

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

I have prepared this report of events and explanations on January 22 as Barack Obama has become president. He referred often in his inaugural speech to the "difficult choices" that the country faces, and choices have become more difficult not only at the national and state levels but also at the local level in this time of economic recession.

That is the case in Lebanon where the school district is faced with the challenge of replacing or modernizing its old schools while tightening its annual operating budget. Lebanon has three school buildings that are more than a century old and another that is more than eighty years old, and the decisions about those buildings would be difficult under optimal circumstances. However, the issues about those buildings have been rendered more complex and troublesome by the pressures of the recession. Consequently, the decision making has become more daunting, but the issues still demand resolution.

In this report, therefore, I will endeavor to present information about our buildings and our school district finances in preparation for the February 7 public meeting and the March 10 voting. Although the School Board conducts its business and its decision making in public, the public discussions do not always present information and issues in a readily understandable or enlightening manner and format. I recognize the need here for clarity about what the School Board and administration do know as well as what we do not know. I hope that information and clarity will be useful in explaining the Board's decisions and recommendations.

Lebanon Junior High School Project

The School Board will ask for public approval of its proposal to construct a new middle school for grades 5-8 on the Moulton property site on Route 4 at a cost of \$24.9 million. The district would be eligible to receive about \$9 million of state building aid for the project. If the proposal is approved, then construction of the new building would begin this summer with a projected opening of January of 2011. Because the project involves the issuance of bonds, it must be approved by 60% of the March voters in order for it to proceed.

The building will include about 100,000 square feet on two floors, and it will include a full gym with a stage opening into it, a library, a computer room, and a cafeteria as well as classroom space for about 550 students. The site of approximately 30 acres is large enough to accommodate three full-sized athletic playing fields. There is a detailed description of the project elsewhere in this Annual Report.

The need to replace or to extensively renovate the junior high school building on Bank Street has been under consideration in Lebanon for decades; I possess reports describing recommendations to address needs of the facility that date back to 1971 and even to 1950. The recent planning became serious, however, in March of 2007 when the public voters approved a \$200,000 allocation for planning money for a replacement or renovation project. During the subsequent planning, the School Board became convinced that the current building was educationally inadequate because it lacked sufficient classroom space as well as appropriate commons areas (e.g. gymnasium, library). Moreover, the building violated several fire and safety codes (e.g. it lacked a full sprinkler system) that were likely to become serious problems in upcoming years.

In response to those conclusions about inadequacy and violations, the School Board proposed to construct a new building for grades 7-8 at the Bank Street site. The Board concluded that any project that involved the significant renovation of the current building was unwise. Any renovation would have to be so extensive as to become prohibitively expensive. Moreover, at that time the State Education Department was discouraging extensive renovation projects of old buildings. Unable at that time to find a suitable piece of new property for a building, the School Board decided to propose a new building on the same site at a cost of \$20.9 million.

However, although that proposal garnered 55% of the vote in the March 2008 voting, that total was not sufficient to meet the 60% standard required for passage. Following a formal public survey of last spring, the School Board became convinced that the criticisms of the proposal focused on the small size of the Bank Street property and on the limitations of the scale of the building in accommodating the long-term needs of the district. Also, following the March vote, two sets of events transpired that affected the subsequent proposals for a new school.

First, a representative of the Moulton family contacted the school district administration to state that the family's company would consider selling a tract of approximately 30 acres to the school district with the expectation that it could accommodate a new building. This was the first time that a sizable piece of land within range of the downtown area and city utilities had become available to the school district for what seemed to be a reasonable price. The offer enabled the School Board for the first time to consider building a new school on a new piece of land. The property would be made available to the school district through the summer with the need for a decision in the early fall.

Second, the State Board of Education in June refused to approve the current junior high building because of multiple fire and safety code violations. During a follow-up visit to the building and an appearance at a Lebanon City Council meeting, members of the State Board expressed their strong dissatisfaction with the building in general and their grave reservations about approving the building when they vote again in June 2009. However, the members of the State Board and the state and local fire officials involved agreed to permit the district to continue to use the building during the 2008-09 school year with the district's promise to install a full sprinkler system as quickly as possible.

Those two sets of events shaped the development of the next proposal and they pressed a note of urgency onto the planning. The School Board and administration continued planning through the summer, and they obtained the approval of a state court judge to hold a special public vote in October on both the purchase of the property and the proposal to build a new school on the property. The School Board added grade six to the school's configuration with the expectation that the addition was consistent with the middle school model and with the district's long term plans that eventually included a new elementary school.

