

**LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield High School Media Center.

Present were: Mr. Shuhi, Vice-chair; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Clock, Mr. Falcetti and Mr. Waugh.

Absent were: Mr. Simone.

Also present were: Superintendent McMullin; Mr. Poole; Ms. Mongeau; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Murphy; Ms. Kubisek; the public and the press.

**Approve Minutes**

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve the minutes of the special meeting of January 22, 2015.

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

MOTION made by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 4, 2015 with the following correction on page 3335 second paragraph from bottom put a period after different and change Art to Mr. Poole.

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

**Approve Payment of Invoices**

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve payment of FY 2014-15 invoices on Accounts Payable warrant dated 2/19/2015 in the amount of \$167,405.29.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve payment of FY 2014-2015 invoices on Food Service warrant dated 2/19/2015 in the amount of \$28,125.44.

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

**Public Comment and Correspondence Communications**

- a. STPC – none.  
PTO – Ms. Stone reported: last meeting January 21<sup>st</sup> with Superintendent McMullin attending; discussion of paper directory vs. e-directory; fundraising needed for cost of directory; one book fair this year; can collections; “boys night out” to be scheduled and looking for new officers for next year.
- b. LHS Student Council – none.
- c. Litchfield Prevention Council – Mr. Waugh reported: met last Tuesday; successful launch of “Project Purple;” 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade student presentation requesting separate program based on “prevention side;” improve self-image; think positive; cost \$1,500; student initiated ideas; box top money; and parent evening presentation costs.
- d. Other Public Comment – none.
- e. Correspondence – none.
- f. Administrators’ report.
  - Ms. Mongeau reported: State testing accommodations submitted; accurate reporting; Jim Parker trained in crisis prevention strategies; PD half day for Special Ed teachers and assistants and PPI training complete.
  - Mr. Poole reported: financial report with about \$98,000 surplus; waiting for heating bills; and likely to drop amount as move on in year.
  - Ms. Della Volpe reported: PD full day of assessment discussion; common language about assessments; very productive and preparatory for NEASC visit.
  - Ms. Murphy reported: PD on becoming digital readers; help students understand when to skim/scan and when to read deeper; make instruction more effective; and two more visits with UConn group.

**Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent McMullin reported: budget presentation later on in agenda; listening to and enjoying students practicing for the play this afternoon; “Footloose” to be presented March 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> before NEASC.

**Old Business** - none.

**New Business**

- a. Gift Presentation – Acoustical Shells – Mr. Porri and Mr. Perkins presented an outline on Acoustical shells including: gift from “Music Parents Association;” Wenger Legacy Classic Acoustical Shells; what they are; what type will be delivered; specifications of shells; benefits to school district; logistics of delivery, assembly, storage/functionality; pictures of storage spacing; cost/maintenance; thanks to Music Parents for ongoing support; Talent in Town fundraiser on Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>; and total cost of \$13,195.

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Board members discussed passing this by the Fire Marshall for storage issues; input to Facilities Committee regarding improving auditorium; and next meeting 1<sup>st</sup> Monday next month.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the gift of Acoustical Shells pending Fire Marshall approval.

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

- b. Pre-K Expansion - Superintendent McMullin reported on Pre-School Program expansion including: take in many more than have now; 3 year olds expand days and number of students attending; program found students transition well in Kindergarten; take in more students than required by law; costs priced out; defray cost of expansion; fee based expansion; blind lottery with male and female students equal; students can be waitlisted; and open door for free and reduced lunch students to be in lottery.

Board members discussed: no cost for students who are in need; Special Ed students one-on-one with non-Special Ed students; no lottery for Special Ed students; interview and selection process; can run without tuition; if free then local pre-schools will have little enrollment; new program 10 Special Ed students to 38 community students; more democratic if charge tuition; applications available for free and reduced lunch students; proven success rate on pre-school students; can be covered if funding is an issue; socio-economic status can affect learning ability; need for early enrichment; affordable for families; multiple birth siblings would not be separated; 3 year old program goes directly into 4 year old program; not many applied in past; money can run through activity fund and go directly to the program expansion expenses; start September 2015; and IEP students will always have space.

MOTION made by Mr. Waugh and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: accept the proposal for the Superintendent to expand the Pre-School Program.

Board members discussed: privacy boundaries issues; publish info for community; free and reduced lunch students can apply; is inclusive; input from Ms. Turner; time period for applications; not good for working parents; and phase in those enrolled this year as free for next year.

