

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, August 11, 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, Paul White, Erin Collins, Darlene Anzalone, and Anna Meigs*

Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principal Tom Ronning, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Technology Director Nicholas Buroker, Curriculum Coordinator Samantha Dignan, and Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Golding called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Superintendent requested to add a nomination for a MS social studies teacher and to move item B under action items (expenditure from capital reserve) to the next meeting on August 25.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavalley and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the adjustments to the agenda moving the capital reserve request to the August 25 meeting and adding an appointment to resignations, appointments and leaves section.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. Bob Newton, Lyndeborough, (complete comments attached) has not been to the last couple of board meetings but has listened to them intently online. Tonight, will focus on two points. He spoke regarding the math coach and why it is needed. He thanked Ms. Alley for her excellent questions during the last meeting. A copy of his comments are attached to these minutes as submitted. He questioned if the curriculum package did not include training for the teachers. He asked if the degreed and professionally certified teachers are not able to teach basic arithmetic to young children. He added we have not started the new curriculum and yet you want to spend more money on a Band-Aid for it. He questioned if you secretly suspect it will not work. He questioned why a math coach would need a bachelor's in math for K-5. As he understands it, it is basic arithmetic plus maybe some areas and volumes of simple shapes. Isn't knowing how to teach effectively more relevant than knowing advanced math. He recommended exploring to add an alternative approach. Math Advantage is an online math curriculum used by the Alpha School, costing \$49 per month per student. You can run a test group of 10-20 students alongside the new curriculum and coach to see which gets better results. He spoke regarding the goals and roadmap. He spoke of the school board's goals being small, looking like an aspiration to mediocrity. The first one, a 10% improvement in test scores is vague and asks if you mean improving FRES English proficiency from 46% to 56% and notes there is nothing in the action plan to show how you will do it. He spoke of the second goal negotiations, being completely vague, filled with happy but meaningless buzzwords. The third goal has the same problems as the second but even worse. The parents and taxpayers do not see your continuing business as usual to be fiscally responsible. Worst of all, none of these goals are about children. You need a goal that addresses the quality of the school experience for the students. Make the kids' goals relevant, challenging and active. Use the most effective teaching techniques and get rid of the counterproductive ones like common core math and whole word reading. Give the kids room to figure things out for themselves and give them interesting material to learn from that is relevant and useful to their lives. Do these things, and he bets that most of your discipline and special education problems will disappear. But doing them will require significant changes in the way this district does its job, including the Board, administration, and teachers. That is the most fiscally responsible thing you can do this year. He welcomes any comments tonight or any other time that people would like to contact him.

Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment. There were no comments.

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59 **V. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE**

60 **a. Reports**

61 **i. Principal's Report/Handbook Changes**

62 Principal Ronning spoke of the summer being outstanding with the facilities crew doing an outstanding job, from flooring and
63 painting. He spoke of hiring a technology education teacher, English teacher and a nomination tonight for an enthusiastic social
64 studies teacher. The Athletic Director position is vacant, having unfortunately lost Ms. Brewster. There are 4 very qualified
65 candidates and once that position is filled, they are fully staffed. He spoke of enrollment going from 278 to 304 at WLC, they
66 have more students who have requested to tour WLC but could not come yet due to the flooring work being done. They will
67 attend the meet and greet and hope we may obtain a few more students. The leadership team meeting went very well. Some of the
68 goals are continuing to push cell phones, increasing student awareness about class time and being on time. We're going to look at
69 handwriting, note taking and computer use. We will end up looking at student outcomes to make sure they're getting the skills
70 necessary to be successful. We will look at reading; students do not read. They can do texts, they can do short things, but there's
71 no pleasure, they don't pick up a book and read. We will look at possibly implementing some time this year for students to be
72 able to read during the day to get some interest because when you read, you write more fluently and reading comprehension goes
73 through the roof with regard to vocabulary skills. He shared some updates in the student handbook in his report and there is a link
74 to the full handbook in there. The athletic parent meeting was just held and the welcome back letter to parents and staff will go
75 out shortly. They had their emergency response plan meeting last week with emergency response personnel talking about the
76 current plan and a couple things to update. Everyone is on the same page with regard to school safety. He spoke of the athletic
77 season starting in a couple of weeks and in his absence, Ms. Draper, Assistant Principal Gosselin have been incredible, organizing
78 schedules, checking transportation, etc. Last year during the athletic advisory meeting the thought of a Booster Club came up.
79 Years ago, they had one, but it faded. Discussion was about what it would take to create a Booster Club to help support athletics.
80 There is a brochure and a table set up in the hall tonight. They don't have the 503C yet but hope to in the very near future. The
81 Booster Club will start this fall with the snack shack. A question was raised whether there are any foreign exchange students
82 coming this year. Principal Ronning confirms there is one from Japan, he believes in 11th grade. Ms. Lavallee noted the Board
83 needs to vote on that, but she has questions about what precipitated that decision that are more appropriate for nonpublic session.
84 A question was raised regarding the uptick of students and if that is across the board. Principal Ronning confirms it is at WLC, he
85 believes they had 4 students who left and 8 who came in. A question was raised regarding discipline. Principal Ronning confirms
86 they wanted to keep it consistent. With regard to failing, he just had a conversation with parents telling them that it depends on the
87 circumstances and gave an example. If they have already been on probation and you know you were on probation and you
88 continue to fail, you're done because school comes first. If it is a situation that is sudden and you've been fine and now are failing
89 three classes, then the question is why. We have a conversation with the student and parents and talk about whether there needs to
90 be time off from athletics to get the grades back up. It doesn't necessarily mean if you are failing the 3 classes you are
91 automatically off, but we look at it. A question was raised that there have been many discussions regarding after school tutoring
92 and has there been any thought for those who are failing but are making an effort by attending tutoring. Principal Ronning
93 confirms they are required to do tutoring. Concern was raised regarding a student failing three classes and being allowed to play.
94 Principal Ronning reviewed the eligibility rules which state you must be passing all classes to play. At the end of the fourth
95 quarter, you have to pass all classes. If you have one or two F's, you are on probation and that means every week you turn in a
96 probation sheet to say you are passing all classes. If you are failing three at the end of the fourth quarter and it's the fourth quarter,
97 not the long class but if it's the end of the fourth quarter, you're not eligible to play. He spoke of some circumstances where it
98 may be all of a sudden there may be something going on in the student's life at that point, it is not necessarily that we should pull
99 them off the team. We may need to put in some corrective action to help you be successful. A question was raised if the warning
100 signs are there and the student has an IEP, is that part of the conversation to revisit the IEP. Principal Ronning confirms, yes.
101 Superintendent Weaver informs the group that updates to the FRES handbook will be presented at the next meeting.

