

**LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 1, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield High School Library Media Center.

Present were: Mr. Simone, Chair; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Stone; Mr. Bongiorno; Mr. Clock; Mr. Falcetti; and Mr. Pavlick.

Absent was: Mr. Shuhi

Also present were: Superintendent Turner; Mr. Fiorillo; Ms. Haggard; Mr. Ammary; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Murphy and members of the public and the press.

Mr. Simone read the following statement:

I would like to address the Litchfield Concerned Parents group that met last Friday evening at the Litchfield Firehouse. The reported purpose of this group was to give parents a forum for expressing views on the Litchfield Public Schools and their operations. Since there was no representation from the Board of Education or school administration at this meeting, I would like to clarify some misconceptions and to refute the perception of lack of transparency on the behalf of the Board. First, clarification is needed in regards to the purpose of a school board meeting. Board meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying on the business of the schools. While these meetings are held in public, they are not public meetings. However, public comment is encouraged during each meeting. While the Board of Education does not engage in dialogue during public comment, efforts have been made to answer questions on a timely basis after meetings. The Board has been informed that the superintendent or her designee has been diligent in answering public comment concerns. While it may be perceived that these answers are inadequate, some information (i.e., employment performance, evaluation, employment dismissal, student information) cannot be shared with the general public which is protected by state statute. This Board of Education is committed to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction. It is a shared belief that all students have the ability to learn and that the school system is able to teach all children at high levels. The Board is accountability- driven by focusing on policies that improve student achievement. Subcommittees are data savvy, monitoring data to drive continuous improvement. Along with the superintendent, the Board of Education makes an effort to lead as a united team with collaboration and mutual trust. The members of this Board of Education are committed to all students in the system during the decision-making process. There is a significant difference between opinion and knowledge. There is a significant difference between information and understanding. Knowledge and understanding are prerequisites for responsible decision making. The members of this Board of Education have spent countless hours ensuring they understand the information needed to advance the vision and mission of this school district. A concern voiced by the Litchfield Concerned Parents group was the length of time that current members have served on this board. This year is an election year. Any resident of the Litchfield community has the ability to run for this office. Three seats are open during this election year. Anyone interested

should indicate their desire to run to their respective Town political parties. In the meantime, a great resource is “Be a School Board Member” found on the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education website ([www.cabe.org](http://www.cabe.org)). An effective Board of Education has a collaborative relationship with staff and community. The public has always been encouraged to attend Board of Education meetings and subcommittee meetings. Perhaps future consideration for a collaborative relationship would include focus groups or study circles that may be put into place in an ad hoc committee. Increased communication may also be achieved through a Board of Education newsletter on the school district website ([www.litchfieldschools.org](http://www.litchfieldschools.org)). Finally, please be reminded that when there is a concern with a student, the proper channels to voice concerns start with the teacher, next the building administrator and finally, the superintendent. The Board of Education should not be involved in the day to day operations of the school district. Their role should focus on advancing the district improvement plan. We look forward to developing new ways to collaborate with and inform parents and the community as we continue to work together to provide rich learning experiences and the best

### **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 18, 2017 as submitted.

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

### **Payment of Invoices**

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: approve the payment of FY 2016-17 invoices on Accounts Payable warrant # 2017-16 dated 2/2/2017 in the amount of \$90,366.41.

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

### **Public Comment and Correspondence Communications**

- a. STPC –none.  
PTO – none.
- b. LHS Student Council – none.
- c. Litchfield Prevention Council – none.
- d. Litchfield Education Foundation – Ms. Reidy reported on the following: fundraiser April 22<sup>nd</sup>; upcoming retro dodge ball tournament; open to all; launched “You make a difference,” parents make a donation in recognition of employee; input from arts director and possible art programs planned; enrichment; have more programs in schools; cooperation from Ms. Murphy and Ms. Turner as principals; and new ideas from Weston and Westport.

