

LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Regular Board of Education Meeting

July 1, 2020

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

Absent by Previous Arrangement: Martha Shoemaker

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum; Kelly Enoch, Principal of Mile Creek School; Jeanne Manfredi, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School; Holly McCalla, Business Manager; Ron Turner, 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: nine community members from Lyme-Old Lyme

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairwoman Linderman. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Mrs. Miller made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Wilczynski, to approve the minutes of Regular Meeting and Executive Session of June 3, 2020.

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

III. Superintendent's Report

1. Update on Reopening Plans

Mr. Neviaser reported on the fall reopening plans for the district which are being based on the State Department of Education's report entitled, *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and*

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Grow Together. Mr. Neviasser highlighted sections of the state's plan in the areas of priorities, daily operations, health practices and protocols, and family support and communication. A copy of the plan in its entirety can be found online on the district's website at <https://www.region18.org/parents/reopening-school-fall-2020>.

Mr. Neviasser reported on the work of the district's Operations Committee and Remote Learning Committee, both of which are working on the development of the district's Reopening Plan, which is due to the state on July 24. Both committees are meeting weekly. The Remote Learning Committee has been developing a document that focuses on building upon the instructional plan used in the spring and developing standards for students and staff should they have to move to a blended model (in-school and remote) or a complete remote learning model of instruction. Mr. Neviasser stressed the need to be prepared for both models of instruction.

Mr. Neviasser reported that the district's plan will look slightly different at each school building level. The document submitted to the state will be a guiding plan for the principals to develop more detailed specifics for their individual buildings.

The six guiding principles of the State's plan:

1. *Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff.*
2. *Allowing all students the opportunity to return to school full time starting in the fall.*
3. *Monitoring the school, students, and staff and, when necessary, potentially canceling classes in the future to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread.*
4. *Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that are emerging from this historic disruption.*
5. *Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators, and staff.*
6. *Factoring into decisions about reopening the challenges to the physical safety, social-emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students when they are not in school.*

Mr. Neviasser reviewed a *potential* adjustment to the 2020-2021 school calendar, which changed several student days at the beginning of the school year to professional development days for the staff with a student start day of September 1. Mr. Neviasser explained that these additional professional development days will provide the staff with training on how to run their programs in and out of school and how to manage things such as their classrooms, lunches, recess, etc.

Mrs. Linderman asked that weekly updates be sent to the Board on reopening decisions that have been made as the more information the Board has, the better they can serve the community. She also encouraged Board members to attend the Operations Committee meetings that occur on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. in the High School Commons.

Mrs. Thompson inquired if there will be a need for additional staffing (teachers and instructional assistants) in the fall so that students' needs are being met. Mr. Neviasser reported that at this point, they

do not anticipate hiring additional staff. He discussed other initiatives being discussed such as cohorting at the K-5 level, classroom settings being altered, etc. Mr. Neviasher discussed other factors that could come into play that might be cause for additional staffing. Mr. Neviasher noted that the State is anticipating 20% of students and staff will not return in the fall due to concerns over COVID-19 although he didn't believe it would be that high at Lyme-Old Lyme. Mr. Neviasher also reported that some international schools reported an initial decline in enrollment that quickly turned around once parents saw that it was safe for children to return to school.

Mrs. Miller voiced concern over the students wearing masks all day and if there would be opportunities for the student to remove them. Mr. Neviasher reported that there has been discussion on "mask breaks" and the ability to not wear a mask when physically distanced and during lunch and recess periods.

Dr. Goulding voiced concern over the loss of three instructional days with the revised calendar and if these days could be added in place of other professional development days that were scheduled later in the year. Mr. Neviasher reported that the students would be going to school for 180 days even with the additional professional development days front-loaded at the beginning of the school year. Mr. Neviasher will also be looking into whether the State is going to mandate 180 days for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Thompson inquired about the possibility of the Director of Communications and Marketing, who was recently hired, beginning her position during the summer to help with getting information out to the community and to help avoid rumors about the reopening of schools. Mr. Neviasher stressed the importance that everyone be aware that the plan that is developed will be subject to change, and they must be flexible to adjustments that will be made.

