

LYME - OLD LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Impassioned with Pride and Purpose

MEETING MINUTES

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Lyme-Old Lyme High School

May 6, 2015

Board Present: James Witkins, Chairman; Paul Fuchs, Vice Chair; Jean Wilczynski, Treasurer; Diane Linderman; Nancy Lucas Edson; Michelle Roche; Sarah Smalley

Absent by Previous Arrangement: Rick Goulding; Beth Jones

Administration Present: Ian Neviasser, Superintendent of Schools; James Cavalieri, Principal of Lyme School; Patricia Downes, Principal of Mile Creek School; Nancy Johnston, Director of Special Services; Holly McCalla, Business Manager; John Rhodes, Director of Facilities; Lori Susi, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School and Interim Principal of Center School; Ellen Tyler, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School;

Others Present: Pam Russell, RETA Co-President; Karen Pasiuk, Math Implementation Coach; Thelma Halloran, Jane Regan and Steve Bushnell, Middle School Teachers; Mercedes Alger, Nila Kaczor, Susan Whritner, and Susan Oliver, Elementary Teachers; Gabe Barclay, High School Student Representative; 20 Townspeople from LOL

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Witkins at 6:34 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of Regular Meeting of April 1, 2015; Special Meeting of April 6, 2015; District Budget Hearing of April 6, 2015; and Special Meeting of April 29, 2015 were approved as presented.

III. Visitors:

1. LOL Lion's Club Presentation of Scholarships and Peace Poster Contest
Phil Parcak, a representative from the Lyme-Old Lyme Lion's Club, recognized three LOLHS students for their academic prowess, athleticism and community service accomplishments. The following students were presented with \$1,500 scholarships: Hannah O'Brien, Thomas Roth, and Olivia Angeli.

The Lion's also recognized Emma Bass and Riley Fruth for their entries in the Peace Poster Contest. Special thanks were also given to Thelma Halloran, Middle School Art Teacher, for her coordination of this contest.

2. LOLMS Call to Action Program

Middle School Teachers, Jane Regan and Steve Bushnell, and several Middle School students (Brynn McGlinchey, Britney DeRoehn, Catherine Battalino, Ann Marie Cote, and Kelly Sablone) were present to explain to the Board their Call to Action Program. This program is an initiative for students to create positive change with fundraising, public service and educational projects.

3. Report from Student Representatives

Gabe Barclay reported on the following activities in the schools:

At LOLMS: the students are in the midst of SBAC testing. Thanks to the improved wireless access, the school has the ability to test an entire grade level at a time. This has minimized the disruption to instruction with 90 minutes of testing and the rest of the day dedicated to instruction. Testing began on April 27 and most students will complete their testing by Thursday, May 7. LOLMS student, Dylan Mulligan, was honored as a "recognized inventor" at the Connecticut Invention Convention for his creation, "Hoodie Helper." Grade 8 students have been fulfilling their "Call to Action" plans in which students work diligently to create positive change with fundraising, public service and educational projects. Students travelling to France had a wonderful time. Lyme-Old Lyme was well-represented by their ambassadors who were, by all reports, well-mannered, helpful and enthusiastic guests in Paris.

At Center School: Center School had a wonderful Celebrate Center School Celebration. There were about 150 people that came to the event including many Center School students. Students have started the SBAC testing and all is going smoothly. The prek classes and the 5th grade students continue to do buddy activities to build school spirit. All the students are currently in the midst of a penny war trying to raise money and having fun at the same time. On Monday, the Salt Marsh Opera sent over some of their actors to Center School to pre-teach what the students will see on May 20 at The Garde when the 5th grade students will see the opera *The Magic Flute*.

At LOLHS: The NEASC accreditation visit is over. Early reports are that they are very pleased with LOLHS. AP testing has begun and will continue through the third week of May. The junior prom will be on May 16 at the Water's Edge in Westbrook. SBAC testing will take place May 21, 22, 26, and 27. Brian Buttrick recently broke the school record for the long jump that stood for 42 years with a jump of 21 feet, 2 inches. The Eastern Connecticut Ballet is using the high school auditorium all this week and will perform this weekend. Bill Derry, Tech Ed Teacher, was able to purchase a drone with a camera for the school through a grant from Pfizer.

