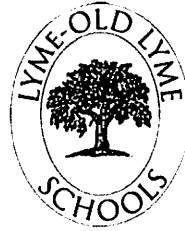


LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Regular Board of Education Meeting

August 9, 2023

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

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; Holly McCalla, Business Manager; Ron Turner, Director of Facilities & Technology; Noah Ventola, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School

Others Present: Dawn Kelley, RETA Representative; Tiffany Caouette, Assistant Executive Director of Connecticut Association of Schools

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

1. Regular Meeting and Executive Session of June 7, 2023

MOTION: Mrs. Dean-Frazier made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Kemp, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 7, 2023 as presented.

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

MOTION: Mr. Kemp made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Dean-Frazier, to approve the minutes of Executive Session of June 7, 2023 as presented.

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

49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371

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III. Visitors

1. Connecticut Association of Schools Recognition of LOLMS

Tiffany Caouette, Assistant Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Schools, presented a banner in recognition of the Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School being named the Connecticut Middle School of the Year for 2022-2023. Mark Ambruso, Principal, and Noah Ventola, Assistant Principal, were present to receive the award.

Ms. Caouette explained the criteria that they use when scoring applications for this award:

Evidence of a safe and healthy school environment.

Evidence that the school involves parents and the community in supporting student learning and healthy development.

Student services that go beyond those that are part of a typical school, i.e., clubs, activities, support services, and extra help for those who need it.

Evidence that the school's educational programs are consistently being reviewed and improved.

A researched-based curriculum with appropriate assessment grounded in standards.

Instructional methods and strategies designed to prepare students to meet high standards.

Teaming practices that drive instruction.

Personalization of the school environment.

Collaborative leadership and professional learning communities.

Mr. Ambruso thanked the Board of Education for their continuing support and Noah Ventola for his efforts in submitting the lengthy application.

2. Report from Student Representatives

This report will resume at the September Board of Ed meeting.

3. 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 correspondence is 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.*

Sender	Date	Subject
Mona Colwell	June 30, 2023	Keeping pornography and highly sexualized content out of Region 18 <i>(Board of Ed's personal email addresses redacted from email)</i>

V. Administrative Reports

1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviasser reviewed the August personnel report which reflected the vacancies yet to be filled and numerous appointments and resignations which occur at this time of year.

The Board discussed the numerous resignations occurring during the summer months this year and whether initiatives should be in place for talent retention. Mr. Neviasser reviewed the current practice of exit interviews and the various reasons why some staff members have left the district.

As school is not in session, there is no enrollment report this month. Mr. Neviasser did report that they are at or above the enrollment projections. Mr. Neviasser also reported that starting with the 2024-2025 school year, per the SDE, students must be 5 years old by September 1 for kindergarten enrollment (or 4 years old by September 1 for preschool). As the district does not have room for a two-year preschool experience, this change will affect those preschool students who do not meet the age criterion. For the upcoming school year, attendance lines were adjusted slightly (further north) due to kindergarten enrollments.

Mr. Neviasser updated the Board on summer projects and activities.

- Successful extended school year program with attendance of almost 100 students.
- Online summer school program at LOLHS with three or four regular attendees.
- Building Committee meeting on August 21 will include the architects and engineers presenting some of their ideas since their review of the elementary and middle school facilities.
- Board retreat scheduled for August 17 with much of the discussion centering on goals.
- High School stage lighting complete (budgeted in fiscal year 22-23; job delayed by supply chain issues).
- High School commons floor refinished.
- High School two main pumps replaced in the chiller.
- Irrigation systems installed in High School softball and baseball fields.
- Center School exterior paint refresh and touchup.
- Center School dry sprinkler system leaks identified and repaired.
- Middle School sound system replacement in process.
- WIFI updated district-wide (received E-Rate reimbursement of 50% of project for \$73,497.50).
- High School technical education lab was upgraded with new computers and monitors to support the new software demands.
- Middle School technical education lab was upgraded with the former high school computers.
- Main campus water system repairs were partially completed with the installation of interior pump and components for tanker water intake. Main tank repairs will be completed in June of 2024.
- Mile Creek, Middle School, and High School gym floors received annual refinish and recoat.
- Lyme School exterior brickwork on gym stairs was removed and replaced.
- Bid package completed and set to be released for the High School bleacher project.
- Ongoing oil spill response coordination.

- Ongoing construction project coordination.
- All ceiling tiles taken down in four schools in order to help map mechanical, electrical and plumbing needs for PreK-8 building project.

2. Business Manager’s Report

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Executive Budget Summary as of July 31, 2023. As there is only one month of spending, there were no fluctuations to note. Trending is the same year over year.

	2023-2024 Received YTD
Town of Old Lyme	\$860,951
Town of Lyme	\$198,193

Ms. Miller inquired why almost half of the budgeted funds for administrative services was already spent. Mrs. McCalla will research and get back to Ms. Miller. Mrs. McCalla believes it was probably the timing of invoices.

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Contingency Maintenance Report. There has been \$32,780 in contingency spending through July 31, 2023:

- \$5,400 between the three campus schools to remove, demolish and dispose of pre-cast tank.
 - \$11,880 at Lyme School to assess and replace gasket on the boiler.
 - \$15,500 at Lyme School to demo and reconstruct the exterior elevator stairway.
- Balance now stands at \$167,220

VI. Educational Presentation

There was no educational presentation scheduled this month.

