



July 2020

FOCUS on Education


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GRADUATION 2020



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A unique end to A UNIQUE YEAR

At the end of what was arguably the most unique school year in the 47 year history of our region, we would like to take a moment to again thank the community for their ongoing support of our schools. When schools were forced to close on March 13, 2020 due to growing concerns over the spread of COVID-19, we were well-prepared to transition to a distance learning model. This was in great part due to the ongoing support of our communities which allowed us the ability to provide each student with a computing device for the remainder of the school year. Our staff was also well prepared due to the many years of technology training that we have been able to provide to ensure that our students have the best opportunity for success in a digital environment.

At the May 6, 2020 Board of Education meeting, the Board unanimously approved a \$34,711,631 budget for the 2020-2021 school year. This budget was unique in and of itself as it was 1.06% lower than last year's budget which equates to a \$373,127 decrease year-over-year. This is the only time in our region's history that anyone can recall a budget decrease from one year to the next.

On June 12, 2020, we celebrated our LOLHS graduates during a "drive thru" graduation. While this too was unique, the weather cooperated and families had the opportunity to enjoy a special moment while their child was honored on stage. The energy and enthusiasm of all involved was reflective of how much we will miss these young men and women and look forward to hearing of their future success. Thank you to all of the parents and staff members who helped make this such a special day. A video of the ceremony, which includes speeches and music, is available on our website for all to view.

Enjoy your summer and stay well,

Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools
Diane Linderman, Board of Education Chair

Planning for the Fall of 2020

Like much of the rest of the country, the Lyme-Old Lyme Schools are optimistically preparing to reopen in the fall despite many uncertainties regarding what exactly that may look like. At the time of this printing, detailed guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has yet to be released. This guidance is expected to outline the requirements necessary to safely welcome our students and staff back in August. We have convened two committees to address this topic and create plans for a safe reopening. One is focused on the curricular

aspect of reopening and the other on operational management. Those committees, comprised of staff members, parents, and Board of Education members, are working with CDC guidelines, the anticipated CSDE guidelines, and lessons learned from international schools that have already reopened. Our goal is to determine the safest and most effective methods for the return of our students and staff in August. Once a plan has been established, parents and students will be notified via our mass communication system.

Facility FACTS



If you have driven through our main campus recently, you may have noticed that the tennis court replacement project is near completion. We are excited that we were able to get this done during the extended school closure and look forward to the day when our students can return to play on our courts and fields.

We have rescheduled our public forum for the artificial playing surface, which was supposed to occur on March 25, 2020. The new date for that forum will be September 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lyme-Old Lyme High School auditorium. We hope you will join us to hear more about this proposed project.

The renovation process for the Lyme School gymnasium has begun. At their July meeting, the Board of Education reviewed construction bids for this project and approved the commencement of such. It is expected that construction will begin over the summer and extend into the beginning of the school year. Plans are in place to prevent disruption of the school day during this process.

Special Thanks to our RETIREES

RETIREES:

Please join us in recognizing the following retirees for their many years of service to the communities of Lyme and Old Lyme.

Myra Gipstein, *School Psychologist at Center School, 20 Years of Service*

John McGannon, *World Language Teacher at Lyme-Old Lyme High School, 17 Years of Service*

Connie Price, *2nd Grade Teacher at Lyme Consolidated School, 34 Years of Service*

Pam Russell, *World Language Teacher at Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School, 30 Years of Service*

Nancy Sparaco, *3rd Grade Teacher at Mile Creek School, 35 Years of Service*

Wendy Zito, *1st Grade Teacher at Mile Creek School, 23 Years of Service*

Board of Education MEETING DATES

Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room in Center School, 49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, CT.

August 5, 2020

November 4, 2020

February 3, 2021

May 5, 2021

September 2, 2020

December 2, 2020

March 3, 2021

June 2, 2021

October 7, 2020

January 6, 2021

April 7, 2021

July 7, 2021

Sustainability RESOLUTION

At their meeting on June 3, 2020, the Board of Education adopted the following resolution as a guiding principle for facilities and operations plans and budgets, with the goal of being “100 percent carbon-free” by 2030.

[Transitioning Lyme-Old Lyme School District to 100% Clean, Renewable Energy Resulting in Net-Zero Emissions.](#)

WHEREAS, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC Report) of 2018, the Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4), climate scientists from around the world, have all declared a climate crisis requiring a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from the burning of fossil fuels by 2030.

