

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, December 14, 2021
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School
6:30 p.m.**

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

Present: *Alex LoVerme, Jonathan Vanderhoof (joined Bud. Co. 7:57pm-8:39pm), Dennis Golding, Matt Mannarino, Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral (arrived 6:54pm), Jim Kofalt (departed 6:57pm-returned 8:06pm), Charlie Post and Paul White (arrived 7:01pm)*

Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principals Sarah Edmunds and Kathleen Chenette, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt (online), Technology Director Jonathan Bouley, Curriculum Coordinator Emily Stefanich, and Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. STUDENT PRESENTATION

Students from FRES 4th and 5th grade were present with teachers Ms. Reid and Ms. Tetrault. They spoke regarding the town's history movie that was put together and shown to them. They provided some highlights of the town's history. Students recognized and thanked the Heritage Commission, Historical Society, Dennis Markaverich of the Wilton Theatre, Deb Mortvedt and Principal Chenette. Ms. Reid expressed the goal was to provide an opportunity to investigate and explain how people and artifacts affect the past and present. This was their first attempt at how to write a paragraph! Students were commended for the excellent job.

IV. 6:45PM JOINT BOARD & BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION

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

a. FY 2022-2023

i. Salaries & Benefits

Ms. LaPlante apologized for getting draft 5 out late. She reports reviewing every contract to double check actuals making sure it is budgeted correctly. She found some discrepancies relating to changes in school year; some school year support staff were only budgeted for 176 days, ABA/RBT's contractually work 177 days, similar for paraprofessionals who work 176 days, plus introductory day, plus 2 for training opportunities. It now reflects the current staff we have. She notes the best way to describe FY22 is it is hard to develop a basis to say who appeared in which bucket. At this time last year when the budget was being developed, we don't know where employees were budgeted. The increase of \$413,791 is reflective of the increase to health insurance, dental, teacher's contract, and support staff. She identified \$29,800 in retirement expenses that were not identified last year and almost \$167,000 for the RISE program. In looking at the bottom line of wages and benefits, everything that has been budgeted is based off a contract/pay agreement and is contractually obligated. There is very little wiggle room. It appears the teacher contract increased by \$66,000, where support staff decreased. Again, in FY22 some staff was put in the wrong buckets and once corrected and aligned; it is very hard to compare back to FY22. This draft takes a look at that, wages and the overall budget. There are some minor changes from draft 4 to draft 5 a net increase of \$8,955, which had to do with wages, and benefits after the extensive review (included some savings), \$3,175 increase for student transportation, and final quote received for property and liability insurance which is an increase of \$2,900. We received the offer for the one-year proposal for transportation, which is up about 5%. We need to keep in mind that FY22 was under budgeted because of the contract extension that happened in May 2021. There are a lot of moving pieces and this is where the bottom line changes come from. Everyone is now in the appropriate bucket and paid correctly; there will not be any surprises next year when accounting for things, there will be plenty of money there. Ms. Browne questioned if the \$166,000 for the RISE program was under budgeted or not in the correct accounts. Ms. LaPlante responded there are 2 components, the prior Superintendent agreed to add ABA staffing after

