

Ledyard Charter School Board of Directors

Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 | 5:00 P.M. | Meeting conducted in person at LCS

This meeting was also conducted via Zoom for one member. The authority to conduct a public meeting in this manner was granted by Governor Sununu's 12th Executive Order issued on March 23, 2020.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Lucretia Witte at 5:07 P.M.

Present: Lucretia Witte, Tom Puleo, Ben Beisswenger, Wendy Kozak, Bethany Solomon, Amie Bettle, Ivy Schweitzer, Alison Heller, Patrick Darley

Absent: Bethany Solomon

A quorum was present.

2. Public Input

There was no public input.

3. Consent Agenda

Ivy Schwitzer made a motion to approve the minutes from the March board meeting and the [Student Discipline Policy](#). Alison Heller seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Wendy noted that the policy paper is one of several to be approved in the coming months. She recommends policy documents are updated every three years.

The 2024-25 [Calendar](#) will be voted on at the next meeting in May and while the [Class Schedule](#) does not require a vote it is provided to notify the board of the change in the type of scheduling LCS will be engaged in as of the Fall of 2024 where classes will be 75 minute long blocks as opposed to the current 60min. per class schedule.

4. [Executive Director's Report](#)

Wendy presented the Executive Director's Report and provided the following insights during the meeting:

- There are currently a total of 45 students.
- The recent field trip to Hypertherm was very successful and she hopes to schedule a field trip and other educational experiences like this one in the future.
- Teacher contracts are currently in the renewal process. Wendy has completed four formal teacher evaluations with goal setting and contracts will follow.
- The remaining support staff will be engaged in a similar process shortly.
- Shelby Day, the Special Education Coordinator, is creating an online platform for teachers and staff to use to streamline the IEP and 504 Plan stipulations. Shelby is additionally performing an internal audit and is working on a progress report.
- Tom Puleo has been working hard on school facilities upgrades around the building. He is also helping teachers and students as a mediator.
- The upstairs tenant is currently occupying the space paying \$3,000 per month and they will vacate the premises by December of 2024 at which time a new tenant will be able to move in. Even with the tenant there Tom is able to continue working on the space.

- Wendy briefly mentioned the financial position of the school which will be expanded up in more detail by Ben Beisswenger in the upcoming financial update.
- Wendy has applied for a number of grants and streamlined that process.
- A fundraiser is coming up this week selling used clothing to Dartmouth students at a pop-up tent on campus. The fundraiser was very successful the last time they held it and are hoping for a similar response. Unfortunately, the bake sale was not as successful as hoped.
- Tom Leduc who has been working with Wendy on school processes suggested that teachers are overworked and this is how the 75 min. class block schedule was determined which will cut back on the number of classes each teacher has in a day and reduces the planning time required.
- The Lebanon Times, local newspaper, reached out to Wendy and asked if she wanted advertising space which she took them up on and is advertising LCS for new students in an upcoming release.
- This year the prom and graduation will be in the SAU building. They will be saving \$600 by changing venues. Wendy is currently planning the graduation.
- Alison Heller asked if the block schedule had been tried and Wendy explained that yes, they attempted a 90min. art and history class which was too long. Patrick Darley spoke up and said the 75 minute class seemed to be the perfect length.
- Lucretia Witte suggested that Wendy obtain an intern to help with small jobs at the school such as Facebook invitations which Wendy mentioned she spent time doing this week. She could also obtain the help of a motivated student. Perhaps they could consider obtaining grant money for an assistant or find an intern.

5. Contract Renewal for Executive Director

Lucretia discussed the Executive Director renewal process for Wendy.

- The job description remains the same and this will be revisited every three years.
- A performance evaluation was completed this year and last (which was the baseline) by staff and board members. The sample size was larger this year and overall scores increased since last year. The scale ranged from 1-4 and Wendy scored in the high 3's.
- Wendy's ability to build relationships and trust appears to be a theme and parents believe discipline outcomes, while unfortunate, are fair. Wendy has done an excellent job of establishing trust, of great importance at the school, and exhibited in her relationships there.
- Delegation of duties has improved and continues.
- Suggestions were given to continue to work toward financial security, building improvements, supporting teachers and building momentum in that direction.
- Lucretia asked for questions or comments on her analysis. Tom asked if he should stay in the room for the vote and Lucretia said he is welcome to.

A motion to approve Wendy's contract for 2024-25 school year was made by Alison Heller and seconded by Ivy Schwitzer. It was approved unanimously.

6. Contract Renewal Process for Teachers

Wendy Kozak presented the teacher contract renewal process.

- Job description templates are already prepared and it will be a simple process to input teacher information to generate their contracts.

- Pay is predetermined in the budget which was voted on at the board meeting in March and is based on experience and education.
- Lucretia asked if the teaching load is estimated in the contract and Wendy said no.
- Contracts will be completed by the end of April but do not require voting upon by the board members and only require Lucretia's signature.
- The teachers will then have until mid-May to express their desire to return in the fall. Wendy noted that Kaitlyn will be taken on as a fifth teacher in the fall.
- Regarding teacher evaluations, Wendy said that the teachers were pleased with the detail provided in the rubric which was completed by both the teachers and Wendy. They all matched well with Wendy's indicating they are on the same page. This concluded the teacher contract renewal report.

7. Finance Report

Ben Beisswenger provided the finance report.

The overall takeaway is that LCS is in a very strong cash position thanks to Wendy's continued work on the fundraising side, and there were no unexpected expenditures.

