

LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Policy and Communications Committee Meeting September 12, 2023

Committee Members Present: Jason Kemp, Policy Committee Chair; Laura Dean-Frazier; Anna James; Mary Powell St. Louis; Martha Shoemaker; Steven Wilson

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Bridget Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Communications Update

Bridget Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing, reported on the distribution of the *Focus on Education* newsletter. After looking at various options, the district is going to remain having *The Day* distribute the newsletter with their weekly local paper as long as this option is available as mailing the newsletter was cost prohibitive. The layout of the newsletter will be done by Lisa Rennison, a local graphic designer. Mrs. Shoemaker recommended that Mrs. Compagno also vet the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities who also could assist with the production of the newsletter with the added bonus of providing municipal discounts.

Bridget Compagno gave an update on the fall edition of the *Focus on Education* newsletter. They are making some minor tweaks with the layout and design. The stories in this edition include the teacher and employee of the year; update on the PreK-8 Building Project; building improvements that occurred over the summer months; the outstanding SAT scores; and a grant that allowed Abby Pinney, Kindergarten Teacher at Mile Creek School, to travel to Ireland and Scotland over the summer.

Mrs. Compagno reported that the staff profiles will start again soon and occur about every three weeks, and videos of students and staff will be added to the district's social media.

***Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools
49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371
T: 860-434-7238 F: 860-434-9959 E: neviaseri@region18.org www.region18.org***

Mr. Neviasser reported that there has been an increase in “Lyme-Old Lyme” social media sites. Most of these sites appear to be run by parents and/or students. Unfortunately, some are being used to spread inappropriate content. He noted that the district only sanctions one Instagram account, one Facebook account, and seven YouTube channels (one per building plus athletics and WLYM.)

Policy Update

Policy 6145.1 Extracurricular Activities

Mr. Neviasser reviewed recommended changes to this policy regarding students who have violated policies or regulations for student conduct and the suspension from participation in events, performances, activities, contests and competitions for 14 calendar days. The recommended change involves allowing these students to continue to attend and participate in tryouts, practices and meetings during this period of suspension (suspended from competitive activities).

The committee discussed these changes and made one recommendation to change the suspension period from participation in extracurriculars from 45 to 30 days for a second violation.

Policy 5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion/Removal

Mr. Neviasser brought this policy before the committee based on feedback from the Board of Ed at their September 6 Board meeting. He reported that the policy mirrors the law so they were very limited in what could be changed. Mr. Neviasser did note that many school districts are using in-school suspension vs. out of school suspension. There were no changes recommended to this policy.

Policy 6171 Special Education

Mr. Neviasser reviewed new language to this policy based on Public Act #23-137 *An Act Concerning Resources and Support for Persons with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability*. The new language addresses students’ eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through the end of the school year during which the student turns 22.

Policy on Participation of Third-Party Entities in School Events

Due to parental concerns over a voluntary student survey that was given by the Lymes’ Youth Service Bureau at the LOLHS field day last spring, the Board of Education, at their meeting on June 7, recommended that the Policy Committee draft a policy that would provide guidance on student surveys and their review by district administration prior to being given to students. This was discussed at the Policy Committee’s meeting on June 13; Mr. Neviasser gathered input from that meeting and drafted a policy which he presented to the committee for review.

The committee reviewed and asked that the following bullet be added to the policy: *All approved third party entities will provide a description of their program and/or presentation to the Lyme-Old Lyme Schools (“the District”) prior to the third-party’s scheduled participation.*

At their meeting of the Board of Education on September 6, Mr. Neviasser was asked to wordsmith the goals that the administration drafted for the 2023-2024 school year; more specifically, the community

goal so that it is broader in nature and includes communicating important district issues and not just the progress of the four-school construction project.

The committee discussed the importance of collaborating and maintaining growing relationships with the community, being more transparent and enhancing communication.

Original Wording of Communication Goal: Provide regular updates to the community on the progress of the four-school construction project via a variety of different methods.

New Wording of Communication Goal: Collaborate with the community via regular updates in an effort to maintain and enhance school-community relationships.

There was consensus to approve the new wording of the communication goal.

The committee discussed correspondence that is sent to the Board that contains student identifiable information as had recently occurred. Based on advice from legal counsel, Mr. Neviasser advised that going forward they would not include these documents in their entirety as part of the Board of Ed minutes but would publish a summary of the letter.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.