LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience *in a Public School Setting*

Regular Board of Education Meeting
December 3, 2025

Board Present: Jason Kemp, Chair; Anna James, Vice Chair; Susan Fogliano, Treasurer, Gavin Lodge, Secretary; Xander Lowry; Scott Brown; Sheryl Shyloski; and Michael Hansen

Absent by Previous Arrangement: Cynthia McCollum

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools; Mark Ambruso, Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School; Thomas Bushnell, Assistant Principal of Lyme-Old Lyme High School; Michelle Dean, Director of Curriculum; Melissa Dougherty, Director of Special Services; Allison Hine, Principal of Lyme Consolidated School; Kelly Enoch, Principal of Mile Creek 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: Isabella Presti, High School Student Representative and 8 community members from LOL

I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m. by Superintendent, Ian Neviaser. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Election of Board Officers
MOTION: Mrs. James made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lowry nominating Jason Kemp to continue as Board Chair.

VOTE: The Board voted unanimously to elect Jason Kemp as Board Chair.

MOTION: Mrs. Fogliano made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lodge nominating Anna James to

continue as Vice Chair.

VOTE: The Board voted unanimously to elect Anna James as Vice Chair.

MOTION: Mr. Lowry made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. James nominating Gavin Lodge as Secretary.

VOTE: The Board voted unanimously to elect Gavin Lodge as Secretary.

MOTION: Mr. Lodge made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lowry nominating Susan Fogliano as Treasurer.

VOTE: The Board voted unanimously to elect Susan Fogliano as Treasurer.

III. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting and Special Meeting of November 5, 2025
MOTION: Mr. Lodge made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lowry to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting and Special Meeting of November 5, 2025 as presented.

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

IV. Visitors
1. Report from Student Representatives
Isabella Presti reported on the following activities taking place at the schools:
At LOLHS: The Student Council recently hosted a successful blood drive with the American Red Cross—thank you to everyone who donated! Before break, we wrapped up our volleyball season with an exciting after-school tournament, and the high school would also like to welcome our new Board of Education members. Looking ahead, our Holiday Toy Drive runs from December 1–12, with a festive wreath on display in the Commons. PJ Day for the Kids is on December 12, Holiday Spirit Week runs from December 15–23, and we'll end the festivities with our Holiday Assembly on the 23rd. The library has launched a new book club meeting Wednesdays at 7:25 a.m. Our Green Team kicked off a composting campaign and collected 575 pounds of food during the annual Thanksgiving Drive to help local families. For seniors, college applications are officially in—now we wait! Finally, we'll enjoy the Holiday Band Concert on December 11, the Choral Concert on December 17, and wrap up the season with our Winter Carnival on the 17th.

At LOLMS: November was a busy month at the middle school. Our 8th graders met with Mr. Kendrick Moore, a motivational and personal coach, who focused on the theme *"Words Matter."* This was the first session in a two-part series centered on empathy, bias, and the impact our words have on others. Our 6th graders continued with our new program, Middle School 101, which supports the development of executive functioning skills. Recent lessons included email etiquette, following directions, effectively using a planner or agenda, and strategies for handling missing work. Our PTO also sponsored the annual Adult Dodgeball Tournament, bringing together members from all five school communities for a fun and

energetic evening. On the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving, we held our parent-teacher conferences, providing families with the opportunity to connect and communicate with all of our teachers. The Thanksgiving break offered a much-needed rest as we enter the final three weeks leading up to winter recess.

Elementary: In November both elementary schools honored veterans with an assembly on Veterans Day. Students received report cards and parent-teacher conferences were held. Our PTOs sponsored successful Book fairs at both schools and we are looking forward to participating in the state-wide PJ Day on December 12 in order to raise money for children fighting cancer at CT Children's Hospital. At Mile Creek, the first edition of the Wildcat Times for the school year was published. Students in grade 3 participated in an onsite program with Bushy Hill to learn more about the indigenous people of CT. At Lyme Consolidated, our Student Leaders collected four full bins of non-perishable food items that we delivered to the Shoreline Food Pantry before Thanksgiving and we are gearing up for a big kindness initiative that the Student Leaders will roll out at our Town Meeting this Friday.

In the Preschool Program: November was a busy month at the preschool. We celebrated Veterans Day with a walking trip to the Town Hall, made "thankful turkeys" with our middle school buddies, and welcomed families for our annual Stone Soup celebration. In December, we will be learning about family, our five senses, and gingerbread. Later this month, we look forward to welcoming families back later this month for a celebration of family. We are also excited to participate in PJ Day for the Kids, a fundraiser for Connecticut Children's Cancer Hospital, and to have the high school choir perform at Center School on December 22. This month we will focus on the letters J, K, and L; the AABB pattern; and numbers 1–7. Our artist of the month is Helen Frankenthaler, our color is green, and our shape is the rectangle.

2. Public Comment

No public comments.

