

# LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

*Regional School District #18*

*A Private School Experience*



*in a Public School Setting*

## **Regular Board of Education Meeting**

February 5, 2020

*Board Present:* Diane Linderman, Chairwoman; Martha Shoemaker, Vice Chairwoman; Jean Wilczynski, Treasurer; Steven Wilson, Secretary; Rick Goulding, Stacey Leonardo; Jennifer Miller; Mary Powell St. Louis; Suzanne Thompson

*Administration Present:* Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; James Cavalieri, Principal of Lyme Consolidated School; Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum; Melissa Dougherty, Director of Special Services; Holly McCalla, Business Manager; Jeanne Manfredi, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School; John Rhodes, Director of Facilities & Technology; Noah Ventola, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; James Wygonik, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School

*Others Present:* Mary Roth, RETA Co-President; Lisa Daly, AFT President; Heather Fried, LOLHS Science Teacher; Isabella Hine and Ellery Zrenda, High School Student Representatives; 6 Community Members

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairwoman Linderman. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: Mrs. Shoemaker made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Miller, to approve the minutes of Regular Meeting and Executive Session of January 8, 2020 and Special Meetings of January 15, 2020, January 22, 2020 and January 29, 2020 as presented.

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

*49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371*

*T: 860-434-7238 F: 860-434-9959 E: neviaseri@region18.org www.region18.org*

### III. Visitors

#### 1. CAPSS Student Recognition

James Wygonik, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School, recognized students Elizabeth Cravinho and Trevor Wells as this year's recipients of the CAPSS Superintendent's Award. This award is based on the students' service, leadership and academic prowess. Mr. Wygonik spoke to the many accomplishments of these two high school students.

#### 2. Public Comment

Rebecca Waldo read a statement on her efforts spearheading a campaign for transitioning Region 18 to 100% clean energy by 2030. A copy of her statement is attached to these minutes for informational purposes. Mrs. Waldo provided the Board with a clean energy school district handbook, which is a program through the Sierra Club that is committing school districts across the country to 100% clean energy. Mrs. Waldo has been working with the club on this campaign to bring Lyme-Old Lyme as the first school district in Connecticut to commit to 100% clean energy. She also provided an energy profile for Region 18 for 2018-19 (solar was integrated in the spring of 2019) and a draft of a resolution for the Board of Education to commit to transitioning Region 18 to 100% Clean Energy.

Mrs. Linderman noted that John Rhodes, Director of Facilities and Technology, will be making a presentation at the March meeting on the energy issue.

#### 3. Report from Student Representatives

Isabella Hine and Ellery Zrenda reported on the following activities taking place at the schools:

*At LOLHS:* Semester two has begun. The chemistry students have once again placed in the top five nationally in the annual crystal growing contest sponsored by the National Science Foundation. This Friday, the Mock Trial team once again travel to the Hartford Superior Court for the state quarterfinals. LOLHS students brought home 8 gold keys and one silver in painting, printmaking, digital art, drawing and ceramics at the Connecticut Scholastic Art Competition. Bella Flagge and Katie Zbierski are the recipients of the Michael's Cup Award for the 2020 season. This award is given to two individuals who embody the mission of Unified Sports and demonstrate positive sportsmanship, encouragement and participation in all events. Bella and Katie will attend a dinner with nearly 200 athletes, partners and their families at the Aqua Turf in Southington on April 27. This Friday, the junior class will participate in the first of four sessions of the SAT prep course presented by Ivy Bound, which leads up to the test on March 25. This weekend the Old Lyme Players will perform the musical comedy "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying." Tickets are available online or at the ticket window. It promises to be a great show.