At Mile Creek School: Third and fourth graders are in their second week of SBAC testing, and all is going smoothly. The Mile Creek PTO's Garden Gang hosted a grounds and garden clean-up on Saturday, directed by Suzanne Thompson. Students, staff and parents spent the morning cleaning garden beds, pruning bushes and trees, and planting beautiful perennials donated by the Griswold's and *Judges Farm*. Equipment and crew were donated by the Looneys and *Gardner Landscaping*. Mile Creek School is most grateful for the community's commitment to making the school grounds a beautiful place to play, learn and grow. On May 14, the Mile Creek PTO will be thanking parents for a year of dedication and support by hosting "Pastries for Parents" from 7:50-8:30 a.m. in the cafeteria. Thanks were extended to the Morgan's and *The Shack* for their generous donations to this event.

There are lots of special events in the month of May at Mile Creek including:

- Grandparents and Special Friends Day for Grade 2 on May 15.
- Kindergarten Parent Orientation on the evening of May 20.
- Memorial Day program by Grade 2 on May 22.
- The 3rd Grade Musical on May 28.

Please contact the Mile Creek School calendar, or call the school office, for further information on these special events.

At Lyme School: The PTO is holding the Spring Book Fair this week which is buy one book and get one book free. This Friday night at 6:30 p.m., the PTO will be holding their "Take a Chance" (a/k/a. basket raffle) fundraiser. The 5th grade band and chorus members will join forces with Center School 5th graders for their annual concert at the middle school on May 19, at 7:00 p.m. On May 28, at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m., the 5th graders will perform "Pirates the Musical." Mrs. Ambruso, PE teacher, started the "Kids Marathon" running program. Students that signed up get off their morning bus and run a few laps before going to their classroom. Students will accumulate 25.2 miles before the culmination event on Saturday, May 30, at Waterford High School when they run their last mile to complete the 26.2 miles of a marathon. There are over 55 students signed up for this event.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Administrative Reports:

1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviasher extended congratulations to all for the successful passing of the 2015-2016 budget. He thanked the community for their continued support of education.

Mr. Neviasher reviewed the May personnel report. He extended congratulations to Carol Hindman for her many years of service at Mile Creek School. He noted that as a result of her retirement, despite a reduction in personnel, the district will not have to lay off any teachers this year. He also reported that Lance Piantaggini, Latin Teacher, has resigned and the district

has hired James Motes as his replacement. Also, Jennifer Whelan will move into the Technology Integration Specialist position beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.

Mr. Neviaser reviewed the May enrollment report which reflected a total of 1,357 students enrolled. He noted that they are closely monitoring the kindergarten enrollments. As of Friday, May 1, there are 28 students registered at Mile Creek and 24 at Lyme for a total of 52 students registered for kindergarten. This is 4 students less than this time last year (56) yet it aligns with what was budgeted for in terms of sections.

Mr. Neviaser reviewed the feedback from the NEASC visit. In summary, they were very pleased with what they saw at LOLHS.

Mr. Neviaser thanked Lori Susi and her team for putting on a wonderful celebration in recognition of the long history of Center School and its many roles over time.

Mr. Neviaser reminded the Board about the upcoming Staff Recognition Dinner scheduled for May 21 at the Gelston House.

2. Business Manager's Report

Holly McCalla reviewed the executive budget summary as of April 30, 2015. Of note: in the area of special education, the tuition costs are down significantly over last year this time; and in the area of administrative services, there was an overrun in technology which was offset by an underrun in instructional technology.

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Contingency Maintenance account which reflected a balance of \$133,376.

Mrs. McCalla gave an update on uniform chart of accounts, the state initiative to get schools and municipalities to use a uniform accounting system for comparable data.

Mrs. McCalla gave an update on the preliminary end of year forecast. She is currently working on entering end of year purchases and will have a preliminary number for the Board soon.

V. Educational Presentation:

1. Departmentalization

Patty Downes, Principal of Mile Creek School, and Jim Cavalieri, Principal of Lyme Consolidated School, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Grade 3 to 5 Departmentalization. A summary of this presentation is attached to these minutes for informational purposes. Their presentation included the advantages of departmentalization, the decision process, their findings, and samples of models of departmentalization.

