LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

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

District Budget Hearing
April 7, 2025

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

Absent by Previous Arrangement: Alexander Lowry

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum; Allison Hine, Principal of Lyme Consolidated School; Jeanne Manfredi, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School; Holly McCalla, Business Manager; Ronald Turner, Director of Facilities and Technology; Noah Ventola, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; James Wygonik; Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School

Others Present: four community members from LOL

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Jason Kemp. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Christopher Staab read the call of the meeting as follows:
Notice is hereby given that the Regional School Board for Regional School District No. 18 for the Towns of Lyme and Old Lyme will hold a public hearing on the budget request for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 at Regional School District No. 18, Board of Education Conference Room at Center School, 49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2025. All interested parties are invited to attend and present their comments or questions.

Mr. Neviaser presented a summary of the 2025-2026 proposed budget which is attached to these minutes for informational purposes. The proposed budget reflects a 7.39% increase over the 2024-2025 budget for a total budget of $39,650,803.

The meeting was opened up for questions and comments of which there were none.

MOTION: Mrs. Shoemaker made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. James, that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, the vote on the budget for fiscal year July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 will be held on the day following the annual budget meeting in accordance with the procedures set forth in section 7-7 of the Statutes. The District Budget Meeting will be held on May 5, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room at Center School; the referendum will be held on May 6, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School in Old Lyme and the Town Hall in Lyme.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m. upon a motion by Mrs. Fogliano and a second by Mrs. Dean-Frazier.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Shoemaker, Secretary

2025-2026 Budget Proposal

Goals to be Served by the Budget

To support the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan by:

- Preserving and building upon the high standards of education in LOL while remaining fiscally responsible to our communities.
- Supporting the ongoing renewal of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and staff development activities in response to the expectations of state and national standards.
- Continuing to plan and provide technology infrastructure and applications that are consistent with highly effective and efficient programming and operational standards.
- Maintaining high facility standards for all district buildings and grounds.
- Maintaining a dynamic and responsive approach to programming needs and mandates in special education.
- Maintaining both compliance and reasonability in response to state and federal mandates.

What is a budget?

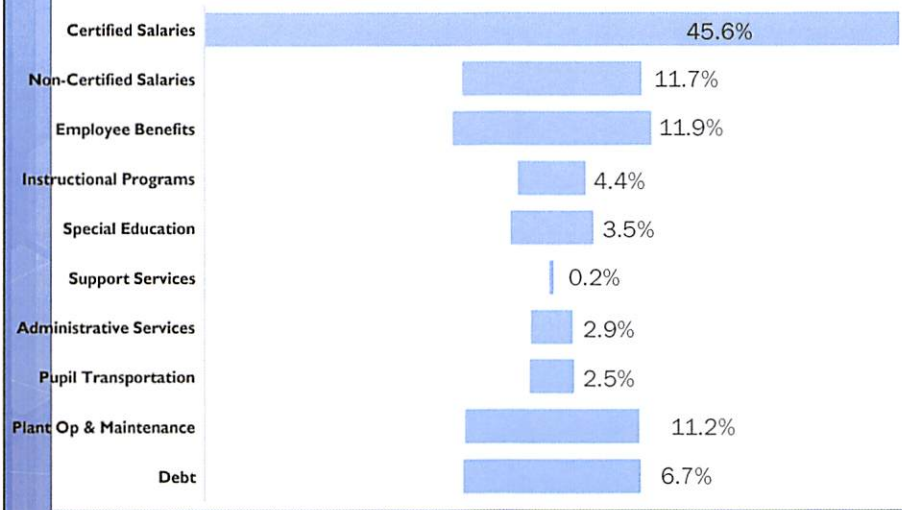
- **Sec. 10-222. Appropriations and budget.** Each local board of education shall prepare an itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance of public schools for the ensuing year and shall submit such estimate to the board of finance in each town or city having a board of finance, to the board of selectmen in each town having no board of finance or otherwise to the authority making appropriations for the school district, not later than two months preceding the annual meeting at which appropriations are to be made.
- **A BUDGET IS NOT ONLY A PLAN, IT IS A STATEMENT OF VALUES AND PRIORITIES**

