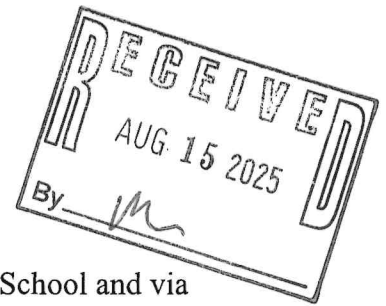


REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 20
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
July 24, 2025



1. Call to Order The Board of Education meeting held at Lakeview High School and via teleconference was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Ashley Westfall.

Members present: Ashley Westfall, Vice Chair, Ashley Hall Daddona, Secretary, John Morosani, Treasurer, Krista Rizzo, Susan Wheeler, Margaret Hunt, Kara Cruoglio, Billie Jean Sideris, and Rob DeLayo.

Also present: Jeffrey Villar, Ph.D., Superintendent, Julie Haggard, Assistant Superintendent Pupil Services, and Julia Cardillo, Chief Financial Officer.

Absent: Tiffany Parkhouse, Chair, Diane Barnes, and Scott Pottbecker.

2. Pledge of Allegiance Ashley Westfall invited everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Chairman's Report & Update

Upcoming Board of Education Meetings

- August 7 – Lakeview High School – 7:00 p.m.
- August 21 – Lakeview High School – 7:00 p.m.
- September 11 – Lakeview High School – 7:00 p.m.
- September 25 – Lakeview High School – 7:00 p.m.

(All meetings will have a remote option)

Ashley Westfall opened the Chairman's Report commenting to the Board members their past energy and dialogue has been appreciated and added Committees have been established and Committee Chairs appointed. Dr. Villar will be working with Committee Chairs on agendas and scheduling consistent, routine Committee meetings. She then read aloud the upcoming Board of Education meeting dates and location.

4. Communications to the Board
None.

5. Consent Agenda

- 5.1 Board of Education Meeting Minutes of June 10, 2025
- 5.2 Approval of ELA Curriculum for Plumb Hill Middle School
- 5.3 Approval of Science Curriculum for Plumb Hill Middle School
- 5.4 Approval of Board of Education Meeting Agenda – January-December 2026

Ashley Westfall asked if anyone wanted to make a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, 5.1 through 5.4 with the edit to 5.1 Board of Education Minutes of July 10, 2025, instead of June 10, 2025.

Margaret Hunt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, 5.1 through 5.4 with the edit to 5.1 Board of Education Minutes of July 10, 2025, instead of June 10, 2025. Billie Jean Sideris seconded the motion.

During discussion, Dr. Villar commented if there was a concern with any item in the Consent Agenda, a motion would be needed to remove the item for further discussion.

John Morosani made a motion to remove Consent Agenda Item 5.2 Approval of ELA Curriculum for Plumb Hill Middle School. Kara Cruoglio seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ashley Westfall requested Margaret Hunt amend her original motion.

Margaret Hunt amended her motion to approve the Consent Agenda, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4 with the edit to 5.1 Board of Education Minutes of July 10, 2025, instead of June 10, 2025. Billie Jean Sideris seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

During discussion Margaret Hunt shared a point of order that there was no Committee Reports on the agenda when she would have provided an update on the two Consent Agenda items: ELA Curriculum and Science Curriculum for Plumb Hill Middle School.

Krista Rizzo made a motion to approve 5.2 Approval of ELA Curriculum for Plumb Hill Middle School. Margaret Hunt seconded the motion.

During discussion Margaret Hunt shared the Curriculum Committee received a presentation on both the ELA and Science curricula. There was extensive discussion about the ELA Curriculum. Melissa Swanson, a teacher leader, gave a presentation and both she and Pam Vecca, Principal of Plumb Hill Middle School (PHMS) addressed extensive questions from the Committee members. The Committee members agreed the ELA curriculum is robust and supported it being brought to the Board for approval as a pilot program for one year. The Science curriculum is approved for roll-out.

John Morosani questioned how the texts outlined in the packet was selected, what it is representative of, as he is concerned these texts don't represent what you would typically see in a Middle School curriculum.

Margaret Hunt shared the texts shown are a sample snapshot of the program and are Newbery Award winners. Billie Jean Sideris commented she is familiar with some of these texts; when her child went through Middle School, these are some of the books that were read.

