

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 21, 2026
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School
6:30 p.m.**

The videoconferencing link was published several places including on the meeting agenda.

Present: *Dennis Golding, Brianne Lavalley, John Zavgren, Michelle Alley, Erin Collins, Darlene Anzalone, and Anna Meigs*
Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principals Tom Ronning and Stacy Maghakian,
Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Technology Director Nicholas Buroker, Curriculum Coordinator Samantha
Dignan (online), and Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Golding called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. Bill Crouse, Lyndeborough, spoke of being an advocate for starting school after Labor Day except this year. He suggested starting school on August 31 to end one day earlier at the end of the year.

Mr. Bob Newton, Lyndeborough, (a complete copy of the comments is attached) commented that he agrees with Mr. Crouse's comments at a prior meeting regarding the public being able to comment on topics not on the agenda as long as it relates to the school district. He provided suggested language to amend policy BDEH (Public Participation at Board Meetings). He spoke of the commotion of open enrollment that has awakened the Board and Administration to the problem of the quality of the education provided and people focusing on the downside risk of excess expenses from students leaving our schools. He suggested looking at it in a positive way as a great opportunity to make significant improvements in the quality of our schools. He spoke of comments made in prior meetings regarding all roads lead to FRES and a complaint from a FRES teacher who commented on struggles to get through class due to behaviors. He spoke of the elementary school serving our children poorly in curriculum and teaching methods and (student) mental disengagement and disruptive behavior being a clear sign that the kids are bored. He suggested the Board authorize and direct the Superintendent to transform FRES into a world-class elementary school starting immediately and including changes in the curriculum, teaching methods, and personnel as the Superintendent sees fit. The project should have significant changes in teaching reading and basic math for grades 1-3 and should start in September. He suggested the Board apply for Innovation School status under RSA 194-E to get any obstacle waived.

Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment.

V. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

a. Reports

i. PTO Updates

Ms. Crystal Gill, WLC PTO, informed the group that they have become a charitable foundation and have come into some big money. She heard the play went well with rave reviews about the lights. The Performance Tech Committee worked hard prior to those funds but are happy for any new funds coming in hopes for another round or a weekend this year that would bring in a substantial amount to be used in other areas. She spoke of the Penny Sale last time she was here and has the final numbers. They raised just over \$13,000 which was split with the Lions Club with a minimal amount they pay out, they ended up with \$12,557 between the two groups and the PTO divided their amount in half to give to the 11th grade class which was \$3,139. She spoke of the students really showing up this year with 27 kids throughout the day and 17 staying from noon until 7:30pm which is unheard of. She spoke of them being so well behaved, they listen and help, they were amazing. Their parents came through with lots of food donations too which they were grateful for. She gave a shout-out to Mr. Hofstetter because he made everything a lot smoother for them, which they appreciated. She spoke of being at step-up night with raffles for the incoming 6th graders. This year they decided to have the webstore year-round for folks to order gear with a variety of sizes and customization with it being

shipped directly to your house. They hope that will pick up soon. Last week they filled 17 advisory buckets for Senior Extravaganza, which has been done the past few years, giving students snacks to keep them going. Teacher Appreciation week is coming up; it's something she is always proud of. This year the theme is Wizard of Oz. There are links that went out to all their parents along with an Amazon list and signup genius. She starts at 6:45am to get the food and spread it out. Anyone who would like to donate would be great. She spoke of being appreciative of all the help they have had over the last few events.

