LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
SAU #68
DATE: January 28, 2026
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:
Jay Duguay, Chairperson
Mandi Avery
Kevin Bell
Casey Caulder
Joe Bossie

SCHOOL BOARD ABSENT:
Tamra Ham
Jasmine Weeden

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF/STUDENT PRESENT:
Dr. Mary Steady, Superintendent of Schools
Peter Stivali, Principal
Debbie O'Connor, Financial Manager
Sharon Holt, SAU#68 Administrative Assistant
Trey Aldridge, Technology Director
Kristy Duris, Teacher Representative

PUBLIC PRESENT:
Jon Ham
Mike Doucette

The School Board meeting was held in the Elementary School Multipurpose Room.

School Board Chairperson, Jay Duguay called the School Board meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Minutes:
Joe Bossie made a motion to approve the School Board meeting minutes of January 14, 2026 as presented. Casey Caulder seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. Kevin Bell abstained. All other Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Technology:
Trey Aldridge reported:

- A Sonicwall Firewall Edge Security Device was included in the 2025-2026 budget and the 2026-2027 budget and removed from these budgets in favor of utilizing the Technology Trust fund for the purchase. During the presentation of the 2025-2026 technology budget last winter, Mr. Aldridge presented a subscription-based which would have wrapped in the cost of the network edge security device. Since then NH law has changed regarding housing and control of data, especially school data. This limited the District's scope of providers for subscription based service and prices increased. These changes made the plan for utilizing a subscription-based service unfeasible. The Sonicwall Firewall Edge Security Device now remains a need for the District as the contract for software updates expires in July. However, the District has connected with the Overwatch Foundation, a non-profit organization, through Primex (the District's insurance provider). The Overwatch Foundation has partnered with the NH Department of Information Technology and the NH Department of Department of Environmental Services to provide school K-12 cyber security "in a box". The Overwatch Foundation has provided the District with enterprise level, endpoint protection for the District's highest level end users to prevent targeted attacks which comes with a 24-7 Security Operations Center monitoring District activity and response. The Overwatch Foundation program is entering Phase II which is to provide Districts with a next-generation firewall edge device through a grant. Lin-Wood has applied for and received one of these grants and will no longer need to access the Trust Fund to purchase a Firewall Edge Security Device
- Would like to request use of $9.500 from the Technology Trust Fund for a single Scale Computing Node for offsite disaster recovery operations. This is a physical small box (computing node) that would be kept in a location offsite. Originally thought to utilize the SAU office for the location of the Node but will now check with the Police Station or Town Hall to see if it could be housed in one of those locations as the SAU office looks to move on-site. The Scale Computing Node backs-up information incrementally on a daily basis which would allow quicker recovery of the District's data and services should there be a breach or other disaster. This would be in addition to the District's current cloud-based back-ups adding another layer of security. The $9,500 covers five years including the hardware cost, 5-year replacement and support licensing. Licensing after five years currently runs at about $1,100 per year.
    - The Board discussed and a Public Hearing will be held prior to the March 11, 2026 School Board meeting for the Scale Computing Node relating to offsite disaster recovery operations.

Communication:

- Dr. Steady noted the North Country Education Services (NCES) newsletter was included in the Board packet.

Reports:

Business Administrator's Report:

- Debbie O'Connor mentioned she would report when discussing the 2026-2027 budget and warrant articles later on the agenda.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Steady reported:

- The open enrollment letter discussed at the last Board meeting is included in the Board packet as well District policies regarding advocacy and political involvement. The open enrollment letter will be discussed again later on the agenda.
- A full list of school activities can be found on the calendar and events section of the School District website.
- Important upcoming dates were provided to the Board on the Superintendent's memo in the Board packet.
    - Kevin Bell expressed his appreciation for the new website and calendar.