WHEREAS a clean energy school district supports Governor Lamont’s commitment to 100% renewable energy by 2040 and 45% by 2030 for energy independence, fiscal responsibility, and community health, our air, water, wetlands and coastlines.

WHEREAS, schools, school districts, and cities around the country are making commitments to run on 100% clean energy to improve public health and to help tackle climate change.

WHEREAS, Region 18 is dedicated to supporting programs and strategies to make schools climate-safe, energy-efficient living laboratories teaching children to understand STEM concepts through clean energy applications.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of Region 18 hereby establishes the goal of achieving 100% clean energy in the form of wind or solar, and energy efficiency measures within the all energy sectors including electricity, heating, and transportation phasing out all fossil fuels onsite by 2030.

In planning and implementation of our 100% clean energy commitment, we shall include effective environmental and sustainability education. These measures will enhance equity in our school district and provide student learning opportunities in STEM and sustainability.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Education calls on city, state, and federal officials and agencies to take swift effective action on climate change to protect current and future students.

High School Honors TOP GRADUATES

Over the past four years, I have had the pleasure of getting to know and work with the Class of 2020, a unique group of individuals who are equal parts ingenuity, intelligence and kindness.



Ryan McTigue, the Valedictorian for the Class of 2020, will be attending MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts this fall. He is strongly considering a physics major, with chemistry as his potential back-up. Ryan has been involved in a variety of clubs and activities in high school, but the Math Team, Science Olympiad and High School Bowl are among his favorites. He has most enjoyed Wind Ensemble with Mr. Wilson, as well as Mr. Elliott's AP Physics class, and is seen as something of a Renaissance man by

peers and teachers alike. According to fellow classmate Trevor Wells, "I expect that if we give it a century or so, we will find 'McTigue' in the dictionary as "a humble genius." A member of the LOLHS crew team, Ryan will continue his rowing career in college. We look forward to following Ryan's continued success at MIT and beyond.



Emily Speckhals, Salutatorian for the Class of 2020, will be attending Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Emily has been an avid member of our Robotics team since she joined three years ago. This interest is so strong, in fact, that she plans to pursue a major in computer science and/or engineering at the post-secondary level. She has most enjoyed her engineering and physics classes at Lyme-Old Lyme, and when she wasn't working with the Robotics team in her free time, she was running cross country

and track. When asked what she's looking forward to most about college, she said it is simply the chance to meet different people and explore new opportunities. We are excited to see what the future holds for Emily at Cornell. Go Big Red!



Theodore Wayland, the 2020 Honor Essayist, will be attending Yale University this fall, where he plans to pursue mechanical engineering. Ted has been a member of the LOLHS Tennis Team, Math Team, Robotics Team and Jazz Band. Additionally, he has served as a homeroom representative for class office. Ted shared that his favorite classes in high school were AP Calculus and AP Spanish. While he may present as quiet and serious, Ted also has a great sense of humor - just take a look at his renowned WLYM piece, "Teddy G."

Outside of school, Ted has dedicated his time to the Boy Scouts, earning the rank of Eagle Scout, an impressive feat, during his junior year of high school. He shared that he is looking forward to meeting new people in the college environment. We wish Ted all the best at Yale and beyond.



Class President Trevor Wells will be heading to Middletown, Connecticut to attend Wesleyan University in September. In addition to serving as a class officer, Trevor has been an avid member of the Philosophy Club, Indoor and Outdoor Track Teams, Cross Country Team, and Early Running Club. In reflecting upon his high school experience, Trevor shared that hands down, his favorite classes all four years have been English. To quote him, "The English department at LOLHS is so ridiculously fantastic!" As he looks ahead to college,

he is considering a variety of majors, including Literature, Philosophy, Linguistics, Psychology and History. Friendly and gregarious, Trevor is looking forward to meeting more people "whose brains I can probe." Looking forward to following Trevor's continued success at Wesleyan.

There is no doubt that these four individuals have enough accolades between them to fill a classroom, but I would argue that their greatest accomplishment thus far is growing into good people. Like so many in their class, I believe they will go out into the world and change it for the better.

Emily Macione
Head Advisor, Class of 2020