

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE  
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, January 4, 2022  
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School  
6:30 p.m.**

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

Present: *Brianne Lavallee, Jonathan Vanderhoof, Dennis Golding, Jim Kofalt, and Charlie Post Participating online: Alex LoVerme (exited 9:34pm)*

*Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principal Sarah Edmunds, Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Technology Director Jonathan Bouley, Curriculum Coordinator Emily Stefanich, Facilities Director Buddy Erb, and Clerk Kristina Fowler*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman LoVerme called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**III. 6:30PM JOINT BOARD & BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION**

Present: Jeff Jones, Leslie Browne, Christine Tiedemann, Bill Ryan, Lisa Post (6:38pm), Caitlin Maki, Adam Lavallee, and Darlene Anzalone (online)

**a. FY 2022-2023**

**i. Draft Prep for Public Hearing**

Ms. LaPlante reviewed that the draft provided is the same draft 5 presented at the last meeting. She and the Superintendent met with the Budget Committee for a question and answer period; they heard of a potential upwards of \$60,000 in savings from technology. These changes have not been made yet; she would like Mr. Bouley to speak to this. Draft 5 included wages and benefits and non-wages and benefits; she had identified an "error". She spent additional time reviewing the wages budget as she felt it did look excessive. The amount of money showing for the ABA/RBT's was not right. She was able to do a better job to figure out what made up the wages and benefits and did a better job figuring out what makes up non-wages and benefits. It did not show a true reflection of the staffing wages and benefits. Staffing last year's may not have all been in the correct line items, which has been corrected. She provided pie chart showing the total budget increase (\$595,637) and charts breaking out the wages and benefits and non-wages and benefits. The teacher's contract wages made up \$116,410: when it was presented at the district meeting was estimated to be an increase of \$150,000 for FY 23. With the staffing changes and alignments, the district is in a good position with staffing. The overall wages and benefits chart shows, an increase of \$413,791, of that, the support staff contract is \$21,000 (was estimated to be \$19,550 but increase due to staff changes), RISE staffing \$31,052, unbudgeted NHRS \$29,800, dental insurance increase \$5,660, addition of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher \$51,155 (not in last years budget), health insurance \$148,400 and "other" \$10,315 (includes curriculum coordinator salary being an employee vs. contracted service offset by removing the SAU performance incentive of \$61,186 (staff increases for all staff not covered by a CBA). She reiterates that draft 5 was incorrectly stated regarding "people". She confirms it does not change the bottom line. Non-wages and benefits shows an increase of \$181,843 with SPED showing \$145,280 of that increase, food service consumables \$11,935 (increase in food), electricity \$5,500 and transportation contract \$19,130. She notes the transportation contract increase is not from the existing contract but includes an increase from what was budgeted. Mr. Pratt confirmed the SPED increase of \$145,280 is all due to out of district placement.

Mr. Bouley spoke of the ECF grant (Emergency Connectivity Fund) which the district was just awarded \$61,695 in late December. The grant originally closed but was reopened in late September as there was still funding available for hot spots for internet access for people at home who do not have it, laptops or computers for teachers and students up to a \$400 in reimbursement. To qualify for the funding, we need students to be able to access at home. We will not be able to use it for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade cart but can still use the funds and will figure out the best way to use them. We have quotes from vendors for specific amounts and if we tried to make changes and resubmit new quotes, it may be denied. He has a plan of how to move some devices around to meet the needs of what we have previously discussed and still keep access for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade but not 1:1 and some staff would get new devices moving forward. He provided a list of what the funds can be used for. He again noted if we make changes to what we submitted it could affect funding. Chromebooks are the best option because they are under \$400 and covered at 100%. Ms. LaPlante added the goal is to be able to use this to offset the 22-23 budget. Mr. Bouley confirms it eliminates 3 line items (new computer or replacement equipment) for the Chromebooks and we have until 2023 to use the funds but we will need to order soon. He confirms he used the same vendor information for the grant as in the proposed budget. He believes we can use all of the funding by moving things around internally. He notes we have a lot of Chromebooks reaching the end of life this year. We found the 130 Chromebooks deployed this year were purchased with ESSER 2 funds. He has not spent any of the replacement Chromebook money this year, which will allow us to use that money to fund this initiative, be reimbursed