*At LOLMS:* Several events took place at the middle school in January. The sixth grade hosted a school dance in which more than 150 students participated, and the middle school PTO hosted a very popular activity night. In addition, the Science Olympiad teams traveled and competed at both Harvard and Sacred Heart. The teams were competitive at both events. Channel 8 highlighted the Science Olympiad program in their weekly segment titled, "What is right with schools." The Math Counts Club had a strong

showing this past Saturday at the Eastern Regional Competition held at the Coast Guard Academy. We are proud of all of our students that competed in the National Geographic Geography Bee. A special congratulations to Peter Olin, who is the middle school champion, was extended. Good luck to Peter as he will now take a test to try to qualify for the Connecticut Bee in March. This year, the entire 8th grade participated in the Patriot's Pen competition sponsored by the VFW. Congratulations to Alexis Graddock for not only being selected as the school's top choice, but also winning for the top essay of District 4, which consists of 23 VFW Posts in Eastern Connecticut.

*At Lyme Consolidated School:* Thanks were extended to Nila Kaczor, Gifted and Talented Teacher, for running a successful Invention Convention for the 5th graders. Lyme School had 17 students enter their inventions, and six students are moving onto the state competition. Congratulations to all of the inventors and good luck to the six students moving on. The Lyme School student leaders helped organize and promote the fundraiser for the Miracle League Field that is being built in East Lyme. Donations from area elementary, middle and high schools are being collected. As of today, 20 out of the 30 schools that participated have donated over \$10,600. Mr. Cavalieri would like to thank every school that supported this fundraiser and a special thank you was extended to all of the students and staff that have donated to this special cause. On February 13, Bonnie Ambruso will once again hold Healthy Heart Day for all the students at Lyme School. Students will participate in 45 minutes of continuous activity. All the donations for this day will go directly to the American Heart Association. On February 24, the Florence Griswold Museum will be conducting workshops for students in kindergarten, first and second grade.

*At Mile Creek School:* This month's social emotional learning theme at Mile Creek is accepting differences. The school wrapped up last month's theme of empathy by collecting money for Southern Connecticut's Miracle League Field. On Monday and Tuesday, we had visits from Project Paws, including teams of therapy dogs and the Mobile Farm from Waterford Country School. Students learned about the differences between therapy dogs, service dogs and emotional support animals. They also learned how to correctly approach unfamiliar dogs. Last Friday, the Winter Wonderland Celebration was sponsored by the PTO. Students and families participated in crafts, face painting, a neon dance party and more. We recently had volunteers from the Florence Griswold Museum visit the school and complete a winter art activity with students. On Monday, two students will be honored at the CAS celebration of the arts in the area of music and art.

*In the Preschool Program:* This month the preschool will study different cultural celebrations and learn about President's Day. The color of the month is pink, the shape is a heart and the theme is feelings and emotions. Math lessons will include a study of patterns, counting to 20 and numerals to the number 9. Letter sounds are M, N and O. On February 11, there will be a family event. Families are invited to create Valentine's Day mailboxes, make creatures out of hearts, and the music teacher will lead students and parents in a sing-a-long. The preschool is happy that spring is expected early this year thanks to the wisdom of Punxsutawney Phil.

#### IV. Administrative Reports

##### 1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviasher reviewed the personnel report, which reflected the hiring of an instructional assistant and a secretary in the Special Services Department. The middle school is still in search of a long-term substitute in science and a world language teacher for next school year. Wendy Zito, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher at Mile Creek School, will retire at the end of the current school year after 23 years working in the district.

Mr. Neviasher reviewed the enrollment report noting that the total in-house enrollment is at 1,299, an increase of 12 students from last month this time. Mrs. Wilczynski asked that future enrollment reports break out the preschool numbers differentiating the number of students in the three-year-old program and the number of students in the four-year-old program.

Mr. Neviasher reported on the process of completing the refunding of the 2009, 2011, and 2012 bonds noting that they were able to save the district \$514,629.87 over the next 11 years including \$111,187.50 in the current year and an additional \$58,742.37 next year. This change for next year has allowed a further reduction in the proposed budget to a decrease of 0.05%.

