

# LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

*Regional School District #18*

*A Private School Experience*



*in a Public School Setting*

## **Policy and Communications Committee Meeting**

**November 9, 2021**

*Committee Members Present:* Martha Shoemaker, Policy Committee Chair; Suzanne Thompson, Communications Chair; Diane Linderman; Mary Powell St. Louis

*Administration Present:* Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools

*Others Present:* Bridget Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

### *Communications Update*

Mrs. Compagno reported that there would be an open house at LOLHS on November 10 for students interested in attending on a tuition basis. Two families are attending.

Based on feedback from the committee members, Mrs. Compagno will include an article in the next edition of the *Focus on Education* newsletter on the outgoing Board of Ed members and an introduction to the new members who will start their tenure on December 1.

Mrs. Compagno is working on a Board of Education newsletter which will hopefully go home to all parents weekly beginning November 19. It will include news specific to the Board of Education such as upcoming meetings, links to presentations, photos, etc. It will be one page in length and formatted similar to the *Focus* newsletter. Mrs. Compagno will also supply copies of this newsletter to the public libraries, town halls and the senior center.

Mrs. Compagno distributed a draft of a one-page summary on the PK-8 Facilities Study which highlighted a statement of needs (replacement of HVAC systems, code upgrades and enrollment increase). It also included a table which explained the four options under consideration for grade configuration with associated cost estimates. This document was developed after the Board of Education recommended it be created for educating the community on this project.

The committee reviewed this document in detail and offered suggestions for clarity, especially in the area of what this project entailed and the fact that it cannot be funded within the operating budget or .

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undesignated fund. The committee also felt it important that the November 17 community forum date be highlighted at the top of the document so that it would stand out to readers. Because it was important to keep this summary brief, many of the suggestions made might be included in a future “frequently asked questions” document. Mrs. Compagno will update the document taking into account the recommendations of the committee.

The committee also discussed the importance of informing the public of the need for their input and giving them sufficient time to do so before the Board of Education selects an option for QA+M Architects to proceed with developing better cost estimates and detail.

Mrs. Compagno reported that she and the Superintendent met with Chip Dumais, Executive Director of Cooperative Educational Services, to discuss the next public forum (December 8) on the development of the district’s strategic plan. Mr. Dumais will also be attending the December 1 Board of Education meeting and will gather Board input at that time. The committee discussed how this forum should run, the process going forward, and the best way to gather community input.

#### *Policy Update*

Mr. Neviasser referred to a CABE new policy recommendation due to the passing of P.A. 21-199 *Improvement of FAFSA Completion Rates*. The act requires boards of education to adopt a policy by July 1, 2022, to improve the completion rates for FAFSA among grade 12 student or students in adult education programs.

The committee wordsmithed the CABE policy and made several recommendations for change. Because the district does not experience a problem with FAFSA completion rates, much unnecessary wording was eliminated. This policy will go before the Board of Education for a first reading at their December 1 meeting.

Mr. Neviasser reviewed a CABE policy update recommendation due to the passing of P.A. 21-1 *An Act Concerning Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis*. He referenced the district’s policy 4118.231 *Smoking, Drinking and Substance Abuse by Staff Members* and Policy 5131.6 *Drug Free Schools* whose wording is affected by this act. The committee wordsmithed the two policies and recommended several changes. These two policies will go before the Board for a first reading at their December 1 meeting.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.