102 **ii. Curriculum Coordinator's Report**

103 Ms. Dignan reports the MS and HS health curriculum is getting a revision this summer. The two teachers teaching those courses
104 have been working on that. She highlighted some of the instructional opportunities this summer noting that many teachers are
105 doing a lot of work over the summer. FRES and LCS innovation group consisting of Kirsten O'Rourke, Jess Hill, Julie Lemire,
106 Andrea Lawner, Morgan Kudlich and Megan Levesque came together and determined a list of priorities. What are the things that
107 we are going to do to support students learning at FRES and LCS and what are we going to change. Some ideas are hands-on
108 outdoor activities and engaging. We wanted to work on interdisciplinary units where math and science work together with music
109 for example. We wanted to personalize it for students and teachers. We came up with a plan, and the teachers are really excited
110 about this idea and would like to present it to the Board in September. She reviewed additional summer professional development.
111 Megan McLaughlin, Megan Levesque and Laura Seal all went to the responsive classroom training. All the FRES core classroom
112 teachers have had this training. Kinley Sullivan and Becky McGrath went to Open SciEd training. Students had summer learning
113 as well with Summer Academy for incoming grades 2-5 with teacher Kirsten O'Rourke as the coordinator teacher and Jess
114 Radloff and Jess Hill were the teachers there. We had Theatre Camp again for grades 1-12 with Morgan Kudlich and Taryn
115 Anderson and at the MS we ran competency recovery with Melissa Norton and Kinley Sullivan. She spoke of her role changing to
116 include not being at FRES one day a week but instead she will be supporting LCS more throughout the week. She will act as the
117 intermediary for LCS and if she cannot resolve the situation, she will call Principal Maghakian who is still the principal of the
118 school. Ms. Dignan will be supporting that middle role. She also worked with Superintendent Weaver taking over the Title I
119 grants. She reported working within three grant years right now. The 24-25 grant year for Title II and Title IV ends. The 25-26

grant year ends September 30 of next year. We just started July 1st, the 26-27 grants for Title I, Title II and Title IV. We have an activity that we're calling Spring into Fall for those students who are part of the W.I.N. program and if you were offered Summer Academy or Title I tutoring last year you may be eligible for this. It is to bolster the skills and combat that summer slide. It will run in the month of September. That was approved this summer along with the math coach. Kira Brewster and Bridgette Fuller worked collaboratively to make sure that all our Title I documents and files are all squared away and ready to go. They reviewed data and started looking at the students who may be eligible for "Spring into Fall" and are looking at professional development for the Title I tutors. That was all done this summer with the 25-26 grant. For the 26-27 grant, ideas were put on the consolidated application that we talked about back in May. Also tutoring for all the buildings and continuing with the math coach in Title II. Also, for the 25-26-year grant is the mentoring program. She worked with Assistant Principal Gosselin to add a new component this year to the mentoring program to support the 2nd year teachers and not just the 1st year teachers. For the 26-27 year, we talked about in the consolidated application and continuing to get responsive classroom training for teachers, having a math book study and continuing the math professional development with Title IV which is primarily student centered. We added the Chess Club, Lego Club after school approved at FRES. We heard a lot about executive functioning for students moving from the elementary school to MS where students are more independent. We found an executive functioning sort of program to support them so that there's a structure to support all the sixth graders coming in. She confirmed the math coach is 100% grant funded; there is no budget impact this year. A question was raised whether there is a way to easily look at performance after fall testing to see how much growth students who attended Summer Academy had. Ms. Dignan confirms she must do it in a way that is not identifying students, but they did pre and post assessments and she may be able to generalize that. It was suggested to look at total growth for all at FRES and then the one groups from Summer Academy to see what the impact was. Ms. Dignan confirms the consolidated application was approved but did have to make corrections. She notes the DOE has made changes to what they request for grants and new requirements. It was noted an error in her written report shows Title IV executive functioning was at LCS vs. WLC. Ms. Lavallee spoke regarding the math coach and the reasoning behind it. She attended some of the grant meeting where it was discussed that it is good to sometimes get a second opinion if something is not working and you have a teacher who's teaching a particular student and they're using the materials correctly and they think that what they are doing should be working and it is not. One of the reasons why we have the math coach is to get a second set of eyes and that second opinion. The goal is to have them intervene at the earliest ages possible, starting with the younger grades, with the most intensive needs based on our fall screeners and assessments. That way we are catching kids who may be struggling early on and getting teachers multiple ways to support those students because not every student is a cookie cutter student where one thing works for every student. She spoke about last year it was identified that one of cohorts that seem to be struggling is the special education population. She asked if we problem solved that at all or is it still in process. Ms. Dignan confirms it is still in process. We will do a special education self study finding out where our strengths and weaknesses are and then bolstering our strengths and supporting the weaknesses. A question was raised, mainly about the HS, were there any classes you wanted to teach that you didn't have a teacher for. Sometimes classes are not available on the list for students to choose. Ms. Dignan responded sometimes they are not offered because they rotate. Some are offered one year or one semester; she is not aware of any that didn't run because we didn't have teachers to teach it.

