

LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Regular Board of Education Meeting

March 2, 2022

Board Present: Steven Wilson, Chair; Martha Shoemaker, Vice Chair; Mary Powell St. Louis, Treasurer; Suzanne Thompson, Secretary; Laura Dean-Frazier; Anna James; Jason Kemp; Jennifer Miller; Christopher Staab

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; Kelly Enoch, Principal of Mile Creek 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: Elise DeBernardo and Andrew Hedberg, High School Student Representatives; three community members from LOL

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Steven Wilson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Mrs. Dean-Frazier made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Miller, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 2, 2022.

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

MOTION: Mrs. Shoemaker made a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Powell St. Louis, to approve the minutes of Regular Meeting of February 2, 2022.

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

III. Visitors

1. Report from Student Representatives

Elise DeBernardo and Andrew Hedberg reported on the following activities taking place at the schools:

At LOLHS: February was a busy month at LOLHS. The robotics team is in full swing building their winning robot. SAT prep sessions for all juniors are also up and running and will continue into March in preparation for the SATs being administered on March 30. The LOL Players presented an amazing and outstanding production of *The Addams Family* on February 10, 11 and 12. On February 16, the 8th grade band joined the LOLHS Symphonic and Wind Ensemble to perform a great concert. We also welcomed the incoming freshmen Class of 2026 and their parents for the annual 8th grade parent / student night which commenced the course selection process. As for March, we are looking forward to the rescheduled senior ball on Friday, March 11, which is being held at the Pequot Museum. The winter sports season is coming to an end, and the spring sports season is starting right around the corner.

At LOLMS: February was a busy month at the middle school. The middle school students visited the high school on February 9 to see their production of *The Addams Family*. The acting, singing and music were extremely well-done, and all of us enjoyed the show very much. The 8th grade welcomed the high school counselors for a discussion about the high school program of studies, and all the 8th grade students registered for their classes for next year. The winter sports season wrapped up in February with the middle school boys basketball team going undefeated for the season. Girls volleyball and the winter running club both started this week, and preparation for this year's LOLMS drama production of *Mary Poppins* is in full-swing, with nearly one-third of students participating in some way in the production. Congratulations were extended to the 13 students who participated in the Invention Convention, three of whom are continuing to the state level. We are looking forward to next week's National History Day showcase during which 8th grade families will be invited to view the students' National History Day projects. Good luck to the middle school students who will be participating in the Eastern Regionals Music Festival this weekend.

At Lyme Consolidated School: During the week of February 14, the students participated in Healthy Heart Week during their PE classes. Through their efforts, they raised \$7,670 for the American Heart Association. A special thank you to Bonnie Ambruso, physical education teacher, for once again organizing this very special week. On March 2, Lyme School celebrated the love of reading as all students and staff participated in Read Across America Day. Each classroom enjoyed having a special guest reader. Thank you to Maggie Dewey, media specialist, for organizing this day. On March 8, the Lyme School fifth graders will join with Mile Creek's fifth graders as they participate with the eighth grade and the high school chorus members in the district Choral Festival at LOLHS. On March 21, students and staff of both Lyme School and Mile Creek School will be celebrating World Down Syndrome Day by wearing their most colorful or mismatched socks. They may also wear the colors blue and yellow to bring more awareness for the inclusion and well-being of people who have Down's Syndrome. The

next PTO meeting will be held on March 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the school library or by Zoom. On March 30, the fourth and fifth graders of Lyme School (and Mile Creek) will be attending the LOLMS play *Mary Poppins Jr.*

At Mile Creek School: In February, Mile Creek students and staff collected 865 items to donate to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen. For more than 30 years, March has been officially designated by the National Association for Music Education for the observance of Music in our Schools Month® (MIOSM®), the time of year when music education becomes the focus of schools across the nation. The purpose of MIOSM is to raise awareness of the importance of music education for all children – and to remind citizens that school is where all children should have access to music. Mile Creek School will be celebrating music all month. Read Across America Day was held on March 2. All Mile Creek students spent time in the library choosing between a variety of creative activities highlighting the enjoyment of reading. Students visited areas such as beach reads, book bistro, flower fiction, and bookroom crossing to enjoy various genres and topics. The next PTO meeting will be held on March 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the school library.

In the Preschool Program: February was a busy month at Center School. The teachers met with parents for conferences, valentines were created for classmates and families, and we welcomed the Connecticut Audubon Society back for a program about plantings and early spring. On March 2, the preschool celebrated Read Across America Day with a walk to the public library and a visit from the middle school reading buddies. In March, the theme is space, and fiction and non-fiction books will be read related to this subject. The students are looking forward to celebrating St. Patrick's Day and welcoming spring. The preschoolers will also build robots and read books by Dr. Seuss. The students are learning the letters P and Q, counting with tally marks in math and learning about spring. The shape of the month is the diamond, the color is white and Jennifer Sanchez is the artist of the month.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Correspondence

Mr. Wilson reviewed a summary of the correspondence that the Board received over the last month, the majority of which were emails in support of ending the mask mandate in the schools. These emails are attached to the minutes for informational purposes. *The opinions expressed in the attached correspondence are solely those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the position of the Regional School District #18 Board of Education or its employees.*

V. Administrative Reports

1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviasser reviewed the March personnel report. Of note: the report listed the positions that need to be filled for the 2022-2023 school year.

