

LAFAYETTE BOARD OF EDUCATION
LAFAYETTE REGIONAL SCHOOL
FRANCONIA, NH 03580

DATE: July 17, 2018
TIME: 5:00 PM

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Public Session

In attendance:

Board Chairman, Luther Kinney

Board Members: Denys Draper, Chris Thayer, Amy Mullins, Christi Gignac

Principal, Gordie Johnk

Superintendent, Pierre Couture

Business Manager, Kristin Franklin

Administrative Assistant, Toni Butterfield

Board Clerk, Lynne Warren

Community members – Megan Detamore, Elizabeth Stone, Joe Garrison, Peter Gignac, Andrea Price, Tine Brown, Gary Way

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:00 PM

Overview of after school care situation was presented by Chairman Luther Kinney. Franconia Children's Center (FCC) will be reducing their after school program in 2018-2019 and will completely eliminate it in 2019-2020. For the 2018 – 19 school year they will accommodate 7 children after school. The 7 spots available for the upcoming school year have already been filled. As a result there are few options available to parents. Principal Johnk, Toni Butterfield, and Christi Gignac have been spearheading an effort to explore options and to better understand programs offered in nearby communities.

Principal Johnk gave a brief history of after school care for the past 16 years. Thirteen years ago, there was an after school program at Lafayette run through the NCYMCA. The program had 4 or 5 kids and didn't last more than a year. Mr. Johnk explained the need for after school care now is much greater. On average, 10-12 kids go to FCC every afternoon, up to 15 kids sometimes; five or six children on average go to Boys & Girls Club (BGCNC), up to nine kids at times.

Christie Gignac distributed information and gave a recap regarding various after school care programs in the area. Many programs in the area are run by the town recreation departments. One available option is the Boys & Girls Club.

About 20 children utilized FCC's after school program in the past, but based on feedback from parents it appears that 25+ children may potentially utilize an after school program at some level. Not all 25 would need care every day.

Board member Gignac met with a representative of the Franconia Recreation Department Board. The board feels they do not have time to put together a program for this coming year. Principal Johnk, who is on the Recreation Department Board, said he had gotten similar information from the board.

There was significant disappointment from meeting attendees, including parents and community members, that the Franconia Recreation Department was not able to assist more.

Gary Way of the Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors spoke regarding the club's existing after school program. He expressed that the club will do anything they can to help the situation including considering pickup and drop-off at Lafayette, and potentially running a second van to accommodate additional children who may utilize the program. He mentioned that they have capacity to take in quite a few additional children, and could add staff to ensure the children are adequately supervised. The club has a good variety of programs including indoor and outdoor activities, field trips, time to do homework and more. The club's program is very affordable at \$150 per year, per student. Gary suggested the school's van might be utilized to help with transportation of children to and from the club. He also mentioned that there has been some preliminary discussion of a 'satellite' BGC facility in Franconia, and that the option could be explored further if warranted.

Peter Gignac, parent and community member, expressed concern over the additional time children would have to spend in transit to and from the Boy's and Girl's Club. Overall children would spend approximately 40 minutes traveling each day, which reduces time for homework and activities. Gignac mentioned the Library might be open to hosting some after school events and programs. He also noted that whatever programs are developed, a one-size-fits-all approach is not desirable. There is a need for variations in the programs based on age.

Megan Detamore, parent and community member, mentioned her concern about the fact that currently the Boy's and Girl's Club seems to be the only option available, especially considering the distance and transport time.

Board Member Chris Thayer observed that different age groups / grades might tend to utilize different after school options. For younger children, an in-town option may be better, where older students may utilize something like the Boy's and Girl's club option more.

Community member and parent Elizabeth Stone also expressed concern with the potential time children would spend in transit to and from any program outside the local community, and the fact that this would reduce the time available to students to complete homework.

Community member and parent Joe Garrison expressed concern that the Franconia Recreation Department was not able to assist, and asked if there were specific reasons for this.

Principal Johnk and board member Gignac both felt it was more an issue of lack of time to prepare and effectively administrate a program that would be ready for the upcoming school year.

The group recognizes that it may be difficult to manage all aspects of the program on such short notice. However, parents need some options and the Recreation Department is in the best position to provide a local program.

There are complications and issues with a program developed and administered by the school board, especially if teachers staff the program. Kristin Franklin mentioned that aside from the potential payroll and employment related issues, the business office is currently extremely busy wrapping up last year's year end budget, preparing for the new fiscal year, and in the midst of an audit related to Federal funds for 6 entities. So they would not be available to provide resources or support for development and administration of a program.

It was agreed that any pilot program would need to have a simple pricing structure to make it easier to administer. This would include paying in advance, and no credit for time not used.

It was noted that it would be much better if the Recreation Department could manage payments and funding / financial related aspects – and that they are already set up to do so.

Principal Johnk, Christie Gignac, and other board members plan to have additional discussion with the Recreation Department board regarding the outcome of this meeting and the information that has been gathered regarding after school programs being administered in other local communities. There is a meeting of the Recreation Department this Thursday, July 19 and Johnk plans to initiate discussion at that time.

Toni Butterfield will send a survey to parents regarding use of a local program. This information will be incorporated into any discussions with the Recreation Department.

The next scheduled meeting of the School Board is August 9, but another emergency meeting will be held next Tuesday, July 24 at 5:00 pm. The Recreation Department Board will be invited to attend and participate in that meeting.

MOTION BY CHRIS THAYER, SECONDED BY DENYS DRAPER TO ADJOURN. ALL IN FAVOR,
MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned 6:31 PM