Some of the advantages cited included:

- Create content specialists.
- Ensure students experience multiple teaching styles.
- Offer multiple teacher perspectives and styles in meeting student needs.
- Provide a transitional step between upper elementary and middle school.
- Establish vertical content teams for focused professional development, committee work and resources.

Discussion followed the presentation and included: whether future teacher hirings would include searching for those with specific skills in certain subjects; flexibility of teachers in teaching multiple subjects with increased and decreased student counts; heterogeneous vs. homogenous grouping; young scholars program for advanced students; whether research papers on the proposal were available; benefits to students in their learning process; longitudinal data on departmentalization; growing trend across state to this initiative; teacher buy-in; benefit of transition for students before they move to middle school; impact on teacher evaluation; and benefit of teachers having time to work on their specialized area.

VI. Chairman & Board Report:

Mr. Witkins thanked the Superintendent and all involved in the budget process which culminated in the successful outcome at referendum.

Mr. Witkins commended Heather Fried, teacher at LOLHS, on her coordination of the NEASC process.

Mr. Witkins discussed the development of a district policy dealing with civility and respect.

Mr. Witkins reported that he will not be running for reelection to the Board of Education in November.

The Board discussed the accreditation process which included discussion on their presentation to the NEASC Committee.

Mr. Witkins discussed how the role of Board members is evolving.

VII. New Business:

1. Educator Evaluation Plan

Mr. Neviasser explained how they are using the LEARN evaluation document, developed by area administrators, as the administrative evaluation model.

Mr. Neviasser reported that the CSDE requires annual Board approval of the district's educator evaluation plan.

Mr. Neviaser gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Educator Evaluation Plan including a review of the 2014-2015 implementation, overview of the proposed 2015-2016 plan, continued request for waiver (whole school student learning indicator or student survey), and a forecast for 2016-2017.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fuchs, to approve the 2015-2016 Evaluation Plan including the waiver to delay implementation of school wide indicator and student survey component.

Follow-up discussion included the number of teacher evaluations and the value of each.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Mr. Neviaser gave an update on the study to make the 11th grade testing the SAT vs. the SBAC. Decision on this should be made within one year's time.

2. Rescinding of Nonrenewals

With the passing of the 2015-2016 budget by the voters yesterday at referendum, Mr. Neviaser asked that the Board rescind the non-renewals of staff members that were made at the March meeting which will allow the administration to make appointments for next year and finalize scheduling and placements.

MOTION: Ms. Smalley made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Lucas Edson, that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151, the Region 18 Board of Education rescind the nonrenewal of the teacher contracts of the non-tenured teachers as noted on the document provided by the Superintendent and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person(s) in writing of this action.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

3. LOLMS Student Exchange Trip

Pam Russell, LOLMS World Language Teacher, proposed a repeat of the exchange program with the Jules Romains School in Paris, France. Their proposal is to have Jules Romains students come to Old Lyme again in October 2015 and LOL students go to Paris again in April 2016. The specifics of the request were detailed in a handout to the Board.

In addition, some middle school students joined Mrs. Russell to share the benefits of their participation in the program this year.

MOTION: Ms. Smalley made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Roche, to approve the LOLMS student exchange program with the Jules Romains School in Paris, France as presented.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

4. Tuition Student Request

Mr. Neviaser recommended the approval of a tuition student at the high school, a student from China, who will be residing with a family in Old Lyme. Mr. Neviaser, along with a team from LOLHS (Jim Wygonik, Tracy Lenz, and Jun Wang), had a chance to interview this student (via Skype) and review his transcript. Acceptance of the student requires Board approval per Policy 2420.

MOTION: Mrs. Linderman made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fuchs, to approve the tuition request as presented by the Superintendent for the 2015-2016 school year.

It was noted that Jun Wang, the district's Mandarin Teacher, will be a mentor for the student.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

On another matter, Mr. Rhodes updated the Board on a reverse auction for electricity which secured a price which equated to a \$52,000 reduction in electrical costs for a 24 month contract period for the district.