Mr. Neviasser reviewed the March enrollment report which reflected a total of 1,335 students, an increase of seven students from last month this time.

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

Curriculum. Use multiple points of data to evaluate academic and social emotional progress over the last 18 months in order to inform instruction, supports, interventions, and, when necessary, development of supplemental programming.

- Beginning the K-5 Structured Literacy and ELA curriculum review process.
- Elementary grade level meetings to resume.
- Peer visits for 3 year old Pre-k students will take place March 11.

Human Resources. Continue to provide ongoing support for staff to ensure existing and new employees have the resources necessary to perform the duties of their jobs at the highest level possible.

- Job positions posted and interview teams assembled for many of the openings for 2022-2023.
- ED Camp professional development topics to be established.
- Summer program positions posted, including the play-based academic skills camp to support grade 1-2 students and the online enrichment opportunities for grades 5-12. All of this is funded through ESSER grants.

Community. Invite community involvement and feedback in preparation for upcoming renovations and strategic planning.

- Community focus groups will be conducted for the Lyme School principal search.
- Strategic Plan development in final stages.

Facilities. Monitor and evaluate facility, safety, and technology plans to ensure appropriate use, improvements, and maintenance of buildings, grounds, and infrastructure.

- Completed drainage for turf field.
- Monitoring possible funding for HVAC projects.

Sustainability. Continue to explore and adopt processes and programs that support the district's vision and mission of sustainability.

- Exploring electric chargers on campus for electric vehicles.

Board of Education. Through professional development and training, transition new members into their roles and share processes and procedures that support the high standards and expectations of Lyme-Old Lyme.

- Members recognized with gifts for Board of Education Appreciation Month.

2. Business Manager's Report

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Executive Budget Summary as of February 28, 2022. Fluctuations of note:

Special Education: due to encumbrances for settlement agreements.

Transportation: down due to reduced runs as a result of the nationwide bus driver shortage and consolidation of routes and stops.

Year To Date Revenue Report

	2020-2021 Received	2021-2022 Received YTD
Town of Old Lyme	\$27,556,679	\$16,929,106
Town of Lyme	\$6,376,133	\$3,758,687

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Contingency Maintenance Report. New spending totaled \$4,000 for rectifying a leak in the main campus water tank. The balance of the account is now at \$133,701.

VI. Educational Presentation

1. Curriculum Update

Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the district's curriculum and how it may be impacted by the State's curricular changes and adoptions. Kelly Enoch, Principal of Mile Creek School, gave a presentation on social and emotional learning and how its concepts provide an extra dimension to education. She also detailed how the Second Step Program, a program used at the elementary level, promotes skills for learning, empathy, emotion management and problem-solving. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes for informational purposes.

Follow-up discussion included: state mandated and non-mandated curriculum updates and the impact to core and elective courses; the process of updating curriculum based on the state mandates; curriculum changes being reflective of societal changes; emergence of social emotional learning and its focus on improving cooperation, communication and decision-making; and the home-school connection of social emotional learning.

VII. Chairman & Committee Reports:

- a. Facilities.* Ms. Miller reported on this committee's meeting that took place earlier in the evening. Lyme Consolidated School was the building focus: Mr. Cavalieri is very appreciative of the cleanliness of the building; there is a need to pave a portion of the track; and the sound system was recently updated in time for the musical. The committee also discussed the possibility of installing electric charging stations at the main campus. This will assist with the charging of elective vans that are planned to be purchased in the future using grant funding.
- b. Finance.* No report.
- c. Communications.* Mrs. Thompson updated the Board on this committee's February 8 meeting. The budget edition of the *Focus on Education* newsletter will be published in early March. In addition, Mrs. Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing, is developing a monthly Board of Education newsletter to be sent home to parents.

- d. *Policy*. Mr. Kemp gave an update on this committee's February 8 meeting. Policy 3260 *Disposal of Obsolete or Surplus Equipment/Materials* is being brought to the Board later in the meeting for a first reading. The committee is also reviewing Policy 6144 *Controversial Issues* and brainstorming will continue at their March 8 committee meeting.
- e. *LEARN*. No report.
- f. *LOL Prevention Coalition*. No report.

VIII. New Business

1. Approval of New Hire

Mr. Neviasser reported that the district would like to hire Peter Shoemaker as an instructional assistant at the high school. Because he is the son of a Board of Education member, this hire requires Board approval per policy 4112.8 *Relatives or Spouses as District Employees*.

MOTION: Mr. Kemp made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Staab, to approve the hiring of Peter Shoemaker as an instructional assistant at Lyme-Old Lyme High School.

VOTE: the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion with the exception of Mrs. Shoemaker who abstained from voting.

2. Health Food Certification

The following background information was provided on this agenda item: [Section 10-215f](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that each local board of education or governing authority for all Connecticut public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must take action annually to certify whether all food items sold to students will or will not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards. This includes all NSLP public schools, regional educational service centers, the Connecticut Technical High School System, charter schools, inter-district magnet schools and endowed academies.

MOTION: Mr. Staab made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Shoemaker, that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

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

MOTION: Mr. Kemp made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. James, that the board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut

Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held.

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

3. Policy 3260 *Disposal of Obsolete or Surplus Equipment/Materials*

The Board reviewed changes made to Policy 3260 recommended by the Policy Committee which amends the policy to include the authorization of “donation of district equipment and materials to organizations that support school aged children and share the same interests and goals of public education. Preference in donations will be given to those organizations that are in need of financial support.”