ii. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent reported meeting with Mason School District and today he spoke with Francestown. He, along with Assistant Principal Gosselin, Principal Ronning, Teacher Cathy Blaise and Ms. Dignan attended a meeting with Mason to highlight what is happening at WLC, such as our graduation rates are, focusing on the opportunities our students have, running start classes and AP classes. Our goal was not to solicit their students; it was to let WLC speak for itself and see if they are open to hearing more. We are not perfect and have plenty to work on as a district and a school. We may be a better fit for some kids vs. Milford if given the choice. Today he received a text from the Superintendent who said there were a lot of positive comments. There were about 12-15 parents in the audience. It lasted 45 minutes to an hour. They would like to come for a visit; we will hold a mini-open house and have a couple student leaders and staff members come and we can answer any questions for them. He is excited that they had a positive impact. The spoke of Francestown currently removing themselves from ConVal. He believes there are 4 towns reconsidering their relationship with ConVal. Francestown is waiting for the DOE to approve them as a school board and form sort of an SAU unit. The school committee person he spoke with is excited to learn more about WLC. His pitch to them was simple, the state is moving in a different direction and how do you create education that excites kids to learn and excites families to have their kids go to that school and for all the kinds of reasons he has already spoke of. They have about 150 students and they are looking for ways to give their parents more choices. The tour and visit will go a long way to communicating to their community what the value of coming here is for MS and HS students. He is more about celebrating what we do here, we are not perfect and are trying to get better every day and would certainly love for some of their students to be a part of that. These were 2 positive conversations he had today and last night was great. He spoke of how amazing Ms. Blaise is and he has been invited to the Biotrek State Competition on May 21 in Manchester. A question was raised how many students could we take before we needed additional resources. He informed the group they have started doing that math on the capacity cap and the state guidelines. He does not have those numbers yet but feels our numbers are in a good place for the HS. He believes on average maybe 12-14 or 12-15 and some classes are higher like physical education and some lower like AP advanced placement, but we have plenty of room for students. He does not anticipate a whole district wanting to come here but some families would. He believes the full legislature is voting on the open enrollment bill with amendments. He is not sure what happens after that if it goes to another committee or directly to the Governor's desk. Once that vote takes place, he believes there will be a grace period and not take effect until FY 2028. Schools are going to try to figure out what we're supposed to do based on the language in the law. Most Superintendents don't know what the final language is going to be and what we're supposed to do because it is very different from what we've ever done before. In a scenario like this he would like to think if we lost some kids to open enrollment, we would also get some kids and would like to think we get more than we lose. He spoke of needing to do all we can to improve education, we would like to say our scores are where we want them to be, but they are not. We engage the students to the best of our ability, we are a community-based school and individualize the learning programs, which is not something the larger schools do. Ms. Blais said last night she probably knew the name of every HS student and could talk to them about their work etc. and that went a long way in Mason, they probably don't have that in larger schools like Milford or Brookline. It speaks to the personalized environment, where you feel known and valued and won't slip through the cracks. He will provide the information on capacity at one of the May meetings. A question was raised whether it would be helpful for the open house to have some board members present as well. He agrees it would; people in decision making positions should be there. He added they felt comfortable and were welcomed at the Mason meeting and that is what our Board does here. Principal Ronning is scheduling the open house and will let the board members know the date. A question was raised if there was any thought to touching base with the older elementary school kids like the 5th grade in those towns since they will be changing schools. Superintendent acknowledged that is one of the things they need to talk about when this law takes effect and will need to brainstorm on what the next steps are to maintain the integrity of our system but continue to improve it and also allow people to look at us for who we are and then see if it is a good fit for their students.

iii. Facility Manager's Report

Mr. Hofstetter reported that one of the senior custodians, Scott Hasu, is retiring from his position in Milford and a past employee, Eric Bouldin, will be filling in. We are still on track with the locker room despite the little setback. He adds it will be amazing and will surpass what he hoped it to be. The shed at WLC fell in, no loss other than the shed itself. He gave a shout-out to Vinny and Eli, they cleaned it up in a couple of hours. The dugout for softball team is completed; he gave a shout-out to Superintendent Weaver for painting it before the 1st game. He spoke of being grateful that the Superintendent being as dedicated as he is. They are gearing up for chemical safety training this summer. He has Hillyard and Clean-o-rama coming in to provide information, SDS and further develop the team especially as new staff are trained. A question was raised regarding heating ventilators. He confirms the cost to replace one is \$25,000-\$30,000. He was asked if there would be time to replace 1 using unspent funds. He confirms he is open to this; his focus has been to get replacement units on the CIP as they are breaking down but would be pleased if unspent funds were used to replace a couple. He is waiting for the facilities committee to reconvene as he has 2 energy companies ready to come in and meet with us to get approval to do an assessment if the committee is interested and do a whole district energy efficiency investigation. It will be a sizeable article once they're all said and done, he thinks it would be good for the district. The CIP would apportion it out over 10-15 years and takes a long time to get it done. It would be cheaper on taxpayers. If we go the other route they'll get it done at once and we have the opportunity to pay that bill down over

the years similar to the CIP, but we get it ahead of time rather than slowly doing it year after year. It was noted it would be good to have that information ahead of time before purchases are made in case there is a recommendation for something more efficient. Ms. Alley will work on scheduling a facilities committee date. Superintendent clarified when Mr. Hasu retires from his full-time position in Milford, the way NHRS works is he must stop working for 30 days then can return here and that is why we have Mr. Bouldin covering for him and we are really lucky to have him return.

iv. Director of Technology's Report

Mr. Buroker reported it being a pretty level month in terms of support, but it will pick up as we get closer to the end of school. April vacation he is planning to move the network interface devise (where the internet comes into the district) to a school with a generator to cut down on the outages. Currently it comes into WLC where there is no generator. If the power goes out for an hour or more, we lose internet in the district. The most exciting thing for him is that the state has come down with more cyber security training grants and this year unlike last year all 3 staff members were able to grab slots to get the training and IT certifications. A question was raised if the technology committee was going to look at the Technology Plan and pivoting from one-to-one computers to be more innovative especially at the younger grades. He confirms there are conversations going on and he is getting research together. Ms. Lavallee asked for the study to be sent to her. Chairman Golding asked Mr. Buroker to schedule a date for a technology committee meeting.

