

# Student Leadership Council

*of Ledyard High School*



## **RESOLUTION 0001**

SLC/RES/2016/1

### **MORNING MEETING**

**Adopted by the Student Leadership Council at its 5th meeting, on 13 May 2016**

*The Student Leadership Council,*

*Reaffirming* its strong commitment to the implementation, success, and continuance of a Morning Meeting at Ledyard High School, and to the Purposes and Principles of the Student Leadership Council,

*Recognizing* that Morning Meeting was removed from the Ledyard High School daily schedule following the 2014-2015 school year,

*Expressing displeasure* that due to the removal of Morning Meeting, events such as the Toy Drive and Thanksgiving Food Drive are centered around second block rather than Morning Meeting,

*Recalling* that this results in multiple problems for those organizations running drives, as well as those supporting drives, by making collection more difficult, requiring organizers to handle larger groups of students, and creating redundancy when informing students about such community efforts,

*Recalling further* that drives centered around second block can take away from teaching time, as the line between announcements and the start of the teaching portion of second block is often blurred and can also cause students involved in facilitating the drive to miss instructional time while they are with another class,

*Emphasizing* that drives are an integral part of how many Ledyard High School clubs receive and distribute goods every year,

*Alarmed* that when The National Honor Society, Student Congress, and the Ledyard Regional Chapter of the National FFA Organization held their joint, annual “Thanksgiving Food Drive” in the fall of 2015, the amount of donations decreased significantly from 2014, when Morning Meeting was included in the Ledyard High School daily schedule,

*Believing* that the sharp decline in drive collections can be attributed to the removal of Morning Meeting from the Ledyard High School daily schedule,

*Recalling* that when Morning Meeting was removed from the Ledyard High School daily schedule, one of the supporting details was that Ledyard was one of the only towns in the ECC that had a Morning Meeting, and *deeply concerned* that upon further review by the Student Leadership Council, the shared information has proven to be false,

*Observing* that Fitch High School, one of Ledyard’s closest neighbors, has a thirty-minute block every day in which students can check in with teachers, study, finish work, and hold events, and that Waterford High School has a similar twenty-five-minute block,

*Recalling* that Ledyard’s Morning Meeting plan was only six minutes long and was dissolved before either Fitch High School’s or Waterford High School’s, and *confident* that, without Morning Meeting, Ledyard students are missing out on vital social and educational contact that they might experience in other towns,

*Recalling* that ten years ago the Ledyard High School student population was roughly 1,100, but has now dropped down to around 850 students and *believing* that if Ledyard wants to continue to attract homeowners and students through our school climate and educational programs, the school schedule must stay competitive and unique, compared to those of other schools in every aspect,

*Believing further* that if parents see that Ledyard is not offering the same emotional and educational opportunities such as those provided through a regular Morning Meeting, the school's population will have trouble increasing or holding steady at any time in the future,

*Reaffirming* the idea that Morning Meeting, often called Advisory, offers an emotional connection for students, providing students with a teacher they can talk to and trust,

*Recognizing* that there are far more Morning Meeting teachers than there are Guidance Counselors and *believing* that Morning Meeting provides students with an alternative adult figure they can confide in or trust for advice, and the lack of time spent on a weekly basis with morning meeting teachers prevents this,

*Noting accordingly* that this disconnect is especially evident in advisories with a new teacher (whether the students are new to Ledyard High School or have had an advisory change),

*Recognizing* in the 2015-2016 school year schedule, barring any unplanned meetings with an advisor or scheduled events, Ledyard High School students only have approximately an hour of contact time with their advisors per month (totaling only 9 hours throughout the year),

*Recognizing further* that under the daily schedule prior to the 2015-2016 school year, excluding lengthened AIM sessions for various reasons, the students had approximately 18 hours per year with their advisors,

*Noting* that the daily schedule change made in the summer of 2015 cut the time in half for students to bond with their teachers, and for advisors to give advice,

*Believing* that many freshman students are scared and uncomfortable during their first few months of school, which is undoubtedly normal, and *emphasizing* that in the past, students could have turned to their Morning Meeting teachers for guidance and help when in trouble, and were unable to during the 2015-2016 school year,

*Believing further* that the current freshman class (Class of 2019) was deprived of a warm connection with a new (Morning Meeting) teacher and therefore may not have had the same welcoming experience as many students in the past could have,

*Expressing further displeasure* with the fact that club activity participation and awareness of activities has drastically decreased since the discontinuance of Morning Meeting, and