Current Balance as of April 17, 2024

Date	Account	Name	Amount
April 17th 2024	Small Bus Check 1	Main Checking Account	\$174,908.17
April 17th 2024	Epic MMA 3	Money Market Account	\$129,020.61
April 17th 2024	Small Bus Check 2	USDA Emergency Fund	\$10,000.00
		Total Cash	\$313,928.78

Credits and Debits

Type	\$
Credit	\$ 150,978.85
Debit	\$ (58,420.45)

Notable Credits:

Description	Amount (+/-)
State Of New Hampshire	\$ 118,800.00
State Of New Hampshire	\$ 18,332.49

Notable Debits:

Description	Amount (+/-)
Payroll	\$ 14,129.28
Payroll	\$ 13,148.55
Laura Velis	\$ 4,807.74

Discussion:

- Ben stated that LCS is in a healthier financial position due to the fundraising efforts at LCS. Ivy asked if we ought to pay down loans, or invest the large sum of money currently in the checking account.

- Lucretia suggests that LCS has been in a scarcity mindset for a long time and recommends Ben and Wendy could make some suggestions on how to handle the sum in deposit.
- Wendy believes they continue with upgrades in the school downstairs. Their current spending has not affected their bottom line. She also mentioned the Millennial Trust loan is being paid back at the rate of \$5,100 per month and that is very manageable. The bookkeeper recommends continuing this schedule as opposed to paying it off in large amounts as interest does not accumulate.
- Lucretia suggested increasing teachers' pay or offering bonuses. Alison recommended buying a passenger van which has been discussed before. Wendy would prefer to increase the number of employees versus increasing the amount paid to current employees.
- Lucretia stated that it would be good to learn what an appropriate amount to have in the bank would be ongoing. Wendy thinks that a 6 month runway is a good amount to keep available which amounts to approximately \$200,000 or \$30,000 per month.
- Ben said that he would be happy to work with Wendy and come back with some ideas at the meeting in May.
- Wendy went on to say that the fundraising account at Millennial will be used for school expansion purposes as it was stated during fundraising efforts whether that is for upstairs or downstairs.

8. Building Report

Tom Puleo provided board members a tour of the school to see the many improvements that have been made as well as go over plans and goals for the future.

Improvements:

Lighting, organization of upstairs space, installation of dispensers for paper towels and soap in the bathroom(s). painting, window blinds, there may be more I did not get written down.

Ideas for future improvements:

- Moving some equipment around in the kitchen to allow for more efficient and sterile passthrough at meal times. Removing paint from indoor windows separating the kitchen from the hallway.
- Installation of carpet tiles to update flooring and dampen echo.
- Clean up and beautification of the easement and create a garden area in the front of the school. Attempt to get the local restaurant to take care of their dumpsters as there is trash everywhere.
- Alteration of the current art room by removing a wall to open up the space to create a new classroom.
- Removing a wall in what was the x-ray room before LCS purchased the building. It currently houses an aquarium and many plants and will be used as a counseling space or for meetings. Additional lighting upgrades and painting.
- Continue to organize upstairs space.
- Remove the wall separating a large storage space in Mr. Leavitt's room to make the room larger and change the paint. Adjust the door currently leading outside from his room to a large window that can open.
- When asked about AC, Wendy and Tom indicated it was too expensive to install at this time.

10. Board Planning for Next Year

- Lucretia hopes to have a response from all board members at the May meeting stating their intention to return or not. At the July planning retreat we will celebrate outgoing board members and try to recruit new members so it would be great if everyone could give some consideration to people who may be interested in joining the board.
- Focus at the July meeting will be on goal setting for the school year 2024-25.
- Tom stated he would try to recruit a board member from town hall where he has developed contacts.
- Wendy would like to have someone on the board with expertise in high level education as an advisor. Mike, a former board member and founder, was a superintendent and was an excellent advisor.
- Lucretia suggested UVEI - Upper Valley Education Institute
- Alison suggested community outreach to get tied into events and business organizations.
- Tom suggested Ingrid from Barnwell Architects or someone from the Rotary Club. Wendy said she may know someone who may be interested. The Rotary Club likes to donate to projects that will have their name on it.
- Lucretia suggested Hypertherm.
- Lucretia suggested that everyone who has a contact that may be interested to email them with an option to contact other board members for more information.
- Priorities for next year:
- Wendy will be trying to get more collaboration with organizations in the community (eg. Headrest). She is open to hearing suggestions.
- Ivy suggested Cover to Cover Bookstore to find someone interested in volunteering and recommended a speaker to come in to discuss how they started their business and learn about legal issues.
- Ali suggested students be offered an opportunity to obtain an internship for a semester.
- Ivy recommends polling students about where they may want to work in the area. Wendy agrees internship opportunities would be good.

11. Board Workday Announcement

- Alison Heller requested that board members commit to either May 18th or 25th to gather at the school and work on planting a garden.
- Alison will provide coffee and snacks, and any other materials/tools we will need (I am working on securing donations from local businesses).
- This event would be open to board members, staff, and any other community volunteers who want to join.
- Our efforts will be documented and posted to the school's social media, with a mention in the next newsletter as well (to give a shout-out to any volunteers and community partners who donate to the effort).
- Some board members are available on the 18th, others on the 25th so the goal is to have both days available to attend.

12. Adjournment

Lucretia adjourned the meeting at 6:55 P.M.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2024 at 5:00 P.M., via Zoom