VI. SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

Ms. Lavallee spoke that in the course of the discussion regarding goal setting for next year and budget for next year, one thing she looked at was the school board completing a self-evaluation which we have a policy on. She questioned when the right time to do this would be and how do we go about completing it and is it something we want to do individually or all together. Discussion was had, new members are elected in March, would it be appropriate to do it in April, or would fall be better giving time for new members to settle in. It was noted budget season is taking place in the fall. It was suggested to do it as a group as a workshop. It was suggested to do the evaluations starting in the 2nd year, especially for those with three-year terms. Ms. Lavallee clarified it is to evaluate how productive the Board is, the relationship with the Superintendent, financial management and risk management etc. and look at those things and areas for improvement and build on those. It was suggested in March it is a good time to evaluate what happened. If we have a new person, they can join the conversation any time they want but don't have to until they have had a full year. Discussion was had that this suggestion would work and sometimes there are members on the Board for only one year if they are filling a term for a vacant seat. From a timing perspective the Board has more time in March when district meeting has been completed. It was noted if they have a workshop, they need to be cognizant of administrations time if they want to have an additional meeting. It was suggested to think about goals for the Board, what we want to accomplish, just a couple of key things and start thinking about what's important to you as a board member then at a future meeting we can come back and discuss it, determine what the 2 or 3 goals would be for this year and then evaluate how we did on the goals. Ms. Lavallee suggested if the discussion is kept short they could have a workshop at 6PM prior to a board meeting and go from there. A brief discussion was had regarding when to hold it. It was suggested and no objection was heard to schedule September 22 at 6PM, and again either the last meeting in March or first meeting in April to have a discussion/workshop and if everyone comes prepared it should go fairly quickly.

VII. HOUSE BILL 1300 (copy of the slides are attached)

Superintendent Weaver reviewed HB 1300 has been signed by the Governor and it significantly impacts our district and how we build a budget and the ceiling that gets placed on the budget. There is also a cap on SAU administration costs. This law applies to every public education district in the State of NH and will be on the ballot in November. He spoke of looking at the impact over the summer and will work with the Budget Committee and how this law affects the budget. Hopefully at the end of tonight we can dig a little deeper into HB 1300 and talk about the impact and what this bill is about. A slide show was presented; a copy can be

