LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience ***in a Public School Setting***

Special Board of Education Meeting
November 6, 2024

Board Present: Jason Kemp, Chair; Anna James, Vice Chair; Christopher Staab, Treasurer; Martha Shoemaker, Secretary; Laura Dean-Frazier; Susan Fogliano; Gavin Lodge; Alexander Lowry

Absent by Previous Arrangement: Scott Brown

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum; Melissa Dougherty, Director of Special Services; Kelly Enoch, Principal of Mile Creek School; Allison Hine, Principal of Lyme Consolidated School; Sean Kennedy, Assistant 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: six community members from Lyme-Old Lyme

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jason Kemp at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to hold a budget workshop to present and discuss budget needs and drivers with the boards of finance and selectmen from both towns, school administrators, and parent leadership. Mr. Neviaser gave a PowerPoint presentation which detailed the purposes of the workshop and some of the notable influences on the budget that are likely to increase or decrease expenditures. A summary of this presentation is attached to these minutes for informational purposes.

At the conclusion of the presentation, input was gathered from the participants. The following is a summary of the comments and observations made on the 2025-2026 budget planning which could be major influences on the bottom line:

- Percent of budget that is discretionary.
- Playgrounds
- Trends in special education spending.
- Funding for food programs. Does providing lunches increase student performance?
- Outdoor instructional spaces / related professional development.
- Coordination between schools re: furniture – buy what we need vs. what we want.
- Purchasing consortiums for school-related supplies.

- IT expenses.
- After school offerings including partnerships with community organizations.
- Bussing expenses and creative solutions to student transportation.
- Contracts that are competitive – high quality staff.
- Waste disposal costs and composting.
- Maintaining current programming (class sizes, curriculum, etc.).
- How can we influence/reduce unfunded mandates.
- Escalating costs such as food, fuel, bus contract.
- Quality of contractors vs. the cost.
- Options for smaller transportation vehicles. Would that reduce costs? Could it help with transportation of sports teams?
- Escalating maintenance costs / unforeseen needs.
- Increase in costs for consumable supplies and licensing.
- Decrease in federal or state funding.
- Decrease in federal or state grant opportunities.
- Increase in needs for mental health support.
- Increase in afterschool programming for students.
- Increase in CTE pathways, career exploration.
- How will decline in high school population impact sports teams, opportunities for students? Cost implications.
- IT costs 1:1 device allocation – do these costs increase?
- Infrastructure costs related to non-binary students/staff.
- Unanticipated costs of building project…relocating students.
- Increase in costs for number of students in magnet/charter schools.
- Special education costs. Outplacements.
- High school enrollment shift – are courses at risk due to lower enrollment?
- Cost sharing with other local districts.
- Bus resolutions to the long bus rides / driver shortage.
- Special education PK-12 and why are costs increasing.
- How are special education increases budgeted?
- PK transportation accessibility for out of district daycares.

There being no other comments or questions, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Staab and a seconded by Mrs. Shoemaker.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Shoemaker, Secretary

2025-26 Budget Workshop

NOVEMBER 6, 2024

Purposes of Session

- To present information about prime drivers that will influence the 2025-26 budget.
- To gather and share input from school and community leaders.

Process

- Introductions
- Presentation of budget drivers
- Break out group(s) to gather questions, observations, and comments
- Reporting out on questions, observations, and comments.

Enrollment

Level	2022	2023	2024	2025 Projected (Roll-ups)
Elementary	609	627	639	631 (617*)
Middle	270	271	271	286 (280)
High	409	395	368	346 (357)
TOTAL	1288	1293	1278	1263 (1254)

- Change in K/ PK4 start date may impact enrollment/ staffing.
- LOLHS will not have a single grade over 100 kids. This drop may impact staffing.
- Over the next five years enrollment is projected to rise to 1361.

Special Education

Year	# of K-12 Students	% of Population
2019	163	13.2
2020	162	13.5
2021	159	12.2
2022	161	13.2
2023	173	14.3
2024	180	14.8

- Increase in level of services needed to support IEP implementation
- Outplacement uncertainty
- Tuition for special education students at magnet schools
- Impact of legislation (e.g., requirement to educate students beyond the age of 22, requests for IEE's, burden of proof, mandated training)
- Increasing costs

Financial Considerations

- Debt service
- Contractual obligations
- Health insurance rates
- Energy Costs
- State funding

Long Term Financial Considerations

- Long term projects/ debt
- Five Year Facilities Plan
- Undesignated fund balance to support larger projects (storage/ parking/ paving)
- Unfunded mandates

Break Out Group Task

- Create equal groups with representation from the following constituencies: parents, towns, BOE, and administration
- Facilitator will record questions, comments, observations—do not judge or answer. (15 minutes)
- Report out on questions, comments, and observations.

Budget presentations will incorporate the input received today.

