

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NO. 12
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
Londonderry, New Hampshire 03053

10 A concurrent meeting of the School Administrative Unit No. 12 School Board and the Londonderry
 School District School Board was held on **Tuesday, April 21, 2015** at 7:00PM at the Londonderry
 Town Office, Moose Hill Conference Room, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH. In attendance
 were School Board members: Mr. Young, Mrs. Hendricks, Mr. Laferriere, Mr. Lekas and Mrs. Reilly.
 Also in attendance were Superintendent Nate Greenberg, Business Administrator Peter Curro and
 15 School Board Secretary Lisa Muse.

1. **Call To Order**: The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Mr. Young.

20

2. **Pledge of Allegiance** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Nancy Faucon.

3. **Questions, Announcements and Presentations**

25

3.1 Discussion regarding Elementary Teacher Assistants: Mr. Young explained how he
 we would like the discussion and the meeting to take place. He will be reading emails/letters sent to him
 and calling on people in the audience. Mr. Greenberg gave an overview of his plan for the reduction in
 personnel for the past years and the reasons on how he had intended to handle it which was discussed in
 past school board meetings. Mr. Greenberg explained how we go about delivering service through all
 30 personnel keeping a lot of points in mind. Mr. Greenberg went back many previous years and went over
 the enrollments for each year for each school. Mr. Greenberg explained over the years how the number
 of certified staff per student ratio was relevant. Mr. Greenberg went through the three tiers and
 explained what the student's day should look like based on their tier. Mr. Greenberg reminded the
 35 audience that Special Ed assistants were not cut at the elementary level. Mr. Greenberg's goal is to
 maintain class size and maximize the certified staff. He feels the students will still continue to receive
 outstanding service and keep the student to certified teacher ratio low. Mr. Young mentioned that he has
 received many letter/emails and if the writers were present they could read their letters and the Board
 would read the letters/emails from the residents not present. At this time, Mr. Young took attendance of
 40 which letter/email writers were present. It was also at this time that Mr. Young realized that the video
 production was not operational for the entire presentation from Mr. Greenberg. While they wait for it to
 be worked out, they decide to do the Liaison Reports

5. **Committee Reports**

45

5.1 Student Council – Sophia Mirageas: Good luck to all spring sports athletes this
 season! Games are beginning, and for schedules and other information for all athletics can be found at
 Londonderry.org. Congratulations to the Drama Club on their stellar performances of Legally Blonde.
 LHS thanks you for a wonderful show. Thank you to all who attended International Night this past
 50 Friday, April 17. Your attendance was greatly appreciated!

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5 **5.2 Teacher Liaison – Stella Skoropowski: South School** is celebrating National Library Week this week with STEM activities for all ages. Activities include dominoes, bridge building, test tracks with various surfaces, water drop races and designing using symmetry and spatial relations. **Matthew Thornton:** On April 10, members of the Matthew Thornton Student Council hosted a volunteer appreciation breakfast. During the breakfast, members of various classes came in to thank the
10 volunteers for all they do for the school. On Friday, April 24, UNH Computer science junior, Matt Mayer, is coming to Londonderry to work with our district's fifth grade pull-out math students on math and robotics. During the presentation, the students will use mathematical equations to make various calculations and control the robots' movements. Mayer is a mentor for the River Cats First Robotics team and the coach of EPIC Bots of the First Lego League. The Sound of Music was presented on April
15 17 and 18. The performance was absolutely incredible. On Wednesday, April 22, Matthew Thornton will be celebrating Earth Day. Green will be the color of the day with all students planting a seed in the courtyard flower beds. **Middle School:** Just wanted to share the entire 6th grade (all three teams) took a field trip to the Capital Center for the Arts in Concord on March 10th to see Arc Attack, an amazing show highlighting electricity. Students loved seeing this show that had a direct curriculum connection to
20 6th grade Science! <http://www.ccanh.com/event/arcattack>. **High School:** Sarah Jackes, Sami Lecaroz, and Breda Holland were selected for the Upper New England Lacrosse Team. The girls were nominated by their coach, Bob Slater, participated in a day long tryout, and were selected from among 90 other high school girls from New Hampshire and Vermont. The team will be playing in a National Tournament at Lehigh University over Memorial Day Weekend.

25 **5.3 School Board Liaison Reports:** Mrs. Reilly talked about the Girls with the Golden Locks play at South School. She mentioned that the children and teachers did a great job with the performance. Mr. Laferriere talked about the athletic fields are good to go and the press box is down and concession stand is being worked on.

30 Video is now working so they continue with the assistant discussion.

35 **3.1 Discussion regarding Elementary Teacher Assistants (continues):** Amy Solomons, 22 Westminster Drive; Mrs. Solomons goes over how the budget was amended at the Deliberative session in support of instructional assistants. She has concerns over comments that were made at meetings and the media. She goes over her feelings on how things have changed over the past years and how the student/teacher will benefit from having an assistant. Luke: Student who spoke on behalf of assistants and discussed how they have helped him over the past years. Talia: Student at North school who spoke on behalf of keeping the assistants. Kate; Student at North School would like to keep assistants.
40 Jeffrey; Student and he would like assistants to stay in classroom, Jaelynn: Student who would like assistants to stay in the classroom. Samantha: Student who wants assistants to stay; Renee Williams, 4 Thornton Road; She is a mom and is concerned that the money that was passed will not be used for the assistants. Mrs. Williams goes over her reasons on why the school board should use the money passed for assistants. Steve Swan, 12 Tokanel Drive: He spoke about how teachers/assistants have helped his
45 son from LEEP to South School. His son knows that if not for the teachers/assistants he would have slipped through the cracks. Mr. Young thanks the children for speaking and tells them they did a great job. Donna Traynham 11 Faucher Road: Mrs. Traynham goes over some points to consider for allocation of the money for assistants. She mentions that class sizes have remained the same and we still have 18-22 children who need assistants. She feels the model provides for the lower students and
50 not the proficient ones who are expected to work for some time alone. She raises some questions on the pilot program at South School. She feels that until we know the answers to some questions, we should not eliminate assistants. Kris Sloper, 13 Buckingham Drive: Mrs. Sloper hands out to the School Board

