

Litchfield School Board

Public Statement - Staff Tuition



The Litchfield School Board has been following discussions on social media regarding a request from a staff member to have her child attend Campbell High School tuition free. This spring, students at CHS have organized protests after this request was denied, and members of the community have generated a petition in support of the teacher and child.

The following are important facts regarding school attendance, tuition waivers and this specific request.

General facts on residency and school attendance:

- New Hampshire Schools are funded largely by local taxpayers, therefore students must be legal residents of a local school district in order to be enrolled in school.
- The residency requirement is carefully considered and enforced by school administrators in determining school enrollment. There are multiple state and federal laws that govern legal residence.
- The education of every student has associated costs. The Per Pupil Expenditure at CHS in 2018 was \$14,860. Therefore, the 4-year cost of attendance at CHS is approximately \$60,000.
- The Per Pupil Expenditure at LMS in 2018 was \$14,700 (4 years will cost about \$60,000), while the cost at GMS was \$17,223 (5 years will cost about \$85,000).

Facts related to tuition waivers:

- Under Collective Bargaining laws (when teachers are unionized) providing a benefit to one employee but not another is an unfair labor practice. There are laws and rulings that must be followed.
- When considering a tuition request, the board must be aware that there are many staff members who may also be interested in having their children attend our schools free of charge. The time period for each request could be a year or it could be 13 years (K-12).
- While individual requests may seem compelling, every exception to policy can be perceived by others as unfair. Each request must be considered with due diligence and careful discernment.
- Only a school board can grant a tuition waiver. Superintendents or principals do not have this authority.

Facts related to this specific request:

- The Board is unable to discuss the specific circumstances of any particular request since each involves personal student information.
- The Board, through the superintendent, always responds to requests in writing, providing rationale and options.
- The Board will be further examining the tuition and admission policies.

The Litchfield School Board respects freedom of speech. We will listen to our constituents and weigh public opinion in making decisions. We likewise request that the public respect and trust that we have been exposed to personal and private information and facts that are not publicly known. These private details are fully considered as we make decisions that follow applicable laws and are fair and consistent to all.