VI. DISTRICT CLERK VACANCY

Superintendent thanked Ms. Mary-Jane Ryan for her work as District Clerk for the last 12 years, it will be difficult to fill the vacancy. In speaking with her, one concern she raised is the time involved and level of responsibility and salary, whether it was enough or not. We pay \$,1000, he cannot say how many hours of work it takes, for example she may have spent additional hours this year based on the number of write-ins compared to last year. She will mentor the next person. Before Ms. Ryan, Ms. Fowler was the District Clerk and between the 2 of them we have a couple of really great mentors that could support the next person to jump right in and really learn how to do that job. With the Board's permission, he would like to research some other districts to see what they do to get people to fill that position, whether it is a stipend position or something else, and report back to the Board. We will have it posted and provide any applications in May. We would like to fill it before summer. We will do the research with your support and maybe our recommendation might be to increase it slightly to make it more enticing for someone to commit to the position. He passed out a job description. Ms. Lavallee supports the research being done and finding out what other districts are paying their clerks. She spoke of the state changing some of responsibilities over the course of the years. She asked Ms. Fowler and Ms. Ryan to review the job description to see if anything needs to be added. A question was raised about the lottery process. Ms. Fowler responded it is used when you have multiple write in votes for the same seat.

VII. DRAFT SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR 2026-2027

Chairman Golding questioned if there would be any negative to moving the 1st day to August 31. Superintendent explained last time we spoke it was either before Labor Day or after and we had compelling views on either side. Moving it 1 day will shorten the last day by 1 day. We would have a 4-day school week to start. We moved it to that Tuesday to balance both sides of the ledger because both arguments are compelling. A question was raised what the October 30 no school date is for. It was confirmed it is the compensation date for teachers for working the evenings of parent/teacher conferences as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the WLCTA.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to amend the start of school to August 31, 2026, and accept the calendar as amended.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

VIII. DISTRICT MEETING FOLLOW-UP

Ms. Lavallee spoke of 2 aspects that the Board should talk about. They heard concerns from the community regarding the presentation not being clear regarding staffing and her opinion is that we don't manage the presentation, the budget committee does but thinks it is important that the Board coordinate and communicate with them regarding the emails and public comments received. She spoke of it being important as a Board to set some norms on how they're going to communicate with each other for next year. It is on the agenda to appoint a liaison to the committee but felt it was important to have a conversation and bring that information to them and offer suggestions on how we can move forward with the feedback received. She suggested it being appropriate for the liaison to ask the budget committee what date they need Board goals by. As a Board, we can set goals for the budget, we don't determine what the budget number is but vote if we support it or not. She believes last year they asked for goals. If we have particular goals around staffing since that was talked about, that would be the time and place to have the conversation and to communicate those goals. Whether they do that or not is their decision. There is a meeting tomorrow night. She also thought it was important for the Board to follow up on this and add it to an upcoming agenda for a discussion amongst the Board regarding the staffing changes so that there is more clarification and more detail from administration because the budget process was handled a little bit differently this year. She has been on the Board 6 years and there have been times when we've had discussions about staffing cuts before and have more detail because even though there are some things that they can't discuss in public, the community does need to have the opportunity to ask questions and weigh in on staffing changes. The Board sets the policies regarding class sizes, and the goals for the district. She feels adding it to an upcoming agenda where the Superintendent can present his vision and they can ask questions about what it is going to look like and whether there are any concerns or suggestions that as a whole Board they want to make. Ms. Anzalone noted the Budget Committee did a good job

with the presentation; they broke down the true costs per student. She felt that was important as there were numbers thrown out there. It was extremely helpful and helped educate folks on what they are spending their money on. Ms. Lavallee spoke about wanting to bring back positive feedback and increase communication and when we are asking the taxpayers to vote on something, we need to present it clearly. The information was in there, we discussed it, we discussed it in September and then discussed it again. We knew that there were cuts, it just wasn't clear to some people and herself included. That is why she did not vote for the budget; she wanted to know exactly where they were coming from before she could say she supported it. The presentation and every other aspect were clear, and she agrees the information added was very helpful for people. Chairman Golding noted whoever becomes the liaison can communicate that tomorrow. A question was raised what the purpose would be to discuss it since the cuts have already been made and voted on and the budget is in place. Chairman Golding responded, better transparency. Ms. Lavallee added we heard from parents it was not clear and they need a way to weigh in. We need to have a public discussion about that, so the public has an opportunity to weigh in. Do we agree or not with decision and if not why? She believes that is where some of frustration came from. She spoke of hearing from the public concerns regarding student behaviors. Any parent that has a student at FRES, it's concerning even if it is not your child, those behaviors change the dynamic in the classroom. If the teacher is busy disciplining children, they're not teaching the class. That is why it is important to have this discussion in public, she feels it is owed to the public. It was noted that it was announced in public there were going to be cuts. Discussion continued including if the concern is smaller class sizes because of behavior issues, that is a separate issue, we need to deal with the behavior issues, we need to support the teachers in a different way, and maybe the solution is not to add teachers. We need to look at what support the teachers get in the classroom.

IX. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Chairman Golding reminded the group that a volunteer for the policy committee and budget liaison are needed. The school board vacancy will be on the agenda for May 5, we have 1 letter of interest currently and they will attend the May 5 meeting. Principal Ronning will add the vacancy on Facebook. Chairman Golding spoke regarding there being no volunteers for the budget committee liaison; he and Ms. Lavallee will split the position, and he will attend meeting tomorrow. Ms. Lavallee agreed to this and added at the board meetings we can bullet out what feedback to communicate to them.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Anzalone that Ms. Lavallee and Chairman Golding will co-liaison as Budget Committee Liaisons.
Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

Ms. Lavallee informed the group that appointing a 3rd policy committee member can wait until after the May 5 meeting when they will have the 9th member. It is a good way for someone to learn while being on the committee. We could designate that person if they are agreeable. In the meantime, she can meet with Ms. Collins, we have already decided what policies we are working on, and she can train her on how to use the template to make them and can vote on policies at the next meeting. It was noted the new person would need to be sworn in. Chairman Golding asked the members to come up with questions to ask a new member at the interview and send those to him to coordinate. Ms. Lavallee spoke regarding the grant committee, which is not a school board committee, but she is on this and wanted to be sure it was okay with everyone if she continues. No objection heard.