found with the minutes. He explained budget process starts early, for us in July and August as a school digging into it. This year there is some expectation but not as clear as it was 2 years ago. In the absence of HB 1300 we always looked at the budget as being fiscally responsible and taking that very seriously. We identify our needs and build a lean budget that the community will support. The last few years since he has been here, the community has always supported us even adding money in when we reduced it. There is ample support for the public to participate and be involved. They don't vote until district meeting in March but the opportunity to find out what the budget means and where the funds are going is always there. At district meeting the voters have the opportunity to increase or decrease the budget and people raise their hands and talk about it. This year the voters will need to consider 2 questions, but they are together. The first is to place a hard ceiling on 6% of the SAU administrative cost and that 6% isn't negotiable. The other is about limiting or capping the increase in property tax levy. So how much we increase our school budget and how much we essentially charge the community members to pay for that budget. Right now, we're looking at that cap being tied to an inflation rate from last March. Right now, he believes it is 3.6% in this corridor in the northeast region. We're looking at CPI, that inflation rate as a cap combined with new construction and property growth. He thinks what's important to note for us is we're really digging into our administrative costs to see what the law says needs and what needs to be included in that 6%. He does not know where that 6% came from but seems reasonable without knowing any other number. We are still trying to understand the bill. He will be attending a workshop with Ms. LaPlante along with other superintendents and business administrators in NH regarding the bill and wants more information before we communicate it out to the community. He may hold a public hearing. We want to educate voters on the pros and cons of HB 1300 and what happens if it is voted in and what happens if it's voted down in our district. Ms. LaPlante spoke of this being their best guess of what this law is going to mean. They have not received any cheat sheets from any of the associations: this is really digging into the law and really analyzing it. If something changes, it's due to new interpretation. Essentially if HB 1300 is approved, our expenditure growth is calculated off the property tax that bills that are sent out to the communities and our growth is limited by the rate of inflation for March of the current year as well as some property value changes. If property values increase across the two towns a net .08% then we can add that in but it's a very difficult calculation that even the DRA is having a difficult with. It limits how much we can bill our communities, and this applies to all of our appropriations. It is not just the general fund. It includes our capital reserve funds, our negotiated CBA's, any one-time special warrant articles such as we've had the tennis courts in the past years; it is across all of our dollars that we're asking to spend. It would implement a 6% cap on SAU and central office budgets not necessarily just the people but budgets as a whole. It is very specific about what those are. It is not us assigning who we think should be there. We have to follow the algorithm. She thinks that is the piece that's going to get some tweaking as we go along. Regardless of whether this passes or not the way the state law is written, it appears again in another 2 years regardless of whether it passes or not. FY 2027-2028 will be the first impact, the budget we are just about to start building. A question was raised how we go about planning if we don't know. Ms. LaPlante responded that she wanted to put the warrant article language in there (on slide) and there are some key things. It's not to grow beyond the prior year's amount of the tax levy, not the budget, the tax levy which means whatever we appropriated minus our revenues to the district or to the community minus the state revenues and it is kind of that flat bill that we send out at the bottom, factoring all of that out. It significantly reduces that. It takes out of the equation the unspent funds we return. The SAU central office spending may not exceed 6% of the total school district appropriations and the bonded costs are excluded from that. We would kind of take that out of the equation. Adoption requires a 3/5 majority vote, a simple 60%. When you go back and you look at what the voting population looked like of votes cast in November 2022 election, it was over. In the November 2024 election there were over 3700 votes cast. It is not a presidential election this year so theoretically it might be fewer folks showing up. Fewer people still mean the same exposure to us. A question was raised what is the point of this. Superintendent responded that there are a couple of slides on the benefits that they have identified by some supporters of the bill and then also some concerns too from people that oppose it. In general, he thinks there is concern in every state but certainly in NH that our property taxes keep going up and its' really hampering people that are on fixed incomes and is becoming a struggle because the state doesn't fund public education here the way it does in let's say in Massachusetts or maybe Vermont and Maine. It is all dependent on property taxes and there is a lot of pressure there. Perhaps this is a tool where the community has to keep property taxes down. Maybe it is an opportunity for people to vote and say we are really getting priced out of our community and we have to slow down the expenditures. There are a lot of big items we can't control like health insurance. We thought 15% was high but it came in at 35%. We are trying to stay as objective as possible. A question was raised that the budget process had already started, how many budgets are being prepared and how much extra work is being put into that. Superintendent responded we have a joint meeting on the 25th and it does have an impact on how we move forward. The SAU 6% is a hard number, and the only override is if at district meeting a supermajority overrides it. Do we start by staying under the tax cap and giving an artificial 3.6% or do we move forward with the budget we need and start reducing that with the Budget Committee. He is hoping they provide some directions on how to approach it. He spoke about 2 years ago, being given a ceiling to stay under and worked hard to stay under that, but we were still over it because there were costs and items that we needed to make sure student needs were being met academically and that we are moving forward. He gave a scenario of the tax cap being approved and then if it was not approved. Discussion continued including seeing it as the state not putting in their share and bailing themselves out for a problem they created. Superintendent added whether we agree with it or not and how difficult it makes this task of building the right budget for our kids in the system, we have to move forward. He spoke of needing to make difficult decisions and we cannot allow a law to fracture our district and take steps back from the leaps and bounds we have made. He spoke of not coming forward with any more staff cuts. Discussion continued. Ms. LaPlante reviewed the slides noting she wanted to take the paper equation and give it some real dollars and cents. She reviewed how it is calculated and reviewed the slide showing how school property tax is calculated. For FY 2027 the budget the voters approved in March 2026, that is our full bucket of our appropriations. We back out our revenues and unspent funds. These are estimates right now until the