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5 a signed petition to Retain instructional Assistants. 480 community members signed in favor to keep
assistants. Mrs. Sloper continues to read why she feels assistants need to be in the classroom even
though enrollment is down. Lisa St. Hilaire, 3 Mount Vernon Drive: She feels the cuts in 2011 were a
mistake. She looked at past NECAP data and it shows downward trend for the
10 proficient/advanced/gifted learners and the number of struggling learners increased. She is concerned
about technology being used to replace instruction. She has questions regarding the South School
model and would like to know exactly what this model is. Mr. Young said this will be a separate agenda
item at a future meeting. Mr. Greenberg does touch on this and mentions that the South School model is
in Grade 2 utilizing two reading teachers and one special educator and is being used across the grade
15 level. The students are receiving 1.5 hours of direct instruction daily and 25 minutes of independent
practice in additional to whole group class and that includes two half hour sessions of targeted
interventions, 1.5 hours small reading group with a classroom teacher, 15 minutes of wall reading and
buddy reading and 10 minutes of homework reading. Mr. Greenberg confirms with Linda Boyd,
Principal at South School that children are not sitting there doing 60 minutes of nothing. Linda
20 Tharrington, 4 Chase Brook Drive: She feels elementary the grades are so important to the
development of the children. She feels assistants need to stay in the class room. Chris Alexandre, 31
Royal Lane: He is a former North School student. Feels he would have fallen through the cracks if not
for the teachers and assistants. Amy Iorio 5 Acorn Drive: She feels assistants need to stay in the
classroom. She is concerned kids would be set up to fail without the extra guidance. Deb Villars 20
25 High Range Road: She has been an assistant since 2001. She doesn't feel technology is not a
replacement for human interaction. She feels first graders need to be guided. She wants to know what
would hold the board back from using the \$240k for the assistants when you have the public support.
Abbey Kelly 3B Shelley Drive: She asks the board if the decision would be made tonight. Mr. Young
assures her that no decisions will be made tonight. Brian Macaulay, 9 Buckthorn Drive: He doesn't
understand why the people who voted for the assistants are not being heard. Doesn't understand why so
30 much time is being wasted for \$240k of a \$68 million dollar budget. Mike Villars 20 High Range Road:
He states that in his opinion the town is run by 2500 people who care and the board should listen to
them. Dan Tamburello, 3 Royal Lane: He feels that once it has been voted on we have a moral
obligation to honor those who voted. We went through the process and he feels you will get your
money's worth. Deb Johnson 30 Royal Lane: She is a North School parent who feels the teachers need
35 help not just in 1st and 2nd grade, but even the higher elementary grades. She wants to live in a town
where education is very high. Attached to these minutes are the letters/emails that were read into the
public record from the Board members. A couple letters were not read into the public as the people were
present at the meeting and spoke. Mr. Young mentions that the Board will review all this information
and there will be discussion in public. Mr. Young will set the agenda as Chair person and will set
40 another agenda meeting. You can see that at Londonderry.org for the agenda. Mr. Baldassarro asks how
much notice is given. Mr. Young mentions that the agenda comes out on Friday before Tuesday
meeting. Mr. Young reminds the public that the agenda is usually tentative. Deb Villars asks if the
public has questions if can they can contact Mr. Greenberg or school board and Mr. Young says yes. If
the public responds to the form, the Chair will respond, but everyone gets the email. The Boards home
45 phone numbers are also on the website. Linda Tharrington, 4 Chase Brook Drive – asks again about the
60 minutes that the children will be left alone. As a former teacher she knows teachers can do this on
their own, but the amount they can accomplish with the assistants is so much more. She feels the kids
are more on task.

50 Five minute break.

9:26PM Back in Session and Nancy Hendricks has departed the meeting.

3.2 Food Service Presentation – Nancy Faucon and Peter Curro (Shortened Report):

There is a handout which shows the Power Point slides but the slideshow is not shown due to the length of the meeting already. Mr. Curro mentions that this is an Executive Report but needs to be reviewed by the Board in next two weeks to decide if we are moving forward with this or not. Also present is Eric Holden the Business Administrator from Hollis-Brookline who is finishing up his certification at SNHU and Amanda Venezia who will be the new Food Service Director. Mr. Curro explains that Marc Corey was his student intern who did some research on food service and spoke with students at the High School on this matter. There are parts to the presentation which include: Year end projection FY2015, the Federal school lunch program and recommendations. The slide on Page 3 shows the year end projection is roughly \$60,000 in debt. They are looking at moving the high school lunch program into the Free Milk Program. After speaking with the Salem School District, they are hearing that reimbursable meals are consistent with the lunch program. Al-a-carte sales have gone up dramatically (anything not a reimbursable meal). The program is called Free Milk Program – you don't get the commodities, you get free reimbursable money but no reduced money. The adequacy grant would calculate free students and not reduced students – this is only for High School. The school can charge 25 cents for milk and be reimbursed 23 cents. This program allows you to get off the restrictions and calorie counts. The Wild Cards = the storage of commodities. There are strict rules and the school district is still working on this. Looking at projections, they can't tell what Al-a-carte sales will be. They used conservative projections. On Page 21 of the packet, is a picture comparing kitchens. The one on the left is the Londonderry kitchen and on the right is the Exeter kitchen. Mr. Curro feels that seeing quality and choice is important, but presentation of the food and environment is also important. He thinks the Londonderry kitchen is probably the original. Mr. Curro feels we need to look at face lifting the kitchen area at the high school – short term and long term. Recommended Pricing is located on Page 22. If we stay on the program, the pricing will be \$2.50 (HS), \$2.25 (MS) and \$2.00(elementary). The Free Milk Program pricing would be \$2.75(HS), \$2.25(MS) and \$2.00(elementary). Portions would be larger because wouldn't have to stick to calorie count restriction. We could go back to the salad bar and sandwich bar cause no calorie restrictions. Page 23 is titled Can the district provide: Char-broiler and Grill \$15,000, Re-Design Serving area (FY2016) \$30,000, New Serving Line (FY2017) \$55,000, Pay for Free/Reduced at LHS \$40,000. In March 2016 or 2017, we would look at redesign of kitchen. Mr. Curro and Mrs. Faucon recommend to go forward with the Free Milk program, increase pricing, expand food choices and renovate the area to reduce waiting time in line. At the May 5th Board meeting, the will discuss pricing for 2015/2016, should we move to the Free Milk Program, should the district cover the costs of free/reduced students at the HS, will the operating budget provide the requested funding for capital equipment and renovations to the HS kitchen. Mr. Laferriere asks again if Salem feels they are turning the corner. Mr. Laferriere asks again if they can get some numbers from Salem, but Mr. Curro says they don't have any concrete numbers yet. Salem sees the al-a-carte sales going through the roof – a burger and fry – doesn't qualify as a meal cause it doesn't have the three components like a piece of fruit. Mr. Laferriere asks about the picture in the presentation – He feels we still need to modernize to complete the process. Where would the money come from? Mr. Curro says the money would come from the construction account. Mr. Laferriere asks about the pricing and if you use the numbers in the presentation is that increase enough of an increase? Mr. Curro says he hopes to freeze the prices for two years and hopes to be sustainable this time next year if recommendations are approved. Mrs. Reilly asks for some clarification about the al-a-carte menu. Mr. Curro mentions that the goal is to get participation up and the per labor hour to produce more sales. The Board needs to discuss free and reduced meals the next time. Mr. Young asks if anybody has talked to the students and Ms. Venezia feels we can reach the students if we don't need to follow the guidelines. Discussion will continue at the next meeting and the Board will provide recommendations on pricing and program and effects on the operating budget.

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- 5 **6.2 To see what action(s) the Board will take regarding School Board Liaisons**
 Assignment: Mr. Young asked the Board to email him for assignments.

10 **7. Superintendent's Report**

7.1 Assessment Update – Scott Laliberte (postponed)

7.2 3rd Quarter Financial Report – Peter Curro: Mr. Curro states that revenues are pretty
15 much on target as second quarter revenue projections compute a surplus of \$31,000. Expenditures side
is projected to come in under budget by \$1,500,000. Snow removal services: The School district moved
6 million pounds of snow off roofs. Total cost \$197,632. The state has been awarded federal disaster
and we will get \$13,000. The State asked for an appeal to widen the dates and if the federal government
to widen the dates then we could get 75% reimbursement. Mr. Curro will let the Board know when we
20 find out to off-set the \$197,632. Mr. Curro did mention that we did not close or delay schools by
clearing roofs or have any roof collapses. We were one of the first school districts to clear the roofs.

7.3 March Enrollment Report – Nate Greenberg: Mr. Greenberg mentions that
enrollment was 4409. Enrollment last year at that time was 4574 which is down 165

25 **8. Non-Public Session**

**Non-Public Session requested under RSA 91-A:3, Section II (b) and (c). Please see
attached Confidential Memorandum.**

30 **8.1 Student Issue**

8.2 Personnel Nomination(s)

8.3 Leave of Absence Request

35 *Mr. Lekas made the motion to reconvene the non-public session under RSA91A:3, Section II(b). Mr.
Laferriere seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call vote.*

40 **9. Adjournment:** Public meeting ended at 10:24PM

Respectfully submitted,

45 Lisa Muse
School Board Secretary

Lisa Muse

From: Steve Young <seyoung@imageability.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2015 1:55 PM
To: Steve Young
Subject: staffing at the school

I wish to address the funding of additional Instructional Assistants.

Student enrollment is down and class sizes remain the same as in previous years. The Instructional Assistants were originally required to help counteract the larger class sizes that used to exist. The originally proposed budget was stated to maintain an appropriate level of these Assistants for the class size and projected enrollment. This increase in funding is so that more Assistants can be employed to assist fewer students. If that is really necessary, then it seems to imply that for the past ten years or so we have been providing inadequate coverage. Rhetorically, is that true?

The Deliberative Session had 164 voters in attendance. Voter turnout at the ballot was 2600. We cannot know if the majority of that 164 who supported the increase is representative of a majority of the 2600 voters at the ballot. We do know that this funding decision was made by a majority from only 6% of the ballot voters because, unlike the Fire Department staffing article, ballot voters do not vote on changes to an article.

David Ellis

1 Wilshire Drive

Londonderry School Board-

One of the reasons I feel confident that I can handle a classroom as an elementary school teacher in the future is that I will hopefully have an assistant teacher to help me with anything I may need. As a freshman education major in college, I am now realizing how difficult it must be for teachers to handle a classroom of twenty or more on their own. I would be worried about handling a large classroom full of kids, mostly because I would feel guilty that I would not have as much time to get to know each of my students individually.

Looking back at my years in Londonderry School District, I have some very fond memories of my past teachers. Some of the first people that come to mind are the assistant teachers I had in my classroom pretty much every year. I remember getting a lot of one-on-one attention from them and from my teacher because of their help. I have no doubt that I flourished because of this extra attention. If there was only one teacher in the classroom, she/he would have been overwhelmed by the sheer number of students and would probably not be able to take as much time to talk to and work with each individual student.

I remember one year in particular, in which I had a better experience because I had two teachers. In third grade, I was able to work one-on-one with my teacher on my writing because there was an aide there to help all the other kids. It was in these times I had alone with my third grade teacher that I was inspired to become a better writer and actually go to school to become a teacher myself. If it was not for the assistant teacher working in the class, I would have never had that opportunity.

I hope you reconsider getting rid of the assistant teachers in classrooms because I feel that my graduating class and I benefitted a great deal from having them around.

Thank-you for your time,
Hannah Johnson

Because I am in college, I am unable to attend. Please include this letter in the meeting minutes.

Lisa Muse

From: kristina ciarametaro <keciarametaro@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 8:10 PM
To: Steve Young; Nancy Hendricks; Dan Lekas; Leitha Reilly; John Laferriere
Subject: Instructional Assistants

Hello:

My husband and I are unable to attend the school board meeting on April 21, 2015. We are writing to communicate the need to keep instructional assistants in the classroom. As a 1997 graduate of Londonderry I take pride in the excellent education I was provided and want the same for my 3 children (6 yrs, 5yrs and 8weeks). Having a first grader I am noticing the higher standards these young children are now being held to and I see the importance of having the assistants in the classroom to assist with educating the children.

Please listen to the community and keep these assistants in the classroom.

Thank you
Kristina and Peter Ciarametaro

Monday, April 21, 2016

To the Members of the Londonderry School Board:

My name is Matthew Tobin. I have lived my entire life in the town of Londonderry, and I graduated from Londonderry High School in 2012. Since I assume that you have already received a myriad of letters and emails about instructional assistants in the elementary schools, I will try not to be too long winded here as I present a few of my own thoughts.

Several weeks ago, at the Deliberative Session, a sum on the order of \$240,000 was added to the operating budget to fund an increase in time spent in the classroom by instructional assistants. As a former student of the district, I was thrilled to hear this, and if I am not mistaken, so were many others in attendance at the session. However, I was disturbed to hear that this money does not necessarily need to be used for what it was originally allocated. Certainly, I am not trying to dispute the validity of this rule, as I can think of several reasons why it exists of the top of my head. Instead, I am simply imploring you to respect the wishes of the residents of Londonderry. The taxpayers have agreed to pay a certain amount to fund this specific service because they deem it valuable. To use that money for a different purpose simply because one does not see the merits is nothing short of a betrayal of trust.

If this is still unconvincing, then I suppose the only way to ensure that the instructional assistants are kept in the classroom is to begin an ad nauseam barrage of benefits of instructional assistants. However, being a somewhat merciful creature, and suspecting that this barrage has already begun, I will only make one additional point, which I have not heard anyone else make yet. I have noticed that people tend to have been focusing on the many tasks in the classroom that are performed by the assistant so that the teacher may focus more on presenting the material. Naturally, this is a very important duty. The point I would like to make, is that the assistant adds an alternative personality to the room. The benefits of this are three-fold. First, interacting with different types of people is a skill that is necessary in life, and an assistant allows the children yet another chance to learn this skill. Second, a different personality almost always means a different teaching style, which can be crucial. Even just a tiny difference in phrasing when helping with math facts can make all the difference for the understanding of a struggling student.

Thirdly, a different personality can be much more approachable, especially for a young student in need. If a student is having trouble academically or at home, he or she must be provided with someone who he or she can easily approach to get the help that he or she needs.

Finally, I want to thank you for taking the time to read this aloud. You now know how I feel about the situation, and I hope by the end of the meeting tonight, you know how the rest of the town feels. In the end, it is, of course, your decision on how to spend the money. I do hope though, that once you have finished your deliberation, you will have realized what is truly best for the town, and keep instructional assistants in the classrooms for as much time as you possibly can.

Sincerely,

Matthew Tobin

Lisa Muse

From: Richard Tobin <richardtobin15@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 9:28 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

Please read this email into the minutes.

I understand that the Board is considering not including classroom aides in the elementary schools, despite the fact that the voters at the Deliberative Session voted a budget increase specifically to have the aides included in the schools. I am writing to ask the Board to include the aides, as voted at the meeting. I do not see what is harmful about having aides in the classroom. And if the people who are paying the cost are asking that the money be spent for that purpose, then why wouldn't you do it? Previous school boards have recognized that the budget is a bottom-line budget but have nevertheless honored the wishes of the voters when the wishes were clear. Children learn at different rates, and having an additional instructor in the classroom must be a big help for many of the children. When I was going to school, the teacher taught to the average student, and many were left behind. It was and still is a bad system to have only one adult working with the students. In addition, times are different today: there is more testing and less time for teaching, teachers are working under much more restrictive conditions for keeping order in the classrooms, record-keeping requirements are increasing, more is expected (and hoped for) from students, the presence of students with behavioral problems can be distracting for some students, and the teacher occasionally has to leave the classroom for a meeting. For all of these conditions, having a second adult who is familiar with the students and the class activities is greatly beneficial.

According to the State of New Hampshire, the median household income in Londonderry is over \$90,000. We can certainly spend \$11 per year for the aides, and the voters recognize that. The aides should have been in the budget in the first place, and the voters have made that correction to the budget. Their wishes should be honored.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 73.149.45.43

Lisa Muse

From: Janet Cichocki <janetcichocki@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 9:10 AM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

I urge you to use the money voted on by the residents of Londonderry for the use of keeping aides in the classroom. This is a fundamental right of each and every citizen that should not be undermined. I do not remember the article stating that if the school board did not want to keep the aides, then the money could be used any way they deemed appropriate. As a citizen that voted for that additional help in the classroom, I feel that the money should be returned to the citizens of Londonderry if you do not choose to listen to them. I know that I only intended that money to be used to help our teachers to challenge those who may be struggling because of a disability, or struggling just because, or need to be challenged because they are at the top of the class and may be a little bored. The decrease in classroom size did not make a difference to me. Let's do everything we can to help our children become the best they can be. If that means giving them extra help, then this money is there for that.

Thank you.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 73.47.21.34

Lisa Muse

From: Tara Crowley <Taracrowley@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 5:43 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

I am writing to ask for your careful consideration with regards to cutting instructional assistants in the classroom. Our schools and classrooms are amazing and this is not by chance. It takes a village...not a village with many people missing to do the great job we do educating our children. Thank you for your time.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 174.62.181.201

Dear Londonderry School Board and Mr. Greenberg,

My name is Hannah Solomons and I am a 2014 graduate of Londonderry High School. I was hoping to speak tonight, but unfortunately because I have an exam this afternoon, I am unable to attend and would like someone to read my letter at the meeting.

When I first found out my mother, and other parents were planning on getting involved in saving the classroom assistants, she told me to take a minute to think about what the teachers and assistants did for me when I was in elementary school. When I did that, I understood why they are working so hard to keep the assistants. I have a sister who is currently in the first grade. I know my parents want her to have all the same benefits I did when I was her age.

We moved to Londonderry mid-year when I was in first grade. I had a new house, a new baby brother, I moved away from my friends and family who lived on the same street I did. There were many changes. All positive, but hard to deal with when you are 7 years old. I remember my first day at North School, and being greeted by Mr. Zacchilli. He had a crazy tie, and made a joke about spelling my name the same way backwards and forwards.

I was placed in a classroom with Mrs. Murabito and her assistant Mrs. Eddy. I was never considered to be a shy kid, but being "new" was intimidating. I got a lot of extra attention and extra help to make the transition as smooth as possible and to get caught up.

I "looped" in second and third grade. I had Mrs. Pirog, and Mrs. Kenney, her assistant. To quote Mrs. Pirog, they worked together like a "well oiled machine". It was around this time I started to develop anxiety about my work. I was a perfectionist and I worked VERY slowly. I was constantly second-guessing myself, afraid of making a mistake. Both Mrs. Pirog and Mrs. Kenney were aware of each student's strengths and weaknesses. They were able to take time and work with us in small groups, or help us individually if the occasion came where we needed that little extra personal time.

Another benefit of having an assistant in the classroom was whenever someone got sick, one of them was there to console the student, accompany that child to the nurse, and the other would continue on with the lesson as usual. This sounds like an issue that only occurs every once in a while, however in my second/third grade classes we had a student with juvenile diabetes and another with chronic migraines who often got sick in class. Trips to the nurse were a daily occurrence in my class, so it was nice to have Mrs. Kenney there every day to prevent the lesson from being interrupted. Our class became like a family. Since leaving that class, we have had a couple of 'reunions' including one last year before graduation.

In fourth grade, my teacher's husband passed away unexpectedly. For obvious reasons, she was absent a lot that year. Our assistant teacher Mrs. Reynolds knew our class, our curriculum, and our routine. Our class was able to continue with our regular schedule even though our teacher was not there. I could write many stories and examples of how the classroom assistants did so much to help give our class the strongest foundation possible. We all know that children learn best with continuity and structure. I am confident that due to the fact we had the same assistants in our class every day helping the teachers, we were able to get a strong foundation that made our graduating class as successful as it was.

The class of 2014 had 180 students named "New Hampshire Scholars" and were recognized at an event at Fisher Cats Stadium. The majority of our class including all of my friends and I have gone onto four year colleges. Many are at elite colleges. When I arrived at Holy Cross, I quickly found out that I am the only one in my social circle who came from a public high school. There are currently 5 students here from Londonderry, so that says something about our district. I'm not telling you this to brag, but to make you aware that the model that was in place during the 12 years I was in the Londonderry Public Schools worked. Yes, there may be less students now than there was when I arrived in 2002, but with all the variables that teachers have to deal with now, we should not consider eliminating their help. We should think of ways to get them more, so the future graduates of LHS will have the same success as my class did. Please start by keeping the elementary assistants.

Thank you
Hannah Solomons
Londonderry High School class of 2014
College of the Holy Cross class of 2018
hesolo18@g.holycross.edu

Lisa Muse

From: Michelle Miller <mgmbiz@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 11:25 AM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

Dear School Board members:

I am not able to attend tonight's school board meeting, where the reinstatement of elementary instructional assistants is on the agenda. Therefore, I am writing to voice my support for the reinstatement of elementary instructional assistants.

As a parent and as an employee of the school district, I strongly believe that instructional assistants provide valuable assistance to classroom teachers, especially at the younger elementary level. I have seen firsthand what it is like to try to get a class of twenty first-graders ready for winter outdoor recess when the entire recess period is only twenty minutes. On multiple occasions, classroom assistants have provided help with differentiated learning situations in the classroom - taking breakout reading and/or math groups, while the teacher meets with another group; or providing one-on-one help for a child who might be a little behind. As a parent, I feel better knowing that my child might receive a little extra help from an extra person in the classroom.

Declining enrollment is NOT a reason for eliminating instructional assistants in the classroom. It doesn't matter how many classrooms we have, existing classrooms need additional support, especially at the elementary level.

I hope that you will consider that the voters of Londonderry have spoken, and that they have said they want the additional budget funds applied to the reinstatement of elementary instructional assistants.

Thank you.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 75.68.42.37

Lisa Muse

From: Lauren Fish <lfishdialysis@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 2:20 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

I'm against the removal of instructional assistants from the classrooms. My son is on a 504 and doesn't get enough help as it is. Removing them would be detrimental!

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 72.251.238.103

Lisa Muse

From: Cherie Fuller <cherieandchuck@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 2:56 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

Please keep the Instructional Assistants in the classroom. They are invaluable. It really is an important part of Reading circle and Math time to have an extra set of eyes to help those that struggle, especially for first graders. Thank you.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 75.67.232.94

Lisa Muse

From: Crystal Ashman <crashman622@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 3:10 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments where sent from the School Board web page email form:

I am unable to attend the meeting this evening but wanted to let you know that I support keeping the teachers assistants in the classrooms. My son has an IEP, but does not require a dedicated assistant. He relies on that other trained adult in the classroom for direction and assistance often, as many other students do too. We can't expect the teachers to teach 20+ students to the best of their ability without some reinforcement from their assistants. I voted for the amended budget, understanding that this was the plan to keep these positions in our elementary schools. Thank you.

Please read my comment into the meeting minutes

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 98.229.228.61

Lisa Muse

From: Jodi Myron <jodi_myron@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 4:38 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

I just submitted a letter in favor of keeping assistants in classroom. Please place this in the minutes for tonight's meeting. Again please support the assistants.

Thanks again,
Jodi Myron

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 66.87.116.114

Lisa Muse

From: Jodi Myron <jodi_myron@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 4:07 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments where sent from the School Board web page email form:

I am writing in regards to keeping the assistants in classroom. As a mother of 3 children in the Londonderry school system, these assistants are a vital and necessary part of our childrens education. If the assistants were removed from classroom it woud be a diservice for a children. Please support the voters and more importantly parents decision too keep them in the class.

Thank you,
Jodi Myron

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 66.87.125.70

Lisa Muse

From: Valarie Oljey <voljey@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 4:15 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments where sent from the School Board web page email form:

I am strongly discouraged in the fact that the town voted to keep money in the budget for instructional assistance for the 2015-2016 school year, more specifically in each grade one classroom and the school board/school district is not going to follow thru with this. Classroom teachers cannot continue to teach the quality education that we expect taught to our children when they have to continue to battle this alone. I, along with many others voted for this and I sure hope you take this into consideration.

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 24.63.215.20

Lisa Muse

From: Deborah Villars <deborah.villars@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 12:21 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

Mr. Greenberg, Mr. Young, and school board members,

As a concerned member of our community, I am writing you to request that you please reconsider your decision to eliminate assistants in first and second grade next year. I know others have also written to request this and much of what I say may be redundant, but important nonetheless. As stated in the Londonderry Times article, enrollment in the district is down making for smaller class sizes, therefore eliminating the need for assistants. I am sure this is true for some grade levels but I believe first and second grade class sizes have been relatively consistent over the past twenty years. Class size was not the sole purpose in hiring assistants. I believe they were also brought into the system to allow more individualized and small group teaching. This will not happen without assistants. You have said there will be certified personnel to assist but no one seems to know exactly what you mean by that. The article mentions reading, educational support. Please explain to us how they will be able to assist all first and second grade classrooms each day during their hour and a half reading block when many of these certified reading teachers have their own reading groups at those times. You also mention support will come through special education teachers. Again, wouldn't they be working with their children?

You also state these "certified" personnel will be available for the entire day, as opposed to the one or two hours a dedicated assistant works. While it is true they are contracted for the entire day, most support is needed in the core hours of reading and math, which is why we are requesting you reinstate assistants to a full three hours per day so they are available during the most crucial parts of the young students day.

In addition, the article mentions a detailed plan outlined by the superintendent and supported by his principals. This raises a couple of questions for me. What is this detailed plan? Secondly, do the teachers support it? While I certainly would not assume to speak for them, I have spoken to a few who don't seem to know the answer regarding the plan and who are also concerned about speaking up since the administration is already on board. My question is, why not ask them? Aren't they in the best position to know whether classroom assistants are valuable or needed? They are the ones in the classrooms every day for six hours and are the true experts on what is most helpful to educating our children.

Finally, Mr. Young mentions relying on volunteer help when his children were in school. I believe that was around 15 to twenty years ago. I think we can all agree that economic times have changed since then and many families have both parents working to support the family leaving them little time to be in the schools. While we do have fabulous parent volunteers we can not rely on them to make up the void of not having classroom assistants or to have the experience and expertise the assistants have gained from working several years with our district.