Principal's Report:

Peter Stivali gave a report on recent school activities:

- Lin-Wood will be hosting the Lakes Region math meet on Wednesday, February 11th right after school. The math team did great in the last meet coming in third place out of seven teams.
    - Jay Duguay inquired as to how many schools usually compete? Mr. Stivali answered there are usually 7-8 teams. Dr. Steady noted some schools have more than one team.
- The Elementary winter activities program has had some bad luck with weather so far this year and it looks like the weather this coming Friday, January 30th does not look promising either. The District will continue to monitor the weather with student safety the first priority. Families will be contacted when the decision is made regarding January 30th activities.
    - Kevin Bell inquired as to the temperature limits for winter activities? Mr. Stivali answered a feels like temperature of 10 degrees is the limit.
- Poetry Out Load was successful. Elementary and Middle Schoolers presented first with the High School students closing out the night. They all did a great job and it is always impressive the bravery it takes to get up and present especially for the younger students.
    - Joe Bossie inquired as to the Poetry Out Loud finals? Mr. Stivali noted the finals will be held on February 17th at 6:00 PM at Plymouth State University in the Silver Cultural Arts Center.
- Lin-Wood hosted Thornton in the yearly school-day Middle School basketball game. It was a great time with lots of cheers and mascots from both sides.
- The Kanc Classic ski races will take place Thursday, January 29th and Friday, January 30th at the Kanc Rec Center. Cold temperatures are expected so dress warmly and come-out to support the Lumberjacks ski teams.
- The Senior class will be hosting a Chaotic Wrestling fundraiser for the third time. The fundraiser will be held on January 31st. The doors open at 6:15 PM and the first match starts at 7:00 PM.

Committees:

Facilities Committee**:**

- Joe Bossie mentioned the Facilities Committee met prior to the Board meeting. The Facilities Committee discussed the facilities needs and feasibility on moving the SAU office to the Middle/High School. Snow removal was also discussed regarding clearing roof cages, clearing air handlers around the Elementary School building and opening the gate and clearing the egress from the Schools to Pollard Road.

Policy Committee:

- Jay Duguay noted there are a number of policies on first reading. The policies are regarding statutory changes and are recommended by the NH School Board Association (NHSBA).
- Jay Duguay inquired about policy EHLB regarding subpoenas and if it is a NHSBA policy?
    - Dr. Steady noted EHLB is a new policy created by the NHSBA in relation to new NH statute that allows the commissioner of education to subpoena school staff members.

Joe Bossie made a motion to move policies KH, EBBCA, EHLB, FEH, IC, IHDC, JCA, JICK, and JLCJA to second reading. Casey Caulder seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

- The Board discussed the policies for withdrawal and they will be withdrawn after the policies referenced in the motion are approved.

Business Requiring Board Action:

Staff Nominations, Recommendations and Resignations:

- Dr. Steady noted interviews for the Business Administrator position were held. Dr. Steady and the interview team would like to bring forward a nomination for McKenzie Bacote-Harrington for the Business Administrator position to begin at the end of May 2026 after the Memorial Day holiday. References were checked. Originally the start date for the new Business Administrator was set for July 1st but having her start earlier will allow time for Ms. Bacote-Harrington to work with Debbie O'Connor on end of year budget change over, etc.
    - Jay Duguay asked if this will allow enough time to work with Mrs. O'Connor to learn the end of year closing procedures? Dr. Steady answered yes.
    - Debbie O'Connor noted she plans to retire on September 1, 2026 in order to complete the end of year State financial reporting (DOE 25). This reporting is a huge task and the person Mrs. O'Connor replaced at the District had stayed on to complete the report at that time.
    - Jay Duguay mentioned he was part of the interview team and feels that Ms. Bacote-Harrington has a strong background and will be able to handle the day to day operations as well as the big picture.

Joe Bossie made a motion to approve the nomination of McKenzie Bacote-Harrington as Business Administrator. Kevin Bell seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

- Dr. Steady mentioned she will contact McKenzie Bacote-Harrington with the Board's decision.
- Joe Bossie expressed the Board's welcome to Ms. Bacote-Harrington.

2026-2027 School Year Calendar:

- Dr. Steady mentioned the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar draft including interim and report card marking periods was presented to the Board members. This draft aligns with the North Country schools and has been discussed with the teacher's union. The teacher's union did request changes to the original draft discussed with them, the current draft presented to the Board members includes those changes.
    - Kevin Bell inquired as to the October 9th Teacher In-Service Day? As Lin-Wood is in a tourist area, the Friday before Columbus Day starts a very busy weekend in the area and it is sometimes difficult to find childcare for younger children.
        - Debbie O'Connor noted prior to Covid the North Country schools did joint professional development on that day.
        - Dr. Steady mentioned the Friday before Columbus Day is historically a professional development day for North Country schools.
        - Mandi Avery noted having the Friday before Columbus Day off allows the older students to work and provide extra hands for some businesses.

