

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
EMERGENCY FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, April 6, 2020
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative MS/HS-Media Room
6:00 p.m.**

Present: *Online-Charlie Post, Jonathan Vanderhoof, Mark Legere, Brianne Lavallee, and Superintendent Bryan Lane was present at WLC Media Room*

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm.

Mr. Post- The School Board formed the Finance Committee to look at the information and to make a recommendation to the Board. The Board may make a decision or bring it back to the committee.

There have been inquiries asking whether or not the Finance Committee had children in the fifth grade. Mrs. Lavallee and Mr. Legere acknowledge they have children in the fifth grade and Mr. Vanderhoof a student in grade 4.

The committee wanted to get feedback from parents. The committee appreciates the feedback. The tally was parents could go either way, nine in favor staying at FRES and seven who wanted students to move up. There was not a clear consensus.

Draft of the presentation is pretty much the same and numbers haven't been changed; waiting to see if numbers changed.

Mr. Vanderhoof- My concern is that the Curriculum Coordinator position has not been thoroughly discussed. Some data came to the committee and should be brought to the school board. There was more information in regard to the funds used and brought back into the district. Need to do a deeper look into the position. The feedback was helpful. With the information I have received, I would change my vote to keep 6th grade at WLC.

Mrs. Lavallee- My opinion on the Curriculum Coordinator has been made clear in our previous meetings. I reached out to Dr. Heon for feedback on the middle school needs. I do not want the position cut but looking at a strategic plan for next year, it would have a less direct effect on the students. I want to thank Mr. Vanderhoof for the email and asking for more information. Structures are in place that can be continued without her. Dr. Heon did state that keeping the entire MS staff due to the content area specialist is a need. The parent feedback was great, I saw a repeat of the need to have planning put into this change and how students and staff will be impacted. If we were going to make a structural change like this we need 3-4 months to plan it out, that has not happened.

Mr. Legere- I sent some emails out to find out about the middle school sports teams; what would be the numbers. I would like to see that. I would also like to know what reductions could be included to maintain the middle school staff and still meet the required reduction and what the staffing would look like per grade.

Superintendent- To meet the dollar figure and keep the teacher reductions could be made in supplies, substitute teacher accounts, insurance buffer as well as smaller options. The middle school staff of 8 would be distributed with 3 sixth grade sections, 3 seventh grade sections and 2 sections of eighth grade.

Mr. Post- Option 2 keeping students at WLC. Still would need to reduce one teacher. Can we reduce through costs through resignations?

50 Superintendent- We cannot predict any savings at this time. Under the proposal, eliminate the Alt Ed Specialist, one
51 middle teacher and middle school counselor.

52 Mr. Post- Trying to keep the teacher, reducing buffers if we can make it through the year.

53

54 Superintendent- The Alt Ed Specialist currently supervises 11 students taking on-line classes, that number should
55 increase a bit with French. These classes meet at different times during the school year. The master schedule will
56 include, one social studies teacher and one science teacher who will be responsible for working with these students.
57 In school suspension will be handled by the administration.

58

59 Mr. Vanderhoof- If you keep the teacher, losing the half time counselor. Other reductions are not a plan and we will
60 try to work our way through.

61

62 Mr. Legere- Are there options to see, if the school counselor, if they are removed.

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64 Ms. Lavalley- When was the middle school teacher half time.

65

66 Superintendent-Four years ago the school counselor taught health for half the day. There was room in the schedules
67 of other staff people to take that away so the counselor could be full time.

68

69 Mr. Post- Looking at the numbers. Eliminating the professional development for the Principals \$4,500 and other
70 things that have been discussed in other options. SAU incentive would be reduced. The middle school teacher half
71 time on the sheet on line 124. Discussion of how the math would work by Mr. Post and Mr. Vanderhoof. Reduction
72 of middle school counselor to half time, the salary incentives for SAU is \$11,000 and MS counselor would allow
73 them to keep the teacher. It doesn't make sense to reduce accounts that we have over spent.

74 Mr. Vanderhoof- The school counselor was removed only if the move was to FRES.

75

76 Mr. Legere- The thought process is that we would be eliminating the position by the administration. I think we need
77 to think about how we feel about the teacher or the half counselor. We looked at the things we need to reduce and
78 allow them to work.

79

80 Mr. Vanderhoof- If you cut the buffer it would, and the SAU incentives gives about \$20,000. Difference between
81 keeping the teacher or half time counselor.

82

83 Mr. Post- What is the consensus.

84

85 Mr. Vanderhoof- What would be the class sizes with the current staff.

86

87 Superintendent - 3 classes of 17 in the 6th grade, 2 classes of 21 in the 7th grade, 2 classes of 24 in the 8th grade.

88

89 Mr. Post- The 7th grade would have 3 sections instead of the 8th?

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91 Superintendent- Yes, the needs of younger students would warrant that.

92

93 Mr. Vanderhoof- Recommend to the Board as is with the reduction of one teacher, class sizes are reasonable, and
94 keeping the counselor. The sixth grade stays at WLC. Discussion point for tomorrow, if the Board prefers to keep
95 the teacher it is possible. Option 2 as written. If you don't want to cut the teacher the counselor is eliminated.

96

97 Mr. Legere- If we present option 2 and the choices to the Board to choose between the half time counselor or
98 teacher. I am ok with multiple options.

100 Mr. Vanderhoof- If we are going to the Board with option 2, we can keep the option of going to FRES. Bring the
101 Board one option with option 2 with variations. Option one is left in the background.