However, the proposal to construct a new school again failed despite garnering 58% of the public vote in October. Although there had been prolonged debates about the value of the Moulton property, its accessibility to pedestrians, and possible restrictions on its use, the article to purchase the property for a price of \$1.2 million gained 55% of the vote and passed. As a budget allocation, the purchase proposal only needed a simple

majority for passage. The district now possessed land, but it still lacked approval for a building project.

In its meetings immediately following the October vote, the School Board concluded that (a) the vote was close enough to passage to maintain the essential aspects of the proposal, and (b) it would add the 5th grade to the new school design. The addition of 5th grade made the proposal more cost effective insofar as students could be added at the cost only of adding classrooms (and not more commons space). It also entailed benefits for the long-term plans of the district because it would enable Seminary Hill School to close as well as School Street and Sacred Heart Public School. (The latter two properties would be sold, and the former would be retained for use as a community facility.) The completion of the grade alignments no longer would be dependent on the eventual construction of an elementary school although the Bank Street site would remain available for any subsequent school construction project.

The Board and administration concluded that the addition of 5th grade was consistent with the educational model for a middle school after visiting middle schools in Belmont and Gilford that included 5th grades. Both schools worked efficiently although they relied on different grouping and scheduling models, and they provided certain advantages in enabling the 6th grades to match up with the 5th grades. There were also significant benefits in curriculum and professional development that seemed to be involved with the addition of 5th grade. Finally, it would become possible for a student to complete his or her entire school career in Lebanon by attending only three school buildings and, therefore, to make only two sets of transitions across schools.

However, just as the School Board became convinced of the benefits of the grade 5-8 model for a new building proposal, three more sets of events transpired that have raised new questions and problems for the proposal. I frame each of the set of events within a question as follows:

What is the status of the ownership of the property on Route 4? Following the legal closing for the property on November 7 that gave the ownership of the property to the school district, one of the banks that held mortgages on the property, the First Tennessee Bank, claimed that it had been misled by the sellers about the purchase price. It then filed suit against the sellers, and it refused to release the mortgages that it held on the property with the statement that it would have insisted on receiving more money from the purchase than it actually received. The school district has now filed a petition demanding that the bank release the mortgages because the bank had agreed upon a settlement document and it has received the money stipulated in the settlement. The case was heard in Grafton County Court on January 21, and the district is awaiting a decision as this report is written.

Although the school district does now own the property and is probably empowered to use it, the district cannot state right now that all the issues regarding the purchase are resolved.

What is the state's position on closing the junior high school? The installation of the balance of the sprinkler system commenced in the late fall, and the work is nearly completed as January ends. Because of that work, the state fire marshal, William

Degnan, has declared that the building is in substantial compliance with the state fire codes. The local fire chief, Chris Christopolous, has agreed with that statement.

Nonetheless, the State Board of Education has issued no further statements about the building since its consensual statements of disapproval last summer, and I anticipate no statement from the Board until the school's approval status is discussed again in June. It is uncertain as to whether or not the State Board has the authority to close the school if the fire officials determine that the building complies with their codes. It is possible that the State Board could withhold state and federal funding from a school that operates in a non-approved building. Lebanon receives about \$1 million in state and federal aid for the junior high school annually.

The administration had prepared a "relocation" plan for use in the event that the junior high school building were to be closed next year. The plan would place students in the following schools:

High School – All grade 9-12 students.

Hanover Street School – All grade 6-8 students.

Seminary Hill School – All grade 4-5 students.

Mt. Lebanon School – West Lebanon grade K-3 students

Sacred Heart and School Street Schools – Lebanon grade K-3 students.

I do not expect that we will need to utilize this relocation plan, but we remain prepared to do so if it becomes necessary. Similarly, I do not suggest that the State Board's dissatisfaction with the current building should serve as a threat compelling action, but I do hope that its opinions and comments will be considered publicly in supporting the arguments for the need for a new school building.

(Note that the administration has the intention of replacing and repairing the bleachers and stairways in the junior high gym if it becomes likely that the building can be used next year. The administration has already begun those discussions with the local fire officials with some hope that the work could even be completed this winter if the scale of the work is appropriate and some assistance can be obtained.)