MOTION: Mrs. Shoemaker made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Miller, to waive the first reading and approve Policy 3260 *Disposal of Obsolete or Surplus Equipment/Materials* as amended.

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

4. Tuition Student Requests for 2022-2023 at LOLHS and Center School

Mr. Neviasser reviewed two tuition student requests for LOLHS and Center School for the 2022-2023 school year and one for LOLHS for the current school year.

MOTION: Mrs. Dean-Frazier made a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Powell St. Louis, to approve the tuition student requests for LOLHS and Center School as presented.

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

IX. 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.

X. Executive Session

Upon motion by Dr. Powell St. Louis, seconded by Mrs. Shoemaker, the Board voted unanimously to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy for a pending claim.

XI. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m. upon a motion by Dr. Powell St. Louis and a second by Mrs. Shoemaker.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Thompson, Secretary

The opinions expressed in the attached correspondence are solely those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the position of the Regional School District #18 Board of Education or its employees.

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask mandate

For the minutes.

From: Mike Bucior <mikebucior@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 10:20 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Cc: Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: Mask mandate

Good evening Ian and BOE members,

As the parent of a LOLHS junior, I very much look forward to the removal of the mask mandate for LOLHS students. It is time.

Mike Bucior

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: please make masks optional for Region 18 students starting Feb 28

For the minutes.

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Arico <sbarico@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 10:21 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Cc: James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: please make masks optional for Region 18 students starting Feb 28

Dear Ian,

Thank you for raising the issue of masking in schools at the Mile Creek PTO meeting this evening and expressing your interest in hearing from parents (and others in the school community), now that Governor Lamont has made it optional starting on Feb 28.

We are 23 months into this pandemic, vaccines have been available for a year (and 3+ months for children 5 and up), cases are declining, and serious sickness is increasingly absent among Covid cases.
The vast majority of America has "opened up;" less than a third of US states now require schoolchildren to wear masks. Even within CT - masking is optional for virtually all segments of the population except within medical settings and in schools.
Research shows only N-95 masks protect against omicron, and no schoolkids wear these.
Continuing to mask increases anxiety among children in unhealthy ways (as many parents in the room tonight shared). Masking during PE and during sports is unhealthy for kids. So is wearing dirty masks again and again, as many kids do. Social and relational wellbeing of children (among other things) are negatively impacted by masks.

Why should children in schools be virtually the only portion of the population outside the medical community required to routinely mask - especially when they are least likely to become seriously ill with Covid (if they even know they have it)?

Should Region 18 continue to require masks after the state of CT has made wearing them optional, this would be a real problem for our family. My husband and I have discussed exploring alternate schooling options for our four children if this were to be the case.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan

Susan Arico
603 767-2029

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask Mandate End

For the minutes.

From: Courtney Bushnell, LCSW <cbushnell@projectcourageworks.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 10:40 AM
To: Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>; Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Subject: Mask Mandate End

Good Morning,

I am a parent of two children at Mile Creek School and am writing in support of ending the mask mandate in school, which would follow the governor's order releasing this mandate as well. Since the start of the covid-19 pandemic, we were encouraged to follow science, and as we have seen, science is ever evolving and changing. We have seen vaccinated individuals who are also boosted, still getting the covid-19 virus, we have seen individuals who are not vaccinated not get the virus. Masks or not, people are spreading the virus and getting the virus. I am a mental health and substance abuse professional who has seen first hand the impact the pandemic has had on people's mental health and their increase in substance use, and worry constantly about the impact this will have long term on my children's lives. My children have been in their crucial foundation stages of education through the pandemic- which are the building blocks for the rest of their lives. They have had to adapt and learn to live without seeing their teacher's smiles, facial cues and their friends smiles. These are not helpful things for child development, social development or overall mental health. There are two articles I am attaching, one report came out on January 20th, discussing how mask mandates have caused over a 350% surge in childhood speech delays. Another article from NPR on January 28th, sites issues related to children wearing masks properly, interfering with brain development, inhibiting social interactions, as well as hearing and understanding speech.

I am asking for families of this district to have the ability to choose whether they send their children to school with a mask or not, and leave it up to them. Everyone is able to have an opinion and can choose what they feel it is best for their families to continue to wear masks or not- but please provide this opportunity for people to make a choice and end the mandate. Thank you for your time.

<https://thenationalpulse.com/2022/01/20/mask-mandates-causing-speech-delays/>

<https://www.npr.org/2022/01/28/1075842341/growing-calls-to-take-masks-off-children-in-school>

Sincerely,

Courtney Bushnell

Courtney Bushnell LCSW

Director of Clinical Services

Pronouns: She/Her

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Old Saybrook, CT 06475

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Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Masking Optional

For the minutes.

From: Steve Spooner <sjspooner@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 12:05 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Cc: Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: Masking Optional

Good afternoon Ian and Board of Education Members,

I was delighted to hear that our governor announced an end to the statewide mask mandate in schools.

This pandemic has been a terrible detriment to our kids learning. Our face is our communicator; facial expression is critical to clear conversation and understanding. Without clear communication learning is compromised. Our kids have endured enough, considering COVID-19 is statistically unlikely to have any significant short and/or long term consequences in children. All region 18 employees have access to PPE, vaccines and treatments should they desire. Additionally, our hospitals are able to manage and care for those in need of treatment.

