

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual District Meeting Minutes
March 10 2018

Present:

School Board Members: Mr. Harry Dailey, (Chair), Mr. Geoffrey Brock, Mr. Matthew Ballou, Ms. Joyce Fisk Ms. Carol LeBlanc, Mr. Mark Legere, Ms. Miriam Lemire, Mr. Alexander LoVerme. Mr. Charlie Post.

Budget Committee Members: Ms. Leslie Browne(Chair), Ms. Karen Grybko, Ms. Pamela Altner, Ms. Dawn Tuomala, Ms. Edwina Hastings, Mr. Jim Kofalt, Ms. Lisa C.M. Post, Mr. Bill Ryan, Ms. Christine Tiedemann.

Absent: Ms. Dawn Tuomala

Other: Moderator Mr. Walter Holland, School District Clerk Ms. Mary-Jane Ryan.

Moderator Holland called the meeting to order at 9:16 AM

Moderator Holland led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The WLC Select choir sang the National Anthem led by WLC music teacher Eric Schneider.

Moderator Holland welcomed attendees.

Mr. Dailey introduced the members of the school board.
Ms. Browne introduced the members of the budget committee.

Moderator Holland introduced the SAU staff , made the following announcements and explained the rules of the meeting.

The historical society will have books with photos available on meeting day.

There is a Girl Scout cookie sale outside the meeting room.

Explained voice vote and hand vote, informed the attendees of a request for paper ballot for Article 7.

Gail Proctor of Wilton requested the names on the request for paper ballot be read:

- Deborah Morville of Wilton
- Tim Morville of Wilton
- Edwina Hastings of Wilton
- Lisa Post of Lyndeborough
- Charlie Post of Lyndeborough

- Tracy Ewing of Wilton
- Michael Ewing of Wilton
- James Kofalt of Wilton
- Robin Maloney of Wilton

Rules of the meeting were approved.

Moderator Holland read the voting announcement as follows:

To the inhabitants of the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District in the Towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough, in the County of Hillsborough, State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote upon Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District affairs:

**You are hereby notified to meet on the thirteenth day of March 2018
At the following places in the Town of your residence:**

Wilton : Wilton Town Hall 8:00 o'clock in the forenoon Lyndeborough
Lyndeborough: Old Town Hall (Citizens' Hall) 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon

Polls will not close before 7:00 P.M.

To vote for District officers:

Article 1: To choose one (1) Moderator, by ballot, for the ensuing year.

Article 2: To choose one (1) Member of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years; two (2) Members of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing three years.

Article 3: To choose one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years; two (2) Members of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing three years.

Moderator Holland read the School District Warrant for the annual district meeting March 10, 2018 as follows:

To the inhabitants of the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District in the towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough, in the County of Hillsborough, in the state of New Hampshire qualified to vote in school district affairs are hereby notified and warned of the Annual Meeting which will be held as follows:

Date: **March 10, 2018**, Time: **9:00 a.m.**, Location: **Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle/High School, 57 School Road, Wilton, NH 03086.** , Details: **Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle-Senior High School Auditorium**

Moderator Holland read Article 4:

ARTICLE 4 : District Operating Budget

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended amount of \$12,344,685 for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents, and for the payment for the statutory obligations of the district. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board

Recommended by the Budget Committee

Tax impact Lyndeborough – (\$0.36)

Tax impact Wilton – (\$0.40)

A MOTION was made by Mr. Harry Dailey and SECONDED Mr. Geoff Brock to approve article 4.

Mr. Dailey spoke to Article 4 stating that a lot of work and time went into this

The proposed budget for the 2018-19 school year is \$12,344,685 which is a reduction over the current year's budget of \$206,810 which is a 1.65% decrease.

The tax impact for the citizens of Lyndeborough on an average home valued at \$214,300 is a decrease of \$78.59 per year. The tax impact for the citizens of Wilton on an average home valued at \$208,700 is a decrease of \$83.60.