Given the state of the economy, why can't we renovate the current junior high school building for continued use for grades 7 and 8? Any plan to continue on the Bank Street site would require the addition of substantial new space, probably for the common areas like a gym and cafeteria, and the complete renovation of the existing space. The March 2008 proposal for a new school for grade 7-8 included more than 80,000 square feet of space; the current junior high facility has about 45,000 square feet. The current building falls woefully short of meeting safety and construction codes standards, including some pertaining to the very foundation of the building, and all of those standards would have to be met in a renovation project. The estimated cost of that work has approached \$20 - \$22 million for a facility for two grades that would sit on a site that is about 50% of the minimum size that is now required. A project that would accommodate only grades 7 and 8 would also require a correspondingly larger new elementary school in the near future in order to address the long term needs of the district.

The School Board has compared that project cost with that of a \$24.9 million cost for four grades on a site that addresses all space, traffic, and parking problems, and it decided to continue with its support for the new building proposal.

Despite these problems and uncertainties, there are three sets of factors that I hope can be persuasive in gaining support for a new school building on the Route 4 property:

Boost the local economy by putting local companies and workers back to work. The School Board recently chose Trumbull-Nelson Construction Company as the construction manager for the project in great part out of the belief that the project should involve local companies and workers. In the effort to involve local sub-contractors, a job fair for the project will be held on Saturday, January 31 at the high school at which time local workers will be able to learn more about the project and to state their hopes to be included.

In a recession economy, projects involving public infrastructure become crucial in the steps toward a recovery. President Obama, of course, is preparing a bill that will promote just that. The School Board and administration hope that the project for a new school can be seen in that manner by providing a stimulus for the local economy.

Emphasize the offsets that will mitigate the tax impact of the project. The School Board has proposed a budget for fiscal year 2010 that will decrease the tax rate by approximately 37 cents on \$1000 of evaluated property. In 2011 the only remaining debt that the school district currently supports (from the high school science labs and Hanover Street School gym) will be terminated and another 40 cents will come off the tax rate. Those offsets total 77 cents toward the approximate \$1.10 that the building project would impose on the tax rate at the start. Because the tax impact dwindles each year over the years of the bond to about 40 cents at the end, the offsets would more than cover the bond costs by the mid-point at ten years.

Include energy efficiencies and savings wherever possible. The School Board has expressed its commitment to constructing an energy-efficient building, and the criteria of energy expertise was an important consideration in the evaluation of potential construction managers. The district has made the commitment to apply the Northeast Collaborative for High-Performance Schools Protocol to the design and construction of the building, and it is still considering application for LEED certification. The building will feature a biomass heating system as well as a tight thermal envelope (R25 for walls, R40 for the roof), energy-efficient lighting, and low-flow water systems. The estimated cost for heating the building will be 10 cents per square foot annually.

School District Budget and School Closings

The School Board and district administration have proposed a general fund budget of \$31,055,850 for fiscal year 2010. The budget figure represents a ***decrease of \$134,600*** from the budget for the current year. The warrant article for the budget, though, lists the final budget figure of 32,651,355. That figure adds the various federal and special funds of about \$1.6 million that the district receives and which require no local tax levies. By law, the district must request public approval to expend those funds as well.

The proposed budget also projects increases in two revenue sources. First, the tuition account has been increased by about \$200,000 to reflect the current year's income.

The administration typically lists that income conservatively by listing the previous year's figure instead of an estimated amount. Also, the state aid account has been increased by about \$600,000. According to the new formula for state aid that the New Hampshire legislature has adopted, Lebanon would expect to receive as much as \$800,000 more in state adequacy aid because of its populations of special education students, non-English speaking students, and free-and-reduced lunch students. Because of the state budget difficulties, however, it appears unlikely that Lebanon will receive that full amount, and so the administration has listed a lower figure based on its best projections of how the legislature will proceed.

The combination of lower expenditures and increased revenues produces a cut in the projected tax rate of 40 cents per \$1000 of evaluated property.

The proposed budget with a reduction in expenditures has been prepared in great part as a response to the economic recession and its pressure on taxes. The proposal includes the interrelated closings of the two small elementary schools in Lebanon, School Street and Sacred Heart Public Schools, and an adjustment in elementary class sizes from the 11-16 students per classroom range to one of 17-19. Finally, the budget proposal also recognizes that the Board is bringing forward two other proposals for expenditures, one for the collective bargaining agreement with the support staff and the other for the \$24.9 million project for a new middle school.