V. Correspondence

Mr. Kemp 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
Michele Grethel & homeowners on Library Lane	November 24, 2025	Wetland Invasive Species Management

VI. Administrative Reports

1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviaser reviewed the December personnel report which reflected the following:

Vacancies

Instructional Assistants	PreK, Elementary, Middle and High School levels
Kindergarten Teacher (long-term Substitute)	Mile Creek School
Second Grade Teacher (long-term Substitute)	Lyme Consolidated School
Custodian	Center School

Appointments			
Name	**Position**	**Location**	**Effective Date**
James Catala	Custodian	Mile Creek School	December 1, 2025

Separations		
Name	**Position**	**Location**
Marc Muller	Custodian	Center School
Daniel Atkinson	Instructional Assistant	Transition Program

Mr. Neviaser reviewed the December enrollment report which reflected a total of 1,252 students in-house; a decrease of 2 students from this time last month. Tuition students remain the same at 17 students.

Mr. Neviaser gave an update on the progress towards the district goals.

Curriculum
Responsibly leverage artificial intelligence (AI) tools to enhance teaching, learning, and operational efficiency while fostering critical thinking, creativity, and ethical awareness.
Solicited staff feedback on student and staff AI documents. Responded to questions raised. Ian attended CABE/CAPSS AI presentation.

Human Resources
In alignment with state guidelines, refine and calibrate use of the Region 18 Educator Support Plan with the new single point rubric and gather feedback on the process to inform revisions for future years.
Continue to use the new rubric for goals, observations, and feedback

Community
Streamline effective communication by expanding the use of ParentSquare's advanced features.
Working on other uses including permission slips and payment options

Facilities
As construction continues, amend and adapt strategies to minimize classroom disruption, adhere to the approved budget and design, and maintain existing facilities via the five-year plan.
Working toward substantial completion of HVAC projects

Planning move to new MCS addition in January. New safety directional signs installed at MCS parking lot.

Sustainability
Implement and maintain a composting program at each school to reduce food waste while educating students on sustainable practices.
All schools are composting lunch food scraps

Board of Education
Through professional development, mentorship, and training, transition new members into their roles and share processes and procedures that support the high standards and expectations of Lyme-Old Lyme.
Four members attended CABE/CAPSS Convention

Mr. Neviaser gave a reminder of the 2026-2027 Budget Process Timeline. Four meetings are scheduled for the month of January.

2. Business Manager's Report
Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Executive Budget Summary as of November 30, 2025. Fluctuations of note: Special Education costs are currently at 120.6% of the budget due to unexpected student needs, exceeding last year's expenditures. The district will closely monitor the overall impact on the operating budget and consider potential spending restrictions.

The variance in Plant Operation & Maintenance is due to the amount and timing of capital project work and payment versus last year.

	2025-2026 Received YTD
Town of Old Lyme	$11,921,011
Town of Lyme	$2,633,179

Mrs. McCalla reviewed the Contingency Maintenance Report. $11,402 was spent this month. This amount is an estimate to replace the backflow preventer in Center School. The remaining balance is $146,922.

VII. Educational Presentation
1. Budget Presentation – Holly McCalla and Melissa Dougherty
Holly McCalla, Business Manager, and Melissa Dougherty, Director of Special Services, provided a presentation on budgeting, including components specific to special education. The full presentation is attached for informational purposes only.

VIII. Chairman & Committee Reports:
- *a. Facilities*. No report.
- *b. Finance*. No report.
- *c. Communications*. Mr. Lodge announced that the newsletter will now be produced three times a year and redesigned into a trifold format with updated colors. The new design will reduce

costs. The team is also exploring expanded opportunities on social media. The redesigned newsletter is scheduled to launch in three weeks.

