

**EAST LYME BOARD OF EDUCATION
East Lyme, Connecticut**

**REGULAR MEETING
Monday, April 4, 2016 - 7:00 p.m.
Room B101, East Lyme High School**

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Tim Hagen (Chair), Al Littlefield (Secretary), Eric Bauman, Jill Carini, Candice Carlson, Bill Derry, John Kleinhans, Barbara Senges, Jaime Barr Shelburn

Board Members Absent: Marlene Nickerson

Administrators Present: Jeffrey Newton (Superintendent), Donna Gittleman (Interim Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Personnel), Dr. Karen Costello (Administrator for Program Improvement), Linda Anania (Principal, Flanders School), Dr. David Miko (Principal, Lillie B. Haynes School), Melissa DeLoreto (Principal, Niantic Center School), Dr. Judy DeLeeuw (Principal, East Lyme Middle School), Maria Whalen (Director of Business and Facilities), Pat Lannon (Technology Director)

I. CALL TO ORDER – 6:45 p.m. by Chair Tim Hagen

The Board took a short recess at 6:49 p.m. (Moving to Room B100, East Lyme High School)

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Jill Carini moved to enter into executive session at 6:53 p.m. and to include Jeffrey Newton (Superintendent) and Maria Whalen (Director of Business and Facilities) to discuss personnel issues; Jamie Barr Shelburn seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m. (Room B101, East Lyme High School)

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Chair Tim Hagen and Ellie Meredith.

Viking Valor Award
Ellie Meredith
Grade 8, East Lyme Middle School
Outstanding Leadership and Accomplishment
Maddie's Mad Food Fest – Chefs Unite to Battle Cancer Fundraiser

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. John Arnold (99 Sleepy Hollow Rd, Niantic) noted that he had been a member of the Design Steering Committee for two years and all meetings were open to the public. He stated he believes two schools comparable in size is an effective compromise and urged the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to be more transparent and to work with the public.
2. Peter Naktenis (3 Champlin Hill Court, Niantic) stated that in light of the HA property transaction being a simple deed with no stipulations or restrictions, the Board needs to reevaluate its plan with the correct information.

3. David Rodes (26 North Road, Niantic) ask the Board why it chooses to put out information to the community that is not complete. He expressed safety concerns and stated that the cost to rent portables will be \$1 million more than to keep NCS open.
4. Jennifer Murray (7 Tabernacle Avenue, Niantic) voiced concerns that playground area depicted in the HA rendering is insufficient and does not believe that the construction plan falls into categories for state funding displayed on the state website. She suggested the Central Office move into HA rather than spend \$190,000 in capital plan for improvements. She asked why the Board did not know that HA could be sold before making its decision, and she stated that according to 1975 town minutes, 7 West Main Street must be used for a school.
5. Jayme Keefe (6 Mohawk Drive, Niantic) stated her biggest concern is that the approved plan undermines the Design Steering Committee's work. She suggested meetings without agendas and minutes were held and she is concerned that the new plan does not address safety and equity issues. She asked the Board to slow the project down and do what's best for children.
6. Maura Ament (72 Mostoway Road, East Lyme), said that Flanders parents are upset with the new plan and there is no assurance that a new Flanders School will be built in 5-7 years. She would like to see equal schools among the town.
7. A letter written by Christine Naktanis (3 Champlin Hill Court, Niantic) dated April 4, 2016 was read into record by Jaime Barr Shelburn. She wrote of concerns that the BOE disregarded public comment and has not responded to questions asked by the public at the last meeting. (letter attached)
8. A letter written by Kelly Streich (20 Brook Road, East Lyme) dated April 4, 2016 was read into record by Jaime Barr Shelburn and listed seven reasons why she is requesting the Board rescind its approval of the new elementary building project plan. (letter attached)

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Jaime Barr Shelburn moved approval of minutes of the Board of Education March 28, 2016 Regular Meeting as presented; Eric Bauman seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

VI. SPECIAL REPORTS

- A. **Students' Representative** – Not present.
- B. **Selectmen's Representative** – Not present.
- C. **Salem Board of Education** – Not present.
- D. **Other Reporters** – None.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Jaime Barr Shelburn moved to approve the consent agenda as presented (A. Proposed Flanders School After School Activities Program for Spring 2016); Candice Carlson seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- A. **Finance/Facilities/Community**
- B. **Instruction**

1. **Discussion/Action re: Proposed Last Day of School for ELPS Students for the 2015-2016 School Year and the ELHS Graduation Date for the Class of 2016**
Superintendent Newton recommended the last day of school for all East Lyme Public School students be Friday, June 10, 2016 (181 school days and 180 school

days for Flanders Elementary School) with certified and non-certified staff returning on Monday, June 13, 2016 for professional development.