The School Board began its budget review in early December with a thorough examination of all of the district's expenditure accounts with the intention of paring the budget as much as possible. It essentially ordered that all non-personnel accounts be reduced to figures that matched or lowered the current levels, and it eliminated the inclusion of any new programming. Still, the overall budget level was pressed by personnel cost increases of about 3% overall based on contracted salary increases and about 1% from the state mandated increase in district contributions to the state retirement system.

By the time of the holiday break the Board was faced with two options if it wanted to reduce the budget to one with no increase in expenditures: (a) close the two small schools and reduce the elementary staffing levels, or (b) spread the reductions including the staff cuts across the district. Although the latter option could have provided a level-funded budget, only the former option enables the budget to be reduced. Both options had been considered briefly earlier in the review process, but it was not until the Board returned in January that the need for a decision became imperative.

At a meeting in early January, a majority of Board members expressed the preference for the first option focusing on the closing of the two schools. The Board has acknowledged for at least a couple of years that it would close the two schools as part of any long-term plan. Although they serve their local neighborhoods commendably, they lack many of the facilities that the Board and administration desire in any school now, and they are very inefficient cost-wise. Lebanon's per pupil cost for its elementary schools exceeds \$18,000 whereas the state average for elementary pupils is about \$11,000. Most of that difference is attributable to the operation of the small schools.

Moreover, Lebanon's elementary enrollment has dropped substantially in the last decade, and the district has not made a corresponding adjustment in its staffing levels. Lebanon's enrollment for grades K-6 has dropped by about 200 students (about 20%) in the past ten years, and the district has dropped a few teaching spots through retirements

during that time. However, the class size range has dropped to 11-16 students, and that has been costly.

The School Board had sought to make an adjustment in those numbers, and the economic recession made an adjustment necessary. As long as students were distributed across three schools, it was nearly impossible to adjust class sizes appropriately. Splitting students in two elementary students across town makes the ratios much more efficient; classroom sizes would range from 16 to 19. The consolidation plan that is implied by the proposed budget would place elementary students in the following buildings:

Hanover Street School – Lebanon students, grades K-4
Mt. Lebanon School – West Lebanon students, grades K-4
Seminary Hill School – all students, grades 5-6

If a new middle school were to be constructed in the next two years, then the Seminary Hill students from grades 5 and 6 would go to the new school and Seminary Hill would be closed as well. The School Street School and Sacred Heart Public School properties would probably be sold, and the Seminary Hill School facility would probably be retained for community use.

The major changes in the proposed budget are in the personnel lines that would be affected by the school closings, and there are as many as twenty staff spots that could be affected totaling almost \$1 million. Fortunately, most of the reductions can be accomplished through attrition, i.e. retirements and departures that the district already anticipates. The specific areas affected are the following:

Classroom Teachers. Seven classroom teacher spots for grades 1-6 would be eliminated thereby reducing the number of teachers from 43 to 36. Two of the reductions will be made through anticipated retirements, two through departures from the district, and three more through additional retirements of teachers who have recently asked to retire in June 2009 because of benefits from the state system.

Specialists. Four more positions would be cut, i.e. the world language teacher, a physical education teacher, a part-time media specialist, and a reading teacher. The last of those positions will be covered by a retirement, and a physical education teacher has asked for a sabbatical leave for a year. The world language position will probably be eliminated for one or two years, and the teacher may likely remain in the district in another position. It appears that that can be accomplished without the loss of any individual's job. The media generalist at this time would be laid off through a reduction in force (RIF).

Office staff. Two secretarial positions and a health aide's position are potentially impacted. One other secretary in the district will be retiring, but the other position is faced with a RIF. The aide will probably stay on in some other capacity. There also will be an excess principal's position in the district. The collective bargaining agreement limits our options regarding the disposition of administrators, but I expect that there will be a savings from this situation as well.

Support staff. With the elimination of several classroom settings, there will be a reduction in four classroom aide positions. Once again, though, I anticipate that the positions will be cut but that jobs will be available for those individuals. With the closing of two schools, two custodial positions would be affected. There is already one unfilled position in the district that will be frozen. The other position might be affected by a RIF, but it is more likely that a job will be available for the individual.

This option concentrates on the elementary schools. However, 1.5 administrative positions have been cut from the high school. The director of guidance is retiring at the end of the school year, and that position will be filled with a counselor. It will not be considered to be an administrative spot. Also, the half-time Director of Curriculum's position has been cut. The high school administration now will include the principal, two assistant principals, and an athletic director.