the FY 22 budget was developed and in the process of putting them in the correct buckets, that is what it came up to. We also have 3 ABA's that became certified as RBT's which increased their salary. Ms. Browne expressed that it is baffling to her; salaries are a contractual agreement, it's a piece of paper that we know and every year we have issues of not accounting for it properly. This is at least the 3rd year we have heard of this happening. Mr. Lavallee commented that he thinks all of those were probably the same source. The former administration didn't read the contracts in putting this stuff together. Ms. Browne pointed out that (former BA) Ms. Baker went through the same steps, going contract by contract and accounting for everyone. Mr. Lavallee responded he thinks she was focused on finding where the money was spent. Chairman LoVerme noted that contract was clearly under budgeted. He questioned if the cuts were made, he was not sure if they were actually made in the buildings. Mr. Lavallee noted the cuts were made; it was bad accounting by the former administration. A question was raised if these positions were added throughout the school year. Ms. LaPlante is not sure; we were unable to find any correspondence to it. She was asked if she checked accounting for it through payroll. She had not done that and agrees with the frustration noted. It was suggested she look at hire dates to find the information. She notes she could go back and do that. Ms. LaPlante reports, theoretically, it appears what we are waiting to finalize the budget and the only unknown is the amount to transfer to food services and the amount you want to establish for the capital reserves. Unless something catastrophic, what you see for numbers should not change. A question was raised if you are expecting any staff changes from what you have on paper. Ms. LaPlante responded she budgeted based on current staff positions. Superintendent Weaver spoke to clarify that we have a social studies position that we intend to not fill and we will add it to the elementary school to address the bubble in enrollment; it is a transfer ideally. Ms. LaPlante spoke that that employee this year is a .80 and she has shifted that to a 1.0 at FRES. Principal Chenette provided a supporting document. She clarified a couple of numbers. There was a brief discussion regarding class size. Mr. Vanderhoof noted if we will continue, each year to have this discussion as a district about class size we really should address the policy. We are not "super close" to going over our policy; if we want to keep class sizes under 20, we should say that in the policy. That is not what the policy says but it seems that is what is strived for. Maybe that is too high, that is fine, we can discuss it but we should address it in the policy. Principal Chenette commented she doesn't disagree and it is more so now with the needs of the students and not every class is the same in terms of the need. Mr. Lavallee voiced he feels 25 is way too high; people in Lyndeborough were promised the class sizes were not going to be bigger than they were now. The discussion regarding class size continued. Chairman LoVerme expressed we need to bring that policy back to the policy committee.

ii. Food Service Discussion

Ms. Erin Smith, Food Service Director was present. Ms. LaPlante spoke that at the last meeting there was a discussion regarding kitchen equipment, maintenance and what may be needed. Ms. Smith has been working with vendors to get a budgeted amount on maintenance; it is not finalized. Ms. Smith spoke regarding the grease traps and gaskets need to be replaced; this will be included in the service. They will be cleaned on December 27 and gaskets will be replaced. The lids are broken to the grease traps. Ms. Smith notes it is a hazard and needs to be fixed. Cost will be the same for all the buildings. It will either be two or three times per year. She notes they have been cooking more and it may have to be done more than twice a year. She spoke of one vendor's quote for preventative maintenance that seemed a little high and is waiting to hear back from another vendor. She is hopeful by the end of this week she may have a dishwasher quote and whether we replace it or get something else that may be more useful is not determined yet. A question was raised if all the issues identified at the beginning of the year have been fixed. Ms. Smith confirms they have and there is no longer water on the floor. She notes they did notice the floor of the walk-in needs to be looked at. She spoke of the recent health code inspection last week went well, they got a green light, no issues identified and they do not need to come back. She spoke of the stove and that they are starting to use it more, making sauces etc. and not just warming frozen foods. She notes it can take a while to get things cooked, such as chili can take 2.5 hours and it is not efficient. She does not have any of the information on the stove such as when it was purchased or where it came from. Mr. Erb spoke it is over 15-20 years old and if you go by the guidelines it is due to be replaced. Ms. Smith notes the convection oven motor was replaced and that was over \$1,500. She is pricing out an electric plate tilt skillet. A question was raised how we are doing with collecting outstanding balances for lunches. Ms. Smith responds there are a few students that are "getting over"; the balance statements go out once a month and parents will reach out if they have questions. She notes there really has not been a giant deposit into any account. She has it set up so that no one can charge in the negative unless it is an instance such as a LCS student needs milk. Mr. Ryan noted the stove has been in for over 20 years. A question was raised if we are not giving food

to students who have no money. Ms. Smith replied that it all reimbursed through the state this year so every child can come through and get lunch. She confirmed ala carte items have to be paid for.

iii. Full Budget Review

Ms. LaPlante reported as far as the budget review, she recapped that in the beginning. This is our best estimate based on what we have in front of us. We have presented to the school board and budget committee what we feel will address all of the district's needs. We recognized it is high \$495,000, a 4.68% increase. If we back out the contractually obligated to, we are looking at about \$30,000 of wiggle room. We wish we could have presented a lower number, because everyone is rightfully concerned about how they will pay their taxes but at the same time, we want to provide a quality education to our students. We are in a position to relinquish it back to you to give direction and what you want to see differently. A question was raised regarding transportation. Ms. LaPlante responded compared to FY 22 it is an increase. Originally, she budgeted a generous amount so it has only gone up \$31,000 from the prior draft. She has spoken to Mr. Browne. A question was raised if it will ever go out to bid. Chairman LoVerme noted Mr. Browne is on his last year of contract extension; he had the option to do this in his current contract.