5. Annual Computer Replacement Purchase

John Rhodes provided the following background information on this agenda item: as part of the school district's technology plan, we replace the oldest computers to maintain reliability and support current application needs. This year we are recommending a mix of desktops and laptops to replace the existing desktops. With the installation of wireless networks at the elementary schools, we will be able to take advantage of increased mobile computing technology. The laptops will be deployed to replace all classroom and media center student desktops in the elementary schools. The quote is based on Connecticut State Contract pricing available through Connecticut Computer Service. The purchase is within the approved budget.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Smalley to approve the purchase of 59 Lenovo laptops and 34 Lenovo desktop computers under State of Connecticut pricing from Connecticut Computer Service for \$42,617.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

6. Mile Creek and Lyme School Media Center Shelving Purchase

John Rhodes provided the following background information on this agenda item: this purchase is part of the Mile Creek and Lyme Consolidated School media center carpeting replacement and reconfiguration. This configuration project replaces the existing carpets but also reconfigures both spaces into flexible learning centers. This purchase price is based on State of Connecticut contract pricing. It is also within the 2014-2015 project budget.

MOTION: Mr. Fuchs made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Wilczynski, to award PSINESP the contract to supply Mile Creek and Lyme Consolidated School library shelving for \$23,259.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

7. High School Track Renovation

John Rhodes provided the following background information on this agenda item: the high school track field has developed a significant infestation of poa annua grass leading to poor quality turf and irregular playing surface for the student athletes. The school district facilities committee has evaluated a number of options to address this condition. Unfortunately, without use of pesticides, the only solution is to completely re-sod the field. The facilities committee has also recommended amending the existing top soil with sand and adding drainage. This additional fieldwork will create a soil condition which will be less likely to support poa annua grass growth.

This project was publically bid. The school district received only one bid for this project. The recommendation to award the contract to Sports Turf Specialties is based on:

- ✓ The bid price is within five percent of the project estimate.
- ✓ Sports Turf Specialties is a high quality athletic field contractor performing major projects on professional, collegiate and municipal athletic fields.
- ✓ They have performed annual maintenance on the district's existing athletic fields for the past four years with quality results.

Mr. Neviaser explained that this work is budgeted for the 2015-2016 school year which begins July 1, but that it would be their preference to start the job as early as June 11 so that the work would be completed before the fall soccer season. Because they must pay for work that occurs in the fiscal year it occurs in, there was Board discussion to approve an expenditure out of the current budget for this early start to occur. After much discussion, the Board decided to wait and see if this expenditure from the current budget was necessary as it is questionable if Sports Turf Specialties would have the ability to begin the work in June.

MOTION: Mrs. Linderman made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fuchs, to award Sports Turf Specialties the contract to renovate the high school track field for \$181,378.

Vote: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

VIII. Old Business:

1. Reports of Committees

- a. *Facilities.* Mr. Fuchs reported that this committee met with a supplier of solar panels for possible use at the High School and Mile Creek School. Cost savings were in the area of \$16,000 if installed on the high school. The committee also walked the various

district athletic fields to review conditions. All fields, with the exception of the track field, are in good shape.

- b. *Building*. No report.
- c. *Technology*. No report.
- d. *Policy*. No report.
- e. *Communications*. No report.
- f. *Finance*. The 2015-2016 budget passed in both towns.
- g. *Human Resources*. Mrs. Lucas Edson reported that negotiations are continuing with the AFT. She reminded the Board to complete the Superintendent Evaluation as soon as possible but no later than May 18.
- h. *Enrollment & Equity*. No report.
- i. *LEARN*. No report.

IX. Correspondence:

There was no additional correspondence to report.

X. Executive Session:

Mrs. Roche made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Linderman, to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing a student discipline matter. Superintendent Neviasser was invited to attend the executive session.

XI. Adjournment:

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Roche, Secretary Pro Tem

Gr 3 to 5 Departmentalization Spring 2015



K-5 Leadership Team

- Mercy Alger
- Jim Cavalieri
- Mary Dargie
- Patty Downes
- Kelly Geyer
- Bruce Hrozenchik
- Nancy Johnston
- Nil Kaczor
- Candice LaConti
- Sue Oliver
- Karen Pasiuk
- Tiffany Sestrom
- Sue Whritner
- Wendy Zito

Why are we talking about Departmentalization?