Three (3) school days were missed this year due to weather conditions and Flanders School students missed an additional school day due to a power outage. The 182nd day of school is Monday, June 13, 2016 (181 days for Flanders Elementary School). State law requires a minimum 180 school day calendar.

Superintendent Newton explained that the parent-sponsored graduation party could be rescheduled to Monday, however, the venue does not recommend two local schools attend on the same evening.

MOTION: Jaime Barr Shelburn moved to set the last day of school for East Lyme Public School students for the 2015-2016 school-year and the graduation date for the East Lyme High School Class of 2016 as Friday, June 10, 2016 (half day) with certified and non-certified staff returning on Monday, June 13, 2016 as presented; Candice Carlson seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

2. Discussion re: Update on Proposed ELPS Math and Reading Enrichment Elementary Summer Program for 2016

Assistant Superintendent Donna Gittleman reviewed the results of the elementary staff survey regarding the proposed reading and math elementary enrichment summer program for 2016. The program has academic, technological, and fun components and may run three hours per day/three days per week for three weeks. Although the program is designed for struggling students, it will be offered to all elementary students. Program details are being discussed and action is expected at an upcoming Board meeting. Eric Bauman suggested a technology piece be built into the curriculum.

C. Personnel

1. Discussion/Action re: Proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the East Lyme Board of Education and the East Lyme Teachers' Association Pertaining to the Implementation of the Newly Negotiated Insurance Plan

Superintendent Newton presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) drafted by the Board's attorney to address issues pertaining to the implementation of the newly negotiated High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). The MOU has been reviewed by East Lyme Teachers Association (ELTA), President, Linda Johansen.

MOTION: Al Littlefield moved to authorize the Superintendent to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the East Lyme Board of Education and the ELTA pertaining to the one-time distribution of certain ELTA members Health Savings Account (HSA) funds for the contract year ending June 2017 as presented; Jaime Barr Shelburn seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

D. Policy

E. Other

IX. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

A. Superintendent of Schools – Mr. Jeffrey Newton

- 04/26/16 East Lyme Public Schools Long-Range Plan facilitator will meet with the Board.
- Chinese Program Update – A group of teachers and Principal Susi are visiting XJHS in China this week interviewing prospective students for enrollment in East Lyme High School next year. In addition, they are delivering model lessons, collaborating with teachers, and evaluating programs. The Board will receive a formal update when they return.

- Elementary building project questions and answers are posted of the District website. We will begin to talk about next steps moving forward.
- Referenced an 04/02/16 article in The Day regarding the impacts of declining student enrollment across the State.

B. Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools – Ms. Donna Gittleman
 - Hiring is underway for summer special education programs.

C. Business/Facilities Director – Ms. Maria Whalen
 - Moving forward with discussions on the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) insurance plan with teachers

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. AAA Committee – Candice Carlson gave an oral report of 04/04/16 meeting.

B. FFO Committee

C. Policy Review Committee

D. ELPS Chinese Program ad Hoc Committee

E. Board of Education Liaison to Board of Finance Schedule

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

XII. NOTICES

A. Notice of the following 2015/2016 staffing changes:

1. Appointments:

2. Reassignments:

3. Increases/Decreases in FTE:

4. Resignations:

- Karen Hollingsworth, 1.0 FTE Math Teacher, HS, 03/31/16

5. Supplemental Appointments

B. Notice of the following out of state field trips: None at this time

XIII. BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Board Comments

1. Board of Finance⁴ has reduced the Board of Education budget by \$115,000 (a 3.3% increase). - Jaime Barr Shelburn
2. Niantic Center School teacher, Ms. Marie Fain has been nominated for The Day's 2016 Best of Readers' Choice Award for Best Teacher. – Jaime Barr Shelburn
3. Suggested the Board develop a one-page fact sheet to communicate facts and next steps to the community. – Eric Bauman
4. Importance of including major drivers to go with new Elementary Schools Facilities Plan. – Barbara Senges

