

News and Views in the Lyme-Old Lyme Schools

JULY 2010

Dear Members of the Lyme-Old Lyme Community,

Summer has made a clear statement this year in terms of sunshine and warmth! I hope that you are enjoying outdoor opportunities and also finding some cool spots to relax.

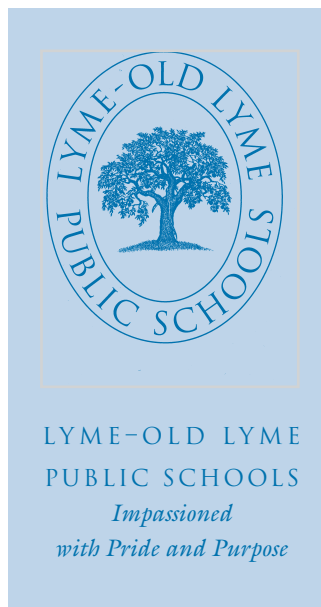
We have been busy in preparing for an exciting year and thought you might enjoy a quick peek at some of what's in store for the 2010-11 year. Please check out some of the new features and activities that are on the horizon.

Continue to check our website, www.region18.org, during the summer as we will post news yet to come. Meanwhile, may 2010 be a special summer for you and your families.



Enrollment and Space Committee

After a year-long study, a special ad hoc committee has delivered its report on enrollment and space to the Board of Education. The study included an analysis of available space, projected enrollments, program requirements, costs, governing documents, and proposed recommendations. The committee forwarded detail on three recommendations. The Board is taking the summer to study the recommendations. It plans to host opportunities for public information and input prior to making any decisions. Watch for notice in early September.



LOLHS Renovation Project to Begin Shortly

The commencement of work on the renovation of Lyme-Old Lyme High School is just weeks away. The project is currently out to bid with initial work tentatively scheduled to begin shortly after the bids are awarded. Official groundbreaking will take place in the fall.

Meanwhile, Principal James Wygonik and staff have readied for the first phase of construction. The project will ramp up gradually over the year. Several classroom teachers and support staff have already prepared for relocation for 2010-11. The weight room is being moved to Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School but will still be available to students before and after school on a schedule similar to last year. A new entrance will be designated as the main entrance and modifications in the driveway and parking areas will be implemented. A new walkway (temporary) will be built to bridge the two sections of the building as the existing walkway will be removed. The most visible change for the year will be the construction of the new space in between the two existing building units.

Athletic Director, Rob Roach, is busy making alternative arrangements for fall sports. The softball field, practice field and the lacrosse field will be off-line as these areas will be used to stage the construction operations. Cross country will continue to be on campus. The soccer program will be split between the field within the new track and the fields at Town Woods. Parents will receive specific directions on schedules and locations for athletic events and practices prior to the start of the fall season. Students participating in sports located at Town Woods will receive bus transportation to the site. Parent pickup for these sports will be at Town Woods.

For more information on the impact plans, including visuals, visit the District website.

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Meal Prepayment System Coming This Fall to Lyme-Old Lyme

The District is pleased to confirm that it will introduce "MealpayPlus" to our families this fall. "MealpayPlus" is an online prepayment system for food services. It enables families to make prepayments for lunches at any time using the Internet or telephone.

In addition to the convenience for families, the system will reduce line speed in the cafeterias and shoulder much of the burden for mandated recordkeeping. The system can allow parents to monitor what their children purchase with their available funds. Auto-replenish reminders can be sent to advise parents of low balances.

The system will be introduced incrementally beginning in the fall. Configuration of hardware and software will take place this summer, with staff training to follow. You will be notified in the fall when the system is ready for your child's school. Please watch for further information.

Introduction of Alcohol Detection Policy

During the 2009-10 year, the Lyme-Old Lyme Board of Education adopted an alcohol detection policy. It did so after careful study and ample opportunity for parent input. The policy, #2351, can be found in its entirety on the District website under Board of Education Policies. In coordination with Lymes' Youth Service Bureau, a grant has been obtained to purchase a breathalyzer. This tool will be used with strict adherence to the policy. The policy will be introduced at the high school level for special events. While the policy does afford some flexibility for other uses, administration does not see these as necessary or appropriate at this time.

High School students and parents will receive additional notice of the introduction of the alcohol detection policy in the coming months.

Automated External Defibrillators

The Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools are readying to comply with new legislation that requires schools, if they can afford them, to have Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) available in each school. Through a combination of donations and Board funds, a unit will be available for each school. The units will be mounted in a common location in each building. A plan for training staff and high school students in their use is being developed this summer. Many thanks to all who contributed toward the purchase of these life saving devices.

Transportation News

Two new changes in transportation are being implemented this year. First, the District has a new contracted carrier. M&J Transportation began providing transportation for our students as of July 1. The new company is employing the same dispatcher and many of the same drivers. Secondly, the buses will now be located at a new depot on Four Mile River Road.

Neither of these changes has direct impact on bus routes. Each year, there are some changes based on shifts in demographics. Routes will be available in August.

BOE Meeting Changes

In an effort to make its meetings available to a wider audience of the communities, the Board of Ed will begin videotaping its meetings this year. Beginning August 4, the location of Board meetings will be in the Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School auditorium. Necessary equipment is on order and will be installed as soon as possible. Watch for further notice on when the meetings may be viewed on cable TV. Meanwhile, you are always welcome to attend meetings or obtain agendas and minutes on our website.