DOE 25 is certified. It is taking our total allowable spend minus our revenues, what we anticipate returning from unspent funds in FY 26 minus state aid, minus adequacy. That brings us down to \$12,572,848. We are taking that \$12,572,848 and backing out those bonded costs within the FY 27 budget. That brings our new number down from which our cap is based to \$11,000,000. Then times the rate of inflation of 3.6%. We are not assuming there's any measurable property growth since it's not clearly defined right now. We're not factoring that in and that takes our ceiling right now to \$430,844 and that is all of our costs. That would be our FY28 operating budget. That would be year 1 of the collecting bargaining agreement for the WLCTA as well as it would be capital reserve funding requests. We automatically are year 2 of our CBA for the support staff. When you compare that to the \$16,000,000 that we first started with we are really only looking at a 2.57% increase. It is not 3.6% on our operating budget, it's 6. Six percent cap on the bill sent to the communities which further reduces it. How would this impact our district. We already know right off the bat that \$26,600 for year 2 of the support staff CBA that voters approved in March with no knowledge that there was going to be a cap put in place. Twenty-three thousand for year 2 of our transportation contract. Last year health insurance was over 34%, she is estimating a 15% increase for this budget, \$336,430, and we are already just shy of that cap. We have minimum cost of living increases for our non-affiliated staff, and we want to keep them, we cannot overlook them just because they don't have a CBA. We have year one of 2 different contracts coming up. With special education costs everything is variable until we get our student population in and can evaluate the students' needs. We don't know what we're going to have for unforeseen needs in July 2027. She noted in her time here in the district, we have done a great job, Board, Budget Committee and Administration to align our spending so that it completely supports our students and staff and it is not going to unfunded positions, we don't keep unfunded position in the budget to inflate it, every dollar goes to somebody with a face because we are a small district. Now that we have made all those cuts over the years, we literally have no place else that we can cut without adversely impacting students or eliminating programs, costs are going to continue to rise. We can't control NH Retirement which is currently fixed at 19%. Electricity and fuel, transportation SPED, employee salaries, building and maintenance, technology, software license fees go up every year by at least 5%, 6%, or 7% but we can't tie those to the rate of inflation. This law does not unfortunately have any provisions in the tax cap for one-time anomalies. What happens if costs exceed the cap. We're talking that we have to cut \$430,000 but there's also a mechanism in place that the votes at district meeting could override the tax cap. If voters approve it in November theoretically in March at district meeting when we count voters, those folks 66% or more could override the tax cap. If we don't get that supermajority then we are looking at \$430,000 and delaying purchases, reducing staff, increasing class sizes, and postponing maintenance whether that is in the operating budget or within the CIP. How does that affect future programs? It limits new initiatives, defers curriculum adoption and honestly could mean the closure of LCS which has a 1-year savings, it does not have substantial subsequent year savings. We want to be objective about this; we see it through our lens but there is a whole other side. She reviewed the slide about the potential benefits of a tax cap, including increasing predictability in local property taxes, encouraging districts to prioritize spending, promoting long-term fiscal discipline and providing taxpayers with additional protection against budget growth. She noted we already have the mechanism in place. Voters are already able to make those decisions. We will not get our health insurance rates until after the November vote. It was suggested to have more than 1 public meeting to explain, there will be a lot of misinformation in the community and on Facebook. Ms. LaPlante added that this is the public's money and we take our roles very seriously as stewards of that money. We are happy to answer any questions and are transparent about where those dollars go. Superintendent added it is fortunate to have a district meeting where voters can out and hear about it and ask questions. We already had those mechanisms regarding the budget in place within our district and the taxpayers continued to support us. This tax cap is a one-size fits all for every district. It doesn't matter if you are Manchester or Rochester, it will affect all the same, but they have more dollars to spend. He spoke of wanting to start getting the word out to the community so they can understand this. Maybe there are some things we are not thinking of. He gave examples of some questions to think about including, what educational opportunities are most important, how should the district balance affordability with education and what does that look like. Our goal is to have a series of opportunities we can present and provide feedback to the public. Ms. Lavalley expressed her personal views and did not speak for the Board. She has spoken to many community members and others across NH. She noted the legislation put forth of all the benefits listed, not one was to improve education in this state. She spoke of it making it more difficult. She expressed frustration, the legislative update is 230 pages long and it has been happening year after year. She spoke of the additional work that has been put on the district and amount of time it takes which comes from the same legislators that are telling us to be fiscally responsible and spend less on administrative costs. They have increased reporting and that's not just at the state level, it is happening at the federal level. She gave the example of the consolidated application we needed to fill out and the hours we had to spend on that. She spoke of town meetings being around for centuries and hopes every voting citizen takes time before November to look into what this is doing to the education of the next generation, the people who will be our lawyers, our nurses, our doctors, our mechanics, our plumbers, because those are the people who will be affected by this. Superintendent spoke of going to a workshop and based on that he will make updates to the PowerPoint and will report out. His plan is to have communication with families, public meetings and anyone who is interested in coming. Ms. LaPlante will be meeting with the Budget Committee Chair on Thursday. Discussion continued including the experiences are different in districts and this is not local control.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. White and SECONDED by Ms. Alley to approve the minutes of June 9, 2026, as amended.
Voting: five ayes, three abstentions from Chairman Golding, Ms. Collins and Ms. Anzalone, motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to approve the minutes of June 23, 2026, as written.

Voting: five ayes, three abstentions from Ms. Lavallee, Ms. Meigs and Mr. White, motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Alley and SECONDED by Ms. Anzalone to approve the nonpublic minutes of June 23, 2026, as written.

Voting: six ayes, two abstentions from Ms. Lavallee and Mr. White, motion carried.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Facilities Committee

Ms. Alley reported the committee just met before the Board meeting. Most of the meeting was dedicated to hearing about an energy audit or the ability to have one done for our school and what that would mean. The committee is not ready to give details or have someone come to present to the Board. The committee needs to discuss whether or not they want to pursue it. It was a good presentation. The next meeting is September 28, at 5PM.

ii. Negotiations

Chairman Golding reported there is nothing to report, there was no meeting. The next meeting is August 20, and an update will be provided on August 25.

X. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES

a. FYI-New Hire-Arianna Simmer-PCS-LCS

b. FYI New Hire-Elizabeth Kep-ABA-LCS

Superintendent reviewed the new hires.

c. Resignation-Amber Brewster-EMS English Teacher-WLC

Superintendent reviewed the resignation.