iv. Warrants

Ms. LaPlante expressed she did not fully understand, when she was looking at the warrant article portion of her duties she thought it was regarding new articles. She had been unaware the Board reviews the language. What we have right now, is the operating budget, any petition warrants, and capital reserve funds. We do not have anything else coming forward to us that we are aware of. We have two capital reserves that the district has funded, special education, building and roadways and technology. Discussion was had regarding the tennis courts and if it should be a warrant. Discussion included who uses them, how many and if there are enough students for a team this year. Superintendent noted if we had lights at night, he is sure it would get more use. Mr. Erb and he are in process of getting quotes to grind it up. He will reach out to the field's person to determine a cost. He confirmed students can play floor tennis in the gym and we can collaborate with another facility for students on a team. He notes there is so much water underneath the courts, you can't even fill it and it is becoming a safety issue. The fence is also falling down. Discussion also included there are some people who are passionate about tennis and should it be put in front of voters. The last quote provided by Mr. Boette was \$8,800. It was noted sadly, tennis is just not as popular as it once was. Concern was raised if is on a warrant and is voted down what happens. It is becoming more dangerous each year. Concern was also raised that some voters take the total you are asking for, all the warrants and it is wrapped up into one big number. It may not be necessary. Ms. Post spoke that she has heard from one citizen in favor of keeping them but not anyone else. She understands they are partly for use of the towns but feels the best solution is to dig them up and turn it into fields rather than rebuild it. There are people who are passionate about it and maybe there are people who want to raise money for it. It was noted if you put it on a warrant to raise (example) \$10,000 and it is voted down, you can't remove the tennis courts. Discussion continued including putting a placeholder in the budget so that if it did pass the money would be there and it is cheaper to get rid of them vs. replace them. Discussion moved to purchasing/leasing a truck for the district. It was noted Mr. Erb uses his truck to do all the maintenance around here and it seems a little strange to put money into tennis courts when we do not have a district vehicle. It was noted this did come before the voters a few years back and it was voted down, trucks are a lot more expensive now. It was suggested to check out the state surplus or pay some allowance to Mr. Erb. Ms. LaPlante confirmed from a risk management side, the district does not own that vehicle and his insurance can gladly deny any claim, it puts him at risk and the district. It is generous that he has done this but the district insurance will not cover a claim; we do not list it on our insurance. Discussion continued that the budget is already up over a million and a half from the proposed budget over our actual and we are not sure the amount for the capital reserve accounts yet, we usually ask for \$50,000 into the SPED fund. Mr. Vanderhoof suggests for the CIP if we make some adjustments, pull the AC for the library, paving for the upper fields and remove the miscellaneous repairs, push the cafeteria renovation out, we could ask for \$130,000 for each year for 3 years; this is just a 5-year snapshot. This was discussed. Mr. Vanderhoof confirmed the \$75,000 miscellaneous on the CIP is a placeholder. Ms. Post expressed she thinks it is a real hardship asking someone to use their own vehicle and put themselves at risk. She supports putting it on a warrant. It was also suggested instead to find some way to accurately reimburse Erb. Mr. Erb does get mileage reimbursement; it is the same as last year and gas is twice the price this year. Discussion was had regarding lease vs. purchase, and if there is a need for a commercial truck. Mr. Erb suggests purchasing a three quarter ton truck. He

notes he just spent \$3,500 on a trailer for his truck. He suggests getting a trailer down the road and have a true maintenance person, not a custodian who also mows the lawn and then you would not need duplicate equipment it can go from building to building. Chairman LoVerne reviews \$130,000 in the capital reserve, \$50,000 in SPED capital reserve and obtain a price on a truck. Mr. Vanderhoof requested more specific, detailed, information on what the vehicle is expected to do and more information regarding what we are using it for now, is it being used to plow, what is the exact function. It was noted it may be more relevant to find out what Mr. Erb is using his truck for and find out what else can it be used for. Superintendent spoke of being concerned about the whole district meeting presentation; it is a lot of money and we need to make some difficult decisions and need guidance from you or the community may be confused at the sheer size of the it and it gets voted down. He noted we could also use a truck for small sports team rather than getting a bus. It was questioned if it would be out of line for Mr. Erb to create a business and bill us. A question was raised regarding the CIP and if we have a cohesive plan that was agreed to. Mr. Vanderhoof spoke, \$130,000 for the next 3 years and then drop it down to \$90,000. It was noted the original intent had been to ask for larger amounts on the past few warrants than were actually asked for; we fell behind on it. Ms. Browne confirms things like the roof we stayed on top of but paving and things like that, which are not a priority we didn't keep up with. We never get to the point that we are making an improvement; we are not making progress just staying afloat. We hope to make improvements but things just keep coming up. Discussion was had regarding the tennis courts, adding to the CIP, the liability of leaving it up, removing it and students using another facility. It was suggested to put the purchase/lease of a truck in the budget. It was noted the van purchase decreased transportation cost. A question was raised if the truck is put on a warrant and it is voted down what is the back up the plan; what we are doing now is not sustainable. Superintendent will provide information on the truck. We will check with Mr. Boette to obtain and updated quote for the tennis court removal. Ms. LaPlante suggested speaking with neighboring towns to see if they are getting rid of any assets (truck). It was noted we cannot continue to have Mr. Erb use his truck for district business without a huge liability. We will have to find a solution and make it work. He has been under this burden for a long time. It was suggested to have some clarification on what we are exposing ourselves to as far as liability from our attorney. It was suggested as soon as we have that information we should be ready to make a decision. Ms. Browne reports the year the truck was on a warrant article was 2015 and it was for \$31,000. Mr. Jones expressed we need the number on leveling the tennis courts. Chairman LoVerne responded we will have to obtain another quote.

b. YTD Reports

Ms. LaPlante reported she does not have the YTD available; we are in the midst of the audit and will have it through November on January 4.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. Bill Crouse spoke noting he is not sure if this is the right time to say this but we were made aware of the overcrowding issue on the bus. We were told students that don't typically ride the bus but are going over a friend's house or for care are not allowed to ride the bus due to overcrowding. If there is not enough room on a bus to go to another home, that is an issue. Superintendent will follow up with Mr. Crouse.

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

The Budget Committee will meet December 21 and the next joint session is January 4; they hope to have some recommendations at that time.

The joint session ended at 7:57, the Budget Committee will reconvene in the Media Room.

VI. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Superintendent reported have additional FYI new hires, two long-term substitutes and one Title I Tutor. Chairman LoVerne noted the Technology Committee would give a report.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Golding and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the adjustments to the agenda. Voting: seven ayes; one abstention from Chairman LoVerme, motion carried.