Mr. Neviasher reported that the first public forum for the turf field is scheduled for March 25, 2020 at LOLHS at 6:30 p.m. Advertising for this event will begin soon.

Mr. Neviasher extended thanks to the Sicuranza family for their generous donation to the LOLHS Ski Club of \$1500 to support ski trips.

The recycling discussion has been tasked to the Coordinated School Health Council. They will be meeting this month to address concerns raised earlier this year. Mr. Neviasher noted that although students are not members of the Coordinated School Health Council, because of the interest expressed in recycling by Lyme-Old Lyme High School students at the Board of Ed meeting when this topic was raised, there will be opportunities for students to participate in discussions to reduce the school district's waste.

Mr. Neviasher reported that discussions with the Lyme Academy administration has continued regarding the potential purchase of the abutting property. Mr. Neviasher has met with Frank Burns, Director, to update him on the Board's opinion discussed at a previous Board meeting. There will be a walkthrough of the property on Friday, February 7, with Greenskies to see if any of the property is usable for solar purposes. Rebecca Waldo, who spoke earlier under public comment on clean energy initiatives, was invited to join the participants on this walkthrough.

Mr. Neviasher reported that the state's accountability report for schools has been released and congratulations are in order for all district schools. The School Category Accountability Index Values are based on the overall performance index (a total of all 12 indication point values listed below).

1. Academic achievement status measured by state assessments
2. Academic growth

3. Assessment participation rate
4. Chronic absenteeism - (Chronic absenteeism is defined as a student missing more than 10% of the designated school days in a school year. Absences counted include out of school suspension, but not in school suspension).
5. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – coursework
6. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – exams
7. Graduation – on track in ninth grade
8. Graduation – four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – all students
9. Graduation – six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – high needs
10. Postsecondary entrance rate – all students (college enrollment)
11. Physical fitness
12. Arts access

Category 1 School 85 – 100 (School of Distinction)

Category 2 School 70 – 84.9

Category 3 School 0- 69.9

(there are category 4 and 5 schools as well - those are priority or turnaround school categories).

Other factors that are not point-based:

- Performance gaps between non-high needs and high needs students in all tested areas.
- Graduation gap between non-high needs and high needs students.
- Participation rates in all tested areas.

Lyme-Old Lyme results:

Lyme: Overall Index: 86.1 - Category 1 School of Distinction

MC: Overall Index: 86.6 - Category 1 School of Distinction

MS: Overall Index: 79.6 - Category 2 School

HS: Overall Index: 87.8 - Category 2 School due to performance gap in science between non-high needs/high needs students - otherwise - the overall index score places the high school as a Category 1 School of Distinction. *The high school continually scores performance-wise as a School of Distinction but other factors, such as performance gaps, automatically disqualify the school to be in Category 1 by the CSDE criteria.*

Mr. Neviasser gave an update on the progress towards the district goals.

Curriculum. *Provide professional development and feedback to support Common Core Math Practices*

*PreK-12: Reviewing Bridges Math Standards.*

- We are currently reviewing Bridges standards-based assessments and aligning report cards to reflect the standards and practices K-5.
- We are evaluating moving from grades on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades report card and better communicate student progress based on priority standards in math and ELA.

Human Resources. *Continue to implement processes that support the recruitment and retention of high quality staff:*

- Plans are being developed to recruit at the elementary level with the largest hiring class in a while anticipated.
- Final interview for the Director of Facilities and Technology position will take place after this meeting. The process was very thorough.
- The administration has offered to work with the AFT to resolve grievance issue.

Community. *Educate the community on the various means of communication to ensure efficient and effective outreach and promotion of our schools:*

- Meeting next week to develop the budget edition of the *Focus on Education* newsletter.
- Article on NGSS success coming out in *Events* magazine.
- Continued posting to website of Board presentations.

Facilities. *Monitor and evaluate the five-year facility, safety and technology plans to ensure appropriate improvements and maintenance of buildings, grounds and infrastructure:*

- Bids are in for the tennis court project.
- Met with Wetlands Commission Re: turf infill, which was well-received.
- Planning for public forum on the multipurpose field in March.