Joe Bossie made a motion to approve the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar as presented. Casey Caulder seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Open Enrollment Letter:

- Dr. Steady noted the North Country schools drafted a letter regarding open enrollment. The letter references that families should be able to choose the best education opportunities for their children. The issue is the lack of local control in the process and budget. The letter was brought to the last Board meeting and the Board asked that it be put back on the agenda and any policies relating to advocacy and politics be brought forward for reference. The policies were included with the Board packet and, upon review, there does not seem to be anything in the policies that would be in opposition. Signing onto the letter is a personal School Board position. Some Boards are signing on to the letter and some are not.
    - Jay Duguay noted policy BJ-School Board Legislative involvement, allows for the School Board to advocate for the best interest of the schools. However, he is unsure signing on to the letter would be the statement Lin-Wood wants to make at this time. There will be Articles on the Warrant relating to open enrollment as well as setting up an Advisory Committee to review educational and organizational configurations in the Elementary School based on declining enrollments. The Warrant Article relating to open enrollment indicates that Lin-Wood would be an open enrollment District however, zero percent of the resident students would be eligible to seek enrollment outside of the District. Current NH Supreme Court ruling noted that sending School Districts need to pay 80% of what it would cost to educate the

student at the sending/local District to the receiving District unless policies are in place. This results in loss of local control of the budget. Would like to hear what the District has to say on these Articles prior to making a decision on signing on to the open enrollment letter.

- Dr. Steady noted currently there is a loop-hole/lack of definition in the open enrollment legislation that allows for the wording for the proposed Warrant Article. The expectation is that this loop hole may be closed by the legislation currently moving through the Senate and the House. The updated legislation may be in place prior to the Annual School District meeting.
- Jay Duguay inquired if the Warrant Articles regarding open enrollment and the advisory committee would be able to be explained to the voters prior to voting?
    - Debbie O'Connor clarified that these questions will not be on the ballot, they will be Articles on the Warrant at the School District meeting and can be discussed prior to the vote.
- The Board agreed to hold off on signing the letter or making any District policy statement regarding open enrollment until after the Annual School District meeting.

2026-2027 Budget and Warrant Articles:
Debbie O'Connor Reported:

- The School District Warrant was run by the Attorney and he recommended a few small changes. The Warrant has also been sent to the NH Department of Revenue Administration (NH DRA) but we have not yet heard back from them.
- Warrant Article 1 and 2, there are three Board openings and one Moderator opening this year.
- Warrant Article 3, regular Article on District reports,
- Warrant Article 4, not a necessary article but Lin-Wood has historically placed this Article on the Warrant. The Article notices the District officer salaries which are included in the budget Warrant Article.
- Warrant Article 5 is the budget article. The Board has pulled out about $100,000 in expenses from the original draft presented this includes the removal of the SAU rent starting in October. Tax impact rates are not required for this Article.
    - Regarding the budget tax impact, Jay Duguay noted the more information the District has, the better.
- Warrant Article 6 relates to the Support Staff CBA it notices the increases for both years of the agreement but includes the need to raise and appropriate monies for the 2026-2027 budget year. Tax impact rates are not required for this Article. The Attorney suggested removing the tax impact rates from this Article.
    - The Board discussed and the tax rate impact rates will be removed from this Article.
- Warrant Article 7 is only needed if Article 6 fails and allows the District to call a special meeting on the CBA expense if Article 6 fails without having to go through the State process.
- Warrant Articles 8-11 are the Articles to fund the Trust and Capital Reserve Funds as in the past.
- Warrant Article 12 relates to 0pen enrollment.
- Warrant Article 13 asks about the creation of an Advisory Committee for reviewing and evaluating educational and organizational configurations for the Elementary School to declining enrollments and budget. The Attorney suggested the word 'direct' in the first sentence be changed to 'request' as the Board does not need the approval of the District to create a Committee.
    - The Board discussed and word 'direct' will be changed to 'request.'
- The Budget Hearing is Wednesday, February 11, 2026. This is when the Board will listen to public input on the Budget and make their final recommendations and vote on the Warrant Articles.
- The total of the budget and Warrant Articles for the current year was approximately $574,000. For 2026-2027, the total at this point, is approximately $575,000 so, not much more overall.
    - The Board discussed having a single page write-up available for voters on the Warrant Articles particularly on Article 12.