102

103 Mr. Legere agrees.

104

105 Mr. Vanderhoof- Option 2 is the path of least resistance.

106

107 Ms. Lavallee- In regard to the teacher, cutting the teacher is not a good decision. My opinion is that I have a hard
108 time with either decision, instead of looking at the other options. Since we are looking at this direction it would be
109 unfortunate to cut the teacher and bring a teacher back and rehire if we reevaluate the process. My stance is the
110 original; looking at other options. If we kept the teacher what happens to the advanced program?

111

112 Superintendent- The advance program could not happen but the challenge program could happen.

113

114 Mr. Post- How long has the middle school model been in place.

115

116 Ms. Bujak through a text message- 17 years and the program has been approved by the DOE and lauded by NEASC.

117

118 Mr. Post- Back to our recommendation. Do we want to leave option 1 in?

119

120 Mr. Vanderhoof- Leave them both. Purpose of the committee was to bring back some clarity. Leaving it in will be
121 difficult.

122

123 Mr. Legere- Not including option 1 will make it easier to move forward with. If we are going to move to WLC, I
124 want the Board to see both options. I would prefer the teacher. Ok with either or.

125

126 Mr. Vanderhoof- Social emotional is an issue for the school counselor. Keeping the reductions, I am concerned
127 about the changes. There has been discussion in the past for reducing staff. Concerned with not putting the
128 reduction we took out. The half time counselor is a good option. We should bring both options.

129

130 Ms. Lavallee- Would like to find ways to meet their needs with the staff and not just do the cuts. Would like to keep
131 the teacher and try to keep the counselor. If you add the 50 students back in you need to put the counselor half back
132 in.

133

134 Mr. Legere- Do you have a preference?

135

136 Ms. Lavallee- I need to do some more research. About when the position was half time and why it was brought up. I
137 would like to see more historical information.

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139 Ms. Lavallee- What does this do to the health insurance buffer.

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141 Mr. Vanderhoof- I will send the information to the Superintendent.

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143 Mr. Post-We have gotten continual feedback, more than I have ever seen the Board request.

144

145 Let's take a vote.

146

147 Motion to keep 6th grade at WLC with two options by Mr. Legere and 2nd by Mr. Vanderhoof.

Voting:

Mr. Post- Aye

Mr. Vanderhoof- Aye

Mr. Legere- Aye

Mrs. Lavallee- Nay

Mr. Post- I will have the options for presentations ready. We will see what the Board will say and if we need to get back we can meet again.

Public Input

Heather Gibson- Right now with the buildings closed are we saving money?

Superintendent- There are cost savings in various accounts but there is no way to have a dependable number at this time. By spending now and reducing costs next year the tax payer, who may need the break would not see that if we used this year's fund to purchase things for next year.

Mr. Post- There is a struggle for people in the future to pay. The towns could be struggling as well to make up due to lack of input.

Ms. Lavallee- Can you explain the budget process for those who may not understand it?

Superintendent- The unexpended funds in any school year are not put forward to the next year's budget. Those funds go directly to the taxpayer and lower property taxes. Those funds would not be seen by the tax payer until next December.

Ms. Susan Ballou- Asks if the Curriculum Coordinator's position is up for discussion. Can it be half time and keep the teacher with the half time counselor? Will it be put on the table? Can we create a curriculum team?

Mr. Post- We did look at that in the first couple of meetings. We looked at merging the position or having it shared with the principal and it was not something that was reasonable. We are making a recommendation. Dr. Heon did not offer a team of people.

Ms. Susan Ballou- Throwing it out there as a possibility; you don't need full time and make it part time. Dr. Heon has done a good job in getting things in place.

Mr. Legere- To Mrs. Ballou, historically prior to that were people who were responsible for curriculum.

Ms. Ballou- We had curriculum committees by department and things were thrown at them. When with Mascenic, there was an Asst. Superintendent, after that the Superintendent took on the role. There was a half time teacher; it did not work well.

Prior to Dr. Heon, there was not an effective practice. Combining the districts; were struggling. Curriculum work was new every two years and this was difficult with the changes in leadership at the central office.

Mr. Legere- As a committee, we were concerned that the progress would not be maintained. With the reductions full time is needed. We are concerned that getting things back we may not be able to keep things up. Don't want to speak for Mr. Vanderhoof; the concern is not maintaining.

Ms. Susan Ballou- There is a new focus with a new person. The changes come in with their ideas and may upset the issues at hand. Someone within the district could do this. There are districts that do not have full time curriculum coordinators.

Mr. Legere- That would be the Superintendent's responsibility.

Mr. Lavallee- through this process I have listened. The committee also has the obligation that cutting \$400,000 it cannot improve the student experience. A series of difficult options, I don't believe any option will improve the student experience.

Mr. Legere- I don't think the Board indicated that.

Mr. Lavallee- It is the obligation of the Board and the committee that after the budget process there is no way to improve the student experience with this size of reduction; it is ridiculous. It has not been explained as to what is going to be done that will not enhance the student experience. There is no gain in this.

Mr. Post- The committee has done its' best to minimize the effect to the quality of the student experience.

Mr. Lavallee- The committee has done a good job, the voters felt that the student experience could still be improved with the reductions.

Mr. Post- I will go through the minutes to look for those comments.

Mrs. Lavallee- Not relevant to the meeting but technical questions... How things are proposed at the school board meeting.

Superintendent- As a Board member during a topic on the agenda, you can bring up discussions and make motions that represent your constituency.

Mr. Vanderhoof- Sent off the numbers on the spreadsheet to Mr. Post.

Motion to adjourn at 7:37pm by Mr. Leger and 2nd Ms. Lavallee.
All aye

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristina Fowler for Bryan Lane, Superintendent of Schools*