This shows the history of the WLC school district budget over the past seven years. In this time, there have been budget increases but the district has done some positive things for education and for our community. In the seven year time period shown the district has renovated two schools, continued to pay off the bond for the renovation at WLC, implemented a one to one technology initiative for students, improved the technology infrastructure of the district, integrated the RISE program to reduce cost in the district while providing excellent services to students, created a long term preventative maintenance program, increased professional development for staff, implemented new curriculums in all areas, hired a curriculum coordinator as well implementing response to intervention specialist, created a program to target instructional practices where students need them the most and approved multiple collective bargaining agreements.

The approved budget in 2011-12, without warrant articles, was \$11,397,771. The proposed budget for the coming school year is an increase of \$946,914 since 2011-12. This is an average annual increase of

1.2% compared to 2011-12. This increase is below the average rate of inflation over those seven years which is 1.7%.

The proposed budget includes the reduction of one teacher in the fifth grade due to changes in enrollment, because of a retirement there will be no need for a forced reduction in staffing.

With the reduction of this teacher, class sizes in grade K-8 will range between 14 and 21 students. This is well within the WLC policy for class size. These projections for class size are an estimate using the student enrollments as of March 1.

Our program in grades 9-12 will continue to be able to offer the wide variety of courses we currently run and allow for small class sizes in honors and advanced placement courses as well as electives depending on course selection by our students.

For improvement in the area of curriculum, Florence Rideout students will be in the second year implementing the reading curriculum and will add on the writing component of the readers/writers workshop curriculum. The school board and budget committee have both shared concerns in regard to math scores that are below expectations. In an effort to increase the capacity of our elementary teachers in the area of mathematics we will be contracting with a math consultant to work with our staff throughout the year to model and implement changes in instructional and assessment practices. New materials will be purchased for fifth grade social studies.

At the middle/high school new software will be purchased to work on targeted instruction for those students who are struggling in grades 6-8. There will be a new science and technology curriculum implemented to allow students to study opportunities in the sciences and engineering. We will be offering an Advanced Placement course in American History for the first time.

District wide, there will be increased professional development opportunities to enhance our practices in instruction and assessment.

Proposed budget items to support instruction and create a better environment in our building include touchpad electronic devices which will be included for second grade instruction. A replacement cycle has been established for aging pieces of technology, furniture and cafeteria tables. A new specialty computer lab will be created to allow students to explore opportunities in engineering. There will be new equipment purchased for science classes in grades 6-9 to create new opportunities in our instructional program. Security cameras at WLC will be replaced with higher resolution units and we will be looking to upgrade the technology infrastructure.

Discussion:

Pamela Smith of Wilton asked what is a Curriculum Coordinator?

Superintendent Lane explained a curriculum coordinator looks for strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and makes recommendations, works with data and teachers to create an appropriate and effective curriculum.

Voting on Article 4

Article 4 Passed by Voice Vote

Moderator Holland read Article 5:

Warrant Article 5- CBA with Support Staff

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School Board and the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Support Staff Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

<i>Fiscal year</i>	<i>Estimated increase</i>
<i>2018-19</i>	<i>\$ 6,575</i>
<i>2019-20</i>	<i>\$16,523</i>
<i>2020-21</i>	<i>\$16,601</i>

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,575 for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. This article is an individual warrant article and does not include appropriations contained in special or other individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board

Recommended by the Budget Committee

Tax impact Lyndeborough - \$0.01

Tax impact Wilton - \$0.01

A MOTION was made by Mr. Matt Ballou and SECONDED by Mr. Alex LoVerme to approve article 5.

Mr. Ballou spoke to Article 5

The support staff includes 26 staff members who are part time secretaries, custodians, para-educators and other instructional support staff. This contract has a first year cost of \$6,575 resulting in an annual tax impact of 1 cent creating a \$2.48 increase for residents of Lyndeborough with a home valued at \$214,300 and for a home owner in Wilton with a home valued at \$208,700 the annual tax impact of 1 cent will create an annual tax increase of \$2.63.