Changes in teaching positions at the high school and junior high school have not been made in this budget proposal. Changes now would result in lay-offs that would cost jobs and would produce series of changes that would produce unwanted consequences. I expect that some changes in personnel at those schools will take place before the opening of the next year, but they are not contained in this current budget proposal.

All of the other budget accounts have been effectively level-funded from the current year. The one other change of significance is the addition of a new English Language Learner teacher to serve the one segment of the district's enrollment that has continually increased its non-English speaking students.

If the budget proposal is defeated, then the district would utilize a default budget for next year. The default figure is set at \$33,614,121 which is about \$960,000 more than the proposed budget. The default budget is essentially a status quo budget; it is determined by taking the current year's expenditure, subtracting any one-year expenditures (e.g. the property purchase), and adding any contractually required increases (e.g. salary increases). The default budget, therefore, does not include the staff reductions that are included in the proposed budget.

Legally, the default budget sets a dollar figure for expenditures; it does not mandate decisions about programming. The School Board, for example, is still empowered to make decisions about buildings, programming, and staffing even if its budget recommendation is rejected in the voting. At the time of this report, the Board had made no further decisions about the implications of the default budget.

District Meeting and Voting

The first session of the Lebanon School District meeting, the Deliberative Session, will take place on Saturday, February 7, 2009, at 9:00 AM at Lebanon High School. The voters who attend that session may discuss the proposed warrant articles, including the proposed budget for fiscal year 2010, and they may amend any articles that are not prescribed by law. For example, the public can vote to amend the amount proposed for the operating budget or a bond issue, but the voters cannot change the amount that is set for the default budget or for a labor contract.

The second session, the Public Voting by ballot, will occur on Tuesday, March 10, 2009, in all-day voting at the three polling places in the city. All of the articles will be voted on by ballot, and five seats on the Lebanon School Board will be filled.

Warrant Articles

The warrant this year consists of seven articles presented by the Lebanon School Board.

Article 1 lists the five seats on the School Board that are open for election this year. Three of the seats are for full three-year terms, i.e. the seats currently held by Jeff Peavey, Hank Tenney, and Beth White. There are also two seats for shorter terms that are open for election; they are seats for which members were appointed by the Board to fill vacancies. Susan Donnelly currently holds a two-year seat that will be open for election, and Ellen Dijkman Dulkes holds a seat with a one-year term.

There will be three pools of candidates on the ballot, i.e. one for the three three-year seats, one for the two-year seat, and one for the one-year seat. Candidates who are interested in any of the positions may file for election by completing the nomination procedures with the district clerk, Mary Cuthbertson, at the SAU office building between the dates of January 27 and February 11.

Article 2 requests voter approval for the issuance of bonds totaling up to \$24,900,000 for the construction of a new middle school for grades 5-8. The district will be eligible to receive approximately \$9 million in state reimbursement for this project. As a bond issue, this article must be approved by 60% of the vote for passage. *The tax impact of this project would range from a maximum of \$1.10 in year 2010-11 to \$0.48 in the final year of 2029-2030.*

Article 3 is the main budget proposal recommended by the School Board. It proposes a total operating budget of \$32,651,355. The figure listed in the article is the sum of the general fund budget of operating expenses (\$31,055,850) plus the expected grants that the district expects to receive for general and special education, food service, drivers' education, and adult education (approximately \$1.6 million). *The tax impact of the proposed budget would be a decrease of 40 cents on the tax rate.* Note that the grant funds from the state and federal governments have no impact on the tax rate. The district simply receives and spends those funds.

The default budget has been set at \$33,614,121; this is the figure that would become operative if the proposed budget were rejected in the voting. This figure is derived from the current year's budget minus any one-year expenses (e.g. the property purchase) and plus any contractually-required increases (e.g. salaries for teacher contracts). This figure is almost \$1 million more than the proposed budget primarily because it does not include the staffing reductions that are included in the proposed budget. *The default budget would result in a tax decrease of about 10 cents.*

Article 4 requests public approval of the costs associated with the negotiated collective bargaining agreement between the Lebanon School Board and the Lebanon Support Staff which represents para-educators, custodians, and maintenance workers throughout the district. The agreement covers the three-year period from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2012, and voters are asked to cover the cost increases for all three years of the contract.

