

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2013

Approved 1/23/2013

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, January 9, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Library/Media Center.

Present were: Mr. Simone, Chairperson; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Messrs. Bongiorno, Falcetti, Katzin, Shuhi, and Waugh.

Also present were: Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Lathrop; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Murphy; Ms. Turner; Ms. Kubisek; and members of the public.

Approve Minutes

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve the minutes of regular meeting December 12, 2012 with the following correction on page 3083 under public comment, Ms. Carr, end sentence at the word "cast."

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the minutes of special meeting December 20, 2013.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Ms. Carr abstained.

Approve Payment of Invoices

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the payment of invoices for 2012-2013 as required.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Mr. Simone abstained.

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC – no report.
PTO – Ms. Moore reported: Thank you to Dr. Wheeler and STPC for cohosting a public forum on school safety to be held next week.
- b. Natalie Wihbey reported on the student council activities at the high school.
- c. Other public comment:
 - Ms. Moore commented on the recommendation from the Facilities and Technology Committee to endorse a hybrid proposal for technology which she described as a visionary approach.

- d. Correspondence:
 - Offer from CABE to have a web-based server maintain records of meetings.
 - Information from Ed Connection Board of Directors to be shared with Board members. (Ms. Carr and Mr. Waugh Board liaisons).
- e. Administrators Reports
 - Ms. Della Volpe – no report.
 - Ms. Murphy – no report.
 - Ms. Turner – no report.

Superintendent's Report

- a. Information – updated Tenure list.
- b. Letters of intent to retire: Cynthia Zeller; Kathleen Jones; Elizabeth Connor; Phillip Fowler; Diane Lauretano; Judith Wheeler; Delean Goldsmith; and Deborah Dove – fine professionals that have devoted hundreds of years of service to the students of Litchfield.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to accept the retirements as presented from Cynthia Zeller; Kathleen Jones; Elizabeth Connor; Phillip Fowler; Diane Lauretano; Judith Wheeler; Delean Goldsmith; and Deborah Dove.

Board members thanked all the teachers for their years of dedication and service and who went above and beyond what Board members could have hoped. Formal exit interviews will be conducted later in the year by Dr. Wheeler, the principal, coordinator; whomever the retiree feels comfortable talking to.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

- c. Budget related staffing proposal will be discussed at the Curriculum, Programs and Personnel meeting Thursday, October 10th.
- d. PD activities today: C.S. – curriculum and reading instruction. L.I.S. – all content areas developed units of study. H.S. technology workshops – very enthusiastic; peer teaching. Para professionals – use of I-Pad communication application.
- e. Financial Statement distributed- Mr. Lathrop reported – transfer of funds to town for maintenance and custodial function completed.
- f. State wide school safety symposium – held Monday; response time; preparedness; receivers; building design strategies; policy implications; emergency response procedures; management; troopers involved; lockdown practice yesterday at L.I.S.; town agencies; safety forum for next Monday sponsored by PTO and STPC; overview to parents; what have in place; seek input; answer questions; no decisions to be made; invitation for parent and adult members of the community to attend.
- g. Trooper Holms comments: lockdown drills; work with staff; work closely with principals; report back to Board if needed; and liability issues.

Board members discussed: need to improve security; possible audit conducted on security issues; checks and balances; policy with lights, shades and doors locked; inventory done by Mr. Lathrop; identify needs; door appliances needed; align procedures with the three buildings; procedures to release children to parents; safe schools assessment; concerns with children being frightened with unannounced drill; need for good practice; response plan shouldn't be discussed publicly; weakness in procedures; first responders; and need to revisit with resident trooper.

Old Business

- a. Honor Roll Criteria – Dr. Wheeler presented the recommendation from the Curriculum, Programs and Personnel Committee.

Board members discussed: almost half the students make H.R.; possibly raise GPA and eliminate low grade; need to have benefit being in high honors classes; unweighted GPA on H.R.; 3 levels now, collapse into 2 levels; strategic plan for graduates; weighted grades for harder classes; weighted GPA not as many on the H.R.; possible straight B; class standing for AP classes; number of students not the criteria but more rigor needed in classes; instruction needs to be rigorous; possible reserve students who have a high weighted GPA for outstanding honors – students with straight A in honors classes for honor roll; students who work their hardest and are not in high honors classes deserve recognition; AP students get recognized with class rank; leave unweighted gives everyone a fair shot with all levels given a chance to be recognized; possible raise GPA; no A- or B-; honors is diversity; raise number not the letter; unfair to penalize student who gets a 79 in one class and all A in the others; possible evidence in recognition and performance; positive reinforcement is significant motivator; recognized publicly; no honor roll could de-motivate kids; best students have opportunity to excel in scholarship recognition; need for others to be recognized; philosophy of honor roll; top students have honor society; well-rounded recognition for all students; part of cumulative achievement; no grade lower than C or C-; need to recognize kids who are not high honors but do well for their level of ability; changes could occur next year; need to look at data and see who would be eliminated if requirements are increased; grade inflation; performance of students above state level; investigate 1. C- lowest possible grade; 2. CPP- take out lowest grade; 3. Take out A-, B- and raise to A and B; possible raise lowest grade to C and not C-; CMT and CAPT show honor roll students excel on the tests; kids are excelling; and proficient scores are not honor roll expectation. Ms. Kubisek will review honor roll data and Board will revisit the questions in the spring.

- b. Goal discussion – postponed to next meeting with Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's goals.

New Business

- a. Out of State field trip:

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the out of state field trip to Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA.

Board members discussed: procedures for students who can't afford the trip; need to notify parents; identifying students who can't afford it; extra-curricular activities; concerned about excluding students; need to revise F.T. form; trips are tied to curriculum; need to check with parents if student is not attending; communication issues; possibly put in handbook; merits of trips; possible policy issue; all should attend; possible email notification; and input from principals.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Committee Reports – None

Board members discussed: Finance, Facilities and Technology agenda items to be covered on the 22nd including: presenting Superintendent's budget proposal at Board meeting on the 23rd; Feb. 20th Board vote on budget; need to get books together ahead of time and using format the Board of Finance is familiar with but adding column for Principal's and Director's initial requests.

Policies

- a. First reading – Policy #4149/4149 Employee Use of the District's Computer System. No changes needed. Return for second reading at next Board meeting.
- b. First reading – Policy # 5131.82 Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material- sent back to Committee.
- c. First reading – Policy #5131.4/6177 Technology – sent back to Committee.

MOTION made by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Ms. Carr: to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Falcetti, Secretary
Joanne Bertrand, Recording Secretary