Additionally:

- The efficacy of someone's vaccine is not affected by the vaccination status of someone else. Our teachers are protected.
- Our kids socialize outside of school without masks. Sleepovers, social gatherings, etc all take place without masks. The only place they mask is at school.
- Studies show that the use of cloth and paper masks, particularly as worn in a school setting, provide little added benefit among healthy students who are not actively coughing or sneezing.
- Vaccines, boosters, PPE, treatments, etc. are all readily available to those who desire them.
- Health privacy matters - we need to return to normal. Healthcare decisions should be between a patient, family and their doctor.

We must make education our number one priority. Now is the time to move forward and learn to live with COVID by making masks optional.

As a side note - I have been flying throughout Europe and the States for the past 2 years. We work in very close proximity on the flight deck. We do NOT wear masks as they are a hindrance to clear communication. My employer does provide guidance to stay home if not feeling well or having any symptom whatsoever, cough, sneeze, sore throat, temperature, etc. I am certain our district has similar guidance, and I would suggest that we maintain that for students and employees of Region 18.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Steve and Stacy Spooner MD

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:28 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask Mandates

For the minutes.

From: Judith Read <readjudith@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: Mask Mandates

Goodmorning All,

I have of course heard the news that Governor Lamont has lifted the Mask Mandate for our schools beginning February 28th. I would like the students of our Old Lyme to have the freedom to choose. I would like to see mask wearing optional not required!

Thank you,

Judith Read, Member
Old Lyme Board of
Finance

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:26 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Masking

For the minutes.

From: Ashlee Konow <ashmkonow@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 7:59 PM
To: Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>; Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Subject: Masking

Good Evening Mr. Neviaser and Mr. Wilson,

I write this evening, fully aware that you both are probably overwhelmed with emails from parents, teachers and staff members concerning masks. I am sorry that this decision falls onto districts as this is not an easy position to be in. However, I would be remiss if I did not speak out about the masking of our students in the Lyme Old Lyme School District. I am a mom of a preschool student at Center School, and am a teacher in another local district.

As a teacher of elementary level students, as well as a mom, I have watched the last two years painfully unfold in a variety of ways. For the past 2 years I've masked up my own child and tried to teach a room of masked children.

At this point of the pandemic, with a vaccine available for those who want it and N95's widely available for those who would like to wear them, it is logical that we allow families to decide the risk levels they are comfortable with, whether to mask or unmask.

I fear that this decision will be political, rather than focusing on what we know...

For two years, we have asked students to cover their faces. All the while, knowing, this virus does not impact children the same way as it does adults. This was a beautiful gift that we as a society have ignored. Instead, we covered their faces to protect us... the people who have devoted their lives to protecting them.

The only study done regarding masking vs not masking in schools has been largely debunked. Europe has NOT masked children at any point during the pandemic, and there has been no indication of any spread being caused from schools. Even WHO has said only children 12 and older should wear masks. Some studies even suggest that it may do more harm than good having children wear masks - the masks don't fit well, they constantly touch them and, have you ever witnessed the spit or snot marks on some students' masks? It's quite frankly unsanitary for many small children.

Next, I'd like to address the academic and social concerns over wearing masks in schools. We have watched students fall behind academically and socially. Sure, some of that has a lot to do with virtual school, but, my own child's difficult with speech articulation... that has an awful lot to do with not seeing his teacher's faces for 2 years. I teach students to read. Have you tried to dictate a word and have students differentiate between the /th/ and /f/ sounds with a mask on? Sometimes it's near impossible.

Studies show that children born into this pandemic have a lower IQ, the cases of self harm in children has been on the rise for the past 2 years. Children haven't seen their friends' faces for 2 years. 2 years! All for a virus that we know does not impact children. Children are at a bigger risk from the flu, and we have never even considered masking children for the flu.

I fear for the emotional health of students if this continues. I fear that we are creating a generation of children who won't know how to read someone's face, who won't develop empathy. I fear that history will not look kindly upon those of us who should have stood up for these children and didn't. So now I'm standing up.

I urge you to make masks optional. For the sake of the students' well-being.

I sincerely appreciate the time you took to read this,
Ashlee Konow

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 11:26 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask Policy

For the minutes.

-----Original Message-----

From: thomas kelo <tomykelo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 9:44 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: Mask Policy

Good Evening Ian and Board of Education Members,

I would like to start by saying I appreciate the work all of you and the and the entire R18 district have done navigating our families through the pandemic quite successful I might add. I have two kids in Mile Creek.

I support dropping the mask policy at all R18 schools regardless of vaccination status.

Respectfully
Thomas Kelo

Sent from my iPhone

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 2:18 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask Mandate

For the minutes.

-----Original Message-----

From: Donna Staab <dmsolct@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 1:17 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: Mask Mandate

I think it's time to stop the requirement that masks be worn in schools. I taught for 37 years and am currently a substitute teacher in the district. It's difficult to hear some students with a mask on. You can't see their facial expressions so you don't know how they're feeling. It's also difficult teaching all day with a mask on and speaking loud enough so everyone can hear.

My recommendation is to give teachers, parents, and students the choice of whether or not they want to wear a mask.

Respectfully yours,

Donna Staab

Sent from my iPhone

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 2:41 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: letter to CDC
Attachments: 555751943-Letter-to-CDC.pdf

For the minutes.