and allocate money for next year's budget. Superintendent confirms we will spend the money and will look at reduction for next year's proposed budget of a little less than a half a percent. It is fortunate that it came at the right time. Ms. LaPlante will send out the 3 lines where the reductions will occur and will incorporate those changes into draft 6 of the proposed budget, the budget increase would then be decreased to approximately \$534,000. Ms. LaPlante asked for confirmation of \$25,000 going into food service and confirmation for amounts going into the capital reserves; once she has this she can provide a true bottom line. Chairman Jones spoke there a few more items coming from the Budget Committee to discuss. They discussed the tennis courts; the next steps had been to obtain estimates. Superintendent responded he and Mr. Erb have worked together to get these, they have one written from Mr. Rimes of about \$25,000 not including the disposal of the fencing and poles and we would need to figure out how to repurpose that or remove it. He does not want the fencing as originally thought. Mr. Erb has met with Mr. Carter today; he is talking about removing the poles, crushing up the asphalt and repurposing it for the road up the fields and around the parking lot. A question was raised if there is any rebar in it. Mr. Erb replies not that he is aware, he does not know of rebar being used in tennis courts. He is coming in about \$16,500. Mr. Carter is talking about leveling, loaming and seeding it, which is extra work. He is willing to include bartering for the old tractor too. That would give about \$3,500 toward the work. Mr. Erb also has a proposal from Mr. White in Milford from December 2020 and that original bid was \$16,000 but with the extra work of \$12,000 brings it to about \$27,300 (bringing in loam, positive drain on outside edge, hydro seeding, athletic seed mix). Superintendent confirms the proposal from Mr. Rimes does not include the loam or seeding. Mr. Erb confirms Mr. Carter will write up a proposal. Mr. Erb suggested having him come to a board meeting to discuss. Ms. Lavallee asked if that is something the Board wants to do. A question was raised, what do we want to use it for. Ms. Lavallee responded there was a discussion on turning it into parking. Chairman LoVerme remembers a suggestion of turning it into practice fields. He adds the less expensive way is to put grass on it. There had also been another quote last year of about \$8,200, just for removal not loaming etc. A question was raised if this would be better to break this into a 2-part project. Would it be wise to find out what it would be to get rid of the fence? It was noted if we are going to do the job, we should just do it all at once. The question was clarified if it would be better to find 2 separate people to the job, removing and repurposing. The discussion continued including, keeping in mind if it is a warrant and it is voted down you can't do it, how would it funded, if we really want to do it then put it in the budget, and support was voiced to remove and repurpose the asphalt for the road and parking edges. It was suggested to put it in the budget and get final quotes. The consensus from the Board was to move forward with hearing Mr. Carter's proposal at the next meeting and research the warrant to look at the language to see if there are any stipulations. Chairman Jones noted assuming it is between \$16,000-\$26,000 he does not think a proposal will sway us. A question was raised if we want it in the budget or not. Mr. Vanderhoof believes it is transparent having it in the budget, we can get quotes and know what it will cost and would give the people the opportunity to say yes or no. It was suggested that if it is important to do, then we should budget for it. A question was raised, what does the insurance company say about it. Ms. LaPlante responded as long as we properly warn the public about dangers then we have done our due diligence. It was noted we have been told it is a hazard but no one has come to inspect it and formally say it is a hazard or that we will lose our insurance. We did use a couple of sections last year for a small tennis team. Discussion continued. It was noted there was past discussion of having a warrant asking if you wanted to continue tennis at a cost of "X" or remove it. It was noted the communities also use it and we need to think of that as well, if we take the tennis courts away, we are taking something away from the towns. A question was raised why it would not be in the town's budget then. Response is it is on school property. Mr. Ryan noted to give time for Ms. LaPlante to do some research; he remembers that the state was involved with the courts. Chairman Jones brought up the storage container and the Budget Committee spoke of using ESSER funds instead of putting it in the budget, cost was about \$8,000. A question was raised if the Superintendent and Ms. LaPlante had looked at this. Superintendent responded we did talk about it and if it meets the terms of ESSER, we agree we have extra equipment and chairs, desk for social distancing and talked about how much it would be to buy 3 or 4 but the cost is unpredictable now. We need storage and these seal keeping out mice, etc. It would be great for LCS as we have a lot of toys and outdoor stuff we need to store and it is in the hallways currently. FRES is out of storage, we would have to have it up at WLC and find a way to transport things back and forth. The sheds on the athletic fields have to come down and will sooner than later. There is an identifiable need, it would be appropriate to use ESSER 3 funds within the guidelines but we need to come up with a figure and see when we need to do it. Chairman Jones questioned if the \$8,000 in the budget now should be removed. Chairman LoVerme does not agree due to the way the pandemic is going, those funds may be needed elsewhere. It was noted there is \$517,000 in ESSER 3, \$136,800 is set aside for learning loss but the other funds could be used for this. Mr. Vanderhoof spoke to clarify, is it coming out of the budget and allocating ESSER funds are separate conversations. The discussion continued. The consensus of the Board is to remove it from the budget and move it over to ESSER 3. Chairman Jones spoke that the last time we met collectively there was discussion of a truck. He questions if the school board has had a chance to discuss this any further. Discussion was had including it is something we really do need, Mr. Erb has been using his personal truck for years now, we are not covered by insurance for this and should not be using someone's personal vehicle for district business, we need transportation between all the buildings, examples of use were given, and a plow could be put on it. It was noted we would not be putting a lot of miles on it and could do a low mileage lease, perhaps an 18,000 mile lease. Discussion was had including what type of truck may be needed, what kinds of things would be hauled (furniture, equipment, ladder, leaves, etc.) Mr. Vanderhoof expressed there are all sorts of things a truck or van could be used for and every time we have this conversation it is not formal, no specifics and just that we need a truck and could save money by doing it. There has not been a formal presentation and until he is provided some kind of presentation on what it will be used for, he would not vote for it. Superintendent voiced Mr. Erb does have some notes if the Board would like we can have that discussion tonight. Mr. Lavallee noted he is pretty sure using your own vehicle is not part of the job description. Ms. Lavallee noted some of the things discussed tonight like the model and lease option would be more beneficial if we had specifics on what the cost would be etc. and to Mr. Vanderhoof's point, it would be helpful to have that

for the town meeting. Ms. Lavallee questioned if it is the consensus of the Board to have this brought back to the next meeting with more detailed information, cost, cost of lease and what it is used for. Mr. Kofalt agreed but notes it would need to be a clear picture with detail, how many miles, what are the alternatives etc. Chairman LoVerme expressed if we don't have it by the next meeting we need to drop the truck altogether. A question was raised if it would be in the budget or a warrant article. This was discussed. Mr. Erb confirms the tractor does not have a plow on it; they use snow blowers and have someone who does the plowing (Mr. Carter). He spoke to what the truck is used for, moving a lot of furniture and supplies between buildings, sometimes vendors leave product at one building (saves on shipping) and then it has to be distributed, leaves at FRES have to be bagged and cannot go in the dumpster, instead he brings it up to WLC, it is the same for LCS unless he risks crossing the road with it to go over the railroad track, it cannot be put out behind the soccer field. He can do this 3-4 times just in the fall. If supplies are needed from Lowes or Home Depot, he uses his truck for pick-up and delivery, when equipment needs to be repaired or a ladder is needed, he uses his truck. He uses it a few times a week for various things during the year and for summer school, he has to move things for summer programing. Today he had to move the playground items from LCS to WLC. With repairs he sometimes take the equipment home as the district does not have the right tools to fix them but he does at home and fixes them and returns them the next morning. He notes last year he probably put 20,000 miles on is truck. It was noted mileage calculation should be part of the presentation. Originally, he had said a 250 or 3-quarter ton truck with a standard cab so we can rent large equipment if needed and can use the trailer. The discussion continued. Chairman Jones brought up the leadership team, which was discussed at the Budget Committee meeting and they asked if Ms. Chenette could speak to this tonight. Superintendent responded she is out for a few days and Ms. Stefanich will try to answer any questions. A question was raised why is it for 8 people when there are only 5 grades. Ms. Stefanich believes it includes specials and SPED. Superintendent spoke that Ms. Chenette can speak to it the next meeting.

