

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOARD OF
EDUCATION MEETING

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
January 21, 2010

The regular Board of Education meeting for January was held on Thursday, January 21, 2010 in the Media Center of the Deep River Elementary School.

Present: The following Board members were present: Gale Dilger, Liz-Tracy Montecalvo (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Christine Daniels, K.C. Nelson-Oliveria, Arthur Robbins, Mark Malcarne, and Lauri Wichtowski.

Absent: Dave Berardis, Jim Olson

Administration Present: Dr. Jack Pietrick, Principal, Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent, Ms. Diane Dugas, Asst. Superintendent and Garth Sawyer, Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was call to order by Christine Daniels at 7:03 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes from November 19, 2009 meeting and Accounts Payable Report

Laurie Wichtowski made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Gale Dilger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Christine Daniels presented to Lori Lenz a token of appreciation for her 10 years of work on the BOE and also expressed appreciation for the work of Gene Labonte.

Lori Lenz thanked the BOE and commented that the best part of being on the BOE is working with fellow board members as well as the Administration. She encouraged board members to attend Sixth Grade Night at the end of the year to get a full appreciation of why the work of the BOE is so important.

Christine Daniels welcomed the public and thanked them for attending the meeting.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

None.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

Dr. Pietrick introduced Linsey and Caitlin Lent to present this evening's Principal's Report.

Linsey and Katelyn are 5th grade students. Recent events at DRES include:

- * November 19, 2009 – Lock Down Drill – state troopers present – the next drill will be unannounced and will take place in February.
- * Mitten Drive – facilitated by Ms. Liberatore – collected 174 pairs of mittens, hats and scarves – distributed to the Deep River Youth and Family organization.
- * Rotary – The third graders received Rotary's annual donation of dictionaries – School participated with Rotary to purchase food for needy families at Thanksgiving – hosted Pajama Day - \$171.00 collected.
- * Lunch Buddies program with 6th grade students and 2nd grade students. Every Monday, these grade levels sit together at lunch. An ice cream party is scheduled for the end of the year.
- * Ms. Casbo directed the Toys for Tots program and collected gifts for 8 area families.
- * 1/20/10 - Geography Bee – grades fourth through six – Grayson Kohary, 5th grader won for the second year in a row.
- * Peer Mediator Program – 6th grade students work to resolve conflicts and create Bully Free Classrooms
- * Science Buddies - 5th grade is paired with a school in Middletown. The children have fun interacting and comparing similarities and differences.
- * Cookie platoon – school participating in the mission to get America baking cookies for our troops/veterans.

The BOE thanked the girls for their excellent presentation.

Early Retirement

Dr. Levy distributed information pertaining to a retirement incentive plan for certified teachers. Dr. Levy reported that a retirement package was offered to teachers 5 years ago. Recently, a number of teachers have expressed interest in retiring but are unable to do so because of medical insurance costs. By offering a retirement package, the Board can realize savings and the teachers can benefit by retiring. The Administration, along

with council has reviewed the proposal and Dr. Levy is requesting that the DRES BOE approve the proposal presented.

Dr. Levy reported that the program was well received by the teachers and 22 teachers throughout the District expressed interest in the plan. She continued that these veteran teachers are excellent and our children have benefited from their years of service. She added that all three Selectmen also support the plan

Garth Sawyer commented that based on enrollment figures, DRES would not need to replace one potential retiring teacher. Garth continued that the Administration has the ability to chart the savings, over time, to the district as a result of the retirement package.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to offer early retirement incentive package, as presented to the Board, to all teachers eligible for retirement under the State of Connecticut Teacher's Retirement Board requirements, with all applications due in hand, at central office, no later than February 26, 2010 at 4:00p.m.

REPORTS

Budget Status Report

Garth Sawyer distributed the Deep River District Budget Status Report. The BOE reviewed same.

Garth reported that due to unanticipated Special Education costs, he anticipates a year end deficit. Currently, the accounts are being monitored to determine a solution. Garth will keep the BOE informed as developments arise.

Mark Malcarne suggested budgeting for Unanticipated Special Education costs. Christine Daniels commented that it is difficult to budget for special education as the cost is uncertain. She favored continued communication between the school and the BOF/BOS.

Dr. Levy reported on the positive communication with the Boards of Finance, Selectmen and Education. This communication will aid if/when we need to discuss potential out of district placement and additional money. She felt that the Boards would support additional requests.

Garth Sawyer briefly discussed the uncertainty of ECS reimbursements and reported that this issue will be discussed/reviewed again in March. He continued that the Budget Status Report will go to the BOS and BOF.

Lauri Wichtowski commented that the E-Script program at Adam's Supermarket has been beneficial to the school. Dr. Pietrick responded that this money goes to the PTO and that DRES was the top earner in New England.

Cafeteria

No Cafeteria Report was available at this time. Garth Sawyer reported that the current \$2,000 subsidy will be sufficient this year.

The increase in the milk prices will take effect September 2010.