From: Brandy Morenko Campbell <bmorenokcampbell2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviasei@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>; Cavalieri, James <cavalierij@region18.org>
Cc: Jay Campbell <jrcampbelldds@hotmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: letter to CDC

Dear Superintendent Neviaser and members of the Board of Education,

Please accept this letter as my endorsement for the removal of mask requirements for my school aged-children. I recognize the fact that current CDC guidelines do not yet align with the upcoming mask mandate elimination in schools. However, I am proud of our Governor for recognizing that school-aged children are not a high-risk group and commend our Connecticut representatives for upholding a democratic approach where its constituents choose a path forward.

I am asking that the school board recognize the intellectual capability of parents to assess their individual risk:benefit of wearing cloth masks and consider allowing parental choice.

Regardless if mask use ends next week or next year, the use of masks will eventually go away and some will ultimately continue to use them. When that day comes, I also hope that educators will firmly promote an environment where kids are free from mask-associated peer pressure and shaming.

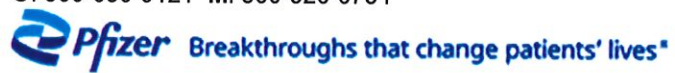
I have also attached a recent letter on this subject that members of the House of Representatives and Congress provided to the CDC for your reference as you contemplate the direction this school district will take on masking children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Brandy Campbell

4 Squire Hill
Old Lyme, CT 06371
(734) 417-6416

Brandy Morenko Campbell, DVM, DACLAM
Attending Veterinarian and Regulatory Lead
Comparative Medicine – Groton, Connecticut
O: 860-686-9121 M: 860-326-6734



Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 2:41 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: Mask Mandate~ I Support Parental Choice

For the minutes.

From: Traci Russell <traciterp@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 4:02 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>
Subject: Mask Mandate~ I Support Parental Choice

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows
Dear Lyme Old Lyme BOE,

I am a parent of two students in the LOL schools. I am writing to support parental choice when deciding to wear a mask at school. The most recent studies indicate they are doing more harm than good, and I can attest to that in my own household. My son suffers from seasonal allergies, especially in the spring. The mask exasperates the symptoms to the point I had to keep him home from school throughout the last few years, missing valuable in person learning. My other son is experiencing an increase in acne, which is embarrassing, due to wearing a mask while working out after school to stay physically fit. Things have changed since March 2020 when there were lockdowns and no contact with outside families. Now, teens/kids are gathering socially in the evenings and weekends without a mask only to return to school around those same kids with a mask on. It doesn't seem to make much sense!

My family is asking you to please consider dropping the mask mandate to finish the school year and beyond. Especially for my Senior who spent over half of his high school years with restrictions. And those kids that feel more comfortable wearing one can do so, but the others can have a choice.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Traci Russell

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: EXTERNAL: Mask Policy update

For the minutes.

-----Original Message-----

From: thomas kelo <tomykelo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 5:16 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Mask Policy update

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of region18.org. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening everyone,

I have read the mask plan update.

I disagree with the recommendation to wait until 3/7 or 3/14.

I would like to see an optional mask policy for those who want to continue to wear them as soon as possible.

In short I'm not interested in being sold the same old line "let's give it two more weeks and reevaluate". It's time to rip the bandaid off.

I disagree with following the guidance on government agencies that to your point contradict each other and all data suggests at this time symptoms are the equivalent of a mild flu.

R18 has been a leader during the Pandemic and I hope that we can take lead getting through this next stage.

Thank you for your time and dedication to our district. I certainly understand you have to balance many factors and opinions when making your decisions.

Respectfully
Thomas Kelo

Sent from my iPhone

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: EXTERNAL:

For the minutes.

From: James Quarto <jquarto2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 7:21 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of region18.org. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

Thank you all for your efforts in working to ensure our kids continue to enjoy and benefit from an outstanding school system. While it was prudent in August 2020 to amend the Region 18 (Section 5132 Dress Policy for Students) to provide for the wearing of masks in our schools, that same policy is now seemingly being used to continue the mask requirement beyond its useful means. Simply, requiring masks in schools beyond February 28 is unnecessary, without merit and frankly will become unlawful following the expiration of the Executive Order requiring masks in schools.

Allowing this to continue even one day longer has now become an affront not only to science but to common sense. Now we're talking about the return from vacation weighing on when masks will come off the faces of kids? What correlation does this have with reality? A spike occurred when kids returned to schools after vacations? We've had spikes and drops for TWO YEARS. What is next? The well-being of our kids and their ability to learn, grow and breathe should not be impaired any longer.

To the Board of Ed, hold a meeting before the regularly scheduled March 2 meeting and vote to change the amendment to list masks as OPTIONAL and to be determined by a Board Vote. Put control squarely back in the hands of the BOE where it was originally intended to stay. Once the amendment is removed or changed to OPTIONAL there will be no requirement of masks in our schools and children, parents and staff can wear masks if they so choose. Given the vaccination rates, the actual hospitalizations (which are overwhelmingly those who are unvaccinated) and the death rate any other course of action is unacceptable. It is time to face the truth, this is a flu.

I can't reference studies or recent quotes from health officials at the town, county, state or federal level as they contradict each other. What is important now is to recognize that the vote to amend the dress code in Region 18 (adopted August 12, 2020) which allowed us to operate last year was an effective tool and used well. Use this same authority as a Board to again change the Policy and restore hope in our kids, a population

you may remember which has been mostly unaffected by this virus. Strange that they now bear the brunt of the very regulations adults enacted to protect themselves.