Ms. LaPlante provided a preliminary report on ESSER funds, which breaks out ESSER 1, 2, 3. ESSER 1 and 2 are spent. ESSER 3 was increased to \$684,000 and the school board has put some mechanisms in place to preserve the integrity of the funds uses. The school board has approved \$10,000 for a sound system, \$3,000 for the nurse stipend, up to \$30,000 for IT assistance through June 30, \$27,000 for long-term substitutes, \$12,000 for learning loss, \$85,000 for WLC boiler leaving \$517,000, which needs to be tied to COVID. ESSER 3 does not expire until Sept. 2024. We are obligated to spend \$136,800 toward learning loss. Chairman Jones noted \$517,000 is a large amount of funds, we could figure out ways to spend it, doing it prudently. He questions with a 4.68% increase in the budget, are there ways we can use that to offset the budget. It was noted ESSER was not created to offset budgets. A question was raised if we have budgeted anything for the kitchen we could use COVID funds for. Ms. LaPlante noted that is a stretch; she will talk to Ms. Smith to see if there may be any correlation and report back on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Jones voiced that technology is another spot with Chromebooks that we may want to take a look at. A question was raised regarding transportation particularly with OOD (out of district), based on the social distancing requirements and has that had an effect on the budget or will it. Ms. LaPlante responded no. Superintendent added we might be able to dig a little digger into food services and technology. It was asked, what about the leadership team. Superintendent responded, it is a small number (less than \$3,000) and is really more of an explanation needed. We can probably make an argument for it but the number is not significant. He adds we need to understand the learning loss. We are spending \$12,000 for staff to work with kids. It's a small percentage of the \$137,000 but we really need to look at how other schools are addressing this and what resources they are using. They discussed the learning loss issue and use of funds. He notes we are having a hard time finding staff and still have positions we can't fill. People are just not applying across the board. He cannot see any positions that we wouldn't use in the operating budget and would use ESSER for. Ms. Lavallee spoke in regard to ESSER she has heard feedback from teachers, not necessarily here about social issues with kids; teachers are struggling and student absences are adding up. She asked what we could do in relation to ESSER to assist with these issues. That would be staying true to the intent of ESSER. Superintendent spoke to this noting it is an important conversation to have; we are looking at 2 years of this now. It is need dependent; there is probably demonstrated need for someone to work with families and kids and is that something we want to talk about down the road as it does support learning loss. He doesn't know if it a discussion we should have tonight. He spoke that kids are still absent, the effort is not the way it was pre-pandemic; the environment is different. It seems like we have a ton of money to spend but we don't have the answers and want to be thoughtful about it and why we want to allocate it. We do need to talk to other schools to see what they are doing. A member suggested to look at this in 2 parts, learning loss and everything else; learning loss needs to be approached in a more proactive way. The other difficult issue is what is learning loss, at what point are we improving education and at what point are we making up for learning loss. It was suggested to bring the Board a proposal that shows this is a way we can boost academic performance of students, not necessarily during budget season. A question was raised if there was a number or percentage the Budget Committee was trying to get, could we get down to 3.9% or something like that. Chairman Jones notes that that they had not really set a target. What we have heard really tells the story and so much of it is in places we can't control. We can explain a 4.3% increase but whether it can be passed or not is a different story; we are looking into opportunities to do that but not set a number. Superintendent Weaver spoke that it would certainly help him to see a target to shoot for. Our goal was to get it as close to 4% and we got it down to 4.35%; we are running out of lines to look at. Mr. Lavallee spoke that he does not think 4.3% is bad and doesn't know of anyone's budget that didn't increase more than that, to be under 5% is pretty impressive. Superintendent added there are significant obligations we can't get around and surely, the community approved it and we thank them for that but if we knew what you wanted we could target the discussion more and make it more efficient for us. Ms. Browne commented that we have not heard of anything from the revenue side and that may help. Superintendent notes we will focus on that data and provide the projected revenue for the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. LaPlante confirms we are an increase of 4.68%, with the technology reductions we will be at 4.35%. Mr. Post added we spoke of \$16,000 for the tennis courts, minus the \$8,000 for the containers

187 plus \$25,000 for food service so we are looking at plus \$20,000. Superintendent noted draft 6 would include these. Mr. Ryan  
188 noted we have not done well at the last couple district meetings and we have a lot of new faces voting this year. We need to be  
189 positive and united. Mr. Post noted the overall impact also includes the warrants.

## 190 ii. Warrants

191 The proposed warrants were reviewed. Article 4 is the operating budget. A discussion was had regarding the capital reserve for  
192 facilities. A question was raised if there was a number for this. Mr. Vanderhoof responded \$130,000. A question was raised what  
193 that included. Mr. Vanderhoof did not have this with him but recalls moving the cafeteria renovation from FY 25 to FY 27,  
194 removed paving the upper field road from FY 26 and removed the placeholder miscellaneous repairs of \$100,000. This is a 5-year  
195 look at this point. A question was raised if that includes exterior repairs to LCS. Mr. Vanderhoof notes we have not had a good  
196 meeting; most has been trying to make this work. We will have to start look at adding it and building it out 10-15 years. He spoke  
197 of his assumption of how the CIP was started and he believes it started with the roof being done over 9 years. He believes the  
198 \$130,000 is pretty solid for what we have. It is believed that last year the article was for \$95,000. Mr. Lavallee questioned how  
199 many projects are kicked down the road; he feels every year stuff on the list just is moved down the road. He questioned if we  
200 will need to get another district to join the coop when the schools are in such disrepair. Mr. Vanderhoof noted we didn't take off  
201 anything that was maintenance related. We moved the café renovation to 2 years out and it was not for repair as far as he knows it  
202 was just to make it nicer, removed paving of the upper field (can be added on) and funding of \$100,000 for miscellaneous. If we  
203 leave stuff on, we just need to fund it. A question was raised what does Mr. Lavallee think was kicked down the road. He didn't  
204 provide specifics but feels like it happens every year. This was discussed. Mr. Vanderhoof believes things have been added to the  
205 CIP without any thought to the funding or placement and what needs to be asked for in the warrant. The LED lighting did come  
206 off, 1 boiler (not due for 2 years), and AC for the WLC library. A question was raised if there was a new sheet available. Mr.  
207 Vanderhoof responded no, he has a rough draft spreadsheet; it may look different from what it looks like now because we will  
208 build it out further. Ms. Browne asked if he would share it and questioned if it would be ready for district meeting. It was  
209 confirmed it would be. A question was raised if the \$130,000 just pays for what we are doing or does it give us money in a  
210 reserve. Mr. Vanderhoof confirms it pays for what we are doing. A discussion was had. Ms. Browne adds the intent was to do that  
211 but it was never funded that way. Mr. Vanderhoof confirms that is what they are trying to correct. Chairman LoVerme added it  
212 was set up so that we would not have to pay for it all at once, but we were supposed to put in \$230,000 some years, we cut that  
213 back. Why have a CIP, if we are just going to fund what needs to be done, just put it in the budget. We are not utilizing it the way  
214 it was intended.

215  
216 Article 6, is the special education capital reserve account. It was confirmed there is about \$200,000 in the fund, the goal was to  
217 have \$300,000 asking for \$50,000 this year and next. A question was raised if that is the direction of the Board, no objection  
218 heard. Last year we added \$100,000. A question was raised if there are any guidelines set in advance, for when the Board thinks it  
219 would appropriate or inappropriate for a future Board to tap into that fund. This was discussed. It was asked if the intent was to be  
220 used if we exceeded our expenditures then we should say that. An example was given for its' use, if we got an OOD placement  
221 not budgeted for, that we didn't know about, it could be used for that. A question was raised if we have explicitly said that. Mr.  
222 Vanderhoof believes it is written. Mr. Lavallee questioned by definition isn't a capital reserve plan for the unexpected. Mr. Kofalt  
223 agrees it is. Mr. Post spoke that 2 years ago, it was spent after the fact and it was a bitter pill for the public to swallow. They still  
224 remember passing that warrant article and the purpose was, we had an out of placement person, a huge expense, then suddenly  
225 there was an over expenditure in the district and some of it got spent after the district annual year close. He notes he believes the  
226 point is we need guardrails around it if they are not there already and is \$300,000 too much. Mr. Pratt spoke to this. He responds  
227 to the question, yes and no, when think of a child going to a day program for example, if we had a student transfer in from out of  
228 state, we do a reevaluation and if we see the need is still a residential program, we are talking \$200,000-\$300,000 for that one  
229 student. If a student is at an OOD in Massachusetts for example, a heavy-duty placement and we do not have the services  
230 available in NH for the same type of placement they have to stay there, we can't just move them. The long answer is, when is  
231 enough, you can draw a line. \$300,000 is great, \$200,000 is great but if you have a placement for \$300,000 come in, (\$200,000 is  
232 not enough). Mr. Vanderhoof added that is when the special meeting comes in and we have to ask to approve additional dollars.  
233 Mr. Vanderhoof believes the \$300,000 is reasonable, Mr. Golding agrees. Mr. Kofalt agrees but would point out the state has  
234 established legislation that allows districts to enter into risk pool agreements (he would actually be opposed as it is like insurance  
235 and insurance tends to drive cost up) but it is probably worth having the conversation and worth knowing more about it. He does  
236 not know the details or what kind of guardrails are up. For now, he suggests sticking with the original plan of \$300,000 and look  
237 for other solutions as well. Chairman LoVerme agrees to stay with the \$300,000 also. Ms. Lavallee asked if all were comfortable  
238 with the \$50,000 this year and next, no objection heard, consensus is yes. Ms. Browne clarifies that last year's warrant was for  
239 \$50,000 not \$95,000.