Mrs. Thompson asked about the consistency of students' masks so that there is not an issue with trendy vs. non-trendy. Mr. Neviasher reported that students will have to supply their own masks with district-issued masks being supplied should students/staff forget to bring them. He also noted that inappropriate masks would be treated the same as a violation of the dress code.

Dr. Powell St. Louis inquired about the inability of students/staff wearing a mask due to medical conditions. Mr. Neviasher reported that they are anticipating this to occur and accommodations will have to be made.

Mrs. Miller asked about SDE's guidance on those opting to perhaps do partial remote learning and partial traditional school. Mr. Neviasher discussed parental decisions on keeping children home intermittently and communication with the district on these type of decisions. Mr. Neviasher explained that remote learning expectations will be fully communicated should parents opt to keep their children home. Mr. Neviasher reported on the survey that will be sent home to parents once the reopening plan is complete. He noted that this survey should give them a better grasp on whether parents might opt to keep children home.

Mr. Neviasser discussed the importance of flexibility with the reopening plan. The plan that they will submit to the State on July 24 will be refined and adjusted even after school starts. Mr. Neviasser reported that the State is not going to respond to the plans received by each school district; the purpose is to collect best practices.

Mrs. Thompson asked about notification from students who will opt to attend private school, a magnet school or be home schooled. Mr. Neviasser explained that magnet school attendance is through a lottery in the spring; home schoolers are required to notify the district; and withdrawal to attend private school can occur at any time.

Mrs. Wilczynski asked how the reopening plan will be made public. Mr. Neviasser stated that it was his intention to post the plan on the website (in its entirety) and send an executive summary home to parents.

IV. New Business

1. Bid Approval for Lyme Consolidated School Gym

The following background information was supplied by Ron Turner, Director of Facilities and Technology: the current HVAC system at Lyme School is outdated and does not provide cooling to the space. The current configuration also presents a hazard to gym participants. This project will update the heating and cooling system and replace the gymnasium floor and stage curtain. This work was advertised through an open bidding process, and four proposals were received.

Proposals:

Diversity Construction Group	\$476,900
G. Donovan Associates	\$541,200
Orlando Annulli & Sons, Inc.	\$438,300
W. J. Mountford Company	\$448,000

Recommendation:

- Orlando Annulli & Sons, Inc., was the lowest bidder and the contracted architect noted that they have a good reputation as a general contractor.
- Recommended contract award is in the anticipated range and within the approved 2020-2021 Facilities budget.
- This recommendation is contingent upon a thorough reference check of Orlando Annulli & Sons, Inc.

MOTION: Dr. Powell St. Louis made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Leonardo, to approve the contract award to Orlando Annulli & Sons, Inc., for the value of \$438,300.00 for the completion of gymnasium HVAC, floor replacement, and related work.

Mrs. Miller asked about the vetting process, and Mr. Turner explained reference checking.

Mrs. Linderman asked if the stage curtain was also being replaced, and Mr. Turner explained that the curtain is being included as an alternate.

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

2. Policy Review – Health Examinations

Mr. Neviasher reviewed several changes to Policy 4112.4 *Health Examinations* that were approved at the Policy Committee level. These changes were recommended so that the policy was in-line with past and present practice regarding health examinations required of newly hired staff members.

MOTION: Mrs. Miller made a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Goulding, to waive the first reading of Policy 4112.4 *Health Examinations*.

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

MOTION: Dr. Goulding made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Wilczynski, to approve Policy 4112.4 *Health Examinations* as presented.

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

3. Tuition Student Request

Mr. Neviasher reported on two tuition student requests for attendance at Lyme-Old Lyme High School and Lyme Consolidated School, which he recommended be approved by the Board.

MOTION: Dr. Powell St. Louis made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Leonardo, to approve the tuition student request at Lyme-Old Lyme High School and Lyme Consolidated School as presented.

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

V. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m. upon a motion by Dr. Goulding and a second by Mrs. Miller.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Wilson, Secretary