Board of Education. *Develop expectations and goals for professional development for Board of Education members:*

- Great start to budget process with good questions posed by the Board.
- Policy and Communications Committee meeting next week – this group has established a regular meeting schedule.

## 2. Business Manager's Report

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Executive Budget Summary as of January 31, 2020. Fluctuations of note: Special Ed: encumbrances entered as student needs are determined.

Admin Services: greater purchasing in Admin Tech Equipment and purchased services last year to date vs. this year to date. Errors in account coding were identified and corrected by year-end. Spending this year is reflected in instructional programs.

### Year To Date Revenue Report

	2018-2019 Received	2019-2020 Received YTD
Town of Old Lyme	\$26,343,259	\$14,055,474
Town of Lyme	\$6,748,520	\$3,355,880

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Contingency Maintenance Report, which reflected \$1,092 in new expenditures. This is in addition to already encumbered funds for the high school sprinkler pipe repair reported at the last meeting. Balance is now at \$118,035.

**V. Educational Presentation**

There was no educational presentation scheduled.

**VI. Chairman & Board Report**

Mrs. Linderman thanked the Board and administration for all their efforts during the budget development process. She also thanked Holly McCalla, Business Manager, for her work on the bond refunding. Mrs. Linderman reported that Martha Shoemaker has volunteered to serve on the Ad Hoc Human Resources Committee whose purpose is to oversee the superintendent's evaluation process. She asked the Board members to let her know if they too wanted to serve on this committee.

**VII. New Business**

**1. Approval of the 2020-2021 Budget**

MOTION: Dr. Goulding made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Wilczynski, to approve the 2020-2021 budget as presented in the amount of \$35,066,107.

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

**2. Field Trip Request**

The Board was presented with a high school field trip request to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst where students will take part in a model United Nations simulation.

MOTION: Mrs. Thompson made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Wilson, to approve the field trip request as presented.

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

**3. Tuition Student Request**

Mr. Neviasser reviewed a request for a tuition student to attend Lyme-Old Lyme High School.

MOTION: Dr. Powell St. Louis made a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Goulding, to approve the tuition student request as presented.

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

**4. Tennis Court Contract**

John Rhodes gave the following background information on this agenda item: The existing high school tennis courts are over twenty years old exceeding their expected life expectancy. The Facilities Committee, along with some community members, evaluated alternatives and decided to replace the existing courts with a post tensioned concrete system. This system will provide longevity, minimal maintenance and provide a consistent quality playing surface. The project was publicly bid. Bid results are listed below:

Company Name	Base Bid	Alternate 1 Bleacher Pads	Alternate 2 Bleachers	Alternate 3 Wind Screens	Total
Classic Turf	\$413,032	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$5,400	\$421,932
Hinding Tennis	\$522,500	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$6,500	\$554,000
Mountain View	\$576,250	\$5,000	\$19,500	\$17,000	\$617,750

Since the bid is well below the project budget of \$465,000, it is recommended that the wind screens and bleachers be included in the project. Sufficient remaining project funds will be available for contingency.

A reference check of Classic Turf Company, LLC was successfully completed.

MOTION: Mrs. Shoemaker made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Miller, to award Classic Turf Company, LLC the contract to replace the six high school tennis courts with post tensioned concrete including bid alternates 1, 2 and 3 for \$421,932.

Mrs. Wilczynski questioned the process of approving a contract without an approved budget for next year. Mr. Rhodes explained the need to get the work in the queue so that work could begin in a timely manner once the budget is approved. He noted that the contractors are aware of the school budgeting process.

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

### VIII. Old Business

#### 1. Closing of LOLHS Project

The district is still waiting for the final change order from the State so there is no action required on this agenda item.