Policy

KC Nelson-Oliveria and Liz Tracy Montecalvo reported that the Policy Committee met and discussed the Homeschool Policy. This policy will be reviewed again at the Joint BOE meeting. The Policy Committee recommends the Joint BOE approve the policy.

Curriculum

Lauri Wichtowski reported that the High School Science Curriculum was presented to the Curriculum Committee including on-line demonstrations of assessments, data and graphs on the Performance Pathways program.

Finance – The Finance Committee has a meeting scheduled for January 26, 2010.

Supervision District

The Supervision District has elected officers including Linda Hall (Secretary/Treasurer) Lon Seidman (Vice Chair) and Christine Daniels (Chair).

The Supervision District has had 3 budget workshops and voted to approve the Supervision Budget. The final budget figure is \$5,838,307.00 (3.99%) and Deep River's increase is \$22,000.00.

The Supervision District also voted to pass the Retirement Plan as presented this evening.

Facilities

Mark Malcarne reported that the Facilities Committee has been meeting to discuss the extensive roof issues throughout the school. The Committee has also toured the building along with Dick Smith.

Because of the roof leaks there has been significant flooding and damage throughout the school including Ms. Bennet's room, book room (resulting in \$1,200 worth of ruined books), equipment room and library (storage room). Dick Smith has met with local roofers and obtained a design for a pitched roof.

Dr. Pietrick reported that the Fire Department removed snow from the roof. At that time, Dick Smith observed that previous roof work was done incorrectly and there are structural concerns with the roof.

The Facilities Committee along with Dick Smith plan to hire a consultant to review and make roof recommendations.

The BOE discussed potential recourse with the previous roofer. Christine Daniels commented that the town has been pursuing same with the shingle company and has received a small settlement. However, to pursue further would cost more money as any warranty would need to be prorated for the 12 year old roof.

Christine Daniels reported that she has met with Dick Smith to establish procedures for building issues as well as a list of preferred town contractors. They also discussed sharing larger equipment (waxer, carpet cleaner, etc.).

Lauri Wichtowski left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Mark Malcarne made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. KC Nelson-Oliveria seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting resumed at 8:28 p.m.

Gale Dilger left the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Asst. Super Report

Ms. Dugas discussed that it was a busy month for Professional Development in the district. In January, we implemented three Language Arts units. Grades 4-6 are working on the DRA and refining students reading levels. Ms. Dugas is very happy with the progress she has seen. On Tuesday, January 19, 2010, and at the Professional Development in May, we will be helping teams to use protocols to look at student's strengths and weakness with a 5 step process to give teachers real time data. Performance Pathways is revising assessment calendars to turn reports around at a quicker rate to refine the data. Ms. Dugas continues to review classroom benchmark data which is a K-12 initiative.

Superintendent's Report

District Report

Dr. Levy reported on her continual contact with Mary Jane Engle from the Health District. On February 5, 2010 an H1N1 Clinic will be held at Valley. Permission forms will be sent home to students. Once signed, the student will be given the H1N1 vaccine during the school day. The clinic will be open to staff members as well. After school

hours, the clinic will be open to the public. The Health District will provide the nursing staff for the clinic.

Dr. Levy was happy to report that she recently joined the Deep River Rotary Club and looks forward to inviting the Rotary to tour the school.

Dr. Levy reported that the state of Connecticut will not receive Race to the Top Federal Grant monies in the first round; however, there is another opportunity for these funds in June. Dr. Levy continued that there are significant “strings” attached to the money; the impact of which is unclear. All of the local Superintendents recommend waiting for more details before pursuing the grant.

On February 22nd, at the Joint Board Meeting, Dr. Joe Woods will present information pertaining to the unification of the Region 4 elementary schools. The Administrators of the schools and the town’s First Selectmen will be invited. The district has held workshops for new Board Members. Dr. Levy would also like to offer it to existing Board Members. During this workshop, attendees were able to create a handbook discussing legalities and the ethical reasons why we do things.

On February 24, 2010, the Central Office will host an Open House to showcase student work and the celebrate achievements. Bob’s Discount Furniture donated \$1,500 toward furniture for the area.

Proposed DRES 2010/11 Budget

Dr. Levy gave a more detailed overview of the budget. She wants the Board to absorb the information and to send Garth or herself any questions no later than two days before the next budget workshop. The Budget will be reviewed and discussed in detail at the budget workshops. The first budget workshop is scheduled for 2/11/10.

Dr. Levy stressed that the ARRA funds will not be available after June 30, 2011. This results in a 2% increase in the budget at that time.

Dr. Levy reported that the union filed a grievance for cutting the Library Para during last year’s budget season. She continued that this position should be reinstated as the attorneys advised we would not win if the case went to arbitration.

Stipended Grade Level Teacher Coordinators

This is a grant funded project. Dr. Pietrick stated that the goal is to have a team leader appointed for every grade level team. This person would be a leader among her peers, as well as a liaison between her colleagues and school administrators. This person would be responsible for moving initiatives and understanding the process and the data driven initiatives. This position will help us to be a collaborative team which will allow our teams and school growth. The stipend for this is position will give compensation for the additional time needed to complete these tasks.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski