

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, February 21, 2023
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School
6:30 p.m.**

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

Present: *Jim Kofalt, Brianne Lavallee, Alex LoVerme (online), Dennis Golding, Matt Mannarino, Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral, Charlie Post, Darlene Anzalone, Geoffrey Allen*

Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Associate Principal Bridgette Fuller (online), Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin (online), Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt (online), and Technology Director Nicholas Buroker

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dance Coach, Melanie Jones and students from the WLC Dance Team were present and spoke about their experience and wanting to go to summer camp and then Nationals in Florida. Ms. Jones spoke about dance camp and the benefits. Nationals is huge she said. This team qualified for the 3rd time for Nationals. They were not able to come up with the funding the last few times to go. They have come up with some ideas for fund raising such as car washes and bake sales and potentially set up a “go fund me”. On Sundays, they set up a concession stand during the Men’s Basketball League. The cost for camp is \$4,587 and it is being held at the Great Woods Lodge. It was clarified it is about \$417 per person and they have 11 members. The cost for Nationals is about triple that but the final cost is not given until a few weeks prior to going. July 26-29 are the dates for camp. First payment needs to be in by May 17. Nationals is February 20, 2024. Ms. Lavallee acknowledged the great presentation they gave. She asked if there was anything the Board could do to help with fund raising. The team asked that they spread the word of who they are and that they are trying to save up the money to show even small towns in NH can progress with time and effort. The group was congratulated and thanked for their enthusiasm. Mr. Allen asked them to take advantage of the experience some of the board members have in fundraising and welcomed them to reach out to him directly. Ms. Jones spoke about their competition experience ranking second place in Boston. They went to regionals taking first place in jazz and hip-hop. Donations should be given to the SAU or WLC and checks made out to WLC with dance team in the memo.

IV. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read. Chairman noted a 3-minute time limit for public comment. He called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment.

Ms. Mary Golding congratulated the dance team, she spoke of being proud of them, what an accomplishment, and she wishes them luck and will help in any way with their fundraising.

VI. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

52 **a. Reports**

53 **i. Director of Student Support Services Report**

54 Mr. Pratt reviewed he will need to delay brining forward recommendations regarding mental health until
55 March or April. He provided in his report the annual data regarding IEP's. SPED has maintained a steady
56 number of students needing services. National rate is 15.6% students receiving special education services.
57 The NH rate is 18.9% our rate is 21%. Coming into the year, we saw a decline in the number of younger
58 students receiving special education services. He believes the reason is that we are doing a great job at the
59 younger grade levels with W.I.N. and other interventions prior to needing any SPED assistance. Kudos to
60 the teams at both schools for working hard on that. We saw a redistribution of special education services in
61 terms of disability type; we have an increase in the specific learning disabilities category and a
62 corresponding decrease in speech and language, which is a natural progression. A lot of students will start
63 off with speech services in the younger grades and as we go along in about 3rd grade we will have an
64 increase in the disability blossoming a little more due to more difficult curriculum. Our out of district
65 numbers remain steady, we have 6 students in referrals prior to making the determination whether or not
66 they have a disability and will receive services. We have 4 students aging out this year, 20 students in RISE
67 and 16 ABA therapists. A question was raised regarding the 6 students in the referral process if this is
68 across all schools. Mr. Pratt responded it is across the district, 2 students at LCS, 3 at FRES and 1 at the
69 middle school. A question was raised how he go to the 21% and how the math works on that. Mr. Pratt
70 reviewed the total number of students with disabilities is 106, 565 total students as of the 31st. The
71 percentage was actually 19.8% and not 21% as previously stated. He will update his report and send that
72 out. It puts us more aligned to the state average. It was noted this report was helpful.

73 **ii. Director of Technology's Report**

74 Mr. Buroker reported 84 tickets, staying at his goal of 10 tickets or less, although ticket close time was
75 more than he had hoped for by 15 hours. Power outages continue to be an issue. The last storm took down
76 a tree branch at LCS, which damaged the fiber line, and LCS was without VOIP phones and internet for
77 about a day. He was impressed with the way LCS managed this and specifically Ms. LeBlanc who held it
78 all together. He and one of his technicians attended some firewall training which was enlightening. He
79 spoke of a new intern whom he has been impressed with. We had a small security breach when some of the
80 middle school students found out the staff Wi-Fi password and got their cell phones on the staff wi-fi. It
81 didn't get them much of anything except a slightly more lenient content filter, he banded all the devices
82 believed coming from students and figured out what caused it and will seek to remediate that over the
83 break. The radio and video surveillance project is going out to bid which he is working on. He will replace
84 the firewall over break as opposed to the access points. TDS is pulling out their copper lines at LCS and
85 replacing it with fiber on Monday. A question was asked regarding the power outages and what would be a
86 staged approach to remedying that. Mr. Buroker responded the pie in the sky option would be having
87 generators wired into this IT rack to keep the IT systems up. That is not the case at FRES or LCS. WLC
88 does not have a generator. WLC in particular is where all the districts internet and voice comes in and out.
89 He confirms if VOIP goes down there would be a backup however if someone hits the fiber line it could
90 theoretically cut all phones. His understanding for replacing this (although just speculation) is that copper
91 is old and finding technicians qualified in copper is hard to find. Chairman Kofalt spoke that previously the
92 FCC said you had to keep all your copper lines alive and pulled that rule about a year and a half ago. Mr.
93 Buroker was asked to double check that the generator at LCS as we may be able to get state funding to
94 cover what he is asking for. Mr. Buroker and Ms. LaPlante will follow up on this.

95 **b. Letters/Information**

96 **i. Enrollment**

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98 Chairman Kofalt spoke we are a little under in enrollment looking at the whole year. Superintendent
99 reported the enrollment reflects an overall stable student population. Mr. Allen questioned what it was 10
100 years ago. Superintendent does not have that available tonight and can get that out. Chairman Kofalt spoke
101 it was significantly lower, the demographics of the northeast were against us and going into full day
102 kindergarten did help with more students entering and staying in the district. He noticed looking at the
103 student support services that last year's number of total enrollment was 579 with about \$3,700 per ADM

attached to that and we will lose some funds as a result, but that number may go up as well. Mr. Allen voiced he asks because looking at 5 years out what is the trajectory and what do we do with the facilities.

VI. DISTRICT MEETING PREPARATION

i. Warrant Articles/Presentation Discussion

Chairman Kofalt voiced we went through these as a board last time, is there anything further we need to discuss. It has all the numbers and the tax rates, which we did not have before. Superintendent spoke we are looking to see if you need help from any of us in terms of the presentation of the articles. It is about helping you build the slide deck if you are going to use one. Is there any information you need or would you like us to put together slides for you? Ms. Anzalone spoke in the past the tax impact has been different but this is the same. Ms. LaPlante explained this, when she breaks out the apportionment Lyndeborough next year will be responsible for 27.9% of all costs and Wilton 72.1% but where it equalizes on the warrant it is looking at the property values. The property values certified as of September 1st is what is skewing that percentage just a little bit making it flat for the two communities. When Ms. Fowler sent out the warrant to you, she included the tax impact sheet and if you break it out to 4 decimal points it starts to show that little bit of difference but this is a real anomaly year where the tax impact appears the same because of the property values that each residence is taxed on. Ms. LaPlante spoke for the apportionment where we break out the cost; it is functioning off last year's tax rate, the 20-21 values. The way the apportionment works and the way the formula works within the Articles of Agreement, we are always essentially going back 2 years and assessing on that property value, we are using that to equalize values but obviously the taxpayers are always taxed on their current property value the town certified. It is a very complex equation and one she felt she is not doing justice to here but would be more than happy to share whatever document that breaks it out and shows where the different values come from and how we are reaching that appearance that it is the same value per thousand. Ms. Anzalone voiced it looks like 50/50, Lyndeborough is paying for half and Wilton is paying for half. Ms. LaPlante responded it is not paying for half of things; it is all assessed over the property values. She provided an example. Chairman Kofalt clarified it sounds like what she is saying is, (using rough numbers) that Lyndeborough is paying 25% of the total costs and Lyndeborough has 25% of the total property value of the combined two towns that would therefore essentially equalize the cost per thousand of property value across the two towns. Ms. LaPlante confirmed this. Mr. Post voiced that doesn't make any sense. The odds of them being the same are astronomical. Ms. LaPlante reviewed this is why she had the spreadsheet sent out with it. Mr. Post suggested they talk about it after. Ms. Lavallee spoke when we came to the presentation the Budget Committee that broke it down in more detail in what the towns were paying is that correct. Ms. LaPlante responded no. Mr. Allen spoke he is sure that her numbers are right but if we are having trouble, it is likely others will too and need to make sure it can be explained. Ms. LaPlante agrees. Mr. Post voiced you are using a home value of \$250,000, Ms. LaPlante confirms that is the value we have used historically. Mr. Post questioned if that value (\$250,000) will be transparent to the public given the most recent revaluations in Wilton and Lyndeborough. Ms. LaPlante responded what is the most transparent is the rate per thousand when you break it down to what is the true number that will carry through. As far as breaking it down for simpler terms, she can reach out to see if she can get more of median home value. Mr. Post asked if the \$250,000 is in any of the public documents anywhere. Ms. LaPlante does not believe it was in the budget presentation or on the warrant. Mr. Post noted the only warrant the Budget Committee is responsible for is the operating budget, the School Board is responsible for the rest, and Ms. LaPlante confirms this. Discussion continued regarding this. Ms. Lavallee reminded the group we usually talk about who will present which article. Mr. Mannarino was nominated to do the presentation on the CBA, he agreed. Ms. Lavallee spoke as far as putting slides together she asked Ms. LaPlante to help with this and at the next meeting will review the final. Mr. Post and Ms. Cloutier-Cabral volunteered to speak to the article for the Building/Roadways Capital Reserve. Ms. Lavallee voiced if there are any specifics you want to see in it please let Ms. LaPlante know. Ms. Anzalone nominated Mr. LoVerme to speak about the tennis court article. Discussion was had that there had not been a warrant article put forward that had not been recommended before. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral volunteered to present the tennis court article. Mr. LoVerme was asked if he would like to help as well, he agreed. Chairman Kofalt voiced he ran the percentages on the property tax base and percentage

allocation to each town the percentage allocated to Lyndeborough based on ADM is 27.94% and the percentage of property tax base is 27.89%, 27.94% vs 27.89% which means that the allocation of costs for the district matches almost perfectly with the tax base for both towns. It actually makes sense that they are very close. If you look at the effect on the tax rate the 88 cents per thousand; the Lyndeborough tax rate is 88.38 cents per thousand and Wilton is 88.26 cents per thousand. To him, it makes sense and is spot on but it is worth taking a closer look and agrees with Mr. Post we should probably bump up the \$250,000 to about \$400,000. Mr. Allen noted what we are saying for the record based on the Chairman's math is that Ms. LaPlante numbers are accurate. Chairman Kofalt responded they appear to be accurate to him. Mr. Post wanted to clarify what Chairman Kofalt said and he voiced you are right in your conclusion but the ADM percentage is 24.50 but it is the equalized value of the property that brings it to the 27.9 not just the ADM. Chairman Kofalt confirms he is correct. Superintendent and administration will work on slides and send those out for review so that at the March 7 meeting we can finalize the presentation.

VII. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. Golding and SECONDED by Ms. Lavallee to approve the minutes of February 7, 2023 as amended.

Voting: Roll call vote, all aye, motion carried.

VIII. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES

a. Resignation-Taylor Owens-RBT-End of Yr. FRES

b. Resignation-Elizabeth Graves-Kindergarten Teacher-End of Yr. LCS

c. Resignation-Desiree Lincourt-ABA Therapist-WLC

Superintendent reviewed the resignations. Ms. Lavallee questioned if we have given any more thought to exit interviews. Superintendent spoke that we are working on a process for that which will go through Ms. Spurrell in HR. She has a template created. In the past, we have had interviews but it has not been a consistent process. Having a common template, we can actually score and review for patterns will be helpful. Ms. Lavallee asked that an example of the template to be attached to his next Superintendent's Report. She also spoke of having the opportunity to be in Ms. Graves's class multiple times and wishes her all the best, she is sad for our district to see her go and wishes her the best in her endeavors. Mr. Mannarino asked that the template be sent to him so he can review it. This will be done.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. John Lavoie spoke regarding the exit interview template and that it is basic business practice to have a set of instructions so that anyone can utilize it, and it sounds like we are headed in that direction.

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

Ms. Alyssa Lavoie spoke that she has had the opportunity to be the para in Ms. Graves's class for the month of February 2 days a week, as we have not had the ability to hire a para full time for the year. That in itself is something that needs to be continually looked at as to why the district has been unable to fill that position. She also seconded what Ms. Lavallee said wishing Ms. Graves the best, it is unfortunate we are losing a very passionate young teacher that she believes was a preventable loss and that starts at the school board level making sure the teachers and more importantly the Superintendent and administration have the support and autonomy to do their job. She would like that kept in mind as we move into the next round of school board members. She commented that the voters had already made their decision or expressed their desire to not continue with the tennis courts, the Budget Committee and School Board do not recommend it; I am really confused as to why it has been put on by the governing body and not requested as a petition warrant article. That is something to consider.

Ms. Melodie Jones thanked the Board for listening to the dance team and taking the time to understand their needs and wants about the upcoming event they want to attend. Chairman Kofalt thanked her for what she does it has been very successful.

X. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral congratulated the dance team. She is very proud of their achievements and is looking forward to the community supporting them. Also, the girls' basketball team is playing now, hoping they are doing well. She congratulated them for making the playoffs; they are a strong team and noted it was a good meeting.

Ms. Anzalone congratulated the dance team as a Board we should try to get the word out as much as we can so that they can go to camp and then onto the competition. Going to Nationals is a big deal. It is the kind of thing we need to get out in the community more and let people know what our students are doing. She believes the community would support them; it is not that much money they are asking for to go to the camp and get the whole team to go. In regard to the budget meeting coming up, we need to have the tax rate information clear for tax payers as she believes it will come up.

Mr. Mannarino congratulated the dance team as a "dance dad" of a 9 year old he knows the incredible commitment it takes and the hours that go into practicing. It is very impressive.

Ms. Lavallee thanked her fellow board members; it was a good meeting and hopes to keep the momentum going. She loved having the students here and thinks it was a positive experience for them. She wishes good luck to the girls tonight playing and hopes to hear good news.

Mr. Allen congratulated the dance team. He thinks it is an example of something we do poorly in the district, which is highlighting the things we do well in a small district. We have a lot of wins here and spend a lot of time talking about losses. There are some good things that happen here. Great board meeting, he appreciates it. He would like to give a shout out to Ms. Kostenblatt. Another thing we don't talk about a lot in this district is the amount of time that teachers take out of their own time to help their students and help them become successful. She has given up about 2 months of Saturdays to help the ecology students raise money, kudos to her and he would like that passed on.

Mr. LoVerme apologized for not being there but it sounded like a good meeting. Congratulations to the dance team and if there is any way we can help them out in the budget he would like to see that done as they don't get very much money out of the budget and it is considered a sport. The rest of the athletic teams get money.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Mannarino and SECONDED by Mr. Golding to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:38pm.

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

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristina Fowler*