X. YEAR-TO-DATE REPORT

Ms. LaPlante reviewed the year-to-date report that was sent out yesterday. It shows savings as well as expenses. She went into some depth to point out some line items to show where it was coming from. Right now, we have about \$509,244, 3.2%, of unspent funds. She is rounding up or down to nearest dollar and leaves the cents in limbo for now. She fully anticipates the \$509,244 amount will increase; we will have more savings but cannot forecast at this point but notes she always provides maximum exposure rather than having to suddenly come in with bad news. Our current savings are primarily in personnel costs. We have \$895,201 in wages in benefits. That is unspent and it's unbudgeted for the rest of the school year. It is due to staffing changes and vacancies. The vacancies are a physical education teacher at WLC, a nurse at LCS, a facilities position and SPED paraprofessionals. To offset some of the vacancies, we ended up having to hire contracted service providers such as a reading specialist. According to the accounting codes she cannot classify that as personnel costs and the total amount of those contract service providers is \$214,647. We have contracted service providers covering facilities, LCS nurse and one SPED paraprofessional position and the reading specialist at WLC. If we take wages and benefits, net savings of \$85,201 and subtract our expense for contracted service providers, we're looking at about \$680,554 savings in our total people cost whether they are directly employed by us or through an agency. It is important to note that this budget we are working on in FY 26 was really built on our staffing from back in September 2024 and our best guess of where we're going to be as of July 1, 2025. Since then, there have been a lot of moving parts, between programs which affect the function code and where things lay, there has been a lot of shifting especially amongst our SPED staff within the buildings. For example, we may have budgeted staff at FRES, but they shifted to WLC. It might show savings and overages. She spoke in net terms. Within our general education teaching positions at WLC, we currently have net savings of \$231,750. That is because since September 2024, we've had seven staff changes and turnover within 7 positions at WLC. We have 1 open physical education position, and we have had an early resignation of a teacher. She spoke of key costs that make it up are found in lines 1, 2 which is \$145,311 in wages, lines 10,11, 14, and 15 for health, and dental, lines 26 and 27 for FICA, Medicare and lines 30 and 31 for NH Retirement (NHRs). That does not include life insurance, disability, workers comp and unemployment. We are currently showing within our personnel costs are under budget, but we're currently over budget in our SPED people at WLC by \$6,345. She will summarize this and put it in a

document to supplement her report. In September 2024, we budgeted for a reading specialist at WLC as a staff position. That person at the end of t last year transferred to an open ELA position in the MS. That funding is staying put within the SPED teaching line. We can't transfer that to another line. For that reading specialist the \$69,253 savings are primarily in wages, FICA, Medicare, and NHRS but then that requires us to backfill that position with a contracted service provider and that cost is \$75,598 on lines 512 and 513. Our SPED aids at WLC are a net savings of \$103,192 and since September 2024, the 2 people within that position have changed. There is saving in wages, savings in health and dental and savings in FICA, and Medicare. She spoke of SPED aids at FRES, the wages and associated employer taxes being over budget due to some unique staffing needs within that building. We had to hire 2 part-time paraprofessionals to meet some specific student needs, which is why that is over. LCS is over budget by a net of \$8,851. We had turnover in those positions as well. We were able to fill 1 of those positions, but the 2nd remained vacant. We hired a contracted service provider earlier this year about halfway through the school year. We see savings in wages and employer taxes in lines 181, 205 and 209. All these lines individually don't tell a story until you lump them together. Everyone individually might not seem impactful until you really analyze where we're at. Our LCS nurse position was budgeted for 30 hours a week and have been unable to fill that. The wages that we offer within the CBA to be honest are not competitive with in the nursing market, which means an RN may not want to come to us for that much of a pay cut. We have net savings within our nursing line of \$42,257. We have the people cost we are saving and then the expense of \$57,749 for the contracted service provider that nets out to \$42,000. Our ABA/RBT is where we see the most shifting between buildings. We budgeted for 20 ABA/RBT positions in September 2024. We have seen turnover in 8 of those positions. With those 8 positions there have come intermittent vacancies. Although all the ABA/RBT positions are filled now there have been times since July 1, 2025, within this fiscal year where some of those may have been vacant. That is across all 4 buildings and notes she will speak to net savings rather than building specific because of the all the movement. There are \$17,698 savings in wages and \$84,144 in health and dental, \$12,926 in FICA, Medicare and \$32,311 in NHRS. The last is within facilities. We have a net saving right now of \$101,911. We have 1 full vacancy currently and one of them went open for most of the summer and into the fall. Because of this we have significant savings in wages, health, dental, FICA, Medicare and NHRS. On the flip side of that we're paying about \$56,300 to a staffing agency to help us out so that we're not burning out Mr. Hofstetter and his crew. A question was raised what the line "school board advertising" is, it is over by \$400. Ms. Fowler confirms it is for required newspaper public notices such as public hearings and other required postings and there was more this year than in recent years. A question was raised if the food service line was the debt. Ms. LaPlante, that is our expense alone, she does not report revenue right now. We are over budget by \$24,000, we have \$180,000 set aside in encumbrances, which she thinks is on the heavy side and is an example where she expects to see some savings. Appreciation was expressed for the amount of information she provided and for it to clear both for the Board and public. Ms. LaPlante notes if any member of the Board or public have any questions, send her an email and she will do her best to answer them in a timely manner.