#### 2. Report of Committees:

- a. *Facilities*. Dr. Goulding reported that the Facilities Committee met earlier in the evening. Discussion centered on the tennis court and multipurpose field projects and the condition of the middle school.
- b. *Finance*. No report.
- c. *Communications*. No report.
- d. *Policy*. No report.
- e. *LEARN*. Mrs. Linderman reported on her attendance at the most recent meeting of the LEARN Board. She noted how these meetings are a good opportunity to talk to representatives from other school districts and where interesting and relevant topics are discussed. At this meeting, the group discussed the shortage of AP teachers and how LEARN might be able to initiate a shared teacher program to help alleviate this shortage.



- f. *LOL Prevention Coalition*. Mrs. Shoemaker reported on an event taking place on February 11 starting at 8:30 a.m. where the results of the recent youth survey will be shared.

**IX. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence to report.

**X. Executive Session**

Upon motion by Dr. Goulding and seconded by Mrs. Leonardo, the Board voted unanimously to move into executive session for the purpose of interviewing the candidate for the Director of Facilities and Technology position. Ian Neviasser and Ronald Turner were invited to attend the executive session.

**XI. Adjournment**

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m. upon a motion by Dr. Goulding and a second by Mrs. Leonardo.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Wilson, Secretary

Board of Education Feb 5 2020 6:30pm

Hello, thank you all for the time you have dedicated to our school district. My name is Rebecca Waldo, I am a resident of Old Lyme and a mom of Judah in 4th grade and Gabe is 6th grade. I would like to thank John Rhodes and Ian Neviasser for providing me with a lot of facilities information, time and feedback. I would also like to acknowledge all the brilliant work Region 18 has done in energy efficiency and conservation with LED lights, solar, and the Certified Gold LEED HS building. Region 18 is on a path of reducing emissions, but even with these achievements we fall short of the 'net zero' guidelines to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC made up of 1000's of scientists across the world.

I am here tonight requesting the Board of Education endorse a 100% clean energy commitment by 2030. A goal of 100% encourages a total transition to clean energy, as opposed to incremental change. The 100% Clean Energy school districts campaign is the platform for Climate Parents a program run through the national organization Sierra Club. 15 school districts across the country have made 100% commitments by passing school board resolutions. This includes the second largest school district in the country Los Angeles with 1100 schools and 800,000 students. Region 18 will be the first school district in Connecticut to adopt a resolution committing to power all operations with 100% clean energy.

Region 18 emissions come from electricity, heating oil and diesel for the buses. Heating oil is about half our emissions and half of these are from the HS that has 110 geothermal wells. Currently within the 5 year strategic plan - HVAC systems are earmarked for Mile Creek, Lyme, MS, CS. The current plan does not include the large spaces like the gym, auditoriums or the large common space in the HS. These will need to be addressed. There is a heat pump HVAC solution for these large spaces that are fossil fuel free - which can replace systems that fail or are part of a renovation such as the Lyme school gym. We have ten years to implement an aggressive and bold transition to electric school buses, offset the rest of electricity with clean energy and upgrade to electric HVAC systems.

The resolution supports the development and implementation for integrating climate science curriculum into instruction for all grades K-12. It puts the environment and society at the core of what we learn in school. As our society moves away from fossil fuels we will need to prepare our students for robust job opportunities in green technologies, construction, and restoration efforts. Students learn the causes, consequences and solutions of the climate crisis in developmentally appropriate ways becoming climate science literate integrating green technologies with learning opportunities we are not utilizing now.

A 100% commitment shows younger generations that we take climate change and there future seriously We create a healthy school environment, we set a standard for our community, we drastically reduce emissions in our town and we save money. We take pride in our academics and athletics, let's add climate leaders to our school district assets.

I have a petition with signatures from 302 people who support Lyme Old Lyme school district 100% clean energy commitment by 2030. Can we put 100% clean energy resolution on the agenda for the march meeting? We have the knowledge, we have the technology, and we have the choice. Thank you for your time and consideration.