

BOARD OF EDUCATION
LYMAN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
LEBANON, CONNECTICUT
Special Session – February 4, 2009

The Chairman will vote only to make or break a tie.

I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman, Donna Lafontaine, Darcy Battye, Melissa Hofmann, Lori Jahoda, James Mello, Donna Skaats, (7:32 p.m.) Marisa Haralson, Keith Wentworth, Beriah Smith, student representative (8:45 p.m.)

ABSENT: Rene Wentworth

ALSO PRESENT: Robert McGray, Superintendent, Sandye Simon, Robert Laskarzewski, Stephen Salisbury, Carol Moore, Rob Laskarzewski, Mal Leichter, Maryanne Leichter

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. COMMUNICATIONS – none.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -

Sandye Simon - Here tonight not to represent one particular party, only to be “a part of the solution and not the problem”. Presented ideas for savings by reducing paper and providing parents, via the website, with the LES Handbook and parent newsletters; receiving Big Y points for school supplies; attendance and report cards are no longer purchased but completed through email; use of Friday folders and announcements sent home with youngest child only; commend our senior volunteers, staff, volunteers, custodians and fellow administrators.

Dianna Bazzano – Encouraged the Board to do what’s best and present a budget to the Board of Finance that maintains our education standards. Recommendations of reduced stipends, pay-to-play sports, cost cutting solutions.

Beth Pavlich – Don’t look at exploratory arts, tech ed or design as a possible solution. Elimination of 6 teachers at the elementary school would increase class size to 30 students per class and would decrease student learning. Have options of band/music and chorus. Cuts to education should be last and keep kids the priority.

Susan Thorpe – Increasing class size and reducing teachers will have negative effects later down the road verses immediately. Children will turn to alternative negative options if the education is not there. Lebanon will lose families who will be seeking a better education. Offered alternative options to fundraising – recycle ink cartridges for money; earn bonus points for recycling efforts.

Miguel Garcia – On behalf of the Teachers Association. Responded to the negative comments and emails against teachers; concessions have been made with health care, prescriptions and participating in the bargaining process; Lebanon is not the highest paid in the State; say “yes” to early retirement incentives for teachers; cut all extras including senior project and sports - no staff reduction; surrounding districts are not presenting a 0% budget, present the needs of the school to the Board of Finance.

Chris Jordan – Encouraged the Board to invite him back to present his proposal for energy savings reductions.

Rebecca Smith – Taxpayer, parent and paraprofessional at elementary school; present to the Board of Finance all cuts with dollar values for their review and give them a thorough list of the number of sports, teachers, computers, etc. that are being cut to meet their demands; explore every State mandate with no money; speak with the Director of Special Education and provide the dollar figures associated for special ed teachers and students.

V. CONSENT AGENDA – none.

VI. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – none.

VII. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT –

1. Updates:

- Board meeting procedures- Discussion on the current method to the voting process. The Board is asked to consider which option they recommend, the new method or the traditional method used prior to September, 2008. This will be brought to the Board at a future meeting for a vote.
- The Superintendent discussed the 3 possible budget scenarios to present to the Board of Finance. This includes a 0% budget, a status quo budget with a 4.77% increase or a mid point budget of a 2.51% increase. This will be brought to the Board at the next Regular Meeting.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – none.

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA – 1) Discuss incentives for early retirement; 2) Discuss appropriate classroom discussion between teachers and students when it pertains to the budget.

X. Adjournment

Moved by Keith Wentworth and seconded by Lori Jahoda to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:07 p.m.
Motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Bennett, Recording Secretary