He noted that we were lucky that Chairman Golding was given the authority to appoint any teachers over the Board's July break as we were able to hire 2 teachers.

d. Appointment-Kierra Bertin-MS-English Teacher-WLC

Superintendent reviewed the nomination for Ms. Bertin.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to accept the nomination of Ms. Kierra Bertin, MS English Teacher at a salary of \$50,000, Bachelors, Step 1.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

e. Appointment-David Matuszek-Technology Teacher-WLC

Superintendent reviewed the nomination for Mr. Matuszek.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the nomination of Mr. David Matuszek, Technology Education Teacher, at a salary of \$60,000, Bachelors, Step 11.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

• Appointment-Carlyanne Fryatt-MS Social Studies Teacher-WLC

Superintendent reviewed the nomination. He noted that this position was previously filled but the teacher's position had been reduced (RIF) at her past district and later put back in, so she returned to her prior district.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the nomination of Ms. Carlyanne Fryatt, MS Social Studies Teacher, at a salary of \$52,000, Bachelors, Step 3.

A question was raised regarding her years of experience. Principal Ronning responded that she was a teacher at Nashua School District whose position was cut. He reports she was a breath of fresh air coming into the interview, she was fantastic.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read. Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment. There were no comments to report.

XII. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. White commented it is good to be back from break. He had the opportunity to see students attending Theatre Camp. They did a fantastic job, they choreographed a number, saw a show and learned about improv. They did a fantastic job. He asked if someone could look into the sound at FRES and wondered if we have anything we could move down there to improve it.

Ms. Meigs commented on what a hardworking, good-hearted Board this is.

Ms. Collins commented, how sad that students don't read. She suggested maybe next time at the Facilities Committee meeting they could talk about jazzing up a space or two inside and outside where students might actually want to go to read if they are going to be given time to do so. Small seating areas, little free library, that kind of thing. She welcomed everyone back.

Ms. Lavallee is very excited for the athletic booster club. She was here when it dissolved. She is excited it is back and we have a group specifically dedicated to looking at that. She looks forward to the innovation presentation that we're getting from teachers. She thanked everyone for their hard work they did over the summer. She thanked Chairman Golding for working on the appointments while the Board was on break.

Ms. Anzalone commented that the library looks great.

Mr. Zavgren commented about reading. He thinks essentially today that people don't read very much anymore. He spoke of an example related to his daughter where students had incorrect information from TikTok but thought it was correct and spoke to them about checking their references and asked if they used any critical thinking. So yes, he believes students need to read but he does not know how to get them motivated to do so. He thinks motivation is the critical thing. He spoke of this briefly. You can read in many different areas; are you going to read about science, history or read fiction. There are probably 14 or 15 different varieties of fiction. He thinks it is good to have an environment where people would feel comfortable reading and have the time to read. What are they going to read and is there somebody they trust who's going to be suggesting things for them to read and helping them enjoy the process of reading. Reading should be enjoyable; it should be relaxing. He does not know how to get students to actually do that.

Ms. Alley spoke as a parent, she is very comforted or grateful to know that the curriculum coordinator, the principal, Superintendent and Business Administrator have been all working hard this summer to give us all the information that we need as parents and community members to be able to really understand the spectrum and the things that we're facing this year and years to come. She appreciates the hard work and for Mr. Hofstetter getting our schools ready and keeping things updated. She loves the idea of reading time.

Chairman Golding spoke of there not being a single person on the School Board that does not put these students first every single time they come into this meeting. The students and what the students do in this school comes first, period. He does not know anybody that puts anything else first on this Board. If you're going to read our minutes, understand and comprehend what you're reading and then you'll know what's going on such as the math coach being grant funded in the Title I. HB 1300, he thinks if the state government is going to step on our toes, but then tells us we need to take control, then stop stepping on our toes and let us take control. And then they need to take a hard look at how towns spend money because he is pretty sure Wilton's percentage increase was way higher than our school budgets, but nobody wants to look at that.

XIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C)

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. White to enter Non-Public Session to review the non-public minutes, personnel and student matters, RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (B) (C) at 8:26pm.

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

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board entered public session at 9:16pm.

A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (B) (C) by Mr. White and SECONDED by Ms. Alley.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the foreign exchange student for this year, (2026-2027).

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. White and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to adjourn the Board meeting at 9:17pm.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristina Fowler*

August 11, 2026

Notes for School Board

I have many notes from the last board meeting but tonight want to focus on only two points:

Math Coach

Goals

- Math coach:
 - a. Why is this needed? Did the new curriculum package not include training for the teachers? Are these degreed and professionally-certified teachers really not able to teach basic arithmetic to young children?
 - b. We have not even started using the new curriculum, and yet you want to spend more money on a Bandaid for it? Do you suspect that it not work?
 - c. Why does the coach need a BS in math for K-5 level math teaching. Isn't knowing how to teach basic math effectively more relevant than knowing advanced math?
 - d. I recommend you explore adding an alternative approach: Math Advantage is an online math curriculum used by Alpha School. It costs \$49 per month per student. You could run a test group of 10-20 students alongside your new curriculum and coach and see what gets better results.
- Goals
 - a. The goals are small. It looks like an aspiration to mediocrity. The first one, a 10% improvement in test scores, is vague. Do you mean improving FRES English proficiency from 46% to 56%, or to 50.5%. And there is nothing in your action plan that says how you will do it.
 - b. Worse, the second one about union negotiations is completely vague - filled with happy but meaningless buzzwords. And renewing union contracts is a basic requirement of the administration's and board's job, not a goal to aspire to.
 - c. The third one has the same problems as the second, but even worse. I can tell you, the parents and taxpayers do not see your continuing business-as-usual to be fiscally responsible.
 - d. Worst of all, none of these goals is about the children. You need a goal that addresses the quality of the school experience for the students.
 - e. Make the kids' goal not just correct answers on standardized tests, but deep understanding of the subjects, real proficiency at the skills, and genuine enthusiasm for learning. Now that would be a real goal.
 - f. Make school relevant, challenging, and active. Use the most effective teaching techniques, and get rid of the counterproductive ones. Give the kids room to figure things out for themselves. Give them interesting material to learn from, that is relevant and useful to their lives.