Take action and put an end to this.

Thoughtfully,

James Quarto

As a footnote the adopted wording addressing Face coverings directly contradicts both items 1. and 2. in the paragraph that precedes it:

Restrictions on freedom of student dress may be applied whenever the mode of dress in question is:

1. unsafe either for the student or those around the student.
2. disruptive to school operations and the education process in general.

No restrictions on freedom of dress and adornment will be imposed on students which are discriminatory or which enforce particular codes of morality or religious tenets.

The administration shall establish any necessary regulations consistent with this policy in cooperation with students, parents and staff. These regulations shall be periodically reviewed, consistently enforced, and communicated to all those at home and at school on a regular basis.

Dress Code for Students

Pursuant to the above Dress and Grooming policy as instituted by the Lyme/Old Lyme Board of Education, the regulations listed below represent specific examples of inappropriate items under the Dress Code:

1. Head coverings, including but not limited to hats, bandanas, and hoods, may not be worn inside school buildings. Face coverings, as defined and advised or required by school administration to prevent the spread of disease, are considered an exception to this standard.

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 3:50 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: EXTERNAL: Mask Mandate

For the minutes

-----Original Message-----

From: Charles Andrew Monte <charlesamonte@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 8:29 PM
To: Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Mask Mandate

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of region18.org. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of The Board of Education,

In light of the mask mandate ending February 15, Please show the leadership we need to end this mandate torture on our children. It breaks my heart to see them gasping for each breath as they compete in the sports they love. It's pretty evident the passion they have for representing their school by putting up with this for two years.

These kids have given up too much of their development in many areas of social relations while masking their identities. How can we encourage the freedom of expression, or even read unspoken emotion if their faces are covered. Enough is enough!

Sent from my iPhone

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 12:58 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: EXTERNAL: An Open Letter to the Board of Education

For the minutes.

From: Kimberly Thompson <kimberly.dr.thompson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022 7:09 PM
To: Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>
Cc: Cavalieri, James <cavalierij@region18.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL: An Open Letter to the Board of Education

Dear Ian and Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing out of disappointment in the recent decision to abruptly drop the mask mandate in the schools. I think everyone is ready to be done with masks, but those of us with young children (too young for vaccines) are feeling like the Board of Ed has just thrown us under the bus. We are so near the end of this pandemic and mask wearing and everyone can't wait to get back to "normal". However, there are still vulnerable members of our community who cannot get vaccinated, whose older siblings now have a greater chance of bringing Covid home. I am afraid that the board may be unintentionally subjecting members of our community to avoidable harm.

I have been very open in sharing that my whole family ended up with Covid in December, my husband brought it home from work, 1 week after his workplace relaxed their masking requirements, he wore a well fitting KN95 mask to work at all times and ate in his car, that was not enough. We all were OK, because we had been vaccinated, except our 9 month old, she also had a mild case, but having COVID was not without harm. All of the local pediatrician's offices do not allow COVID positive patients in the office, nor do the local urgent care centers. So when the 9 month old developed yet another ear infection from Covid congestion we had no choice but to take her to the ER. Let me repeat that, we had to go to the ER for an ear infection. So not only were we contributing to congestion in the ER and had to spend hours with a very cranky baby in a busy ER, but we now have a \$900 bill FOR AN EAR INFECTION. This is not a hardship for our family, but for many families in town \$900 would absolutely be a hardship, these families might have to weigh the cost against just waiting to have an ear infection or other routine pediatric concern seen. In addition we had to cancel an ENT appointment (intended to address ear infections) and delay surgery a further 2 months...subjecting the baby to yet another ear infection.

I HOPE we are soon at a point when it is a reasonable science-based decision to remove masks in school. I find that Izzy has no issues wearing a mask, because we have talked to her about empathy and the importance of protecting those around her, she does get concerned and stressed when those around her are not wearing masks. I do not think the time to remove masks is when we're still getting daily notifications about new cases in the schools. I would have also hoped that the BOE could have taken the youngest members of our population into consideration. It is going to be hard to backpedal now that a decision has been made. But you should know that those members of the community who would have appreciated a more thoughtful and incremental approach to removing masks are disappointed and find the partisan celebrations occurring among the anti-mask, anti-science crowd distasteful. I have even seen acknowledgement that "the BOE won and science lost" among those celebrating and THAT is unconscionable for a board

charged with protecting education and science.

Things I would have suggested, as this didn't have to be an all or nothing change:

Start with masks optional at the high school (these students have all had ample chance to be vaccinated and are unlikely to have immediate family members under the age of 5)

Wait until cases are down to less than 5/week (or some reasonable threshold)

Set some threshold where masks may be required again if cases go back up

Wait until the weather is better and more time can be spent outside

Wait until pediatrician offices have protocols to avoid sending COVID+ patients to the ER (I will be reaching out to our local office to push on this as this protocol caused unnecessary harm to my family)

Wait until a few weeks after february vacation, when people will be traveling

It seems that what is done is done, and knowing that several BOE members campaigned on a platform of getting rid of masks regardless of science, I expect this falls on mostly deaf ears. Given that no BOE members have children under 5, I felt it was important for you to know that parents of very young children are tired, stressed, and just as ready as you all are to be "done with Covid", but we're not there yet because our littlest family members cannot be vaccinated, and this decision by the BOE was yet another blow to our already beaten moral.