In closing, and with all due respect, please don't be penny wise and pound foolish. A classroom assistant is an inexpensive resource that can bring great value in making sure our children are college and career ready. Thank you for your time. Please have this read into the minutes.

Sincerely,
Deb Villars

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 70.192.21.100

Lisa Muse

From: Brian Macaulay <brian.macaulay@pfizer.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 10:49 AM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

Good morning,

I have a question in regards to the FY 2016 budget that I am hoping you can help with. When is the school budget adopted (is the budget adopted when it is approved by the voters)?

Thanks,
Brian

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 148.168.40.122

Lisa Muse

From: Anne Marie Govoni <amragjr@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2015 5:16 PM
To: Steve Young
Cc: Nancy Hendricks; John Laferriere; Dan Lekas; Leitha Reilly; Lisa Muse
Subject: Instructional Assistants

Dear Mr. Young,

I am writing this letter in response to your letter to the editor and the article in the Londonderry Times regarding instructional assistants. Please read this letter into the minutes of the April 21 School Board meeting prior to the teaching assistants discussion.

In your letter you state "In my opinion, they (aides) should have been added much sooner." Well almost 25 years ago the Londonderry School District did realize the value of assistants in the early elementary classrooms. Instructional assistants have been supporting certified teachers in 1st grade classrooms since 1991 and in the 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms since at least 1996. I know this because my son was in our school system in 1995, and I have friends whose children were in school four years prior. Assistants were definitely supporting readiness and 1st grade teachers at Matthew Thornton since 1993, and I would imagine it was probably since 1991, since all the elementary schools seem to follow the same protocol.

There may have been overcrowding at Matthew Thornton before redistricting; however, South School, and I suspect North School, never had close to 30 children in the early elementary grades. I would be interested to know the average 1st grade class size at M.T. in the early 1990s. Is it possible it was the upper elementary grades with the 30+ students you are referring to in your letter? In the early 2000s instructional assistants were added to the 4th and 5th grade classrooms because of larger class sizes, and they were eliminated in 2011 when the numbers declined. Although the overall enrollment numbers are down, the average 1st grade class size has remained fairly consistent over the years. The number of 1st grade classrooms were added or reduced based on the number of incoming students.

Building a strong foundation for students to build upon in future school years is critical. Our young children need to have a solid foundation and a love of learning in order to be college and career ready. Instructional assistants in the early elementary grades play an important role in building that foundation. First graders are not independent learners. iPads and busy work cannot and should not be a substitute for instructional assistants in the classroom. Class size could not have been the reason assistants were added to 1st grade classrooms almost 25 years ago, and it should not be the reason they are eliminated now!

The voters of Londonderry have given the school district a gift—the opportunity to keep more adults in the early elementary classrooms. Please accept this gift graciously and honor the wishes of the voters!

Sincerely,

Anne Marie Govoni
10 Westwood Drive
Londonderry

Lisa Muse

From: Kris Sloper <kris_sloper@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 10:47 PM
To: Leitha Reilly; Steve Young; John Laferriere; Nancy Hendricks; Dan Lekas
Cc: Kris Sloper
Subject: Instructional Assistants: Please Read this into your Minutes

Good Evening,

I am writing to you today to discuss the proposed elimination of Instructional Assistants from our elementary school classrooms. The public addressed their concerns regarding the termination of the aides at the last deliberative session which resulted in an amended budget. On March 10th, the people voted in favor, by a very large margin, to fully fund keeping the Instructional Assistants. The vote not only preserved the aides current status, but it approved increasing their time in the classroom by double, because one hour simply isn't enough.

I am fully aware that you, the school board, have the final say on how the approved funding will be appropriated. I sincerely hope you do your job in representing what the voters/taxpayers/families have asked for. We have given you the funding necessary to keep our successful system in place. Without it, our children and our exemplary teachers will be setup for failure. Teachers cannot possibly reach the rigorous demands of this Common Core curriculum in a classroom filled with a diverse population of students, all with individual learning styles. Our community has approved the funding you need to ensure our children and teachers are well equipped to face these challenges head on. If you choose not to represent the taxpayers wishes, it will clearly display that there is a political agenda taking preference over what is best for our students.

So many young families flock to Londonderry because they want a superlative education that will set their children on a path to success. I fear, that if you don't listen to the folks that graciously appointed you to your positions, the dream will crumble for us all. I lie awake at night fearing that my children will fall through the cracks because their schools REFUSED to provide them with the resources they needed to succeed. How peculiar is this fear? Very. The ONLY thing standing in the way of their success at this point is you.

Please listen to your community! The people of Londonderry have spoken. Keep Instructional Assistants in our elementary classrooms. Our youngest students are depending on us to provide nothing but the very best. Please, please don't stand in their way of their success!

(Please read this into the minutes.)

Respectfully,

Kris Sloper

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa Muse

From: Lisa St. Hilaire <l.sthilaire@snhu.edu>
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 9:55 PM
To: schoolboard
Subject: Email from the School Board Web Page

The following comments were sent from the School Board web page email form:

I have written the following letter to each board member via email. I have only received one response encouraging me to look for the issue on the upcoming board meeting agenda. I am sending the letter again, in the hopes you will each provide your position on this issue.

I am writing to express my concern over the current plan to eliminate instructional assistants from the elementary school classrooms (other than those required for an IEP).