240  
241 Ms. Lavallee spoke regarding the district meeting this year being on school vacation week and having no leeway to change it. The  
242 prior Superintendent said to change it to the first or second week; we would have to present it to the towns. Mr. Lavallee added it  
243 is restrictive now; you have to decide to cut your vacation short or not. Discussion was had including moving it to Friday night.  
244 Ms. Lavallee notes, it was done by warrant and would need to be changed by warrant. Chairman LoVerme spoke that it was  
245 mostly for Lyndeborough people to get more participation. Mr. Kofalt likes the idea of the flexibility and the idea of a weekday.  
246 Mr. Vanderhoof suggests removing February vacation all together and getting out earlier. Consensus from the Board is to move  
247 forward with it being a warrant article. Discussion was had if it should be kept to a Saturday or move to a weekday night. Ms.  
248 Browne spoke that her understanding is it was brought forward as a petition warrant article from a Lyndeborough resident and it

passed. Anyone can put forward a petition warrant article; she did not have the timeline details. A question was raised if the Board can put forward a warrant. Response is yes, probably. It was noted the district meetings are getting more complex and a Friday night could go very late. It was suggested to look at the language of the original warrant, talk to our constituents about which date and discuss it at the next meeting. Chairman LoVerme suggested it needs to be consistent and not switch back from a Friday or Saturday. They continued to discuss this. Superintendent will provide language for the next meeting for discussion.

Ms. LaPlante spoke that we just had our first field portion of the audit. They asked if we had the warrant to retain a portion of the fund balance. There are conflicting opinions on this. She spoke that there is a push happening to create the reserve and provide an offset to taxes. She was asked to chat with the school board to see if they would be amendable to adding it. The thought was to give the voters the option and if they don't want it, they would be the ones to turn it down. She can bring it up again at the next meeting but thought it would be prudent to approach it today. Ms. Lavallee asked if the wording could be provided. Ms. LaPlante can and stating the auditor is highly recommending that the voters choose. She adds she is just providing the feedback as requested from the auditor. Mr. Post noted it seems it is out of the auditor's scope of their job. Mr. Vanderhoof notes it has been discussed in prior years and not that long ago. Ms. LaPlante clarified the discussion came out of a financial discussion they were having. Mr. Post added, we don't have it now and it doesn't need to be audited because it doesn't exist. Chairman Jones questioned if we want to table this for this year, he doesn't feel like we should get into that now. Discussion continued including that it gives the taxpayers the opportunity to reserve the funds. It was suggested you would not generally ask for warrant articles if you have this in place; you wouldn't ask for another \$100,000 on top of reserving funds. Superintendent questioned if the language should be brought to the next meeting or not. Chairman LoVerme suggested bringing the language. Ms. LaPlante will do so.

#### **b. YTD Reporting**

Ms. LaPlante provided the expenditures through November 30, 2021. In addition to the report, she included a summary; she does not have any concerns at this time. She asks for any feedback. Ms. Browne noted at the last meeting it was discussed everyone was going to relook at the encumbrances and wonders if that is reflected here. Ms. LaPlante responded no, and the December report will not. We will chat with the leadership meeting to discuss their encumbrances and PO's they have with the goal to close at the end of the month and go through the process to spend funds within the budget. Hopefully the January 31 report will capture a better view of it.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

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

There was no public comment. Chairman LoVerme thanked the Budget Committee and wished all a happy new year.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Tiedemann and SECONDED by Mr. Ryan to adjourn the Budget Committee session at 8:31pm  
Voting: all ayes motion passed unanimously.*

The committee will meet across the hall.

### **V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

Superintendent reported the following adjustments, for action items, appoint a district clerk and the second to make WLC remote on March 8, voting day, similar to what we did last year, move WLCTA to February 1 and add an FYI new hire, through June 30.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Mr. Post to accept the adjustments to the agenda.  
Voting: via roll call vote, seven ayes; one abstention from Chairman LoVerme, motion carried.*

### **VI. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **a. Reports**

##### **i. Principals/Curriculum Coordinator's Report**

Principal Edmunds reported this month's report is a combined report. She spoke of some of the WLC happenings, including concert and dance recital and festive things, auditions for Matilda the musical is next Monday, the drama club is doing fund raising. Middle school robotics team did not make it to the next round, they "gave it a good try" and all had fun. WLC is hanging on and grateful for the long-term substitute, there are quite a few staff out.

Ms. Stefanich provided an overview of the report highlighting that the curriculum is on track and they are making headway. She is seeing teachers take ownership with the documents even when it is challenging. There was a team that attended the Christa McAuliffe conference and created a new partnership with Discovery Ed, which is offered free through the state through 2023. She notes this report is an addition to the one given in the fall. The key piece missing then is how our data compared to the state. In December, the state released the data so we could then dive deeper into it and break down our scores. We looked at successes and areas to improve on. While the scores are not where we want them to be, FRES exceeded the state's proficiency for ELA, math and science. Students who are economically challenged and students with disabilities exceeded their states target. We recognized