Kim

Kim Thompson, MSPH | Cell: 860-287-2714

To connect with me as a Clinical Research Professional, please [connect with me on LinkedIn](#)

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Kim

Kim Thompson | Cell: 860-287-2714

To connect with me as a Clinical Research Professional, please [connect with me on LinkedIn](#)

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Neviaser, Ian
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 12:05 PM
To: Delaura, Jeanne
Subject: FW: EXTERNAL: Mask Choice

For the minutes.

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Jewett <spoonerk07@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 4:25 PM
To: Wilson, Steven (BOE) <wilsons@region18.org>; Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE) <deanfrazierl@region18.org>; James, Anna (BOE) <jamesa@region18.org>; Kemp, Jason (BOE) <kempj@region18.org>; Miller, Jennifer (BOE) <millerj@region18.org>; Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE) <powellstlouism@region18.org>; Shoemaker, Martha (BOE) <shoemakerm@region18.org>; Staab, Christopher (BOE) <staabc@region18.org>; Thompson, Suzanne (BOE) <thompsons@region18.org>; Neviaser, Ian <neviaseri@region18.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Mask Choice

Good afternoon Region 18 Board of Education Members

I am writing to express my hope that the district come to a decision regarding mask choice in Lyme/Old Lyme-as many of our neighboring districts are doing.

It is far beyond time to introduce mask choice for parents and students- as was supposed to happen in September before situations arose to change that.

I have a kindergartner in the district this year and two smaller children who will be in school in just a few short years here.

It is my hope to have all of my children continue to attend our wonderful schools- but if the masks continue beyond early March I will be looking into homeschooling for the time being. As a former Kindergarten teacher I can't imagine these young children learning and interacting all day long with these masks covering their faces (not to mention the constant touching of the masks.) I am sure many of you are in agreement with me that it is beyond time to remove the masks and get the children back to some semblance of normal.

Please follow the common sense actions of many of your neighboring districts and institute mask choice, effective either 2/28 or 3/1/22.

Please institute this choice and please do not ask these children to wait another week or two after February vacation. My kindergartner is already coming home from school talking excitedly about how she heard masks might be coming off at the end of the month.

It's time to free the faces and put their mental well-being front and center.

Thank you
Kim Jewett
Old Lyme Parent
860-933-3359

BOE Update: State Curricular Changes/Adoptions



Objectives

- Introduce common language and definitions
- Provide information on state mandates/recommended curriculum updates
(2022-2023)
 - a. African-American/Latino Studies (HS)
 - b. Climate Change
 - c. Native American Studies
 - d. Asian American/Pacific Islanders Studies
 - e. K-12 Health/Physical Education Draft Framework (including SEL information/Gender Studies)
 - f. American Veteran experience and military service experience
 - g. Financial Literacy
 - h. Civics and Leadership
- Answer questions



Common Vocabulary Definitions

Curriculum - A course of study including standards/content, assessment and instructional strategies.

Standards - Define the knowledge and skills students should possess (at points in their education).

Skills - Behaviors or actions selected to best suit situations or task requirements.

Framework - A structure of standards/learning outcomes that defines the content to be learned and provides guidance to develop curriculum.

State Model Curriculum - Curriculum for state mandated/recommended content that may be adopted by school districts or used as a foundation to guide local curriculum development.

SEL (*Social Emotional Learning*) - A set of skills to support the management of emotions, social skills and healthy relationships.



Region 18 Curriculum

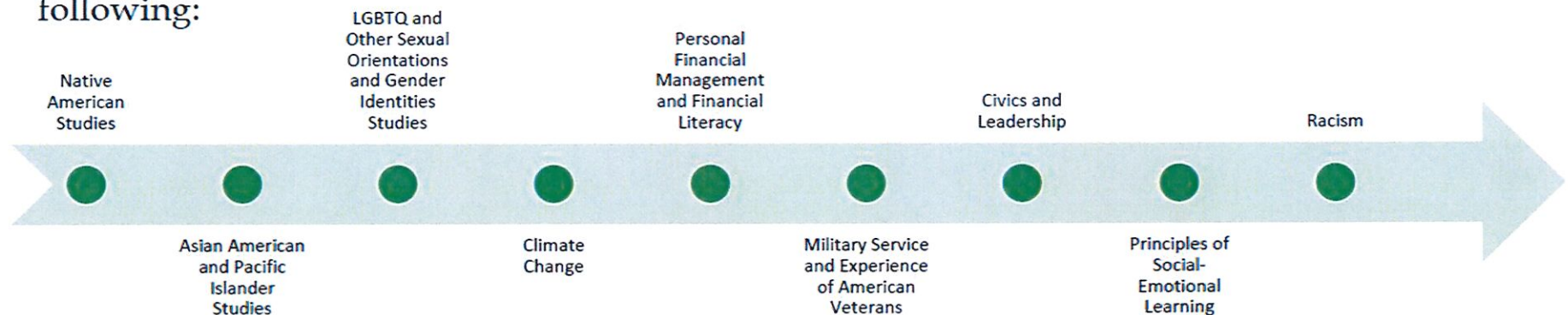
- **Follow mandated state or national standards/course of study:**
 - English/Math Connecticut Common Core (CCC)
 - Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
 - CT Social Studies Framework
- **Curriculum, text and programs** that are scientifically-researched based/and or peer reviewed and/or highly rated though research organizations (Ed Reports)
- **Course of study/programming based on community need** (eg. Computer Science 3-12; Specific Social Media education)



Model Curriculum for Grades K-8

June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-2, Section 374, effective July 1, 2021

- Directs the SDE, in collaboration with the State Education Resource Center, to develop a model curriculum by **January 1, 2023** that boards of education may use for grades kindergarten through eight.
- Among other requirements, the model curriculum must include and integrate at least the following:



Once complete, the SDE must make the model curriculum available to boards of education and post it on the SDE website.