The costs cited in the article are the estimated increases in salaries, salary-related benefits, and other cost increases that would result from the implementation of the new contract. (The increases for health and dental insurance are already included in the general fund budget because those increases will take effect regardless of the status of the

new contract.) The new agreement stipulates annual salary increases of 1.5%, 2.0%, and 2.0% plus 35 cent-per-hour steps for the approximately 100 members of the support staff group.

The approval of this article would appropriate \$123,507 in fiscal year 2010 for cost increases. *That cost would add about 7 cents to the tax rate.*

Article 5 would add up to \$385,000 of year-end surplus funds into the district's Capital Reserve Fund for the repair and renovation of its school buildings. Jim Fenn, the district's business manager, has compiled a long-term Capital Improvement Plan that the School Board has approved as a schedule with which to address the district's building repairs and needs. Those projects are funded each year with a combination of budget and Capital Reserve Fund expenditures. The annual allocations from warrant articles have funded the Capital Reserve tasks.

The money specified in this article would be added to the fund if the district has a surplus of more than \$250,000 at the end of the current fiscal year. The first \$250,000 of any surplus will be set against next year's tax rate. The next \$385,000, if the surplus is that large, would be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund. *This article has no direct impact on the tax rate.*

Article 6 establishes the annual salaries for district officers. The district has paid annual salaries to its officers and School Board members for the past nine years. The School Board this year, though, has eliminated the salaries for its members aside from continuing a payment to the Board Chair, and so the remaining salaries total \$6,085. The salaries must be approved by public vote, and they are not included in the base budget. *The tax impact of this article would be less than one cent on the tax rate.*

Article 7 is a petitioned article that was received by the School Board. The petition was prepared by the Granite State Fair Tax Coalition and signed by twenty-five registered Lebanon voters. It asks for voter approval of a statement that would essentially "reject" the "pledge for no new taxes" by state officials. The petition further requests that the statement be forwarded to various state officials if it is approved. The School Board has expressed no opinion on this article.

Conclusion

Amidst the near-constant discussions about buildings and budgets, daily life and business has continued in the Lebanon schools with numerous and notable successes and highlights. The state test scores that were recently received were generally positive with the high school returning to its status as one of the best-performing schools in the state. The Lebanon High School golf team led by Steve Moretti and Ethan Gage won the state championship in October by solidly outplaying all of its opponents including its archrival, Hanover. Senior Emilee Martin became the eleventh Lebanon hockey player, and the second woman, in the school's history to score 100 points in a career. Mount Lebanon's physical education teacher, Amy Bielunis, was named the New Hampshire Teacher of the Year, and Deb Springhorn from Lebanon High School was named as a winner of the Distinguished Teacher Award from Yale University.

There were two additional situations that were less competitive or measurable but notable, nonetheless, in representing the district. I attended a public meeting in Grantham in early January at which the Grantham School Board asked to discuss their district's continuing relationship with Lebanon. Following the Board's outlining of the question,

the first speaker who rose immediately praised the opportunities her son had enjoyed at Lebanon Junior High School. In particular, she praised the long-time athletic director and teacher there, Linda Preston. The speaker's son was not a skilled athlete but he had enjoyed playing at the school, and Linda had heightened that enjoyment immeasurably by simply sending him a hand-written note congratulating him on some achievement, however modest, that he had recently enjoyed. The opportunity to enjoy the activities was wonderful, the speaker concluded, but the recognition of his modest accomplishment by Linda made it all truly special. Subsequently, speaker after speaker spoke highly of their district's association with Lebanon.

Finally, the Hanover and Lebanon girls recently played a high school basketball game that featured the two remaining undefeated teams in the state's Class I standings. However, the importance of the game and the rivalry evaporated when the father of the one of Hanover players suffered a heart incident that required immediate medical attention. The game stopped (and was postponed), the gym evacuated, and assistance was rendered by the EMT at the game. The gentleman was rushed to the hospital where he recovered satisfactorily in the next few days.

Many parties earned praise for their conduct, and the incident, of course, ended positively. However, one young man, a Lebanon High School senior named Jeremy LaBombard, responded with actions that have been described as "heroic" and "valiant." As a young man who has had his own EMT training, he responded to the emergency by rushing to offer assistance, securing the AED devices that were available, and directing others to certain tasks. Jeremy can remain proud that he responded nobly in a moment of crisis, and Lebanon can be proud that one of its own young men was capable of doing so.