the strong effort from FRES in making sure students are prepared and it is clearly reflected in the results. At WLC, the state proficient for science was 55%, which outscored the state average of 37% that is a significant difference from the state average which is a cause of celebration. Our students with disabilities also outscored the states average of students with disabilities in the ELA test. It is a strong testament to our programs for students with disabilities. On the fall PSAT, done in October, it shows our scores increased across the board but the percent meeting benchmarks remained stagnant. After reviewing the data and comparing to the state averages, we again saw the need to review the math instruction. We revisited the action tools from the fall, are still evaluating the root causes for declines, and increases. Each of the Principals can speak to what is happening in the buildings. We are supporting teachers for refining their instruction, IMPACT team meetings at FRES, and additional training at WLC, we continue to look for ways to support student growth, afterschool tutoring, courses, and test preparation is embedded in the classroom. Principal Edmunds commented it has been a real pleasure to work with this team and have a collaborative atmosphere. A question was raised regarding how the afterschool tutoring was going. Principal Edmunds spoke that we are just getting started again; tutors are now reaching out those students "in need" (parents and students) and as of today the quarantined students as well. She is hoping it will gain additional students and perhaps some online tutoring as well. Ms. Stefanich spoke for FRES saying attendance has been strong, a few absences due to illness but it is going well and she sees students eager to attend. A question was raised how participation is at WLC. Principal Edmunds responded, nonexistent still, each teacher during the tutoring time is reaching out to parents. A question was raised how the response has been so far. Principal Edmunds responds we are just getting back and will have more the next time she reports out. Regarding students with disabilities falling behind in scores, a question was raised if you can if you can target students of that population for individual tutoring. Ms. Stefanich responds in certain areas; we look at where are the kids that have the most need and are they students with disabilities, then look at are they quarantined students, are they students that missed last year etc. and then get them into tutoring. We are looking beyond labels and looking at who is behind, what they need and how do we get them there. Ms. Stefanich spoke regarding the MS, math is a real area of need, ELA is on par with state average, and they are doing well, exceeding, in science but wants to see some of that translate to math. What we are seeing is the application piece on the math test are not similar to what we are doing in class. We are asking teachers to tweak that. They know the skill but it is not translating to how they ask the question and set up the test interphase of the computer. A question was raised regarding that in the past; the curriculum transfer from elementary to middle school was behind; do you have any data on this. Ms. Stefanich spoke we are looking at that, one of the things we are doing at FRES is starting with math and making sure the scope and sequences are aligned. We noticed some were vague and some were teaching above and some below. We have cleaned that up for what it should be, what does a 5<sup>th</sup> grader need to know, what about a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. We are going to work on vertical alignment on a PD day to make sure there are no gaps, and have transition meetings between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The hope is that the transition will also help the MS teachers so they know what the jumping off point is. A question was raised looking at math for the district as a whole at the assessment proficiencies, grades 3 and 4 are up, 70%-80% in terms of percentage proficient and then it drops off suddenly grade 5, 42%, grade 7, 31%. It seems a dramatic drop from grade 4. Is this because the complexity or do we know why. Ms. Stefanich spoke there is a dramatic step, the common core does levels and really hits home in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and they start to introduce new skills. We are starting to see a big range in complexity when they get to those grades. It was noted the data in 2018-19 shows science, grade 3, 4, 6, 7 there is no data, and grades 5, 8, and 11 it is lower than it is for math than it is for ELA. ELA is pretty consistent across the board, math a drop off starting in grade 5 and science 4 out of the 7 available there is no data. Superintendent confirmed regarding science it is only assessed in grades 5, 8, and 11 and not assessed annually. Ms. Stefanich noted the NH DOE website is not easy to navigate but they have updated the Ireport platform to be interactive and has the 20-21 data; she will share that link with the Board. Mr. Kofalt had already done this and there is training available. It is great that the team has put the time and effort into this. Ms. Stefanich confirms at FRES tutoring attendance is good, a few absences due to illness, students are eager to be there and teachers are engaging in meaningful ways in a small setting. A question was raised regarding the math questions and the wording of those; would that be a math or ELA issue and is that causing the drop we are seeing. Ms. Stefanich spoke looking at the state questions; they can be tricky, it does not always feel like educators are writing the questions. A clarifying question was asked if you are being hit on the math score because you are not understanding the language rather than the math problem. Ms. Stefanich spoke some of the barriers are how the questions are written and we need to be sure we are teaching test strategies, such as how are they written, how to use the tools, interactive formats and making sure students are equipped with that skill set too. A question was raised if that is being written into the curriculum. She confirms we don't necessarily want to teach to the test but rather integrate it seamlessly so it seems more natural and not a whole month of test prep. A question was raised if a student is looking at a math problem and is not understanding is that the math teachers sole responsibility or more of an ELA teachers. Principal Edmunds confirms it is both and she gave examples of what they are doing. She notes math teachers are also literacy educators. All disciplines should work together to help them. A question was raised regarding students with disabilities; it is difficult in a district our size, what is the percentage, what are the numbers. Ms. Stefanich responded it is 19% of our student population. Mr. Kofalt noted he has heard from parents that the math homework is especially convoluted, parents who have not had a problem with math say this does not make sense to them. This is part of his concern; this kind of methodology is more challenging than it needs to be, although there is not anything that we can necessarily do about it. It is frustrating to hear this from parents. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced concern regarding the scores and questions what is the timeframe to achieve real substantial growth/improvement regarding the scores. Ms. Stefanich responds, we will continue to look at the data; part of it is digging into root causes, figure out trends, what is the target part, why this is happening; it is hard to give a timeline when we are in the beginning stages of still trying to figure things out. Superintendent elaborated on this noting the dilemma we are having is our sample sizes are small and if we have absences, it can really wreck the scores (example 40 kids testing and 5 absences). We need to really break that apart and figure out what is going on with the 5 kids who affected the scores, how do we reach out to them, how do we do it differently, do they have the right

services, and what can we do and that is what we need to spend our energy on. In addition on the other end, what are we doing with the kids who are testing higher and what can we do to push them over the hump. It may take a little tweaking to get them over. We have work to do and we have this pandemic, which is causing problems, kids are absent, we continue to play catch up. All districts are dealing with this but ours is remarkable because for some reason our science scores shot up. These are the same kids taking math and ELA tests. What did we do differently, what did the teacher do, was it the pace, how did we excel so much in science but not other areas. We need to be able to replicate it year after year. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced concern that this is his 4<sup>th</sup> year on the Board and has heard all of this; it starts to sound similar each year and looking at 55%, 37% proficient as good numbers seems odd. The correlation of this meeting also comes at the tail end when we are going out to ask for 13 million dollars. We are spending a lot of money and should get the best product we can. Superintendent agrees and is having those discussions. We have to get this trajectory right. We have to look at growth gains individually and as a class. Most of us have not been here long but understand it is an issue for all communities. We have to be able to show that the money taxpayers are investing in our school system is making a positive difference. There is all kinds of data to show this but today we are talking about standardized data. That is how we are held accountable to the state and the thing is that even though it is an artificial comparison we are compared to schools around us in the region, like ConVal and Hinsdale etc. We pay attention to it and take it seriously. It's easy to say we don't want to teach to a test and that is a false argument he has heard in other districts. Everything you have said is accurate; we are all on the same page. He wishes he could give a timeline but certainly will keep pushing at this and this is why you have seen more data presentations this year. We are having more conversations and focus on the data, not try to hide it, be honest with it, we have a serious issue with math and are working on that and we want to celebrate the successes. A question was raised that we see some kids proficient in ELA for example but not math, are there some good in one area and not another; it seems if you are good in English, you should do well in math word problems even if it is convoluted math. Superintendent responds we would have to look at that. If it turns out that way, how do we get those children to the level that some of the other students are? Superintendent responded we have looked at that and in other schools, they may double up in math for example and have guided study. It is always a challenge; we want to reach every kid. He elaborated on this. These are all our kids and we can't just address some of them, we have to address it as a whole. Ms. Lavallee questioned how are we engaging parents in this, there seems to be a disconnect with school and home. How are parents handling teaching the children and helping them with their homework. Looking at the PSAT scores and SAT scores and hearing we have zero participation in tutoring is disheartening; that is a huge factor that we don't have a lot of control on but need to look at. Are parents calling when they see the scores, is that conversation taking place with parents and staff. Principal Edmunds responded sometimes but does feel there is a disconnect and they are more interested in grades for graduation rather than standardized test scores. Superintendent added that there are other things going on in their lives too. We do have kids that are generally just disinterested in the school we offer. Extended Learning Opportunities can help them learn things in a field they are interested in. That kind of thinking may not get our test scores up but may make the student more successful. He likes state testing but understands there is a point some kids need a different approach in a different way and we want them to be successful in the long term. It is on our radar, we want to be transparent and show we are trying different things. Sometimes we need to cut our losses with programming that is not working. He spoke again about wanting to pay attention to those kids in the upper level and moving them forward, identifying the kids who are engaging and pushing the envelope in their classes and not just settling. Ms. LaPlante passed around an article in the Monadnock Ledger Transcript about the boost in science scores. Discussions were had regarding learning loss and perhaps considering looking at how people internally are thinking of improvement as an incremental process. Is there something we can do in particular, we have the funds (ESSER 3) to be a remedy for learning loss; are there things that would "leap frog" us into success. Maybe it is bringing in a team of tutors. Are there things we can do differently and not more of the same? Administration was encouraged to think of this when returning to the Board regarding learning loss funding. It was noted the links Principal Chenette put in her last report were helpful and in the past early childhood teachers came in to talk about what they are doing in their classrooms and brought samples, those kind of things are helpful for board members to be more in touch with what is happening. Administration was encouraged to think of this when returning to the Board regarding learning loss funding. Superintendent spoke of math being a problem in the state for years and years. He spoke of having the National Honor Society tutoring kids and would that be something the community would support; he has seen this work and also to offer incentives. Discussions continued including that incentives could be a big deal and would like to see some goal setting. A question was raised who does that goal setting, is it the Superintendent or the Board; there is frustration hearing the same things. A question was raised what does administration need from the Board to help with the tutoring program, is it transportation, what is it. Appreciation was voiced for providing the report and presentation; the Board understands it is a huge undertaking and wants to help. Ms. Edmunds spoke that many students say they do not come to tutoring because they have to work or watch their siblings. She has offered remote tutoring and is still working on the kids. There are many kids who stay for after school activities and she does not believe transportation is the issue. WLC has tried to do things during the day and we will see if that has helped. We have 2 weeks left before the end of the semester and she is hopeful. She spoke that having less faculty turnover would be helpful to provide more stability. If we were all on the same page for longer time, she thinks you would see a different WLC and FRES. If we can keep teachers from going elsewhere and build something together with the same goals. We have new people coming in all the time and have to continue to train; keeping our employees is important. Chairman LoVerne agrees. Mr. Post notes he heard the opposite when he was first on the Board. He spoke of the article in the newspaper. He notes it is puzzling why a community that has this kind of talent and community support with a pretty high funding level has issues with scores; what is the disconnect. He understands we have spent a lot of time talking about this tonight but it is nice to talk about this instead of talking about how to "run the machine". He voiced appreciation for the work being done and knows no one wants to teach to the test but sadly, this is how we are judged as a