B. Future Agenda Items:

- a. East Lyme Chinese Program Update – *Monthly*
- b. Field Trip Discussion – *To be scheduled*
- c. Elementary and Middle School Period Updates from Students – *To be scheduled*
- d. Short/Long-Term Savings Ideas – *To be scheduled*
- e. Using Technology to Advance Curriculum – Eric Bauman – *To be scheduled*
- f. Revenue Account Review – Al Littlefield – Presented to FFO - *To be scheduled*
- g. Comprehensive Review of Coastal Connections Program – Tim Hagen – *To be scheduled.*

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Jennifer Murray (7 Tabernacle Avenue, Niantic) asked the following questions:
 - a. Who was actually responsible for putting forward putting forward the new plan and who was on this committee?

- b. Will Flanders School continue to have larger class sizes or is there a plan in place to redistrict some of the Flanders students into the rebuilt Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School facility?
- c. When will the community forums be scheduled?

The Board took a short recess at 8:35 p.m.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Al Littelfield moved to enter into executive session at 8:38 p.m. and to include the Jeffrey Newton (Superintendent) and Donna Gittleman (Interim Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Personnel) to discuss a personnel issue (possible administrative reassignments); Jaime Barr Shelburn seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting reconvened at 9:02 p.m.

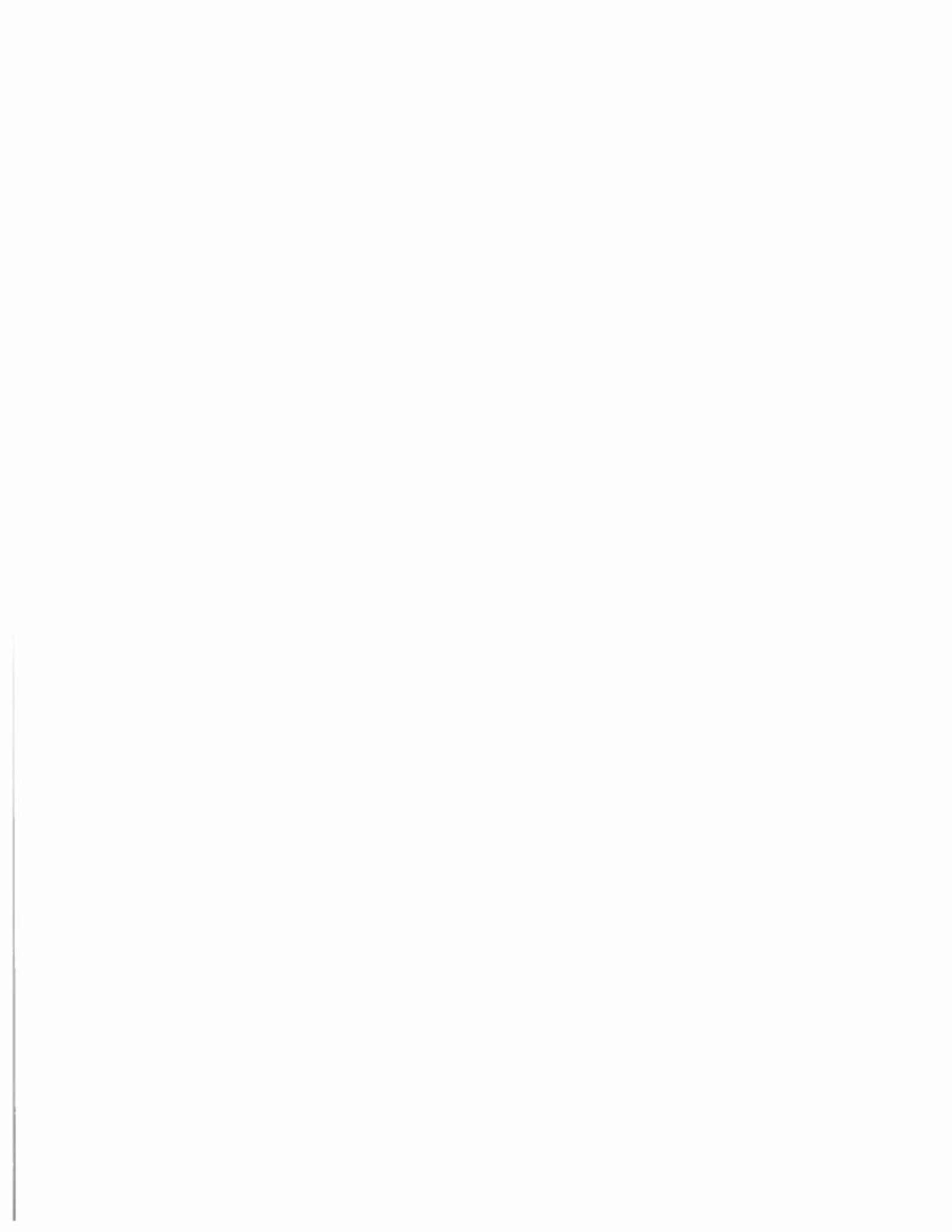
XVI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Jaime Barr Shelburn moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m.; Al Littlefield seconded.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,
Albert Littlefield
 Albert Littlefield, Secretary
 East Lyme Board of Education



