

Vision

When most people think of the School Board, the first thing that comes to mind is budgets. The School Board is also responsible for hiring staff, ensuring the buildings are maintained, making sure schools are in compliance with all state and federal laws, negotiating employee contracts, providing professional development opportunities to the staff, and setting policy for how the school district will operate. These are all important jobs that must get done, but they are secondary in nature to the School Boards primary function. That is to set the vision for the school district. Where do we want to be? What does the community want for its' schools and more importantly, its' children?

We get a sense of this by listening to the taxpayers at the annual school meeting, selectman meetings, visiting at the local coffee shop, short conversations in the grocery store and on the street, reading letters to the editor in the papers, or through phone calls and emails with the citizens of Ludlow. This past winter the School Boards of the elementary and high school held a community forum to get specific ideas and feedback about what the community wants for its' schools. Through that process we have created a 4 year strategic plan that is central to what we feel the community wants.

What we have heard is that the people of Ludlow want their schools to remain a viable part of the community, and they want the best education possible for the children. The elementary and high school boards are working on this on several fronts. Throughout the supervisory union, there is unprecedented cooperation between the school boards, the schools, and the administration. Several district wide committees have been formed by the superintendent, comprised of staff from all of the district schools. These committees will be looking at teacher evaluations, professional development, and student assessment/curriculum. This can only lead to improved programs and opportunities for our children. We are extremely pleased with the way the staff, not only in our school, but throughout the district, have embraced this level of cooperation.

There are however, some tough choices ahead. The School Boards of the elementary and high school are currently studying all of the options available to us concerning our schools and how best to meet the wishes of those that want to keep the schools in our community while at the same time, keeping costs at a level that is sustainable. We believe we can achieve this, but only with the collaborative efforts of the schools and all segments of the community mentioned by the superintendent in his letter. Over the next several months, we will be holding a series of public meetings to talk about our options, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Please plan on attending these meetings, ask the hard questions, and become informed about all of the options available. In the end, the final choice will be yours.

To end on a high note, things are happening. We are heading in new directions, and everyone is energized. It is nice to see there are new ideas and opportunities being created by the administration and the staff, and that they take advantage of them. We are looking forward to a great year of providing your children an excellent academic experience. Thank you all for your support.

For the LES Board,
Wayne Hammond, chair

For the U39 Board
Diana Chimbolo, chair