VII. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

a. Reports

i. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent reported COVID numbers are as high as ever, there are some pockets in NH with low numbers. His wife informed him the intensive care beds are full in the state, the Governor will be bringing in resources to help with a 6 million dollar allocation. All that is happening in and around us. As a school he notes, we are doing a good job to keep moving forward the best way possible to pre-pandemic. Our teachers are amazing. He met with a teacher who is leaving for personal reasons mid-year; he asked him what he was grateful for. He said he was so grateful for the staff and administration he worked with and the commitment they have to all our kids. That is the kind of energy he prefers to focus on. Superintendent reiterated that if we have a cluster we have to implement a targeted mask mandate, which we all agreed to. He spoke that if we have major outbreaks we may have to implement other measures such as significant social distancing. If there is a state emergency and we go to full remote. Parents should be commended for keeping kids home when they are sick. He asks they be patient with us, our nurses and administrators continue to send home notes/emails, parents are contacting us when there are household contacts, keeping kids home, giving evidence of testing, and hopes more are being vaccinated. He want to be sure to recognize the efforts that our parents and teachers are making, the kids just coming to school doing their best. There is a perceived notion of drop-off in motivation in our state and in our schools. We are in this place where we feel the pressure of the pandemic around us, that has not gone away and we are battling that. When the Board agreed to use ESSER money to support kids after school, kids online who are missing a lot of days, hire long-term subs, those are the kind of decisions that impact our protocols and support those kids who may be falling through the cracks. He recommends not changing the (Back to School Plan) but to stay vigilant. If we do have a cluster and have to make those difficult decisions, we do it confidently and do not hesitate to make the decision. He believes we have had 4 clusters. He adds, our staffing is good, we have a shortage of substitutes every day and not just for COVID reasons; teachers are out for other reasons, PD, personal reasons etc. Teachers overall have demonstrated a commitment to our kids. Staffing is not abnormal in pre-pandemic times but he thinks we do need a break; especially this year and have time with family and friends and all are looking forward to Christmas break. He provided additional data in his report. A question was raised how we are doing with the nurse coverage. Superintendent reported since we started November 1, she has entered 23 entries in her journal, where after school hours or on the weekend, she has had to support students or staff with either COVID or some nurse related issue. Typically, it is the nurse who calls DPH. We have one nurse out back next Monday and one returning from leave, we are still in flux. Ms. Bertoncini should be commended; she has been basically carrying us. We have tried to find substitutes but the state has had to spend millions of dollars just to bring nurses into our state to support hospitalizations, there are just not any available. Ms. Bertoncini has done a great job following up, and making every call we need to. Superintendent reports wanting to share some information regarding math, ELA and science data he received from Ms. Stefanich. Next month there will be a collaborative report from the Principals and Ms. Stefanich where they will dig a little deeper into the data that is available on state assessment testing. When we talk about COVID and our trajectory with testing is always below the state and doesn't ever seem to be where we want it. Despite the fact that the overall scores have dropped in the state, in ELA we exceeded the state average by 2%; that is important to point out. We are right there with the state if not even a little higher. In math, we matched the state at 30%. Next year we are so focused in math, especially in the earlier grades. Science exceeded the state average by 14%; it has gone up 17% since the last time we tested kids. That is a pretty big number. We have to credit administration, the science teachers, support staff, parents and communities that came in to do activities with the kids. It is a collective effort and something we should celebrate. We will dig a little deeper into this on Jan. 4 and break those numbers out. He reviewed with staffing we are looking for one more Title I position at LCS; it is a .60 position grant funded. We filled the science position for semester 2. Our current science teacher will stay until the end of this semester. The struggle we are having is with Spanish. We have a highly qualified college student helping us who is back for winter break; she is doing a terrific job, she is not certified but it is an area of critical need. She is here until the first week of January and if we are not able to fill it, we will focus on getting students registered for VLACS. Mr. Post noted the news of the assessment scores is fantastic. He questioned if that is recent. Superintendent responded it was testing done last year in April/May. Mr. Post spoke of hoping since we for the large part had students in person it would help our students as opposed to the other communities along with all the work everyone did. It is a huge jump in science and they should be congratulated for that. Superintendent added that in 2019 we were 5% below the state average; it shows the investment staff has made despite what is happening.

ii. Principals' Reports

Principal Chenette reported in the report, if you have not had an opportunity to click the link to the videos we are sharing on our website, she encourages you to do so. Tutoring is ready to go; letters are going home tomorrow. On the heels of the increased science scores, she received a letter from the DOE granting FRES \$4,867 for a FRES robotics program. She recognized Ms. Stefanich and Mr. Andrew Tyler for helping so that we can connect those programs. A round of applause was given.