Overall Budget Summary

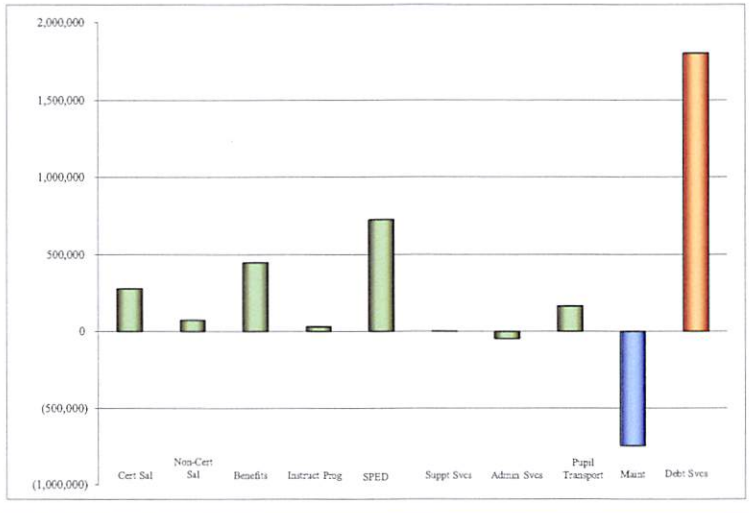
	23-24 Actuals	24-25 Budget	25-26 Budget	$ Increase or (Decrease)	% Inc or (Dec) by Line Item
Certified Salaries	16,227,328	16,349,160	16,627,814	278,654	1.70%
Non-certified Salaries	3,869,083	4,188,967	4,263,615	74,648	1.78%
Employee Benefits	3,972,368	4,274,244	4,722,729	448,485	10.49%
Instructional Programs	1,507,946	1,586,694	1,616,322	29,628	1.87%
Special Education	806,398	1,238,752	1,965,473	726,721	58.67%
Support Services	66,929	78,298	78,360	62	0.08%
Administrative Services	1,018,558	1,026,921	979,148	(47,773)	(4.65)%
Pupil Transportation	661,768	883,269	1,047,503	164,234	18.59%
Plant Op & Maintenance	4,110,690	4,883,574	4,136,551	(747,023)	(15.30)%
OPERATING BUDGET	32,241,068	34,509,879	35,437,515	927,636	2.69%
Debt Service	3,229,313	2,411,002	4,213,288	1,802,286	74.75%
TOTAL BUDGET	$35,470,381	$36,920,881	$39,650,803	$2,729,922	7.39%

2025-2026 Proposed Budget

$39,650,803 7.39% increase



2025-2026 Budget Drivers (Increase/Decrease)



Historical Perspective

2020-2021	$34,711,631	
2021-2022	$34,874,548	+0.47
2022-2023	$34,830,464	-0.13
2023-2024	$35,844,345	2.91
2024-2025	$36,920,881	3.00
2025-2026	$39,650,803	7.39

2020-2021	$34,711,631
2025-2026	$39,650,803
	+$4,939,172

- That is an average annual increase over five years of $987,834 or **2.73%** per year.
- During that same time period the average annual operating budget increase has only been **1.84%** per year.

Comparisons

- Clinton 6.10%
- Old Saybrook 4.49%
- Guilford 5.50%
- Madison 2.46%
- Waterford 6.51%
- Westbrook 3.45%
- East Lyme 6.99%

Historical Impact of School Renovations (increased debt service)

Year	Total Budget Increase
2000-2001	10.91%
2002-2003	9.49%
2003-2004	8.20%
2011-2012	4.92%
2025-2026	10.53% (predicted)

The operations/program budget reflects:

- Continued adherence to class size guidelines
- Addition/ reduction of staff to account for enrollment shifts
- Continuance of existing academic and extracurricular activities
- Adjustments for anticipated changes in the special education population
- Adequate funding for maintenance and repair of buildings and grounds
- Scheduled replacement of technology and equipment
- Program improvements that are consistent with high academic and operational standards

Facilities Proposed Projects

Capital Projects	2025 – 2026
High School Auditorium Sound System	$150,000
Middle School Auditorium Lighting	$150,000
Replace Pre-K Playground Piece	$46,000
Pave Middle School Front Sidewalk	$13,200
Project Totals	$359,200



What's next?

- Opportunity for public comment
- Board discussion and action on the proposed budget