Christine Naktenis
3 Champlin Hill Ct
Niantic, CT 06357

April 4, 2016

I respectfully request that this letter get read aloud into the minutes of tonights Board Of Education meeting.

One week ago I joined a group of concerned parents and towns people to stand in front of you and request further information prior to a vote on the amended school plan.

All but two of you on this board disregarded the public comment, some so blatant about it as to be on cell phones, or propping there heads in their hands from boredom, or to keep from falling asleep, some board members even rolled their eyes as brave members of the community stood before them speaking their concerns and asking that their opinions hold some weight.

I will reiterate that we as a community asked you to answer many questions last Monday night. We have given you five full business days, more than ample time, to do this. Yet not one of our questions has been answered. Those of you who didn't care to pay attention to those questions, can be sure to find them in the minutes of last weeks meeting. They were consolidated into a letter that was read in to the minutes at the end of the meeting, a letter written by Marc Murray. It is a concise list and we are waiting for answers to each and every question. It is your job, and it is your duty to answer them.

The following comes from the Board of Education Bylaws,
9012-B


10. To keep the citizenry informed of purposes, values, conditions and needs of public education in the town.

9010-B

7. Representing the community as a part of a representative governmental body.

9325-B

1. All pertinent questions will be answered orally or in writing at a later time by the chairman or an appropriate member of the administration.



Christine Naktenis

Kelly L. Streich
20 Brook Road
East Lyme, CT 06357

April 4, 2016

Board of Education
165 Boston Post Road
East Lyme, CT 06333

Dear Members of the Board,

I respectfully request that my letter be read into the minutes of tonight's meeting.

I am writing to request that the board rescind its approval of the new project plan presented by Superintendent Jeff Newton on March 28, 2014 for the following reasons:

1. The vote was held despite the fact that new information was presented to the board earlier in the meeting that indicates that the Lillie B. Hayes property can be used for other purposes or sold.
2. The new plan was developed without any input from the community and consideration of other important factors presented during the facilities planning process, such as parking, safety, location, and culture (not inclusive).
3. The new plan will have a mil rate and tax increase, making a successful outcome of a referendum unlikely.
4. The current economy of the state has decreased the likelihood of receiving state reimbursement which will result in an immediate increase in the project cost and further decrease the likelihood of a successful referendum.
5. The new plan and the rebuild of Flanders School will cost the tax payers 10-30 million dollars more than the previous plan.
6. There will likely be an additional increase to the mil and tax rate when the Town seeks to construct a police department and potentially relocate the town offices.
7. Superintendent Newton's presentation to the board on March 28, 2016 took place after public comment and included new information that addresses what would happen if the referendum were to fail. This information states "Plan B – Combine NCS into the LBH existing structure beginning 2017-2018 school year. Two schools with no renovations and increased costs for any future construction plans for LBH or FL." Clearly, this is the intended outcome of the new project plan; a plan that has been fast tracked, a plan for which community input was never even solicited, a plan with no concern for the quality of education in our town, a plan which seems more designed for failure.

In addition to the fact that both success and failure of the referendum guarantees closure of Niantic Center School (NCS), every year for the last five years, there have been talks about

closing NCS. It is obvious that there is an element in town government aimed at closing NCS and has finally undermined the facilities planning process, the only way that the community was allowed to be heard. Many people, including you (members of the board) worked hard over many years to develop a fair and equitable plan for the elementary schools. I urge you to consider these factors and retract the new project plan from moving forward.

Sincerely,

/S/ Kelly L. Streich