VII. Chairman & Committee Reports:

- Facilities.* No report.
- Finance.* No report.
- Communications.* Mrs. Thompson reported that the committee discussed the need to change the distribution of the *Focus on Education* newsletter due to advertising changes at *The Day*. Currently, *The Day* includes the newsletter with the *Lyme Times* which is changing to a more regional publication. The committee discussed the expense of mailing the newsletter vs. other means of electronic distribution.
- Policy.* Mr. Kemp reported that the committee and the superintendent are currently working on a policy that would provide guidance on student surveys due to recent parental concerns over a voluntary student survey that was given by the Lymes’ Youth Service Bureau at the LOLHS field day.
- LEARN.* No report.
- LOL Prevention Coalition.* Mrs. Shoemaker reported that Allison Behnke, Prevention Coordinator, is resigning from the Lymes’ Youth Service Bureau.
- PreK-8 Building Committee.* No report.

The Board discussed best ways to publicize Facilities Committee meetings in light of a complaint that a recent meeting did not appear on the district website calendar.

VIII. New Business

1. ViewSonic Digital Display Board Purchase

Ron Turner, Director of Facilities and Technology, presented the following background information on this agenda item: the acquisition of these 36 display boards is the final phase of the school district's multi-year technology plan to replace the remaining Smartboards and projectors. Once this order is received and deployed, all of the district classrooms will be operating with the same technology.

The ViewSonic digital display boards are being purchased using the pre-bid PEPPM state cooperative contract pricing #528897-289.

This purchase value is included in the anticipated range for the approved FY 23/24 budget.

MOTION: Mr. Staab made a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Powell St. Louis, to award CBS a contract for the supply of 36 ViewSonic display boards for \$86,288.00.

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

2. Tuition Student Requests at LOLHS

Mr. Neviasser reviewed a family's request for their two children to attend LOLHS (10th and 12th grade) in the fall. He recommended approval of this request.

MOTION: Ms. Miller made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. James, to approve the tuition student requests as presented.

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

Mrs. Shoemaker asked for confirmation that the three students from China will be attending LOLHS through the ACES International Program in the fall. Mr. Neviasser reported that the students will be attending and that they have host families for all of the students.

IX. Old Business

Ms. Miller reported on the formation of the Solid Waste and Recycling Committee whose goal is to build upon the work started by the Sustainability Committee. One of this committee's initiatives is to establish a green team "mini committee" in each school and which will be led by students to promote the Trex Challenge, increase recycling in schools, etc. The green team concept is to get the students involved and energized. Ms. Miller voiced hope that the Board of Ed would support this and include in their goal setting at their retreat on August 17.

X. Executive Session

There was no need for an executive session.

XI. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m. upon a motion by Mr. Staab and a second by Ms. Miller.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Thompson, Secretary

Summary of Communication to Board of Education

August 9, 2023

Sender	Date	Subject
Mona Colwell	June 30, 2023	Keeping pornography and highly sexualized content out of Region 18 <i>(Board of Ed's personal email addresses redacted from email)</i>

Delaura, Jeanne

From: Mona Colwell <monacolwell@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 30, 2023 10:18 AM
To: Delaura, Jeanne; Neviaser, Ian; Wilson, Steven (BOE); [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Dean-Frazier, Laura (BOE); [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Miller, Jennifer (BOE); Staab, Christopher (BOE); Kemp, Jason (BOE); Shoemaker, Martha (BOE); Suzanne Thompson; [REDACTED]
Powell-St Louis, Mary (BOE); Delaura, Jeanne
Cc: Steve Spooner
Subject: Keeping pornography and highly sexualized content out of Region 18

Hello BOE and Region 18,

This is a good piece on the books in question in the youth section of the public library. My only concern about the article is that political parties are being positioned on opposing sides. This is not a partisan issue. Parents, not the state, are in charge of their own children and fund the public school districts. I am not sure why people across the nation are forgetting that schools are supposed to be about education, not sexualization.

<https://connecticutcentral.com/ct-dems-defend-access-to-two-sex-ed-books-challenged-at-old-lyme-library-want-to-see-what-they-are-defending/>

Copies of both letters sent to the library are available where we politely asked the library to reconsider the highly sexualized marketing of the entire youth section. I believe people in our town have been duped into thinking that we are discussing normal topics. These books are far from normal and represent things I've never known as an adult and would never, ever want a child to witness. It's unfortunate that people signed a petition to "stop book banning" (which was never mentioned by anyone) perhaps without fully researching the contents of the letters and these two books that the library itself identified as needing age appropriate review.

When I came to the last Region 18 Board meeting to discuss a policy to prevent sexualized content and pornography in our schools, I never discussed "banning" books. No one is talking about removing anything that we as a society can agree is educational and will enhance the life of children both during and beyond k-12. I look forward to seeing the policy that is in place or that our BOE creates to protect our children from sexualized content and pornography in the Region 18 school district.

Thank you,

Mona Colwell
401-286-2650
Sent from my iPhone