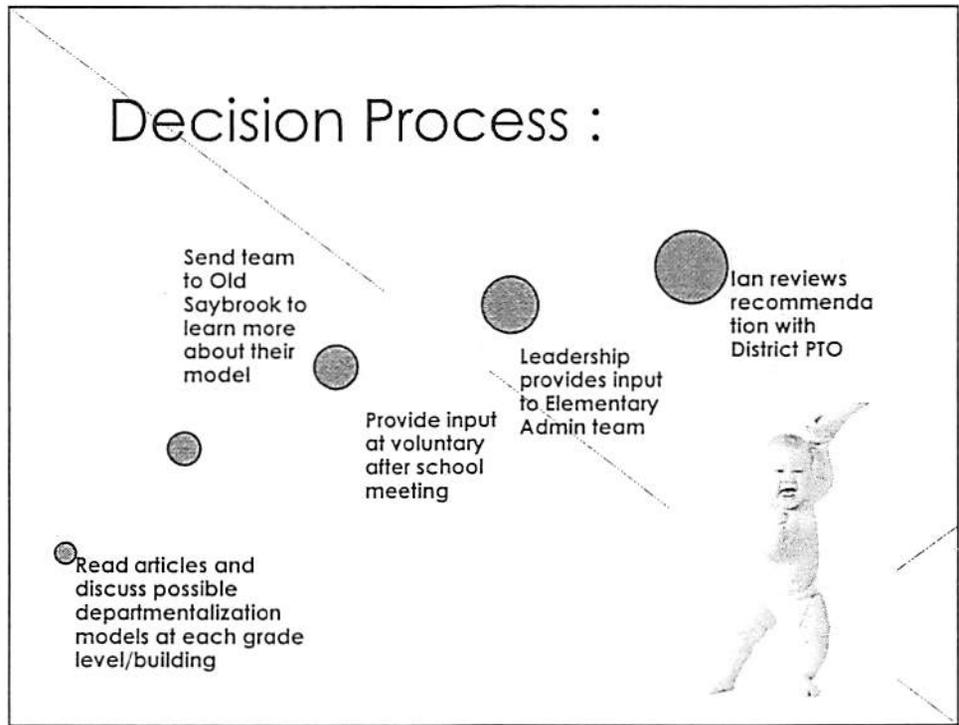
Teacher Input

- Concerned that some subjects do not receive adequate attention
- Interested in being a subject specialist
- Looking for more effective ways to team

Advantages of departmentalization :



- Create content specialists
- Ensure students experience multiple teaching styles
- Offer multiple teacher perspectives & styles in meeting student needs
- Provides a transitional step between upper elementary and middle school
- Establish vertical content teams for focused PD, committee work, & resources



Findings

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various models exist • Model is well received by adults & students
Grade Level Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades 3 to 5 are interested • Grade 3 – transition year • To go forward, all gr 4 – 5 must participate
Visit to Old Saybrook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and students love it and find it less fragmented • Model required more common planning • Different schedule required including intervention block
Voluntary Staff Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are interested • Grade 3 will have more time with homeroom • Models will look different but have common elements
PTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liked concept and thought it would be well received • Recommend Spring communication

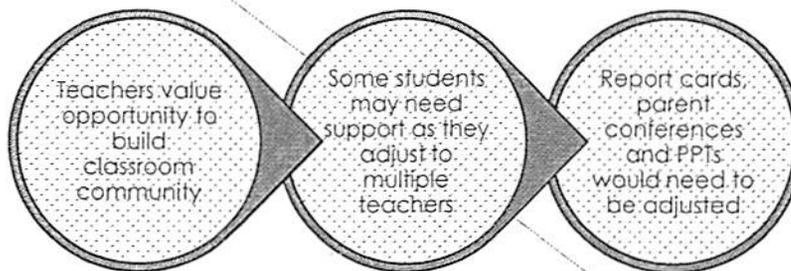
Sample Departmentalization Models Investigated

	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Grade 3 Model	Math	Math
	ELA	ELA
	ELA across SS	ELA across Sci

	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Gr 4 & 5 2 Teacher Model	Math	ELA
	Math	ELA
	ELA across SS & Sci	ELA across SS & Sci

	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Gr 4 & 5 3 Teacher Model	Math	ELA	ELA across SS & Sci
	Math	ELA	ELA across SS & Sci
	Math	ELA	ELA across SS & Sci

Additional Points of Consideration



Final Committee Recommendation



RECOMMENDED

Adopt Departmentalization for Grades 3 to 5

K-5 Leadership will develop and communicate Implementation Plan

Plan will be communicated to BOE and parents in Spring 2015