

LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

SAU #68

DATE: November 13, 2024

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:

Jay Duguay, Chairperson
Kevin Bell
Joe Bossie
Casey Caulder
Jasmine Weeden

SCHOOL BOARD ABSENT:

Mandi Avery
Tamra Ham

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF/STUDENT PRESENT:

Dr. Mary Steady, Superintendent of Schools
Peter Stivali, Principal
Debbie O'Connor, Financial Manager
Sharon Holt, SAU#68 Administrative Assistant
Bart King, Technical Support
Shaun Hagan, Teacher Representative

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Joanna Boisseau
Nancy Bartlett
Megan Houle

Sarah Kraus
Jackie Wilson
Paula King, Remote

The School Board meeting was held in the Elementary School Multipurpose Room.

School Board Chairperson, Jay Duguay called the School Board meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Minutes:

Jasmine Weeden made a motion to approve the School Board meeting minutes of October 23, 2024. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. Jasmine Weeden, Kevin Bell, and Joe Bossie were in favor, Casey Caulder and Jay Duguay abstained and the motion carried.**

Educational Focus:

Literacy Team:

- Joanna Boisseau and Sarah Kraus presented on literacy happenings around Lin-Wood. With the help of Maureen Watson the Elementary School teachers are working on the foundation skills of reading with students including the decoding of words, phonics, and reading for comprehension. Ms. Watson has provided tools for screening and progress monitoring. Dr. Tolman is working with the Middle/High School teachers on strategies to enhance vocabulary and comprehension. The strategies provided can be used throughout subject areas not just within English Language Arts. Ms. Watson and Dr. Tolman provide a hands-on learning approach that is supportive to teachers and students.
 - Jay Duguay asked how the literacy work with Ms. Watson and Dr. Tolman integrates with the school's reading program? Joanna Boisseau noted the school's reading program works on the same foundational knowledge basis as the instructional strategies from Ms. Watson and Dr. Tolman.
 - Dr. Steady mentioned, in addition to the tools provided by Ms. Watson and Dr. Tolman, the District has purchased a program, Branching Minds, which organizes student data to determine what instructional supports an individual student may need.

STEM Team:

- Jackie Wilson and Megan Houle presented on the Innovation for Transformation Consortium they, along with Peter Stivali, attended near Cincinnati, OH. The Consortium was held in the Indian Hill School District which holds four different schools (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12) that are STEM certified schools. Attendees visited all four schools where every level of learning had STEM imbedded lessons that were meaningful to the community (school community or community-at-large). The schools focus on strategies that engage the mind as well as the traditional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics of STEM by building thinking classrooms and utilizing project based learning. These techniques are shown to increase student engagement. Moving forward with project based learning takes a while and a change of mindset as Teachers still need to teach to standards and state testing while adding-in project based learning activities. Teachers at Indian Hill School District observed project based learning for a full year prior to moving forward.

- Jay Duguay asked how Lin-Wood could begin using these strategies in the short-term? Megan Houle mentioned the District has some great tools available including 3-D printers and the *Glowforge*. These tools will be made available to the lower grade levels as well as the Middle and High School. White Mountain Science, Inc. (WMSI) has provided an over-view training to Lin-Wood teachers on the *Glowforge*. Additional, more in-depth, training will be held next week.

Communication:

Correspondence:

- Jay Duguay received a notice from the NH Electric Cooperative (NHEC) regarding matching grant funds available to School Districts for energy efficiency upgrades. Jay Duguay noted it may be worthwhile to have someone from NHEC come to the school to take a look at possible projects such as the Elementary school windows.
- Dr. Steady mentioned the North Country Education Services (NCES) newsletter was received and included in the Board packets.