Principal Edmunds reported there is a lot happening at WLC. They also received a portion of a grant that Mr. Tyler and Ms. Stefanich put in for in the amount of \$5,180 for our robotics team. A round of applause was given. The HS robotics team is going to a scrimmage this weekend, taking the van. It is the first of the year. MS did qualifiers last weekend, they did well but didn't make it; they are proud of themselves and she couldn't be more proud of them. One of the things she loves is the sense of community they build and it's not about winning. Tutoring began last Monday. There is one teacher per day for an hour. There is not much participation; they will working on that. The senior class had a fundraiser Friday night. We hosted 140 elementary school kids to watch the Polar Express, served hot chocolate and sugar snacks. The senior class made almost \$1,200. Everyone had fun. The MS team tonight won the away game this evening, we are very proud of them. She gave a huge thank you to the PTO. They have been doing some amazing things you may not be aware of; with the varsity softball team raffling off a PS5 donated by Scott Dowling, they are doing baskets, ornaments, selling all of these things. In addition, the PTO in one day was funded the money to buy every kid on the dance team tickets to see the Boston Ballet Nutcracker plus a donation of a limousine to take them down. The kids were in tears, it is a wonderful thing. The dance team will be putting on a mini-nutcracker December 21, it is free but donations are welcome and will be used for any upcoming competitions. They have won quite a few trophies. The National Junior Honor Society was inducted on the 29th, it went very well, and the kids were excited. The WLC winter concert is tomorrow night at 7pm. A question was raised what Principal Edmunds thinks the resistance is for tutoring, is it transportation, getting home, not wanting to do it. She responded yes, some is transportation and some don't want to do it. She thinks with the MS it is more of a transportation issue and for HS they have a lot going on, some have other activities. The fact it is being offered is really great. The closer we get to the semester end she believes more will attend. She also noted we do have a significant amount of student absences, some quarantined, and some out with COVID etc. She is hoping that when they come back they will take advantage of it. A question was raised if it were centralized in Lyndeborough if she thinks it may increase. She responded she could do a survey of the students to find out. Superintendent spoke that he was part of a tutoring program where HS students tutored MS students, and part of it was the comradery, and part was the soda and pizza. It was a different approach to get kids to buy in. Principal Edmunds noted the MS is using time during SEER during the day, pairing them with older kids to help each other and that happens every day. A question was raised regarding teachers not grading homework. Principal Edmunds responded she thinks in those cases, the homework is done, they go over it in class, what has and hasn't been done correctly. In a competency based learning environment we are not looking for the grade but looking or the skills obtained. That is the goal; it is a hard thing for the kids to take sometimes. Chairman LoVerne noted it is hard for the parents too sometimes. She agrees. Superintendent added it is a philosophical issue. There has to be middle ground somewhere and sometimes we have to make compromises with our philosophy. It is a good question because we are dealing with some kids who are not motivated.

VIII. WLCTA

Ms. Becky Hawkes and Ms. Andrea Petrone were present. Ms. Petrone reported the Polar Express was a huge excitement; she thanked the MS and HS and noted some of the kids were so excited they came to the school in their PJ's. It was very successful. Teachers are excited the tutoring has started; they are not anticipating a ton of students and have about 15 students signed up. Tutoring will start at FRES soon and teachers were asked to give a list of names about who we think would benefit from it. At the elementary level, it is more in parent control in a lot of ways. The 7th and 8th graders are going to see a Christmas Carol at the Palace Theater on Friday. The 8th graders had a fundraiser. A shout out was given to Morgan Kudlich for organizing the FRES holiday concert. It was really special to see them get up and sing, dress up and it boosts morale for the staff. Last year they didn't have that due to COVID. LCS came over for a concert during the day. She reports we are so thankful for the W.I.N. teachers starting at FRES; that will be a huge help. There were a few kids that could not fit into W.I.N. capacity as it is now but with two more teachers that will help and with the long-term substitutes coming that will also be big. It is these little things that make a difference in our day. It is stressful for us to be home as a teacher not knowing who will be there. Thank you! She thanked the specials teachers; because of the lack of the substitutes, they have been asked to go above and beyond to help fill in. Of course, they say yes because that is in their nature, and they do it so well, that is huge! The 3rd grade is working on restructuring the reading program, we have seen a decline and there is a need for more explicit phonics instructions. We do teach it but not the way they need it this year. Three teachers got training

and we've been able to zone in on specific needs of students and are on the right path. It is in the nature of what COVID did when these kids were in 1st grade; we are seeing it now and playing catch up. Overall, we are grateful for the things you have put in place for us. It has been very stressful for teachers, in some ways the most stressful year yet. On behalf of the staff, she wishes all a happy holiday. Mr. Kofalt commented in the Principal's Report from FRES referenced the videos that were embedded in the report from the W.I.N. team giving an overview. He found it to be useful, it was concise and would like to see more of that.

IX. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. Post and SECONDED by Mr. Mannarino to approve the minutes of November 23, 2021 as amended.

Voting: six ayes; one abstention from Chairman LoVerme, motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Post and SECONDED by Mr. Golding to approve the nonpublic minutes of November 23, 2021 as written.

