

LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Policy and Communications Committee Meeting

February 6, 2024

Committee Members Present: Anna James, Policy Committee Chair; Laura Dean-Frazier, Communications Committee Chair; Jason Kemp; Gavin Lodge

Administration Present: Ian Neviasser, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Susan Fogliano, Board of Education member; Bridget Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing (remote)

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

Communications Update

Mrs. Compagno reported that the next edition of the *Focus on Education* newsletter will be out next Thursday. The budget issue will be published the first week of April in time for the May referendum. Mrs. Compagno shared some of the ways she publicizes the budget referendum including articles in *LymeLine* and the *Connecticut Examiner* and social media posts reminding the community members to vote. Signs are also placed in key areas of town on the morning of the vote, and a Budget Book with key information is published annually. Suggestions were shared on best ways to communicate the referendum such as involving the PTOs/PAB, brochures at sporting events, etc.

Mrs. Compagno reported that she and a former student of LOLHS are working on a new video showcasing the district with the main focus on the high school and the goal to have it completed by the end of the school year. It will replace a video currently on the district's website which is a bit dated. She is seeking to interview former students who have been out of the district for a while to gather input on how their education at Lyme-Old Lyme played a role in their success.

Mrs. Compagno reported on the possibility of scheduling an open house at the high school for prospective students sometime in the spring.

Susan Fogliano, Board of Ed member, presented a draft resolution related to the recent Right to Read legislation. In summary, the proposed resolution asks that the curriculum purchase requirements be removed, while putting forth justification for same. Essentially, the district is not asking for a waiver, but rather asking the legislature to fix the core problem.

Mr. Neviasser gave some background on the Right to Read legislation and the outreach from him and Board members to local legislators on their opposition to this unfunded state mandate. He also reported on discussion held at a superintendents' meeting with representatives from the State Department of Education on this matter. Mr. Neviasser voiced his concern over a formal resolution from the Board as it would draw attention to the district which might have negative effects.

The committee discussed this issue at length. Subject areas included how other districts are handling this mandate, consequences should it not be followed, and getting taxpayers and members of the local political parties to voice their concerns.

There was consensus of the committee to not move forward with the proposed resolution.

Policy Update

Mr. Neviasser presented a School Climate Policy developed by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. The policy was developed to provide districts guidance on recent revisions to Connecticut's school climate law, Public Act 23-167. In accordance with this act, for the school year commencing July 1, 2025, school districts must adopt and implement the School Climate Policy.

The committee reviewed the policy and gave input. One area of concern voiced was the definition of the word "bullying." Mr. Neviasser explained that there was no action necessary at this point in time as the policy did not have to be adopted until July 1, 2025.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.