This is a three year agreement which includes salary increases of 2.5% annually and the removal of step increases from the contract. The average annual salary increase for all members would be \$464.21. The

first year of the contract has a low increase due to an agreement to change health insurance plans that will save the district approximately \$8,000 per year. The district will pay 87% of the insurance premium and the employee will pay the remainder.

The agreement creates a new evaluation system for employees that will include identified goals, objectives and meetings during the school year to monitor progress. The probationary period for employees is increased from 60 to 90 days to allow the administration to have a more in depth assessment of the staff before deciding to keep a staff person employed on a more permanent basis. The pay for staff will be equalized throughout the school year so staff are not negatively affected by school cancellations.

Discussion:

Neil Faiman of Wilton asked if the \$16,000 is relative to this year.

Superintendent Lane replied \$16,000 is relative to this year.

Voting on Article 5

Article 5 Passed by voice vote

Mr. Ballou requested on behalf of the school board that Article 6 be withdrawn.

Voting on withdrawal of Article 6 passed by voice vote

Moderator Holland read Article 7:

Warrant Article 7- Full Day Kindergarten

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to approve expanding of the current kindergarten program to full day and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$117,745 for this purpose. Such cost to be offset by revenues which may be available by the State of New Hampshire on an annual basis. This article is an individual warrant article and does not include appropriations contained in special or other individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board

Not recommended by the Budget Committee

Tax impact Lyndeborough - \$0.08

Tax impact Wilton - \$0.09

A MOTION was made by Ms. Carol LeBlanc and SECONDED by Ms. Joyce Fisk to pass Article 7

Ms. LeBlanc spoke to Article 7

The cost to the district to implement a full day kindergarten program is \$117,745, this amount is reduced in year one by an anticipated revenue of \$60,200 if we have 40 students. The amount to be

funded by the district in year one would be \$57,545. This creates an annual tax impact for a homeowner in Lyndeborough with a home valued at \$214,300 of \$17.14 and in Wilton for a home valued at \$208,700 an annual tax increase of \$18.78.

The increased cost to implement the kindergarten program would include hiring a full time kindergarten teacher, one half time preschool teacher and a part time food service worker and some additional furniture. This is assuming we have more than 34 students. If 34 or fewer students enroll, the district would not hire the kindergarten teacher.

Currently the staff at LCS has 2.5 teachers covering 3 half time sections of kindergarten and 2 half time section of preschool.

We anticipate needing three full day kindergarten teachers. In order to do that the staffing would be created so that the:

- Teacher who is full time kindergarten remains full time kindergarten.
- Teacher who splits AM kindergarten and PM preschool would be full time kindergarten.
- Teacher who is half time preschool would be full time preschool.
- District would hire one full time kindergarten teacher.

A concern was raised in the discussion of the kindergarten program about the long term support by the state to fund full day kindergarten. The concern was that in the past the Department of Education at the state and federal levels have decreased funding for educational purposes in areas such as Medicaid reimbursement and catastrophic aid as well as changing the formula for adequacy. The additional \$1,100 per student that is being distributed to school districts that offer full time kindergarten is part of RSA 287:47 that was voted on and approved by the state legislature and governor. The Department of Education does not have the ability to reduce this dollar figure as they do with other funds. So unless the law changes, these additional funds will be available.

There has been conversation regarding the effectiveness of full day kindergarten with the school board, strategic planning committee, and the budget committee. Data from the department of education does not provide us with guidance to determine the effectiveness a full day program versus a half day program.

In the conversations from the strategic planning committee a concern was raised about the schedule for full day kindergarten. Information was requested as to what a full day kindergarten student experience would be like for students.

In our current half day program the current schedule allows for 2 hours of instruction for students. The areas in bold print are considered to be instructional time.

A full day kindergarten program would increase the instructional time to 4 hours per day. Included in the day beyond the instructional periods are time for students to have recess, lunch, free play and quiet

time. This is age appropriate and allows for not only instructional time but social interaction time which is important in developing positive school routines and behaviors.

The full day program will increase the annual instructional time by 348 hours in a 174 day school year.

This full day program also gives added time to learn the skills of being with others which are very important to be successful in first grade and beyond.