MOTION carried. Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Clock, Mr. Falcetti, Ms. Rosser, Mr. Shuhi, and Mr. Waugh voted in the affirmative. Ms. Fabbri and Ms. Carr abstained.

- c. French Program - Superintendent McMullin presented a proposal to phase out French at L.H.S. and L.M.S. including: distribution of "World Language Enrollment" handout; difficulty in finding a highly-qualified French teacher; 5 preps for teacher; high level of student attrition; falls off after 9<sup>th</sup> grade; and low enrollment in Litchfield to maintain 3 languages.

MOTION made by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to accept the proposal to phase out French at L.H.S. and L.M.S. as presented.

Board members discussed: have French in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade; could take online courses; next year teach 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with no 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes; one class for 9<sup>th</sup> grade French the following year; students have opportunity for 2 years of French; caution with online offerings; need for online courses to maintain expanded curriculum; lack of quality teachers for French; need for French language to read important French writings; need to find good teacher to avoid dropping program; need to fund student's needs to complete French requirements if requested; need to have cut-off point; credits for college; technology does support expanding curriculum; possible Mandarin Chinese courses; Virtual High School limits how many students can sign up for online courses from one district; online courses made up of students all over the country; different styles of online courses; could look into other languages to offer even though French phased out; fluency goal in Spanish not just exposure; and exposure in lower grades critical for student success in world language.

MOTION carried. Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Clock, Ms. Fabbri, Mr. Falcetti, Ms. Rosser, Mr. Shuhi, and Mr. Waugh voted in the affirmative. Ms. Carr voted in the negative. There were no abstentions.

- d. 2015-2016 Budget Proposal - Superintendent McMullin outlined the 2015-2016 Budget proposal including: will be available online; celebrating accomplishment; table of contents; thanks to Board for input; administrative team; letter of transmittal; \$758,000 increase at 4.57% increase; math curriculum and technology to support Math curriculum; student activities; our mission; core belief; budget process; glimpse from past; success stories, academics; CMT scores; DRG definition; DRG – E for Litchfield; Grade 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 CMT scores; Grade 10 CAPT scores; Growth over time Class of 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020; SAT scores class of 2014; success stories SAT's; AP scores and increases; 2014-2015 success stories in technology, C.S., L.I.S., L.M.S., L.H.S.; 2015-2016 proposed budget; priority #1 – Math curriculum; priority #2 technology to support math curriculum; priority # 3 maintain small class sizes; high school class sizes; 2014-2015 actual class sizes at L.H.S.; key budget drivers; contractual obligations and fixed costs; additions over last year's budget; staffing, math, iPad for math; decreases from 2014-2015 include Special Ed tuition, transportation and regular ed transportation; salaried employees; salaries of teachers; salaries of AFSCME employees; salaries of non-union classified; salaries of administrators; utilities; 2015-2016 budget summary % increase; expenses by categories; 2014-2015 increase 4.68%, 2015-2016 increase – 4.57%; budget comparisons with other districts; and State average vs. Litchfield's average.

Board members discussed: Capital does not cover furniture; video production lab needs; costs for math curriculum; PD needed; social study's needs; Language Arts increase; pick up one Spanish take French away; curriculum writing needs; payout for online courses; tuition balances

out Pre –K program; 2 adults to 12 students; career ed to meet college board requirement; AP courses paid for exam if take more than 3; college board concerns on Saturday exams; changed to Wednesday during the school day; library budget; homebound instruction budget; tuition students; central administration increase; extra duty pay; early retirement process being phased out; M.S. coordinator or 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> team leader; role of chemical hygiene; snacks for testing students at C.S.; recess equipment at L.I.S.; athletic trainer at H.S.; technology for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade; administrators increase; CABE membership; issues with miscellaneous expenses; printing and binding costs; handbooks; graduation expenses; computer software increases; fees for software; computer turnover; IEP Direct subscription; licensing fees; Special Ed secretary increase .5; water expenses; Plumb Hill Field costs; upgrade music equipment; Waterbury Symphony Master Classes; computerized music course; and need to review budget before next Board meeting before voting on budget.

### **Committee Reports**

Finance - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee met last Tuesday and discussed: budget report; communication from town; joint business department; and being comfortable with consensus reached at last meeting to not join the two departments. Mr. Post from the Board of Finance attended this meeting and had a good preview of the Board's budget.

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that the committee met last Thursday and discussed: tabled item; and issues with French curriculum.

Facilities and Technology - Mr. Bongiorno reported that the committee will meet two Mondays from now.

Policy - Ms. Carr reported that the committee will meet tomorrow night.

**Policies** – none

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Clock: to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

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

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