Dr. Villar added these texts do not represent traditional canon and approximately 15-20 years ago there had been a shift in most schools toward this direction, but these titles are not radical and represent quality literature that represent other cultures. Titles such as the *Odyssey* and *Animal Farm* were raised as other text that are considered in this ELA pilot program for PHMS.

Dr. Villar apologized to the Board for how this curriculum approval unfolded describing it as "the cart is well before the horse." Dr. Villar recently learned of this pilot program and acknowledged decisions on curriculum are within the purview of the Board of Education. He shared teachers and staff have worked diligently putting in a year of planning and working toward this instruction. The Committee and Board has been put "behind the eight ball and we are watching the cart roll down the hill." He closed by saying what was proposed at subcommittee is to move this forward and the Curriculum Committee will receive quarterly updates on how this pilot is working.

Ashley Westfall called for a vote.

The motion passes with 69% voting in the affirmative with one vote from each town. John Morosani abstained.

6. Superintendent Update

Dr. Villar gave the Superintendent Update sharing the middle school and high school administration have sent out a notification to families updating them about the district's student information management system (PowerSchool). Since this release, there have been a few challenges for families. Rising grade 5 to grades 6 students will need to log into their PowerSchool account before families can do so and there have been issues with parking application forms at the high school. These issues will be resolved shortly. The district will do better with the coordination and communication moving forward. Student course registrations for the upcoming school year have been released. Lakeview High School Freshmen Orientation is scheduled for August 20th from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., and Lakeview High School Meet & Greet will be held on August 25th from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

7. Financial Update

7.1 FY26 Budget Report

Julia Cardillo reviewed the FY26 Budget Report commenting it should be fully populated with update to date details for the next Board of Education meeting in early August.

8. Public Comment

Individuals offering public comment should please state their first and last name and the town where they reside. Remarks should be limited to no more than three minutes. A maximum time limit of 30 minutes will be allocated for public comment at any one meeting. Individuals representing a common interest or topic may be asked to have one individual speak for the group. Public comments must be relevant to the meeting's agenda. Speakers shall direct all comments to the Board, not to individual BOE members or administrators. Profane or vulgar language, partisan political statements, and comments related to the conduct or performance of staff are not permitted. Public comment is received without Board comment or response, the Board is to keep comments "under advisement." However, BOE members may seek clarification or additional information from speakers through the Chairman.

Dave Wiig from the town of Morris thanked the CFO for including the FY26 Budget Report in the BOE packet posted on the district website.

Erich Marriott from the town of Litchfield shared he is the Chair for the Board of Finance Committee for Litchfield and if anyone has any questions regarding Action Item 9.1 Discussion and Possible Action for the Approval of the Agreement with Town of Litchfield-Pension he would be happy to assist if needed.

9. Action Items

9.1 Discussion and Possible Action for the Approval of the Agreement with Town of Litchfield-Pension

Dr. Villar shared discussions regarding this document had been finalized and he is "buttoning up" work by his predecessor and this needed to come before the Board. He added, this document is memorializing the understanding and current practice which is Region 20 is responsible for the pensions of people that were hired after the creation of Region 20. The town of Litchfield is responsible for Litchfield Public School retirees prior to 2024 and the creation of Region 20. This document has been shared with the Region 6 Selectmen.

John Morosani made a motion for the Approval of the Agreement with Town of Litchfield-Pension. Susan Wheeler seconded the motion.

Dr. Villar responded to questions from the Board.

Ashley Westfall called for a vote.

The motion passed unanimously.

9.2 Discussion and Possible Action for the Approval of the Medical Advisor Services Agreement

John Morosani made a motion for the Approval of the Medical Advisor Services Agreement.

Krista Rizzo seconded the motion.

During discussion Margaret Hunt inquired about the role of the Medical Advisor. Julie Haggard shared this person is someone with medical expertise and oversees nursing to make sure the nursing practices are in accordance with the law, proper medical storage and all these types of things are properly addressed. This role is also required by BOE Policy 5141 Student Health Services, and this expense is accounted for in the FY26 Budget.

Ashley Westfall called for a vote.

The motion passed unanimously.

10. Adjournment There being no further business to come before the Board, Billie Jean Sideris made a motion to adjourn. Krista Rizzo seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Escobar
Secretary, pro-tem