*observing* that only one individual signed up to audition for Ledyard Idol in 2016, as opposed to the 12 in 2015, due to the subsequent communication failures,

*Recalling* that many students have reported that although their second block teachers display the written morning announcements, they do not read or notify students of anything important like their Morning Meeting teachers used to and *observing* that the spoken morning announcements are very hard to hear because teachers may begin their lecture or allow their students to talk over the announcements,

*Applauding* the efforts of Ledyard High School clubs to host an extensive array of highly successful activities for students and parents to enjoy including, but not limited to, the Lip Sync Battle, Ledyard Idol, Jamnesty, and Coffee Houses, and *deeply concerned* by the fact that the awareness of those events has dipped dramatically, resulting in less and less student participation,

*Noting* that Ledyard Idol has historically been one of the most prominent and well-known singing competitions conducted by the student body, yet when announcements were posted and the sign-up sheet was put in the Main Office of Ledyard High School, only one person signed up within two weeks, and *convinced* that this shows an incredible lack of communication through the announcements,

*Believing* that a lack of participation in student-run activities is a loss for the students of the high school, but the groups that suffer most from this miscommunication are the organizations and charities that these activities make donations to,

*Recognizing* that The STAND Lip Sync battle was created in order to raise money and donate it to the efforts to help save and care for Syrian refugees, and *considering* the possibility that a lack of communication could diminish Ledyard's attempts to support global causes,

*Observing* that in many elective classes, in which students come from multiple grade levels, when announcements are read, teachers often times skip over those that they believe do not pertain to any of their students and as a result certain students end up uninformed,

*Observing further* that, conversely, some teachers choose to be safe and read the entirety of the announcements, and as a result detract from their own teaching time by reading announcements irrelevant to the students,

*Believing* that teachers should not be forced to decide what they will and will not read to their students during second block, and that teachers should be able to start class as soon as the bell rings and end class as soon as the next bell rings, and *emphasizing* that in a Morning Meeting setting, the teacher is familiar with what announcements pertain to his/her students,

*Calling attention* to the convenience of Morning Meeting for a high schooler's sometimes-forgetful brain, *considering* that throughout a given week, students are assigned work from as many as eight classes and have to keep track of weekly events, AIM periods, and irregular weekly schedules,

*Taking into consideration* that the student-to-teacher educational contact time (71% of time in school) in the daily schedule (including Morning Meeting and an extended lunch) prior to the 2015-2016 is greater than or equal to that of other schools in the area, and *observing* that Fitch High School students spend only 69% of their day directly in an educational setting,

*Emphasizing* the incredibly strong student support and backing for this resolution, and *observing* that more than 200 signatures were gathered on a petition by junior Sean Healy (Class of 2017) to bring Morning Meeting back to the high school,

*Observing* that students who experienced Morning Meeting in the past, including the Class of 2019, emphasize the importance of Morning Meeting on the Ledyard experience and have rallied behind the noble efforts of many to try and get that crucial part of their life back,

*Determining* that the absence of Morning Meeting in the Ledyard High School community has been and will only continue to be detrimental to students' success in both their academic and social lives,

*Recalling the Preamble of the Charter of the Student Leadership Council and acting under Chapters III and IV of the Charter of the Student Leadership Council,*

1. *Declares accordingly* that it is necessary that Morning Meeting be made a permanent fixture in the daily schedule of Ledyard High School;
2. *Strongly condemns* past efforts to remove Morning Meeting from the daily schedule of Ledyard High School;
3. *Reiterates* that without advisory, the student body's overall happiness, interconnection, performance, participation, and ability to succeed will undoubtedly decrease over time;
4. *Endorses and expresses its commitment to* the petition regarding Morning Meeting written and distributed by junior Sean Healy (Class of 2017);
5. *Calls upon* any member of the student body to present ideas, thoughts, and options to the Student Leadership Council, in order to continue the flow of new ideas between the students and their Student Leadership Council representatives on the matter;
6. *Calls to the forefront* the Ledyard Public Schools administration's duties to ensure a safe and productive learning environment, which, as has been made abundantly clear, is only possible with a daily schedule including Morning Meeting;
7. *Requests* all Ledyard High School and Town administrators to respond promptly and without bias to all Student Leadership Council requests and resolutions;
8. *Decides* to make all possible efforts in order to ensure Morning Meeting is reinstated as quickly as possible to the Ledyard High School daily schedule;
9. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter, revisit the situation in no more than 15 days from today, and to take further steps as may be required or deemed necessary by the Student Leadership Council.

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