- e. Other public comment –
  - Mr. Hatfield commented: how to resolve issues from parents’ concerns and improve the schools with cooperation and communication.
- f. Correspondence-
  - Letter from Jodiann Tenney regarding the French program.
  - Letter from John Dufour regarding Bus Contract.
- g. Administrators’ Report
  - Mr. Ammary reported: Way to Grow started on Monday with 40 in attendance; and preschool and kindergarten registration on going.
  - Mr. Fiorillo reported: met at Finance Committee meeting on Monday; first budget workshop; status of oil bid; \$1.9025; year to date budget; status of nursing subs; possible service needed; high needs students; and no capital money for auditorium.
  - Ms. Della Volpe reported: Open Mic night to be held; ongoing course selection process; and feedback and proposal (handout) regarding French program.
  - Ms. Haggard reported: reviewed the handout distributed to Board members at the last meeting, updating the Special Services Department.
  - Ms. Murphy reported: art show at OWL Pre K- 6; Read Aloud day on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>; community members participate; thank you to volunteers; After School Arts program April 4<sup>th</sup> Waterbury Symphony Orchestra performing free of charge; and funding from the arts program grant.
  - Ms. Kubisek at CCSU so Superintendent Turner reported: competition at CCSU; SS teacher dressed as Ben Franklin; visit to Tapping Reeve Law School; have debates; “Call of the Wild” discussion at 9:30 on Friday; Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> next Fun Night; and sponsored by Student Council.

### **Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Turner reported on the following: midyear goal meetings with administrators; teacher goals; working on PD for Pre k – 12 for Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>; plan for teachers to walk away with something; district goals; SRBI consistency across the district; common forms needed; assessment for administrators and share between schools.

**Old Business** – none.

### **New Business**

- a. School Fuel - Ms. Cook distributed a handout and reviewed the following: update of program; grant status; early readiness for students; use in preschool; \$15,000 grant given; how to develop good use of devices; scientific info; and screen time goals.

Ms. Bates reported: participation with families; include first 5 years; setting limits; screen time for families; model programs; interact with child; make connections; app learning; have 4 iPads in preschool; have 3 to rotate to families; build school community; and different settings for students.

Ms. Curtiss, parent, reported: son participating in pre-k program; parent does training; can take device home; parents get trained; then students trained; importance of sense of responsibility; love wide range of programs; art – music; get once every 3 weeks; kids get expert experience; science applications; can trace letters; try new things; sit and learn with kids; kids manipulating; engaged in learning; allow to explore; always safe explorations; see validity and thanks to the Board for supporting program.

Board members discussed the following: balancing screen time; information from studies needed; crossover status; information between grades; how well programs went; have ability to have devices; could bring it home and need to make it valuable.

### **Committee Reports**

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that the committee will meet tomorrow evening.

Facilities and Technology Committee - Mr. Bongiorno reported that no funding for auditorium from capital budget; sound system issues and needs to seek grant funding.

EdAdvance - Ms. Carr reported that the committee will meet tomorrow evening.

Policy – Committee met on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Policy Review**

- a. Review
  - i. Policy # 1110.1 Individual Student Concerns/Educational Concerns/Challenged Materials – policy reviewed. No changes.
- b. First Reading
  - i. Policy # 1110 Communications with the Public – no changes made. Return at next regular BOE meeting for Second Reading.
  - ii. Policy # 1110.1 Individual Student Concerns/Educational Concerns/Challenged Materials – no changes made. Return at next regular BOE meeting for Second Reading.
  - iii. Policy # 41118.112/4218.112 Sexual Harassment - no changes made. Return at next regular BOE meeting for Second Reading.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to move to Executive Session at 8:05 p.m. to discuss personnel and collective bargaining issues.

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

Litchfield Board of Education Meeting, February 1, 2017

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**Executive Session**

Present were: Mr. Simone, Chair; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Stone; Mr. Bongiorno; Mr. Clock; Mr. Falcetti; and Mr. Pavlick.

Invited to attend were Superintendent Turner and Mr. Fiorillo.

Returned to public session at 8:25 p.m.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Litchfield Board of Education and Local 1303-392 of Council 4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Donald Falcetti, Secretary  
Joanne Bertrand, Recording Secretary