Reports:

Business Administrator's Report:

Debbie O'Connor reported:

- 2023-2024 school year financial reports were provided to the School Board.
 - The general fund review of expenditures shows the District saw savings in salaries and benefits due to some unfilled or half-filled positions. Additional savings came from the oil cost actuals vs. budget. The Middle/High School HVAC project was unfinished at the end of the school year and the remaining budget for this project was encumbered. The remaining unassigned fund balance of \$166,000 from the prior year was rolled back into the fund balance. These items as well as other pluses and minus resulted in a remaining unassigned fund balance in the general fund of \$833,105. Of this, \$399,750 was retained and \$433,355 was returned to the towns to be applied to the new year's tax rate in the tax rate setting process.
 - Jay Duguay asked if the \$166,000 was the remaining balance after the use of a portion of the previous year's retained funds for the flooring project? Debbie O'Connor answered, yes, the original amount of the retained unassigned fund balance was \$340,000 and \$166,000 remained after the completion of the flooring project.
 - The food service fund report indicates the food service subsidy from the general fund increased again this year. The subsidy is budgeted each year and the number keeps going up. Food costs have increased, enrollments and free and reduced numbers are down, and the lunch price increase cap of 10¢ per year all contribute to the food service operations bottom line. The District is currently looking at Free and Reduced numbers to see if there is a way to get more families to apply for this program.
 - The trust fund report was mentioned. There is approximately \$148,000 in the facilities trust fund at this time which can be utilized for upcoming facilities related projects.
 - The District Profile Reports provide information from the State financial reports and year-over-year comparisons. The District's year-over-year comparisons are pretty consistent which shows that expenses are getting classified correctly.
 - Jay Duguay asked if the current-year projects slated to come from the trust funds have been completed? Debbie answered yes, most of the major projects including the Middle School lockers and technology upgrades have been completed.
 - Jay Duguay asked about the plan for the target amount to be held in the Special Education Capital Reserve fund? The account is currently at approximately \$276,000. After discussion, the consensus was the target amount to be held is the Special Education Capital Reserve is the cost of approximately two out-of-District placements. Dr. Steady mentioned residential out-of-District placements cost approximately \$250,000 including travel while day-school placements cost approximately \$130,000-\$150,000 including travel.
- The 2024-2025 (current) year to date financial reports were provided to the School Board. Spending is in-line with budget. The District has seen some savings with payroll due to positions put in place at the beginning of the year and the PE/Health position that has not been filled. The student interns covering the PE/Health position are being paid at a lesser rate. There have been some additional Special Education placements that were not budgeted.

There may be a need to utilize the Special Education Capital Reserve fund. Additionally, there may be some shifting in line items within the budget.

- Parents/guardians are placing their children in schools outside of the District such as charter schools and other public schools. Although the placement is made by the parent and not the District, the District where the student resides is responsible by law for covering the cost of any Special Education needs. The Lin-Wood District has seen a few of these instances this year. The cost for these services are not as high as a traditional out of District placement but are still significant.
 - Mary Steady noted that these costs would be naturally absorbed in the District's budget if the student(s) attended school at Lin-Wood.
- 24-25 Budget: Special Education placements, staffing, and STEM programs are all items that will need to be discussed during the budgeting process. Additionally, health insurance premiums have increased 9.5% (some Districts have seen increases of 15-20%). NH Retirement is funded by employees and employers. The Employer contribution to NH Retirement has decreased slightly. The Administration team has gone through the budget requests submitted by staff members. A copy of the budget schedule was included in the Board packets. The first Board budget work session is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2024.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Steady reported:

- An initial meeting was held with *Finalsite* regarding the School District Website. Additionally, Dr. Steady has consulted with Kevin Bell to gather his professional insights and recommendations on website design.
- Dr. Steady has submitted three new grant applications: a grant to supplement the Literacy/LETRS program the District is currently working on; a grant for a hydroponic tower; and a mini-grant for a 3-D printer geared for younger students which would be specifically for the Elementary School. This printer would be used for education as well as family engagement activities. Information on grant acceptance will be provided once received.
- As well as WMSI providing staff training on the *Glowforge*, WMSI will also be utilized as a resource to assist staff with moving towards project based learning.
- Along with the literacy work being done with Maureen Watson and Dr. Tolman, Administration has been observing in classrooms. The kids seem excited with the literacy learning approach.
- Dr. Steady had reached out to two organizations for proposals relating to the District's Strategic Plan. Both proposals came in at similar cost however, one company responded in the manner requested and the other did not provide all requested materials. Dr. Steady has worked with one of the companies, *2Revolutions*, in the past and would recommend moving forward with their proposal based on the materials received. Presentations from the organizations can be scheduled with the Board if more information is needed. Dr. Steady has consulted with Debbie O'Connor and part of the Strategic Plan process can be funded from the current year's budget and the remainder included in 2025 – 2026 budget.
- A list of winter coaches was included in the School Board packet. These coaches have all coached for the District in the past.
 - Kevin Bell inquired as to what the *Glowforge* was and its uses? Jay Duguay mentioned the *Glowforge* is a CNC laser cutter. It can edge and cut different materials. It is designed for a more casual user and is a great tool for project based learning opportunities. Potential start-to-finish (creating, marketing and selling) product fundraising opportunities using the *Glowforge* were discussed and fundraising policies will be reviewed.
 - Jay Duguay provided background information on the current Strategic Plan. The District worked with the NH School Board Association (NHSBA) on the current plan however, it was a long process as there was a delay in the Plan development due to COVID. The cost for the previous plan development was \$35,000 and considering it has been six years, the cost increase is not too significant. The Board discussed the need to have a presentation by the organizations providing proposals as well as the project timeline. The Board determined to move forward with Dr. Steady's recommendation, *2Revolutions*, for Strategic Plan development with no further presentations needed. The Strategic Plan process is expected to be completed by June of 2026. This completion date will align with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process.

Joe Bossie made a motion to engage 2Revolutions for the purpose of reviewing the District's Strategic Plan. Jasmine Weeden seconded the motion. Discussion: None Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

Principal's Report:

Peter Stivali reported:

- Fall sports have wrapped up successfully. The Cross Country team attended the State meet. The runners put in some great times and even some personal bests. The Varsity Soccer teams each reached the playoffs.
- The first ski team meeting was held tonight, Wednesday, November 13, 2024.
- In conjunction with the Lincoln Library. K-3 students had a visit from author, illustrator, and songwriter, Jim Petipas. Mr. Petipas generously donated two of his books to the Elementary School library.
- PSAT testing has been complete and results will be available soon.
- The first Middle School dance was well attended and the kids had a great time.
- The Veteran's Day Assembly was held on Friday, November 8th. This is a great community event. The same three student flag bearers have been presenting the flags for a number of years, these three students are all now seniors and were recognized at the Assembly. Many thanks to Paula Houde for organizing this yearly event.
- The first quarter grades have closed and report cards were issued.
- Parent-Teacher conferences were held today, Wednesday, November 13, 2024 and went well.
- American Education week is next week, November 18-22, 2024. A food drive will be held all week to celebrate the community. For the first time, the District has reached out to Kim Pickering at the Chamber of Commerce to send a letter to local business to assist with donations to the food drive. Students will be celebrated on Monday, November 18th; Staff will be celebrated on Tuesday, November 19th; A School Band and Chorus concert will be held the evening of Tuesday, November 19th; School Board members are asked to help provide snacks for the afternoon snack break on Thursday, November 21st; and Friday, November 22nd parents/guardians and grandparents will be celebrated with an invitation to join their child(ren) for lunch.
- YLTA (Youth Leadership Through Adventure) is going strong this year under the direction of Dani Tzabari. Ms. Tzabari is working on getting the WYLD (Wilderness Youth Leadership Development) program going again as well.
- EarlyAct, the pre-cursor to InterAct, for students in grades 3-5, is up and running for the year.
- The Counseling Staff (Sydney Campbell, Erin Bell, and Matt Manning) are working on Lin-Wood becoming a Certified Kindness School. As part of this process students and staff members have signed the Kindness Pledge. The signature poster for the Kindness Pledge was designed by Alli Frobey.
- The Scholastic Book Fair is taking place this week (November 12-15, 2024).
 - Joe Bossie expressed appreciation on behalf of the Lin-Wood area Veterans for the Veterans Day Assembly event.
 - Joe Bossie mentioned he had chaperoned the Middle School Glow Dance and the kids were all excited and well behaved.