Questions arose in the Strategic Planning Committee sessions as to what choices parents and guardians have if the district implemented a full day kindergarten program.

Do parents have the option to enroll their child in kindergarten at age 5?

Kindergarten is not a requirement for any family. If a family does not enroll in their child in kindergarten it is their choice.

Would there be a half day kindergarten option if parents wanted that for their child?

A half day option would be available to those students who have an IEP which recommends it or a 504 plan that indicates the half day program is an appropriate option.

What if a family felt their child wasn't ready for first grade when they turned six?

Each family would have the choice as a child reaches the mandatory attendance age to choose whether or not to enroll their child in kindergarten or first grade if their child had not attended kindergarten. Right now, the only option is to enroll the student in first grade

If a parent doesn't feel their child is ready for first grade after a full year kindergarten program, does the student need to move into first grade?

After a student completed a year of kindergarten a recommendation would be made after the student is assessed as to whether or not the student was ready for first grade. The assessments would be both academic and social. If the family feels they want do not follow the staff recommendation a meeting would be scheduled to discuss the issues at hand but the family would make the final decision.

The majority of the school board chose to support this warrant article for several reasons.

- Current district data through our STAR 360 assessment indicates that at the beginning of the school year more than half of our first graders did not have the basic skills to be ready to read. In addition, at the mid-year all of our kindergarten students still have a way to go to be prepared to be readers. The additional 348 hours of annual instruction in Kindergarten would be an effective way to get students ready to be readers in first grade.

- In looking at how other school districts that are similar to ours are doing on standardized testing in the third grade who have full day kindergarten, on average their students demonstrate proficiency at a higher level.

- Exposing students to specialized instruction in art, music, and physical education would be beneficial.

- Our students are competing against students statewide, 70% of those students have the ability to enroll in full day kindergarten.

- The majority of the school board felt that the addition of 348 hours of kindergarten instruction would be helpful in getting students to be ready for their educational journey. The potential to decrease long term educational services in reading and speech would not only benefit the student but reduce cost to the district. Early identification of learning issues aides in finding solutions that help to remedy some situations early and with less stress for the student.

- There is a long term cost to the district for staffing with the implementation of full day kindergarten but the majority of the board felt that the expense would yield positive results for students.

- The majority of the board agreed that there are things that go beyond the world of academic achievement. The feeling was that a full program builds skills socially as well as academically our students will be better prepared for all aspects of their educational future in first grade and beyond.

Discussion:

Matthew Smart of Lyndeborough asked about a half day option for parents wanting half day kindergarten for their children.

Superintendent Lane replied there is no half day option unless the school provides an IEP or 504 or they have the option of not enrolling in the kindergarten.

Kevin Boette of Lyndeborough explained the state will balance their budget by reducing funds to the towns, they may only fund this once. Mr. Boette referred to studies on full day versus half day.

Mr. Dailey stated there is no specific study saying it is absolutely the best way to go, but there is enough to bring it to discussion. A lot of time was spent looking into this.

Scott Chapman of Wilton asked why the budget committee did not recommend.

Mr. Kofalt explained there is a dropping enrollment and we have to adjust expenses accordingly; our state aid per student is less because of the declining enrollment.

The budget committee is not convinced of the value of a full day kindergarten, half day performed better than full day. They are a statistical tie. The Dept. of Education data does not provide effective proof to invest in it. When comparing to other towns, is it really the kindergarten or is it another issue affecting the testing.

Superintendent Lane stated that half of our first graders did not have the necessary skills to start first grade. They are better by third grade but there is a cost to the district to catch them up.

Mr. Chapman asked why do we have to do this if it is normalized by third grade? and what is the plan for reductions if we save money by providing full day kindergarten?

Superintendent Lane replied we can not predict the success of this and predict a definite savings. When asked how we compare across the state Superintendent Lane replied we are 19% above cost and our scores are lower.

Mr. Chapman asked where is the data to support that this will help?

Superintendent Lane agreed the data is conflicting, there is no specific data.