XI. POLICY DISCUSSION-DIG-SCHOOL LUNCH MEAL PAYMENT

Ms. Lavallee informed the group this came up because a community member and Ms. Nantel reached out to her. This policy was updated in 2017, but policy EFAA-Meal Charging policy was updated in 2024. NHSBA no longer has policy DIG, she does not know when they withdrew it and there is a lot of crossovers between the 2 policies. She wanted to bring it to the Board so that we could discuss the policy committee going through clarifying it and perhaps with the result of withdrawing it but needs to be sure all the content is in EFAA. There was a question from a community member regarding graduation, and she didn't have the answer because it is not outlined in the policy and needed Ms. LaPlante and Ms. Nantel to weigh in on it. We have a practice where in order for us to recoup unpaid funds to the lunch program we would send a letter to parents regarding participation in graduation activities and the requirement to participate in those activities. One of them was to make sure their lunch debt was paid off. She asked Ms. Nantel to speak to it because Ms. Lavallee felt that the Board should discuss and agree on how to handle the situation. Ms. Nantel informs the group in her research she was drafting a letter to a senior parent to let them know of their debt and consequences of not paying it and wanted to refer to a policy but did not find one. Two years ago, we had a student who didn't walk because we thought and she was under the same impression, that they could not if they had a food service debt. We have had a donor pay off the senior's debt in the past, but they have not reached out this year. We have nothing to back up encouraging parents to pay off the debt. There is \$4,790.62 in senior debt. Seventeen seniors may not be able to graduate, and she has no motivation to give these parents at this point. A discussion was held regarding the practice of not letting seniors walk if they didn't pay the debt. Principal Ronning noted it is his 3rd year and doesn't know when the practice started. He spoke of students earning the right to walk across stage and in his prior experience they would not get a diploma until it was paid. He disagrees with taking away the experience for students. Ms. Lavallee noted having a hard time punishing students for the parents not paying. Superintendent clarified he would not support doing that because of a debt and it is unfortunate that a student could not walk, he would never support that. In his experience he has never withheld a diploma or prevented students from walking. He has as a principal, not allowed them to join in activities such as trips if they had a food service debt and they quickly found a way to pay for that. Also, during graduation rehearsal, he did not allow them to sit where they wanted. There are some that won't pay it. Ms. Nantel confirmed if they have a negative account balance, they cannot get snacks, they have to be paid with cash. Discussion was had including it is a parent's responsibility to feed their child, and it is too bad kids have to miss out on things because of this. There are opportunities for help through free and reduced programs. A question was raised how the parent can be held responsible. Superintendent responded, civil action or collection agency. He does not recommend civil action. This debt accumulates over time. A question was raised whether there are many students with small balances or a few with large balances. Ms. Lavallee read a portion of policy DIG which says there is a process to collect, and the district will take responsible action. It was noted it is also staff who have debt and some have left without collection. Discussion continued, including agreeing with