Voting: six ayes; one abstention from Chairman LoVerme, motion carried.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Facilities Committee

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral reported the committee went over a lot of it during the joint session, mostly about the CIP and Mr. Vanderhoof did a lot of research to come up with the \$130,000 for 3 years to put on the CIP. It is based on the current projects. The number would drop to about 100,000, then \$75,000 then \$5,000; it is subject to projects added. It is tricky to look at the CIP because of the way it was developed, what is a project and what is maintenance. The needs have changed. Last year we didn't meet because of COVID; it has been something we struggled with. This is pretty good start to start building the foundation. We talked about the tennis courts, the truck, the boilers, and the LCS boiler.

ii. Budget Liaison

See below

iii. Finance Committee

Mr. Kofalt reported the committee met last week and reviewed the finance reports, YTD expenditures which you have all seen, and covered payroll expenditures which was discussed earlier. We talked about the procurement practices and the tendency to issue blanket PO's and then draw against those throughout the year. He thinks it is useful and necessary some of the time but can be overused. Kristie will take a look at this, are there ways we can dial this back and not generating as much of these. We have a couple of procurement policies, listed as such, which we renewed not long ago which are basically related to federal compliance. In addition to those are purchasing policies which essentially delegate to the Superintendent; (example) the Superintendent shall create operating procedures for purchasing, there are a couple like that. We feel it is probably time to revisit those to see if they fit what the Board wants to do now. Kristie will pull those together and look at what other districts are doing. He is interested for example, in disposal of assets, if we have some equipment replaced and disposed of do we have adequate controls in place and know if we got full salvage value for it. Some of those policies say the Board shall delegate to the Superintendent to develop those procedures; we thought we would get those on the SAU website as we revise those; there is no link to the corresponding document in those cases. Mr. Kofalt spoke regarding records retention, it requires some additional participation from others like Mr. Bouley, as there is a lot of cybersecurity, FERPA etc. and it is something we will be reviewing over time and revising. Ms. Lavalley as the Chair of the Policy Committee is also on the Finance Committee. There is a whole host of finance policies and she is happy to have the Finance Committee take a first pass at those. They fall into the category of important but not necessarily urgent. We will take care of those over time.

• Budget Liaison

Mr. Vanderhoof reported the committee will meet next Tuesday. They will start to dig into the budget pretty well; there is some concern looking at the actual spent 2 years ago vs. what we are asking for and the budget last year vs. budget request. It is a very different percentage. There is potential concern with that going back 2 years vs. 1. They will look at technology; because of a lack of a plan, that will partly drive that. He didn't get a good sense overall as far as consensus where everyone is at regarding a final number. He is sure at the January 4 joint meeting there will be a lot more information.

• TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Mr. Kofalt reported the committee just had their first meeting this evening. They talked about the scope of work; the committee would engage in and agreed that this committee should work toward creating a technology plan that establishes a high-level vision. They don't necessarily want to get into details of implementation but we want to look at key issues and questions around technology such as additional professional development to support technology, privacy and security additional areas technology could benefit us potentially things like procurement. One thing he has heard from parents is if we are using technology too much in some cases and perhaps we should revert to books and paper more often than we do. We need to understand what the community wants, talk to staff and what worked for them and what doesn't. They will start to put together an outline for a technology vision, a Board documented plan followed by implementation plan, owned by staff, reviewed by the Board and potentially approved by the Board. That is a twostep process. We don't anticipate having anything that is probably going to change or steer the budget in short term. It is too fast to gather the information and set a different direction. Mr. Bouley has a lot of this in varying stages of development. The next goal is to build the vision document and start to put together surveys, and potentially do some focus groups and understand the needs better from a staff and community perspective. The Technology Plan document is no longer required by the state. There are only 3 school districts that actually submitted one that is up-to-date. It is something we want to do and should share at some point. One thing that occurred to us is we currently have 2 board members and one budget committee member. It probably makes sense to have a 3rd board member as only the board members can vote. Mr. Post volunteers. The next meeting is January 4 at 5pm before the Board meeting across the hall. Mr. Vanderhoof will bring it up with the Budget Committee, as he believes the current member on the committee may have trouble making it.

XI. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES

- a. FYI-New Hire-Amelia Clune-FRES Title I Tutor**
- b. FYI-New Hire-Susan Rodgers-FRES Title I Tutor**
- c. Resignation-Rene Altamar-WLC Spanish Teacher**

Superintendent reviewed the new hires and resignation of the Spanish teacher. Regarding the long-term substitutes, he will bring a request to extend this in January. He notes filling the Spanish position is difficult. Some students can extend learning through VLACS with minimal support and some with a lot of support. It is a difficult to ask this of students. We have done everything we can to find a replacement including contacting Franklin Pierce to see if they have anyone interested and even done some out of the box thinking regarding this trying to find ways to support those students. He spoke regarding still trying to fill the district clerk position and hoping to find someone to bring to the Board mid-January. If you know of anyone interested, refer him or her to Kristina Fowler at the SAU. The stipend for the position is \$1,000; it is intense but brief work.