community. How do we get the scores to reflect the talent and investment in the community? He questions how we can help and notes are moving in the right direction and hopes that direction came across tonight.

Mr. LoVerme exited the meeting; Ms. Lavallee took over as Chair.

Mr. Vanderhoof commented that his children in grades 2 and 6 have effectively zero homework coming home. He feels that is a significant change. He does not know if this is across the board but his experience they are not getting any. There are not a lot of things coming home for a parent to look at. It was noted that it is something to look at to maybe help bridge the gap. A question was raised if there are ways to accommodate the student's schedules for tutoring; it is asking a lot but would love to see some innovative solutions such as a Saturday block or a way to do asynchronous tutoring if that is even a viable option. Are there ways we can reach those kids who are working, it would be good to see some improvements there. A question was raised if it is known prior to COVID, if we were that far below in NH and the US in math and what are other schools do to support their students to prep them for PSAT an SAT; is there an opportunity for the Board to be more supportive. Principal Edmunds spoke there are SAT classes; we are embedding it into everyone's class prep, which is new. On a PD day we have our long-term substitute Ms. Rosenthal (also works with a tutoring company and tutors kids for the SAT) coming in to train our teachers on how to help with SAT questions, tricks of the test etc. Some schools have an SAT prep courses but not all kids take it; we embed it into the regular curriculum and that way it is beneficial for all kids. Ms. Stefanich spoke that historically we averaged around 50%-65% in the reading and writing benchmark, that has been since 2017 and math we hovered around 28%-38%, 20-21 has had significant drops post COVID. Superintendent spoke that many kids do not see the value in SAT. He spoke of looking at college enrollment and using that as a data point. How do we incentivize this with the reluctant learners? He is open to all ideas, internships, and other electives and in return, they have to make their best effort, do we negotiate with kids like that. Principal Edmunds added we do some of that, some kids get out early doing internships and earning credits; a lot are so bright but the online/paper and pencil tests kids don't want to sit through them. They discussed this a bit. Superintendent agrees there is more work to do and spoke that we need to do more of this; we spent more time tonight talking about this than we have spent since he has been in the district. The other thing we are trying to do is build positive relationships with the school board. This is good, this is what we are supposed to be doing, trying to problem solve, trying to keep our best staff, supporting teachers; we are doing all the right things and need more time.

## **b. Letters/Information**

### **i. Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECS Grant)**

Ms. Lavallee spoke that we did talk about this earlier. Mr. Kofalt asked if a motion was needed. Mr. Bouley responded no, he has the quotes; he just wanted to be sure that he could move forward. He spoke that we have 12 months from December 20<sup>th</sup> to spend the money and it has to be related to a student's ability to access our environment from home to do homework etc. It has to be available to them at any moment to use at home. He confirms it is mostly for hardware. It could be hot spots for people with no internet access, modems, routers, laptops. He confirmed it couldn't be used for software or subscriptions. He spoke about taking what we had for next year and making changes; we would still do 3, 6, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade and normally move the 12<sup>th</sup> grade Chromebooks to the paraprofessionals but suggests that instead we move those to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade carts. The 46 new Chromebooks would go to paraprofessionals and we could use up every dollar and not lose anything. Grades 3-12 would pretty much be outfitted and going forward we could have a 5-year rotation. The consensus of the Board is Mr. Bouley can move forward, there was no objection heard.

## **VII. WLCTA**

This was moved to February 1.

## **VIII. POLICIES-1<sup>ST</sup> READ**

### **i. ADB-Drug-Free Workplace & Drug-Free Schools**

Ms. Lavallee spoke this was a big undertaking. This policy was taken under review when the grant report noted it was not following current regulations. This policy should have been updated in 2018; we have not updated it since 2010. Discussion was had regarding that it appears to apply to all substances, anyone taking Tylenol with codeine would be subject to discipline; it does not take into account a doctor's prescription. It was suggested perhaps an attorney should weigh-in, as it is not clear where that line is. Ms. Lavallee has reached out to Attorney Phillips for some guidance. Discussion was had regarding the word "unlawfully" and the interpretation of that. They discussed the language further including the word "or" and discussed medical marijuana card". Superintendent spoke that he does not want any gray areas or to split hairs over wording. It was decided to wait for the attorney's review. Ms. Lavallee confirms it is a model policy and the Committee did make some changes included taking out the part regarding syringe take back. This will come back for a 2<sup>nd</sup> read with the attorney response. Any changes made will be made in red.