Ms. Lavallee students should be able to walk, it would not be fair to them, and it is a bad way to start them off going out into the world. A suggestion was made that staff should have it deducted from their check. A suggestion was made to have the students work it off. Ms. Nantel would like to explore that as she has several kids who work and volunteer in the kitchen but doesn't know how to make the numbers work in her program. Ms. LaPlante clarified for the group that we must be very careful, having a work expectation when it comes to volunteers, because that triggers the Department of Labor. It would have to be some type of alternative arrangement where literally money is exchanged. We can work to explore that. We can't auto-deduct it from employees' paychecks. It is considered a loan because for employees we have allowed them to accrue that debt. The Department of Labor says that a voluntary loan therefore can't just automatically deduct it. We must get permission to do that anyway; we have explored that. She wants to be clear; this is fact finding conversation to understand what has happened in the past to make sure that we're not inadvertently tying our hands to the future. Ms. Lavallee spoke about needing to have a conversation both about changing the policy and about what we're doing to do this year because it will take time to change the policy. The discussion continued including some parents cannot afford it and do not qualify for free and reduced, it adds up quickly especially if they are eating both breakfast and lunch it is \$25 a week. Ms. Nantel confirms she does not have the letter with her that she wanted to send. It was noted it is still important to try to collect the debt. Ms. Nantel sends letters around this time and would like to send them earlier. Some have large debt. She is asking for guidance from the Board. She was asked if she would feel comfortable working with the Superintendent to firm up the language of the letter before it goes out. This way the Board is not micromanaging it but is aware of the issue and we're giving authority to Superintendent Weaver to try to problem solve with you. The Board will look at the policy and try to provide more direction for the future. No objection is heard regarding this plan. Ms. LaPlante added if you look at your students' debt, regardless of if they are senior or not, it didn't accrue overnight. If you need to work with the Food Service Director, Ms. Nantel, on accommodations to pay it quarterly or maybe you can't get it by the graduation date, but you can get it by August 31, we're certainly not going to shame any families because they are doing their absolute best. In her prior days as a municipal tax collector, people sometimes forget we will absolutely work with people. We are not looking to hold them hostage and so that the public knows it is kept completely confidential. As long as the employee does not need to know they don't have access to the information. If you are more comfortable talking with guidance you can reach out to them as well. There are ways families can try to access help to figure out a plan. Ms. Nantel informed the group that it is important when you have had a change in finances, you can turn in a new application at any time, just submit the form. She has another letter going out to families who have a \$50 debt and the form is included. Eligibility continues until October 10. It doesn't end as soon as school ends. Ms. Lavallee asked if she could send that out quarterly letting parents know they can submit it any time of the year. Ms. Collins added to make it clear that they don't have to fill it out if they don't have a change in circumstances. Chairman Golding reviewed, we will not stop a student from walking or getting their diploma and the Policy Committee will look at policy DIG and EFAA. Ms. Nantel asked to clarify that when kids have debt, she has permission to sign off on their graduation. Chairman Golding responded yes. Ms. Lavallee added that Ms. Nantel with work with Superintendent on a letter.

XII. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Ms. Alley and SECONDED by Mr. Zavgren to approve the minutes of April 7, 2026, as written. Voting: six ayes, one abstention from Ms. Lavallee, motion carried.

b. Project Ideas/Unspent Funds

Ms. LaPlante reports there has been frequent conversation since the budget development process when project ideas come up saying, we didn't put this in the budget because it was not a critical need but want to pursue this project with unspent funds in the spring. For folks who are not familiar, the \$509,000 she spoke of earlier is the amount we are expecting to have at year end and the Board has taken this opportunity in years past to reinvest it back in the district. This does not artificially inflate our tax rate because we're not asking for a large purchase price in one year vs. the other. Based on that she met with administrators over the last several weeks and came up with several projects that she has submitted to the Board. She reviewed each project.

WLC, not including athletics or co-curriculars:

- Purchase a new desk for the Assistant Principal - \$825 plus shipping (current one is falling apart, could cost \$1000-\$1100)
- Replace blue folding chairs (we currently have 400) (chairs are flimsy, these are ones our guests are sitting in, all agree they are horrible. There are some options and would need the rolling dollar carts)
 - Steel Folding Chairs - ~\$45.50 per chair
 - Chair Cart - ~\$1,417 per 100 chairs
 - Plastic seat with rugged steel frame - ~\$79 per chair
 - Chair Cart - ~\$1,365 per 100 chairs
 - Padded chair - ~\$54 per chair
 - Chair Cart - ~\$1,417 per 100 chairs

FRES

- Robotics kits (6) - \$2,160 (This can be used for co-curricular activities.)
 - Tables and chairs for one 1st grade classroom - \$3,411.14
 - Tables for one 2nd grade classroom - \$1,474.00
 - Makerspace equipment & materials for future use by 4th & 5th grade - \$4,980.47. (Librarian with Principal Maghakian's support would like this for future use by the 4th and 5th graders as part of their curriculum. It will have an annual ongoing cost of about \$250-\$300.)
- Technology**
- Purchase 11 battery backup units to provide front office power redundancy at WLC and have spares for the District - \$4,070 (We do not have any currently.)
- Facilities**
- Purchase 5 air conditioners to have extras on hand - \$3,445 (We have no spares, if one goes down we're down. Mr. Hofstetter would like 5 more to use as spare units.)
 - Purchase 5 dehumidifiers for use at WLC and FRES - \$1,345 (For use at WLC and FRES's basement which gets very moist and at WLC the water table's high and it ends up impacting the quality of the wax work.)
 - Purchase 2 metal storage containers - \$3,800 each (\$7,200 total) (We have one up by the tennis court but want 2 more to be used for storage.)
 - Heating Unit Ventilator repairs & parts - \$15,000
 - Replace two water fountains at WLC with filtered bottle filling units (B wing, upstairs MS)
- Food Service**
- Purchase can rack for FRES to free up space - \$760
- Athletics & Co-Curricular**
- 14 passenger van –
 - o Used Van - \$36,916 - \$44,099
 - o New Van - \$60,000 - \$63,000
 - Golf Team – (Mr. Lavallee volunteered to coach the new golf team last year and it has been wildly successful. This is the norm for other athletics golf teams.)
 - o WLC Embellished Golf Bags - \$3,420 (12 @ \$275 each)
 - o Golf Balls with WLC logo - \$666
 - o Uniform shirts - \$540
 - Baseball & Softball -
 - o Pitching machine for softball - \$2,195 for basic machine; \$5,090 for machine with changeup (both prices include shipping)
 - o Pitching machine for baseball - \$3,190 (includes shipping)
 - o Batting Cage ("Turtle") - \$6,100
 - Soccer -
 - o Net system for behind goals - \$6,722
 - Dance Team -
 - o Costumes (uniforms) - \$800
 - Weight Room –
 - o 3 additional mats - \$450
 - o 2 additional benches - \$160
 - General -
 - o Gator to transport elderly/handicap attendees, equipment, water jugs, etc. to upper fields - \$14,395

Ms. Lavallee recuses herself from discussions regarding golf and baseball as her husband is a coach.