Committees:

Committee Reports:

- The Wellness Committee minutes were included in the Board Packets.

Facility Committee Chair, Joe Bossie reported:

- The Facilities Committee met prior to the Board meeting. The Committee discussed the possible efficiency project grant from the NHEC and utilizing this grant opportunity for Elementary School windows and LED lighting replacement. The committee additionally discussed the garage replacement, as well as fencing and flooring projects. Issues with the Elementary HVAC system are being addressed as the system is not working correctly in one room in the Elementary School.

Policies for First Reading:

- A number of policies included in first reading are those that had been approved on an emergency basis in August relating to the changes in Title IX law. It was confirmed that other policies referenced within the Title IX policies are correct relative to Lin-Wood's policy titles and structure.
- The remaining first reading policy changes include: GCI-relative to the removal of the requirement for a Board Member to sit on the Professional Development Committee; IKF-relative to changes recommended in the Fall

Policy Update from the NHSBA as well as the inclusion of language from IKF-R; JLDDBB-relative to updating the Crisis Lifeline number; and GDB-R-relative to updating the names of holidays referenced in the policy.

Jasmine Weeden made a motion to move the policies as presented to second reading with the exception of policy IKF-R. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

Business Requiring Board Action:

Staff Nominations, Recommendations, and Resignations: None.

School District Clerk Appointment:

- Jay Duguay asked Sharon Holt if she was again willing to take on the role of School District Clerk. Sharon Holt agreed.

Jasmine Weeden made a motion to appoint Sharon Holt as School District Clerk for 2024-2025. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

- Jay Duguay expressed his appreciation on behalf of the District to Mrs. Holt for again taking on the role and responsibilities of School District Clerk.
- Sharon Holt noted that a Board member would need to administer her Oath of Office after the meeting adjourned.

Recognition of Visitors/Public Participation:

Student: None.

Staff: Jay Duguay welcomed Shaun Hagan.

Shaun Hagan reported:

- From Dori Weeden:
 - The Class of 2026 raised approximately \$500 in donations for METAVIVOR in memory of Claire Bujeaud.
- From Jen Witcher:
 - Members of the junior and senior class have toured the campuses of Plymouth State University (PSU) as well as the University of NH (UNH). At this time seven seniors have acceptances from PSU and a few have been accepted into UNH. Seniors are waiting to hear on other college acceptances. Appreciation was relayed to the Board and District for supporting these college campus tours.
- From Heather Krill:
 - Mrs. Krill attended the Bright Spot Conference at PSU which consisted of a round-table type discussion to share what is working well relating to English Language Arts and Social Studies instruction.
 - Mrs. Krill and Ryan Weeden expressed their appreciation with the flexibility to allow the fifth grade girls to play on the Middle School team which provided enough players to field a full team.
 - The freshman class took over the Pumpkin Walk from the Bridge Project and did a great job.
 - Appreciation was expressed to the junior class for the METAVIVOR fundraiser.
- From Kristy Duris:
 - Author, Jim Petipas, visited the K-3 students.
 - The Scholastic Book Fair is happening this week (November 12-15).
 - The Middle and High School students will be reviewing the Libraries' digital resources; invited to participate in a book tasting; and participating in media literacy lessons.
 - The Student Interns from PSU are doing great, working well as co-teachers, and will be teaching 8th grade health this semester with guidance from Mrs. Duris.
- From Sally Nicoll:
 - Three students participated in the Kid Governor program with Raylynne Shamberger moving on to represent Lin-Wood in the competition. Unfortunately, Rylynne did not win however, her presentation was well done and she had the full support of the fifth grade.

Community: None.

Joe Bossie made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting. Kevin Bell seconded the motion. Discussion: None. Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Holt, SAU#68 Administrative Assistant