Vicki MacPherson of Wilton, a Kindergarten teacher explained that in 20 years the requirements are different than they used to be. Expectations are higher, they have a full time curriculum and only a half day to do it in, also reminding everyone there needs to be time for play.

Shannon Silva of Lyndeborough expressed the decrease in population may be because as a school district we need full time kindergarten to attract families to stay and we are spending more money and more time to catch students up by third grade.

Cynthia Foss of Wilton ,a speech therapist spoke on children being behind, stating the extra instructional time will be beneficial to students.

Kristen Hardwick of Wilton stated more people will move here if we have full time kindergarten, we need to give people a reason to move here.

A resident of Wilton expressed with the dynamics of today's families a full day kindergarten may support a safe environment for the day.

Sandy Reid of Wilton asked to call the question.

Moderator Holland said he would hear a few more questions.

A resident of Wilton asked if we are being in tune with the development of students, is this kindergarten curriculum to much, too many assessments? People are not moving here because we are not giving out what they pay for.

A resident of Wilton asked Mr. Post why he opposed this.

Mr. Post replied that the half day program is going away and some families want the half day. We began with a curriculum coordinator last year let's finish that first and see if those investments work. There are 17 elected officials and only 6 voted for it.

Fran Bujak of Lyndeborough stated appreciation of the school board to keep costs down. If a student has an extra day are they better off at school or at home? A lot of people have spoke in favor of this and the cost is not a lot.

A resident of Wilton asked is there research on what percentage actually participate in a full day.

Superintendent Lane replied more than half participate in a full day.

Jeffery Jones of Wilton spoke in favor of full day.

Moderator Holland put Article 7 to a paper ballot vote

VOTING ARTICLE 7

Article 7 passed by Paper Ballot vote

115 Yes / 70 No

Moderator Holland read Article 8

Warrant Article 8- Adding Funds to Building/Equipment & Roadway Fund

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 to be added to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum is to come from general taxation. This article is a special warrant article and is not included in the operating budget warrant article. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board

Recommended by the Budget Committee

Tax impact Lyndeborough - \$0.11

Tax impact Wilton - \$0.11

A MOTION was made by Mr. Mark Legere and SECONDED by Mr. Alex LoVerme to pass Article 8

Mr. Legere spoke to Article 8

The cost of the warrant article is \$60,000.

The residents of Lyndeborough would be responsible for \$17,280 of the total cost creating a tax impact of 11 cents with an annual tax increase of \$23.

The residents of Wilton would be responsible for \$42,180 of the total cost creating a tax impact 12 cents with an annual tax increase of \$24.

This fund was created by the district in order to ensure that funds would be available to support the facility needs of the district on a long term basis.

There is a significant investment by both Lyndeborough and Wilton in our school buildings and maintaining them the district will save money in the long run and not be exposed to large costs all at one time. The two projects for the coming school year would be the third year of a five year program to resurface the roof and parking lot repairs both at WLC.

This is a copy of the CIP, we have provided a hard copy on page 39 of your annual report so that you can see the information more clearly. As you can see in the column marked 2018-19 the funding for the roof repair is \$41,100 and the parking lot repair is \$18,900.

Discussion:

Bill Keefe of Wilton inquired about the last bond payment being made and suggested money be set aside to capital reserve for ongoing repairs.

Voting on Article 8

Voice Vote was too close to call. Moderator Holland called for a hand vote.

Article 8 passed by hand vote

109 Yes / 37 No

Article 9: Transact any other business.

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Moderator Holland thanked the custodians, technology staff , the music dept. and the select choir.

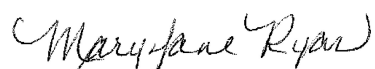
Leslie Browne recognized retiring Budget Committee members Karen Gybko ,Dawn Tuomala and Jim Kofalt; stating this leaves three open seats on the budget committee.

Harry Dailey recognized retiring school board member Geoff Brock.

A MOTION was made to adjourn the meeting and was SECONDED

The motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM

Respectfully submitted,



Mary-Jane Ryan
School District Clerk