Shipman and Goodwin LLP, 2021

2022-2023 State Mandated Curriculum Updates

African American and Latino Studies

Native American Studies (NE Woodland Tribes)

Allowance of American Sign Language as a World Language

Maintain developmentally appropriate education in:

Arts, careers, human growth/development, nutrition, first aid, CPR, disease prevention, cancer awareness/self-exams, physical/emotional/mental/consumer health, suicide prevention, substance abuse, opioid and related disorders, safe social media.



2022-2023 Non-Mandated State Curriculum Updates

Locally developed curriculum or use of the Connecticut Model Curriculum:

Danger of gang membership

Accident prevention

Computer Science

Climate change (aligned with NGSS standards)

Asian American/Pacific Islander studies

Citizenship, economics, geography, government, holocaust/genocide education

Great Famine in Ireland

Personal finance

Labor history/Economics/Capitalism/Entrepreneurship

K-8 CT Model Health Curriculum



Mandated Curriculum K-12

Additions to curricular offerings required by the CSDE



Public Act 19-12: Inclusion of Black and Latino Studies in the Public School Curriculum

- Full-year Social Studies elective, grades 11-12
- State adopted curriculum(s) and resources
- 150 curriculum/resource contributors
- Multiple community focus groups
- Inquiry-based, student centered learning opportunities with interdisciplinary opportunities
- Teacher professional development (*highly recommended*)
- 50 'early adopter' districts, including Old Saybrook and Westbrook

[Link: African American/Latino Curriculum](#)



Public Act 21-2: Native American Studies

- Include Northeastern Woodland Tribes of Connecticut

Native American Studies are taught in grades 4 and 5 (NWTC)



Non-Mandated Curriculum K-12

Suggested curricular updates by the CSDE



Bill 1202 - Amended Section 1, Public Act 19-12

- Computer Programming

Starting formally in Grade 3 (Tynker C.A.D Programming) - high school non-leveled elective courses up to AP Computer Science



Public Act 21-2: Climate Change

- Limited guidance on depth/breadth/content
- Included at some point in K-12 curriculum

Climate change is addressed grade 4, 5 and 6 and the high school Biology, Environmental, Marine Science curriculums.



Public Act 21-2: Veteran and Military Experience

- Limited guidance on depth/breadth/content
- Included at some point in K-12 curriculum

All K-12 schools in Region 18 hold annual Veterans Day programs to educate students on military experience and the American Veteran experience. This is also covered in various aspects of our social studies curriculum.



Public Act 21-2: Personal Finance/Financial Literacy

- Limited guidance on depth/breadth/content
- Included at some point in K-12 curriculum

Personal Finance is offered as a half-year elective at the high school.
Financial literacy is addressed in the Advisory Curriculum at the high school level.



Public Act 21-2: Civics and Leadership

- Limited guidance on depth/breadth/content
- Included at some point in K-12 curriculum

Instruction in Civics and leadership is woven throughout the K-8 curriculum. All 9th graders are required to take Civics in high school as part of an existing state requirement for graduation.



Public Act 21-2: K- 8 Connecticut Model Health Curriculum

- State developed and published curriculum that *may* be used for guidance/instruction/resources

Topics in the Draft Health Model Curriculum include:

- Correlation between national health standards and SEL Categories
- Nine essential Content Standards
- Skills related to healthy living
- Gender/sexuality education
- Encourages data-driven decisions based on what is to be taught, when and based on student needs/school-community norms.

Currently, 9/10 Health curriculum includes two lessons on gender studies under the HECAT standard of Health Relationships.

- · *Demonstrate an appreciation for diversity in society, and advocate for acceptance of marginalized groups.*
- · *Be able to define key terms related to sexual identity, sexuality, and gender.*

Link to [CT Draft Health Curriculum Framework](#)



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) = Skills for Everyday Success

Children need social-emotional skills to thrive both in the classroom and in life. Social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula teach children techniques to:

- Gain confidence
- Set goals
- Make better decisions
- Collaborate with others in work and play
- Navigate the world more effectively

Social-emotional learning isn't just a feel-good activity. It's not psychotherapy or an attempt to parent kids. Nor is it a substitute for core academic subjects such as math, science, or literacy.

Instead, SEL concepts provide an extra dimension to education, focusing on improving cooperation, communication, and decision-making. In a world where emotional intelligence is critical for lifelong happiness, successful careers, and healthier relationships, SEL gives students a framework for developing these skills.



Second Step Program promotes:

- **Skills for Learning** - ability to self-regulate by learning to focus attention, listen, be assertive and use self-talk.
- **Empathy** - ability to identify, understand and respond in a caring way to how someone is feeling providing the foundation for friendships, cooperation, coping and conflict resolution.
- **Emotion Management** - ability to recognize strong feelings and use calming-down steps to stay in control in order to increase coping and reduce problem behaviors. Necessary for effective communication, assertiveness, negotiation, compromise and problem solving.
- **Problem Solving** - ability to handle interpersonal conflicts effectively.

