund that can be carried over from year to year. He noted if there are receipts or use of the fees, it would be well documented for accounting and auditing purposes. He mentioned that some parking fees were used in the past for specific events.

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Mr. Bourque asked about the cost for Challenge Day. Dr. Jette indicated the cost would be \$15,000 for all three schools. Mr. Bourque suggested asking CHS Administration to provide more information on September 5.

Mr. Izbicki reported that final statements for NH Retirement will not be received until the fall; he spoke to the auditor in charge regarding extending the relationship with Plodzik & Sanderson and reducing costs, for which a proposal will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Harrison asked if the district can go out to bid for auditor services. Mr. Izbicki indicated that the district can go to bid; however, a first year auditor will include additional fees. He noted that Plodzik is a good firm and has served Litchfield for some years.

Mr. Izbicki reported that the new Food Services Director began on August 1. He indicated that she started working on the menus, is working with her staff to try to make changes, and started a Litchfield Dining Services Twitter account.

- LMS Entry Proposal

Mr. Izbicki reviewed a proposal from Windy Hill Associates to provide architectural services to revise the existing entry at LMS. He indicated that the architect is prepared to develop a design and preliminary budget for reconfiguring the existing entry to LMS. The cost is \$10,000.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the development of a design to reconfigure the entrance to LMS by Windy Hill Associates at a cost of \$10,000. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 4-1-0, with Mrs. MacDonald opposing.

- 2018 DOE 25 and MS 25

The DOE 25 and MS 25 were signed by the School Board.

- 2018-2019 Tuition Rates

Mr. Izbicki indicated tuition rates are calculated from the DOE 25 and require approval of the School Board. Tuition rates for 2018-2019 are as follows: \$17,448 for Elementary; \$14,727 for Middle School; \$15,126 for High School.

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to approve the 2018-2019 Tuition Rates as presented. Mrs. Hershberger seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

V. OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. CHS Parking Fees

The Board Chair requested the CHS Parking Fees agenda item to address concerns regarding the disposition of the funds.

Mr. Izbicki reported that two years ago parking fees collected were put into the general fund and, if not used, returned to the taxpayers. He indicated that since then, parking fees have been used to maintain parts of the CHS parking lot.

Mrs. Harrison asked how much the cost would be to maintain the parking lot. Mr. Izbicki indicated that restriping can cost \$5,000 or higher; power sweeping can cost \$1,200; snow plowing is part of maintenance.

Mr. Izbicki reported that there is a request to use parking fees to pay for Challenge Day.

Mrs. Hershberger was not comfortable that parking fees are used to pay for Challenge Day. She commented that there are many alternative ways to fundraise for Challenge Day.

Mr. Bourque suggested having Mr. Perez come to the Board meeting to explain how funds were raised to support Challenge Day in the past.

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Dr. Jette commented by taking the parking fees out of the revenue stream and put into a restricted fund, it can be carried forward and accumulate to be used strictly for the parking lot.

B. Policies:

• Discussion:

Dr. Jette reported in recent weeks, there has been much discussion regarding the following two topics. The US DOE has reminded state departments of education [who communicated to local school districts] the ESSA requires districts to adopt policies that prohibit assistance in obtaining a new job for a school district employee, contractor or agent who is known or believed to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor student. There were also headlines and questions regarding recent sentencing statements made by school district employees in support of a former co-worker who pleaded guilty to sexual assault of a student.

- ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) Requirement for Providing References
- Guidelines for Requests for School District Employees to Appear in Court

Dr. Jette indicated legal counsel has provided explanation and recommendation for each topic. Recommendations include the creation and adoption of a policy pursuant to Section 8546(a) of ESSA; and guidelines created and adopted regarding the handling of requests for school district employees to appear in court. He noted if any of our employees are asked to speak in court we need to have a guideline procedure for employees to follow, with a clear understanding of the chain of command. He commented we want our employees to understand what they can and cannot say as school district employees.

Mrs. Hershberger thanked the Superintendent to bringing this to the Board's attention in a timely manner.

Dr. Jette indicated legal counsel acted on this in a very timely manner. He indicated a policy to meet the ESSA requirement and guidelines for employees to follow if asked to appear in court will be drafted.

• Revision:

- DFE, Gate Receipts Procedures

Board members talked about sports using their own funds or admissions for field improvements and gym repairs.

Mr. Bourque commented that he was under the impression the Boosters can use the football gate receipts to get things for the football field or for gym repairs.

Mrs. Harrison commented that there should be a delineation regarding what is covered by each party involved.

Mr. Bourque commented Boosters request the money for the improvements. He indicated we are not collecting money for the Boosters to use.

The Gate Receipt procedures will be reviewed at the September 5 meeting.

- EHB, Data and Records Retention

Dr. Jette reported pursuant to a change in legislation with regard to Special Education Records, a revision to the Data and Records Retention policy shall reflect the timeframe of the retention and/or destruction of a special education student's records. He explained the district has to keep student special education records until the child turned 26, but now will have to retain those records until the student is age 30 if the parents make the request to retain the records. He noted if there is no request to retain the records the district may destroy the records in a reasonable time following the student's 26th birthday, so long as they are destroyed by the student's 30th birthday.

Mrs. Hershberger made a motion to approve the amendment to policy EHB, Data and Records Retention. Mr. Meyers seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

C. School Board Goals

This item is a placeholder for the School Board to discuss areas they would like the new administration to focus on over the next 3 to 5 years.

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VI. MANIFEST

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Community Forum

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, proposed that the goal indicating 90% of high school graduates go on to college be changed to reflect 100% of graduates have a post-secondary plan in place. She indicated it is a more inclusive goal and includes students who may not want to attend college. Mrs. Hirte indicated that Seniors will not have school on October 10 due to the administration of the PSATs. She asked Mrs. Callinan to reach out to businesses to offer job shadowing for senior students. She asked those in attendance to please spread the word.

Janine Anctil, 43 Tanager Way, welcomed Dr. Jette. She commented on the enrollment in Grade 1. She indicated she is a first grade teacher at GMS and has a child in first grade at GMS. She noted that teachers appreciate that the Board is showing concern to find ways to support us. Mrs. Anctil explained that program paraprofessionals still leave the classroom teacher with 23 or more students and that is still a lot of children the teacher is responsible for. She commented the program paraprofessional is still under the direction and guidance of the teacher. She was concerned about too many people in the classrooms as other adults come in and work with the students in the classrooms as well. Mrs. Anctil believes that keeping class numbers low is an educationally sound approach and the benefits of a solid foundation will last throughout their education. She commented it seems like we fix our problems by second grade. She encouraged the Board to have a commitment to more forward thinking and a plan for kindergarten and grade 1 class sizes. Mrs. Anctil indicated the Grade 1 team believes an additional teacher is needed.

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 7:36 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. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. Meyers, yes; Mrs. Hershberger, yes.

IX. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Upon a motion by Mrs. Harrison, the Board returned to public session at 9:40 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

Mrs. MacDonald made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board