d. *Policy*. Policy 5141.21 will be reviewed under New Business

e. *LEARN*. No Report

f. *LOL Prevention Coalition*. No Report

g. *PreK-8 Building Committee*. Presented by Mrs. Fogliano. At Mile Creek School, we are on target to turn over the addition for occupancy during the holiday break. The classroom doors will be hung there next week. The Superintendent, Kelly Enoch, Ron Turner and Brian Dow from the school district met with the construction foreman at the MCS to discuss completion of three classrooms in the existing building on December 17-18, and moving on to other parts of the building in phases to complete HVAC work there. So there may be some shuffling of existing classrooms over the break as well. Site work has been completed to the point where we can go back to the Old Lyme Land Use office to get sign off from the original zoning permit. Old Lyme Fire Marshall David Roberge has asked for some additional signage at MCS to allow emergency crews easy access to shut off points should the need arise. At the other three schools, Center School will see additional work on the flooring in the vestibule this weekend, and many of the ceiling tile grids that were left open are now being installed. The hardwood floors on the stage there are being repaired and resurfaced due to construction work that occurred underneath. This will be completed in time for the HS wrestling team to commence their practices at this location. Completion of all of the HVAC punch list continues to be a top priority. At the Middle School, flooring and carpet upgrades in areas which were disrupted by construction are continuing. Ceiling repairs are near completion in all of the main corridors. There have been some issues with the main campus boilers not coming completely up to temperature, but we believe that the computerized Building Management System may have not caught up to the new design. The construction team called the BMS system folks in real time this afternoon to make sure the boiler set point was correct. Keep in mind that the LOLMS boilers heat parts of the HS as well. At Lyme School, similar issues have caused the boilers and burners there to function inconsistently. We are told this is not usual in this phase of testing new heating systems in an occupied building. Any time the boilers have shut off, for whatever reason, the situation has been addressed immediately, day, night, or weekend. The engineers believe there may be some issues with the water/glycol mix, as these had to be newly filled. Once again, everyone recognizes the critical nature of having a functioning heating system in our school buildings and are cooperating to troubleshoot the problems as quickly as possible. The Superintendent, the Director of Facilities, his associate Brian Dow, myself, and Alan Scheiness of Lyme (representing the Building Committee) attend weekly meetings with the architects, engineers and construction firm. We believe that our presence and constant questions have been instrumental in moving this project forward and avoiding financial missteps. Even though the troubleshooting of the HVAC systems will continue into the New Year, the billing on all three schools (except Mile Creek) is approximately 85-90% complete, giving us some confidence about our budget predictions. We were fortunate to purchase many of our materials, such as structural steel, before the onset of tariffs.

Mr. Brown shared information about *Language Integration for Language Academics (LILA)*, a state-approved LEARN resource to better support MLL students' language development

IX. New Business

1. Policy Review
Policy 5141.21 *Administration of Medication*
Mr. Neviaser reviewed the updated policy, noting that the only change is the addition of a nasal spray form of epinephrine, referred to as "Nephi," as an alternative to the EpiPen.

MOTION: Mr. Lowry made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Shyloski, to waive the second reading and approve Policy 5141.21 as presented.

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

X. Old Business

XI. Executive Session
Susan Fogliano made a motion, which was seconded by Scott Brown, to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing a student discipline matter at 7:47. Mr. Neviaser was invited to attend the executive session.

The Board of Education reconvened into open session at 8:07

Anna James made a motion which was seconded by Alexander Lowry to approve the stipulated agreement for the expulsion of Student A.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

XII. Adjournment
The regular meeting adjourned at 8:10p.m. upon a motion by Mr. Kemp and a second by Mrs. Fogliano.

Respectfully submitted,

Gavin Lodge, Secretary

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.

Summary of Communication to Board of Education
December 3, 2025

Sender	Date	Subject
Michele Grethel & homeowners on Library Lane	November 24, 2025	Wetland Invasive Species Management

Regional School District 18
Board of Education
Attn: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent
49 Lyme Street
Old Lyme, CT 06371

Dear Members of the Board of Education and Superintendent Neviaser,

We are writing as homeowners and neighbors whose properties abut the wetlands behind Lyme–Old Lyme High School, specifically the areas bordering 18, 20, and 22 Library Lane and 3 Dunns Lane. Over the past several years, we have become increasingly concerned about the rapid spread of phragmites (Phragmites australis) and other invasive species expanding across the shared wetland corridor behind the high school. These invasives have significantly disrupted the natural ecosystem, contributed to the displacement of native wildlife, and created long-term environmental challenges for the surrounding area.

For the past five years, we have been managing this issue independently by mowing and applying herbicide in accordance with proper environmental guidance. More recently, we have begun working with All Habitat Services, a reputable ecological restoration company that has been highly responsive to our needs and concerns. Through this coordinated effort, several neighboring households have agreed to synchronize management of invasive species to make eradication efforts more effective.

However, despite these efforts, full ecological restoration is not possible without the cooperation of Regional School District 18, as the phragmites growth on school property continually spreads back into the areas we are maintaining. Because invasive species do not recognize property boundaries, successful eradication requires a unified, multi-parcel approach.

We respectfully request that the Board of Education consider partnering with us by allowing All Habitat Services, or another approved contractor, to mow and treat the phragmites located on the high school's adjacent wetland areas. Taking action on school property would:

- Restore native habitat and support the return of natural wildlife
- Reduce fire hazards and improve overall visibility and safety in the area
- Prevent further spread of invasive species into neighboring properties

- Support long-term environmental stewardship, aligning with the district's educational mission and commitment to sustainability.

Enhance the ecological quality of a landscape that is used and appreciated by students, families, and the broader community.

We believe this is a meaningful opportunity for the school district and local residents to work together in a way that benefits students, neighbors, and the environment alike. We would be happy to meet with the Board or Facilities Department, walk the property together, or share photographs and documentation from All Habitat Services outlining safe and effective treatment methods.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We deeply appreciate any partnership that will allow us to address this issue comprehensively and responsibly.

Sincerely,

Michele Grethel & Dawn Cuglietto-Grethel
20 Library Lane

Brita Herman
18 Library Lane

Benjamin & Victoria Morgan
22 Library Lane

Cc Jason Kemp, Chair of the Board of Education