- g. Do these things, and I'll bet that most of your discipline and special ed problems will disappear. But doing them will require significant changes in the way this district does its job, including the board, administration, and teachers.
- h. And that is the most fiscally responsible thing you can do this year.

UNDERSTANDING NH HB 1300

WHAT WILL VOTERS DECIDE THIS NOVEMBER 3rd?

- STATEWIDE BALLOT QUESTION THAT WOULD CHANGE HOW THE NH MUNICIPAL BUDGET LAW (RSA 32) AFFECTS SCHOOL DISTRICTS
- APPLIES TO EVERY NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL DISTRICT
- POTENTIAL LONG-TERM IMPACT ON SCHOOL BUDGETING

OUR GOALS ARE TO:

- EXPLAIN HB 1300
- EXPLAIN HOW OUR SCHOOL BUDGET IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPED
- DISCUSS HOW A TAX CAP COULD AFFECT FUTURE SCHOOL BUDGETS
- SHARE POSSIBLE LOCAL IMPACT
- ANSWER QUESTIONS

HOW DOES OUR SCHOOL BUDGET WORK TODAY?

01

Drafting

Budget Committee &
School Board build a draft
budget

02

Meetings

Series of public meetings
for open discussion

03

Hearing

Public Hearing held in
February

04

Meeting

Annual District Meeting
held in March

Voter Decision LOCAL VOTERS ALREADY DETERMINE THE ANNUAL SCHOOL
BUDGET BY APPROVING OR REJECTING THE BUDGET

WHAT HB 1300 DOES

01

Statewide Vote

Requires all communities in NH to vote on November 3rd on a question specific to adopting a tax cap for their School District Budgets and related limitations on central office administrative expenses.

02

60% Approval

Must receive a 3/5 (60%) affirmative vote across the votes cast in the Towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough that day to take effect for the budget that will go in to place July 1, 2027.

03

Tax Growth Cap

Would cap annual Tax Bill growth by the rate of inflation and net increase in taxable property growth.

04

Expenditure Limit

Would limit the SAU/Central Office expenditures to 6% of the total operating budget.

IF HB 1300 IS APPROVED:

01

Expenditure Growth

Limited by inflation and net new taxable property growth using the prior year's municipal tax bill as a basis (excluding bonded capital costs). Not based on prior approved expenditures.

02

All Appropriations

Applies to ALL appropriations and Warrant Articles—including the Operating Budget, negotiated CBAs, Capital Reserve, and one-time Special Warrant Articles.

03

Administrative Cap

Also restricts and limits central office administrative expenditures to ensure resources are focused appropriately.

04

November 2028 Ballot

Regardless of whether it passes in November 2026 or not, the question must also be placed on the General Election ballot in November 2028.

TAX CAP WARRANT ARTICLE LANGUAGE

- “SHALL THE TOWN OF X LIMIT PROPERTY TAX GROWTH FOR THE WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT UNDER RSA 31:5-I? IF ADOPTED FOR A TWO-YEAR PERIOD: (1) THE LOCAL PROPERTY TAX LEVY MAY NOT GROW BEYOND THE PRIOR YEAR’S AMOUNT, ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION; (2) SAU CENTRAL OFFICE SPENDING MAY NOT EXCEED 6 PERCENT OF TOTAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROPRIATIONS; AND (3) BONDED COSTS ARE EXCLUDED FROM BOTH LIMITS. THESE CAPS APPLY ONLY TO ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS OF THE SAU CENTRAL OFFICE AND DO NOT AFFECT CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES, OR OTHER MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES. THESE LIMITS MAY BE OVERRIDDEN AS PROVIDED IN RSA 32:5-I. ADOPTION REQUIRES A THREE-FIFTHS ($\frac{3}{5}$) MAJORITY VOTE.”

Important Calculation Note

The Tax Cap is calculated based on the most recent **Tax Levy** (Tax Bill). It is *not* calculated based on the prior year's approved appropriations.

How is School Property Tax calculated?