### **ii. GADA-Employment References and Verification (Prohibiting Aiding and Abetting of Sexual Abuse)**

Ms. Lavallee spoke this policy was identified in the grant audit; we did not have it and it is required to fill requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act. She spoke of the policy. It was suggested to perhaps possibly striking # 3 as if it remains open even if no charges have been filed, it should be a no. There was support voiced for this. They discussed this including why arbitrarily 4 years, it is more of a guideline rather than a policy, it does not lock us into giving a recommendation, and by taking that out does



it disqualify us from federal compliance. Ms. Lavallee will check on this. Superintendent spoke about it noting it is a tricky one for educators; we call references and are called for references often. This policy will come back for a second read.

### **iii. IGE-Parental Objections to Specific Course Material**

Ms. Lavallee reviewed this policy was not in place, changes were made in 2017 and should have been in place then. This came up in the webinar she attended, as there were significant changes to it. She has sent an email to the attorney to clarify a few things including the piece about the parent bearing the cost of any alternative instruction to be sure that was legal. A discussion was had regarding why it included that nothing in the policy should be construed to give the parent the right to appeal to the school board. Discussion included, why is it there, a school board member would agree to hear a parent, could there be a situation where a parent does it each time a book is assigned, is it to tell the parent you don't start with the school board, we have policy KEC and there is a process for appeals and that process goes all the way through the school board. It was proposed we should consider adding a sentence from RSA 186:11 "The name of the parent or legal guardian and any specific reasons disclosed to school officials for the objection to the material shall not be public information and shall be excluded from access under RSA 91-A". It was noted it does not need to be there but is a reminder to people/school board members that this is a nonpublic matter and not be disclosed. Board was asked if there is any objection to adding this, no objection heard. Changes will be made, Ms. Lavallee will look into the rational of the wording and it will return for a second read.

### **iv. IK-Earning of Credit**

Ms. Lavallee reviewed that this was also included in the webinar and legislative updates were needed in 2021. A question was asked if there should be an appeal to the Board. This was discussed, Superintendent spoke to this specific situation if it gets to the school board, what is it that you would learn that might make it change. Superintendent notes it's really on the Board if they want to put themselves in that situation. He tells parents it doesn't stop with him; you can appeal to the Board. Ms. Lavallee pointed out we also have policy BAAA which is a policy that says if you don't agree with the judgement you can appeal anything to the Board so there is a provision for parents to appeal to the Board. It was noted that hopefully the Superintendent would inform the Board before it got to that level. Superintendent spoke about students transferring in from other schools, and how situations of earning credit could be an issue. He added there is always a middle ground and at the end of the day, you want the student to be successful. There are no changes recommended and this policy will return for a second read.

### **v. GBCD-Background Investigations and Criminal Records Check**

Ms. Lavallee reported this policy was also included in the webinar she attended. There were changes in 2020 that we did not adopt and in additional changes this year to add a designee to reflect RSA 189:13A. This policy was reviewed and will come back for a second read without any changes.

### **vi. JICD-Student Discipline and Due Process**

Ms. Lavallee reported this policy had significant changes. Input was received from Principal Edmunds and Assistant Principal Gosselin as they attended a conference on this. Ms. Lavallee has reached out to the attorney to obtain clarification regarding paint ball guns, airsoft and what if it were locked in a student trunk on school property. Discussion was had regarding this policy including on page 2 there are reasons for suspension listed at the bottom, (behavior that is detrimental to the health, safety....), the concern is if someone is making threats, they may be serious about it, it may need to be included here, which is probably a legal question for the attorney as well. Page 3, III does not state the possession must occur on school property and it is suggested to include this. Discussion was had regarding the language and interpretation regarding this as it is currently written. Superintendent spoke that this is a limit on the Superintendent and does not think it would hurt to include wording "on school property" and does not believe it would change the intent. They discussed the wording of "to continue", it was suggested to strike "continue the suspension and". Ms. Lavallee spoke that the reason this was changed was to limit the suspension to only allow 20 days out in accordance with the RSA. If it goes over 20 days, we would have to provide educational services. Consensus was to add "while on school property". It was noted weapons policy JICI does not mention airsoft. Ms. Lavallee responded it has not been updated yet. They discussed if a student has it locked in his trunk it is a different scenario, it could be perceived as a threat for a lot of people, where do we draw the line on what is reasonable and those are important things to clarify. It was noted regarding language of "during school hours", the school has a lot of property, and a student could live on the road, and playing paintball in the area. Ms. Lavallee will obtain clarification from the attorney on items identified. A typo on page 2, 6, A will be corrected to reflect "an" act not "and" act. Ms. Lavallee will meet with Ms. Fowler to make the edits. She has many policies to go through still, will work on those and put a report together for the Policy Committee's next meeting. This policy will return for a second read. The committee has started the discussion of not having a policy regarding library materials; it is not a required policy. The librarians brought up wanting some direction on how to handle it if a parent objected to materials. Mr. Kofalt spoke that the Policy Committee should be open to that not being a policy but procedure. Ms. Lavallee agreed.

## **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

### **a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Post and SECONDED by Mr. Golding to approve the minutes of December 14, 2021 as written.*

*Voting: five ayes; one abstention from Ms. Lavallee, motion carried.*

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Kofalt and SECONDED by Mr. Golding to approve the nonpublic minutes of December 14, 2021 as written and leave them unsealed.*

*Voting: five ayes; one abstention from Ms. Lavallee, motion carried.*

### **• Voting Day/March 8, 2022**

Superintendent requested WLC to be remote as we did last year for the March 8 voting day, keeping it simple and to relieve parking. A question was raised if it is beneficial to do this or to have this as a day off. Superintendent confirmed being remote, if a student did not show up the parent would get a call. He felt it worked well last year going remote; the town was appreciative to have the bathrooms available etc. Teachers will be in the classrooms teaching (students expected to join class remotely). A question was raised if this is going to be a regular thing or is it for COVID reasons. Ms. Fowler responded, she spoke to the town clerk and in this case, it is due to COVID; originally, it was going to be in the town hall but due to increases in COVID, they have changed the plan. A question was raised if they really can't social distance at the Wilton Town Hall. It does not tend to be large numbers voting; this is not a presidential election etc. Superintendent spoke that it is to relieve the stress on them and some people voting and parking can be an issue. Mr. Post spoke that it is good community relations to have people in this building. A brief discussion was had which included we don't necessarily have to go remote. Ms. LaPlante spoke that in her district, they make voting day a PD day and moving forward it may be a good solution. In addition, November Election Day could be used for parent/teacher conferences. Superintendent spoke we could entertain making March 8 a PD day and flip-flop that with the scheduled March PD day. It was noted that would then effect the other schools and more parents. Ms. Lavallee suggested at this point, the Board should approve what the Superintendent is suggesting. Discussion was had if the town specifically asked to go remote. Ms. Fowler confirmed she did not specifically talk about that when it was requested but believes last year it was requested. Ms. Lavallee spoke that last year there were concerns regarding firearms, the stage is open and the front door is not locked. Superintendent noted the parking lot is pretty full during school days; students are coming and going being dropped off and picked up etc. Remote day is authorized by consensus, no objection heard. It was noted it is still the same workday just WLC would be remote learning.