Joe Bossie made a motion to preliminarily approve the 2026 Warrant with modifications as presented. Casey Caulder seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

New Business: None.

Continuing Business: None.

Recognition of Visitors/Public Participation:
Student: None.

Staff: Jay Duguay welcomed Kristy Duris.

Kristy Duris reported:

- From Katie Parent: Throughout January, chemistry students have been learning about scientific journal articles as part of their scientific literacy. In preparation for a visit from Dr. Tolman, I had my chemistry students look at a scientific journal article by our local scientific researcher, Geoff Wilson, on Snowpack. In both chemistry classes, we worked to decode high-level Tier 3 terms from this article by analyzing morphology, context, and visual representation. I first read the abstract and then the conclusion of the article aloud to the students, stopping to ask questions about words I anticipated would be difficult to understand. We did morphological surgery- breaking the word into its prefix, root, and suffix, in-text context clues, and then translated the sentence into "everyday" language that our peers would understand. Additionally, we did a deep dive into the word "ablation" with Dr. Tolman leading this part. As a follow-up, I asked Geoff Wilson, and he graciously accepted the invitation to come into my two chemistry classes to give a talk about Hubbard Brook, the writing of a scientific journal article, including rejection and the editing process, and his work on snowpack relating to the article we read the week prior. It is so nice to have passionate people visit Lin-Wood. Thank you for supporting these efforts.
- From Heather Krill and Jen Whitcher: Congratulations to Ian Anderson, Lin-Wood's Poetry Out Loud school champion, and to Seamus Fadden, the alternate, who will be helping to warm up the judges at Plymouth State University on February 17th at 6:00 PM. Lin-Wood had upwards of 30 students from grades 3-11 participate in the Poetry Out Loud school finals at the Woodstock Station. Lin-wood's band played between performances. Thank you to everyone who contributes to making this a memorable event each year, including students, judges, parents and staff members. An incredible tradition for 17 years.
- From Courtney Donati: Lincoln Urgent Care has agreed to take over doing sports physicals for Lin-Wood students. Dr. Felgate's office used to perform these physicals. Urgent Care has provided vouchers to give to students that need a sports physical. The students can just present the voucher when they go to urgent care for their physical. These physicals will be offered in the spring starting in March. Information will be sent out to families soon. Thank you to Urgent Care for offering this service to Lin-Wood's students!!

Community: Jay Duguay welcomed Jon Ham.

- Jon Ham expressed concerns that Board members could not be heard well by the audience members at Board meetings because of the loud fan in the Elementary Multipurpose Room.
- Jon Ham expressed concerns the Board meetings were no longer being live-streamed or video recorded.
    - Jay Duguay noted a Board vote has been taken on this and the Board meetings will be audio recorded. The audio recordings will be available on the School District website the following day or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Jon Ham expressed concerns about the need for the $9,500 disaster recovery device as presented at the beginning of the meeting.

Jay Duguay welcomed Mike Doucette.

- Mike Doucette is the owner and operator of Precision Driving School which is Littleton based but operates some classes out of Lin-Wood school. For this opportunity Lin-Wood students are given first priority for driving class space. Most of the instructors are former first responders or military. Students who are required to follow a set of rules (such as no vaping, etc.) and if a student is found in violation, they are removed from the class. School building access is needed for drivers and students to utilize the building's restrooms. Classes take place year round and building access is needed year round as well. Precision Driving has four key fobs for the school and requests to receive two additional in order for all six cars that are available for use to have a key fob in the car. This will allow for his drivers to not have to check to see if they have a car with a fob before leaving Littleton. The fobs are kept in the glove compartment of the locked cars.
    - The Board discussed and determined to provide Precision Driving School with a total six key fobs. These should be returned to the school should the relationship between Precision Driving School and Lin-Wood end. The written contract should have information on the key fobs.

Jay Duguay took a poll vote to enter non-public session based on RSA 91-A:3 II ((c) the discussion of matters that are likely to adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of the School Board. Joe Bossie, YES; Mandi Avery, YES; Jay Duguay, YES; Casey Caulder, YES; and Kevin Bell, YES. The Board entered non-public session at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Holt, SAU#68 Administrative Assistant

The Board members returned to the public meeting at 8:31 PM.

Joe Bossie made a motion to adjourn the School Board Meeting. Casey Caulder seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Duguay, School Board Chairperson