XII. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Post raised concern regarding the 4.68%. Mr. Vanderhoof noted the Budget Committee will do some research to see if there are any large increases in specific areas. Mr. Post spoke regarding the truck, he thinks we should just consider it and roll it into the budget. He does not like increasing the taxpayer burden but it is long overdue. Mr. Vanderhoof spoke that other than one year, the Board doesn't see a review done of programs. What are the 5 least attended programs and are they worth continuing. He notes 2 years ago we removed the French program and it was a significant amount off the budget. He adds we get staffing numbers but never a view of the workload. He spoke about the truck expressing that in 8 years he has not seen what this truck will do for the district, specifically, if we need one, we need one, but it shouldn't just be because we want one. The trailer you can put in the budget next year but you have to get a truck first. He thinks the voters will look at it and say you have not had one before, why do you need one now. He wants to see a good argument for it. District meeting is the last weekend of February vacation, which will be interesting to see what turnout we will have. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral voiced she thought the dialog was good; she is glad we are talking about a truck. She adds, we know Mr. Erb is using his and if something goes wrong with it on a regular basis all that stuff would not be getting done. That will be the conversation in the presentation that this is how we have been doing it but shouldn't have been and need to remedy it one way or another. Mr. White questioned if we are still dealing with the retirement program; it went up last year. He questioned if this is a reason why the budget is up. Mr. Kofalt explained the retirement contribution is driven by the state and there was an adjustment essentially because it was underfunded for years. Based on projections of what the fund will earn over time, how many are in the system, it was adjusted upward. Every district and municipality is dealing with that reality. It causes our cost to go up; it is the right thing to do in the sense that it is the fiscally responsible thing to do in getting back to reality. Chairman LoVerme noted the district funds it 100% now.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

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.

XIV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Mannarino commented the robotics program was amazing, the most fun his son has had at that school in years. It's a great program and is excited to see what that turn into in the coming years.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral commented she feels to be in this tricky time, especially in a joint meeting, and to have this positivity. She can't think of just one thing, it was such a good meeting. Everything between how hard the nurses are working, how the whole district is coming together, the PTO; we have a lot to be grateful for.

Mr. Vanderhoof echoed what was said in public comment about the buses. He wants to follow up on that and see if we can get a solution for it.

Mr. Kofalt apologized he had to be called out for an emergency for a brief time. He asked for a brief recap of the on the test scores. Superintendent responded last time we tested below average and now there is a 14% above state average (science). Mr. Kofalt suggested that we reach out to the press and make them aware and that the district is moving in a positive direction.

Mr. Post congratulated the Superintendent and his leadership team for navigating in uncharted waters; somethings are better, some worse in some aspects. It is great to see the great work from everyone on the team from facilities to special education.

Mr. White commented everyone is doing a great job. This will be his last board meeting due to his schedule. He was hoping to stay until March when his seat will be up for election but could not. He will not be attending any longer and his seat will have to be filled. He enjoyed working with everyone, enjoyed the experience, and will try to keep as involved as possible from a public perspective.

Chairman LoVerme thanked Mr. White for all he has done for the district and for giving up his time. He really appreciates it and so does everyone else, students and school board. Like Ms. Cloutier-Cabral said, there is positivity in the meetings and they are a lot different than in years past. We have a good crew and they bring positivity to the meetings. It is great that the Union comes and shares. He congratulated the robotics teams for being awarded grants.

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

A MOTION was made by Mr. White and SECONDED by Mr. Mannarino to enter Non-Public Session to discuss personnel matters RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (B) (C) at 9:05pm.

Voting: via roll call vote, eight ayes, one abstention from Chairman LoVerme; motion carried.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board entered public session at 9:45pm.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Golding and SECONDED by Mr. Mannarino to adjourn the Board meeting at 9:46pm.

Voting: eight ayes; one abstention from Chairman LoVerme, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Fowler