FY 2027 Approved Appropriations

(Amount approved by voters in March 2026)

- FY26 Revenues
- FY26 Unspent Funds
- FY27 Adequacy Aid & State Education Tax

= **Property Tax Levy**

Estimate of 2026 Property Tax Bill

\$16,835,295 Appropriations

- **\$800,000** Estimated FY26 Revenues
- **\$600,000** FY26 Unspent Budget
- **\$1,189,515** State Education Tax
- **\$1,672,932** Adequacy Grant

\$12,572,848 Property Tax Levy

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE - THE TAX CAP IS CALCULATED BASED ON THE MOST RECENT TAX LEVY (TAX BILL); IT IS NOT CALCULATED BASED ON THE PRIOR YEAR APPROVED APPROPRIATIONS

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE LEVY = PRIOR FISCAL YEAR TAX LEVY (2026 PROPERTY TAX BILL FOR SCHOOLS) - BONDED CAPITAL COSTS (REMOVED FROM 2026 TAX LEVY AND 2028 BUDGET) X (1 + INFLATION + NEW NET TAXABLE PROPERTY GROWTH)

FOR OUR 2028 BUDGET:

~\$12,572,848 - \$604,970 FY27 BONDED CAPITAL COSTS = \$11,967,878 X 3.6% RATE OF INFLATION = \$430,843.61

IF THE BUDGET CAP PASSES, OUR TOTAL ALLOWABLE INCREASES WOULD BE CAPPED AT ~ \$430,844 FOR OUR FY28 OPERATING BUDGET, YEAR 1 OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS (WLCTA, ABA/RBT), YEAR 2 OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT (WLCSSA) AND CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDING REQUESTS (BUILDINGS & ROADWAYS, SPECIAL EDUCATION)

\$430,844 ESTIMATED CAP EQUALS A 2.57% INCREASE FROM OUR TOTAL FY27 APPROVED APPROPRIATIONS

HOW WOULD A ~\$430,844 BUDGET CAP IMPACT OUR DISTRICT?

FY28 KNOWN OR ANTICIPATED INCREASES:

- ~ \$26,600 YEAR 2 OF SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACT
- ~ \$23,000 YEAR 2 OF OUR TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT
- ~ \$336,430 ESTIMATE HEALTH CARE INCREASE OF 15% (LAST YEAR IT WAS >34%)
- ~ \$??? MINIMUM COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR NON-AFFILIATED STAFF
- ~ \$??? YEAR 1 OF ABA/RBT CONTRACT
- ~ \$??? YEAR 1 OF TEACHER'S CONTRACT
- ~ \$??? SPECIAL EDUCATION COSTS
- ~ \$??? UTILITY COSTS (HEAT, ELECTRIC)
- ~ \$??? REPLENISH SPECIAL EDUCATION CAPITAL RESERVE FUND (IF NEEDED)

WHAT COSTS CONTINUE TO RISE OR ARE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL?

- HEALTH INSURANCE
- NH RETIREMENT COSTS
- ELECTRICITY & FUEL
- TRANSPORTATION
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- EMPLOYEE SALARIES
- BUILDING MAINTENANCE
- TECHNOLOGY
- SOFTWARE LICENSE FEES

MANY EDUCATIONAL COSTS INCREASE FASTER THAN INFLATION

WHAT HAPPENS IF COSTS EXCEED THE CAP?

IN THE EVENT OUR FY28 NET APPROPRIATION INCREASES EXCEED \$430,844, THERE IS A MECHANISM FOR VOTERS TO VOTE TO EXCEED THE CAP AT DISTRICT MEETING (MARCH 2027). THIS WOULD REQUIRE AT LEAST 66% OF VOTERS IN ATTENDANCE TO APPROVE THIS MEASURE

IF VOTERS DO NOT VOTE AT DISTRICT MEETING TO EXCEED THE CAP, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL NEED TO CONSIDER (IF NECESSARY) OPTIONS SUCH AS:

- DELAYING PURCHASES
- REDUCING STAFFING
- INCREASING CLASS SIZES
- POSTPONING MAINTENANCE
- REDUCING PROGRAMS
- LIMITING NEW INITIATIVES
- DEFERRING CURRICULUM ADOPTION
- CLOSURE OF LCS

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF A TAX CAP?

SUPPORTERS GENERALLY ARGUE THAT HB 1300 COULD:

- INCREASE PREDICTABILITY IN LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES
- ENCOURAGE DISTRICTS TO PRIORITIZE SPENDING
- PROMOTE LONG-TERM FISCAL DISCIPLINE
- PROVIDE TAXPAYERS WITH ADDITIONAL PROTECTION AGAINST BUDGET GROWTH

CONCERNS RAISED THAT OPPOSE A TAX CAP

OPPONENTS OF A TAX CAP GENERALLY ARGUE THAT HB 1300 COULD:

- LIMIT LOCAL FLEXIBILITY
- IT IS A ONE-SIZE FITS ALL IN EVERY DISTRICT
- WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO RESPOND TO UNEXPECTED COSTS
- INCREASE PRESSURE ON STAFFING AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE
- AFFECT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
- VOTERS ARE ALREADY ABLE TO CUT OR INCREASE SCHOOL BUDGETS AT THE ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

QUESTIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER

- WHAT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT?
- HOW SHOULD THE DISTRICT BALANCE AFFORDABILITY WITH EDUCATION?
- WHICH SCHOOL SERVICES ARE ESSENTIAL?
- WHAT LEVEL OF FLEXIBILITY SHOULD LOCAL VOTERS HAVE IN FUTURE BUDGETS?
- REMINDER - COMMUNITY ALREADY HAS LOCAL CONTROL MECHANISM TO IMPLEMENT BUDGET CAP