I am a Matthew Thornton Elementary School parent and am concerned that the elimination of these assistants will be detrimental to the school's ability to provide personalized instruction for students. I believe this action contradicts the district's vision to "provide appropriate individualized academic, social, emotional and physical learning opportunities in order to establish a dynamic foundation for quality education and continued student growth." I am one of many concerned voters who have expressed our opinion during school board meetings, at the recent deliberative session, and/or by voting for the school budget as amended. I am asking you, as a board member elected by the voters, to please take the funds that we have allocated and fund instructional assistants for 3 hours/day/classroom at the elementary level.

While I believe that the voter's wishes are clear, I would also like to address Mr. Greenberg's assertion that because enrollments are declining the assistants are no longer needed. I strongly disagree with his opinion that support in the classroom can be met with existing personnel. While enrollments have in fact decreased, the average class sizes have remained fairly consistent. As the chart below illustrates, since 2001 (the first year class size data was collected at the NH department of Education), the average class size for 1st and 2nd grade has ranged from 19 to 22, with 20 being the typical size. The same trend holds true for 3rd and 4th grade with class size ranging from 20 to 23, with 21 being typical. I do not think this variance is sufficient to justify elimination of the assistants.

And while class sizes have remained relatively stable, the demands we are placing on our students and teachers are growing. I see it first hand with my daughter who is in first grade at Matthew Thornton. Her curriculum is noticeably more advanced from what my third grader experienced just two years ago. That being said, I am not against increasing the rigor of our curriculum. My concern is for our children getting the instruction they need to succeed, and I firmly believe that these assistants will play a critical role that success.

I look forward to hearing your opinion on this matter and I am confident that you will work with your colleagues to ensure our students have the resources they need to succeed.

Sincerely,
Lisa St. Hilaire
3 Mont Vernon Drive

Senders IP(as reported by the client): 174.62.182.252

Lisa Muse

From: Jennie <jennie_fitzpatrick@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 6:45 PM
To: Steve Young; Nancy Hendricks; Leitha Reilly; John Laferriere; Dan Lekas
Cc: Jennie Fitzpatrick
Subject: Please read as part of School Board Meeting on 4/21/15

thank you for reading on my behalf as I am unable to attend meeting

Dear School Board,

I am a parent of three children; my oldest child is currently at North Londonderry School. We cannot say enough about the support my son has received to date while at LEEP, Moose Hill and North School. In our opinion, Londonderry provides excellent education services to our children and for that I am thankful. My son is currently on an IEP for reading development and is assisted by the reading department at North School.

I am writing to express my concern over class room assistant budget decisions that will have a direct impact on my child. As mentioned, my son is currently on an IEP for one specific area of focus. This does not include his need for an extra nudge from time to time to stay on task during normal class time. He is an example of many students who may not qualify for special education services but still need help throughout the day. There are children in every class room that need extra attention, either because they need an extra push to meet grade levels or they are beyond peer level and need extra enrichment to remain engaged.

I believe we can help our children succeed in school by working together. My husband and I are both involved in our children's education. We help to complete homework and study with our children to earn higher grades and test scores. It is because we are so involved with homework that I can see the need for assistants. We are assisting with nightly homework one-on-one or as a team. While yes, he is young and still needs age-appropriate guidance, he truly 100% needs assistance. I can see how this would be necessary for him in a classroom as well. Having a handful of similar students in one class would be overwhelming to say the least for the teacher if not impossible to give this much attention to each student.

I have been following the meetings and elections regarding the school budget. I believe if the majority of the public, including my family, has voted for something then it is the School Board's job to listen and to use those funds appropriately towards their intended budget item, class room assistants. If the current budget cuts being proposed are implemented, it will mean that my son will not have the support systems in place as he has today. Londonderry Schools will not be able to provide the level of support my son has received in his first two years at North School if these budget cuts are approved. I urge you to use the funds as intended to avoid impacting students who rely on the crucial services that the teacher assistants provide.

Sincerely,
Jennie Fitzpatrick
19 Longwood Ave
Londonderry, NH 03053

Londonderry School Board
Non-Public Minutes
Tuesday, April 21, 2015

5 PRESENT: Board Members: Mr. Young, Mr. Laferriere, Mrs. Reilly, and Mr. Lekas
Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Greenberg
Assistant Superintendent: Mr. Laliberte
Director of Human Resources: Mrs. Swenson
Director of Pupil Services: Mrs. Carpinone

10 Entered non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, Section II (b) and (c) at 10:26PM.

15 Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mrs. Reilly and passed unanimously (4-0) to approve
administration's recommendation for an out-of-district placement

15 Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mr. Lekas and passed unanimously (4-0) to approve
administration's recommendation for a Special Education Facilitator nomination

20 Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mrs. Reilly and passed unanimously (4-0) to approve
administration's recommendation for the Special Education Facilitator compensation

Mrs. Carpinone exited the meeting at 10:32PM

25 Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mr. Lekas and passed unanimously (4-0) to approve
administration's recommendation for a custodial nomination

Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mr. Lekas and passed unanimously (4-0) to approve
administration's recommendation for a leave of absence request for FY16

30 Mr. Lekas moved, seconded by Mrs. Reilly and passed unanimously (4-0) to exit non-public
session at 10:40PM.

35 Mr. Laferriere moved, seconded by Mr. Lekas and passed unanimously (4-0) to adjourn public
session at 10:41PM.

Respectfully submitted,

40 Nathan S. Greenberg
Superintendent of Schools