**• Appoint District Clerk**

Superintendent asked the Board to appoint Ms. Mary Jane Ryan as School District Clerk. Ms. Lavallee recognized her and understands what a big job it is. Superintendent noted it is a big responsibility, he is not clear on all the laws and legal motions, and suggests talking about having an attorney at district meeting.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Post and SECONDED by Mr. Kofalt to appoint Ms. Mary Jane Ryan, as School District Clerk with grateful appreciation.*

*Voting: all ayes; motion carried unanimously.*

**X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**i. Budget Liaison**

Mr. Vanderhoof reported the committee spoke about the truck on Dec. 21, the leadership team request, containers and insurance and what was budget for medical benefits as far as it changing after the budget. They also discussed the connectivity fund. There were more forward questions tonight as far as cuts than before. There is a little bit of hesitance from some with the number going forward. It was a good meeting and he does not see them making many changes although he was not present for their separate meeting tonight. There was a big discussion at prior meetings about technology and the amount we were spending, the plan overall and that we are working on it for something in the future. Hopefully next year we will have a solid plan and it will be easier to explain and understand for the public. It was noted that they were asking for a percentage the Board was comfortable with. Mr. Vanderhoof responded there is not anything they want to cut, the question is, is this a number that will pass. A couple meetings ago it was asked to bring back the 5 least utilized programs. That did not get answered. If we have programs that are no longer filling a purposed or getting the benefit of, we should move on from those and spend the funding elsewhere. It was noted this is not an unreasonable ask. It was noted so much of the increase is driven by things we have no control over.

**ii. Technology Committee**

The committee met for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time this evening. They have an outline for what they are informally calling the Technology Vision Document. This committee should come to the Board with a plan, a vision and what is working, what is not, the priorities, how to apply it to further academic excellence and specifically around technology capabilities for students, and how do we do PD. The details of how to implement that would be left up to the staff to take it to the next level. The Committee will potentially get surveys out to a couple of the stakeholder groups such as parents, community, teachers, staff and potentially students. A timeline has been laid out for creating this document and hope to have the surveys done by the end of March. We want to leverage it with the District Meeting; we want your opinion and let them know how to access the survey. The idea is to get it back, collated by end of March, in mid-April have a draft document, and incorporate the results. The target is to have it to the Board by April 19 for a first read and have until May 10 to incorporate any revisions. Some dates may be pushed out but they hope to have it ready and approved by the end of the year for use on July 1 with firm direction. Ms. Maki is the Budget Committee representative but it may be difficult for her to attend the meetings; we are trying to schedule them in a way that there is one less night for people to have to stay.

**iii. Policy Committee**

Ms. Lavallee noted this was discussed under policies.

**XI. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES**

**a. FYI New Hire-RBT-WLC-Desiree Lincourt**

617 **b. FYI-New Hire-IT Support-WLC-Dimitris Alexandrou**

618 **c. Appointments**

619 **i. Frank Virzi-HS Science Teacher**

620 Superintendent reviewed the new hires and nomination for appointment. He noted Mr. Virzi will be a .80 FTE vs. 1.0 to keep it  
621 within the budget and we made it work.

622  
623 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Post and SECONDED by Mr. Kofalt to appoint Mr. Frank Virzi, HS Science teacher under the*  
624 *proposed terms.*

625 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously*  
626

627 **XII. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION/DISTRICT MEETING**

628 Mr. Post spoke that 4.5% is a tough number, given we previously voted on the raises and contracts that had a big impact on that.  
629 What Ms. LaPlante put together tonight was great; it shows what we can affect and what we cannot. Discussion was had about  
630 adding a truck, and whether to add it the budget or to the warrant, or at all, and discussion of a lease and what the town had done.  
631 Mr. Vanderhoof spoke of wanting a plan, as he has not heard much of a plan or a case for it. A brief discussion was had regarding  
632 the pie charts Ms. LaPlante provided. It was noted it is telling, we increased nothing and it clarifies why we are where we are. Ms.  
633 Lavallee agrees there are areas that are out of our control; because we are such a small district we can't add things, even 2 years  
634 ago we had to take things away. It was noted there were things we had to change and we had to make some difficult decisions.  
635 Mr. Post added the cuts were made to the increases not cuts to the budget. It was noted you have people who don't read the  
636 minutes, don't come to school board meetings. We can refer to the pie charts, based on this, 2/3 of the wages, and benefits the  
637 voters approved last year, 80% is SPED and what is not here is everything else. Concern was voiced of not being comfortable  
638 with a 4.3% increase but we gave back 1.15 million to the taxpayers. It was noted everything is going up in cost. There is some  
639 truth to the statement that it is not horrible. With the 1.15 million, there is a strong case for not doing the reserve article, especially  
640 this year. Discussion was had that the hesitation is the percentage of increase. Superintendent noted any significant cuts would  
641 have to come from staffing. It was suggested if we could just shave it down to 3.9% the optics are better. Mr. Goulding would like  
642 to see what Mr. Erb comes up with regarding the truck and the tennis courts. He does not think it can be done in this budget  
643 however. Mr. Vanderhoof responded that you could put the tennis courts in the CIP but would have to increase the funding or put  
644 it out 3 years. Superintendent spoke that in 3 years, we will have new contracts to negotiate. He again expresses he is concerned  
645 looking at this as a whole, budget, warrants etc. all together and is concerned of the perception of it. It was noted we have a big  
646 staff and there is a request for \$4,000 in leadership team stipends, do we really need this. As far as improvement and guidance,  
647 isn't that what administration is for. If that is not built into the system already then we have not built the system right. Discussion  
648 was had that it does not help that this budget comes around the time when there are some cultural issues. Mr. Kofalt spoke of how  
649 purchasing is being done and asked what are people thinking when they make a decision to spend money. He spoke of examples  
650 he has seen in the manifests and wonders if people have the mentality that every bit of taxpayer money is valuable. We need to  
651 justify expenses there are senior citizens cutting their prescriptions in half. We want a quality education and we have to figure out  
652 how to do it.  
653

654 **XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

655 Ms. LaPlante commented in the process of developing the budget, 4.68% is a huge load and this is her first year. She presents  
656 facts, what the district needs and it looks daunting to have a new Business Administrator and Superintendent to come in with such  
657 a large budget. She notes it is not a reflection of her coming in thinking the taxpayers can absorb that. She adds we don't take this  
658 lightly.  
659

660 **XIV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

661 Mr. Post spoke that even though 1.1 million was returned to the taxpayers, the way it landed was Lyndeborough's taxes went up.  
662 Ms. LaPlante noted that is due to the home valuations in Lyndeborough. Mr. Post understands the need for the truck and if we can  
663 do it economically, ok, but we have seen it happen before in 2016; we need to proceed cautiously. He believes we should do away  
664 with the tennis courts. He feels OK with the budget but is worried. It is challenging for a small district and we need to figure out  
665 ways to do it creatively.  
666

667 Mr. Vanderhoof commented that this was the best Principal/Curriculum Coordinator Report in a long time. He wishes we had a  
668 lot more of that kind of discussion at the Board.  
669

670 **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

671 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Kofalt and SECONDED by Mr. Post to adjourn the Board meeting at 11:30pm.*

672 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*  
673

674 *Respectfully submitted,*  
675 *Kristina Fowler*  
676