Ms. LaPlante informed the group these were all ideas that have been discussed and vetted with administrators, and they feel comfortable bringing these to the Board to consider. She confirms the water fountains are \$2,500 each, \$5,000 for both.

Discussion was had regarding the items on the list. Ms. LaPlante explained reasons for each request. Chairman Golding asked for more research to be done on the chairs for WLC. A question was raised how much it all added up to be. Ms. LaPlante does not have that as it depends on what products are purchased. It was noted that Mr. Hofstetter spoke of having an efficiency review done. It was suggested to move forward with some items. A discussion was held regarding the items and how to proceed.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to give permission to Ms. LaPlante to move forward with the expenses listed under FRES category.

Ms. LaPlante clarified when asked regarding the tables and chairs, they want to switch from desk to table and one of the classrooms would need chairs.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to purchase a new desk for the WLC Assistant Principal.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

Chairman Golding noted the total is \$186,193.61 on the high end without the van.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to approve the recommendations under technology, facilities and food service.

Superintendent Weaver requested to add an additional storage container because if we are adding the athletic equipment we need a place for them.

Ms. Lavallee WITHDRAWS her MOTION.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to accept the recommendations under technology as written, facilities as written including adding an additional \$3,800 for a metal storage container (now total is 3) and food service as written.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

Ms. Anzalone is supportive of the van, however, would like to see the cost savings and how much the insurance will be and Ms. Lavallee would like the added maintenance cost to maintain it. Ms. LaPlante noted it was discussed at a prior meeting but will pull that up and bring it to the May 5th meeting. A question was raised who would drive the gator. Ms. LaPlante asked to wait on the gator as she needs to double check. There was a brief discussion regarding the pitching machine and turtle. Ms. Lavallee noted regarding the weight room that it is not just used afterschool, it is used for curriculum during the day. It was confirmed the police use it as well.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to exclude the van and gator for now but approve everything for the golf team, and baseball getting the machine that is \$5,090, the dance team and weight room.

Voting: six ayes, one abstention from Ms. Lavallee, motion carried.

Ms. LaPlante confirms there is no special license needed to drive the van. The total cost of all approved for purchase items is \$80,629 and is a savings for future budgets.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Ms. Crystal Gill, Wilton, thanked Ms. LaPlante for making the explanations easy to understand. She appreciates the amount of effort she takes and to speak in a way they can understand. The netting system that was just approved is huge. Regarding the food service debt, she notes some of those are probably overlooked. She struggled hearing staff have debt, and she doesn't think it should be allowed and you all know how much she loves the staff and hopes it is addressed. In regard to the mini-open house, which is amazing and the PTO will come and is happy to help with anything they need. She heard the Superintendent talk about different people being here, she spoke of many parents who love being here and went to school here and it is the reason we continue to come and give back. Having parents here will help give the parents who are wondering why they should come here and thinks that it is important to try to find a group of parents along with the kids to attend. The Superintendent spoke of Ms. Blais and our community, something that should be addressed is that type of teacher who goes above and beyond for our kids, which is why she loves it here. She knows all of her children and still checks on her son and talks to them about their siblings. These are the things that keep us here. Those are the stories that should be told during that open house why we all stay. She thinks it is important to have multigenerational families, and we have a lot here in this town, to be there and present and really give their heart.

Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment.

478 **XIV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

479 Ms. Meigs commented that she is learning.
480

481 Ms. Collins voiced appreciation for the year-round PTO webstore and spoke about seeing t-shirts at Dollar General. Ms. Gill
482 informed her those are not from the PTO. Ms. Collins reminded everyone that the open enrollment vote is tomorrow. It is short
483 notice but show up and let the legislators know you care even if you can't show up in person, it helps to drop a line with your
484 representatives so that they know which way you would like them to vote. Hooray for the new dug out and lockers and moving
485 the technology to where the generators are. Good things are happening!
486

487 Ms. Lavallee commented that she wasn't present for the last meeting but read the minutes. She thanked the Board; you had a
488 great discussion, especially about the curriculum and it was good to see that. She spoke of a comment made by Mr. Newton,
489 noting this is just her reflection of it, she is excited about where we are right now as a Board and District. She started on the
490 Board years ago when COVID hit. Ms. Anzalone joined the following year. She feels like there was a while there that as a Board
491 was not really focused on improving, innovating, and getting better. She feels like as a Board we have come so far and as a
492 District. It is very exciting for her because that is why she originally joined the Board so that we could look at how we can be
493 better. What can we do differently and not that we're necessarily doing anything bad, but it is always great to make progress and
494 be innovating. She thanked her fellow board members because we have come a long way and is really excited for what we're
495 going to do next year.
496

497 Ms. Anzalone commented that she agrees with Ms. Lavallee, it has been a complete 180, especially at WLC the school and
498 quality of the school and just the atmosphere since she started. She added she thinks we owe a lot of that to Principal Ronning
499 and the staff in general. Her kids have had a really great experience here; she has loved all their teachers. They've always been
500 great to work with and if anyone has any questions or concerns, it is very easy to reach out to them. She thinks that is why she
501 gets so concerned, her comment earlier about behavior in the classroom. She hates that teachers have to focus their time on that
502 but they're getting distracted and that is causing issues in the classroom. It is not fair to the teachers and doesn't think they
503 should be judged on that. If they're getting distracted because they are dealing with behavior issues. She thinks all the teachers
504 care about the kids and are trying to help the kids and work with them. She also mentioned that she did to see a few of the senior
505 projects and wanted to acknowledge the seniors. She knows how much time and effort her son put into it and the kids work so
506 hard all year long and should be very proud of themselves. It was pretty cool to watch the projects she saw. She spoke of hating
507 to see kids not being able to walk at graduation, she notes it sounds like we're not going to do this and is so glad we decided to
508 not do that.
509

510 Ms. Alley spoke of a public comment about completely overhauling FRES. She is all for analyzing and figuring out ways to fix
511 things and make things work better but overhaul is pretty drastic, especially when there's been so many successes.
512

513 Chairman Golding spoke of the public comment as well, noting this may be unpopular but teachers are here to educate your
514 students. It is not daycare, and behavior management starts in the home and is a parent's responsibility not the teachers.
515

516 **XV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C)**

517 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Mr. Zavgren to enter Non-Public Session to review the non-public*
518 *minutes and discuss personnel matters RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) at 8:47pm.*

519 *Voting: via roll call vote, all aye, motion carried.*
520

521 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

522 The Board entered public session at 9:53pm.
523

524 *A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms.*
525 *Collins.*

526 *Voting: all aye, motion carried.*
527

528 **XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

529 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Alley to adjourn the Board meeting at 9:53pm.*

530 *Voting: all aye, motion carried.*
531

532 *Respectfully submitted,*

533 *Kristina Fowler*
534
535

Bob Newton Comments 4/21/26

1. I agree with Bill Crouse in his comment at the March 17th meeting. The public should be able to comment on any topic germane to the school district. Board can limit time, but unless more than ten people are commenting the limit should be no less than three minutes per speaker.

Specifically, the policy BDEH should be amended: Section 5, should be replaced with the following:

“Comments must be germane to the school district. In the interest of preserving individual privacy and due process rights, the Board requests that comments (including complaints) regarding individual employees or students be directed to Superintendent in accord with the processes set forth in School Board Policies KE and KEB.”

2. I would like to tie a few threads together from points made in previous meetings and administration report. The commotion over pending open enrollment legislation has had a benefit: It appears to have awakened the board and the administration to the problem of the quality of the education we provide. People have focused on the downside risk of excess expenses from students leaving our schools. But let's look at it in a positive frame: We have a great opportunity to make a quantum improvement in the quality of our schools. The real benefit will not be merely financial, but that the children of our towns will be more successful and happier for the rest of their lives.
3. At the last meeting, Mr Golding commented “All roads lead to FRES”. This echoes a point I made at the January meeting. And the poor results on state tests are well-known to us all. Also at that meeting was a complaint from a FRES teacher that teachers are “grinding themselves into the ground” and “it is a nonstop struggle to get through class because of behaviors.”

I suggest that the cause of these related problems is simple: The elementary school is serving our children poorly both in curriculum content and teaching methods. Mental disengagement and disruptive behavior are clear signs that the kids are bored. We can't blame the kids. They did not come in that way. A famous teacher once said, “Children don't resist learning, but they do resist teaching.” Young children are hard-wired to learn. They love challenges and the accomplishment they feel overcoming them. On subjects that interest them, kids want to learn as much as they can as fast as they can. Do our content and methods support that desire? I have studied a fair bit on this topic and have a lot of experience in my own teaching career, but we don't have time for details tonight. But think about your own experience: What makes you tune someone out and seek to create your own entertainment? Is that happening in our schools?

4. In budget and board meetings last year, the question was asked whether the Superintendent should be a part-time job. The superintendent himself said it was a valid idea, but the board was against it. Our superintendent and principals get big salaries. Here's an idea to get a substantial return on our investment in the leadership of the school:

I suggest that this board authorize and direct the Superintendent to take all actions he deems necessary to transform FRES into a world-class elementary school, including changes in curriculum, teaching methods, and personnel as he sees fit. This project should start immediately and as a deliverable, significant changes in the teaching of reading and basic math for grades 1-3 should be implemented starting in September.

I know Superintendent Weaver has the knowledge and experience to do this. The question is whether you all are willing to do it.

If he sees a need for legal cover against the state's micromanagement regulations, the board should apply for Innovation School status under RSA 194-E to get any obstacles waived.

This project is simple but will not be easy. School leaders and teachers will have to make major changes in how they operate, doing different things in different ways from the status quo. But we can't go on doing the same old things in the same old ways and expect better results.