

DRAFT

3581

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 1, 2017

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

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

Absent was: Ms. Fabbri.

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

Mr. Simone read the following statement:

Thank you all for coming tonight. As I said in my message last week, it is important that you are informed about district priorities and that you educate yourselves on how the budget supports these efforts.

As a Board of Education, we are inviting you to participate in a Community Conversation at a Special Board Meeting to be held on Wednesday, March 8 from 7:00-9:00 in the Center School gym. The purpose of this Community Conversation is to discuss concerns that have been communicated recently by the Litchfield Concerned Parents group, as well as any other concerns regarding the Litchfield Public Schools and their operations. Parents and community members will also have the opportunity to ask questions about the budget, which will be especially important as we enter a somewhat uncertain budgetary future here in the state.

Please understand that some information such as employment performance, evaluation, employment dismissal, and student information cannot be shared with the general public and is protected by state statute.

We welcome the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation with parents and community members with the purpose of creating a collaborative relationship necessary to ensure the best education possible for all of our students. They have been, and continue to be the Board's top priority in all of our actions and decisions.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 1, 2017 and February 15, 2017 with the following

corrections on page 3575 delete the summary of Mr. Simone's statement and include statement read at the meeting; and on page 3579 under Executive Session change "Tuner" to "Turner."

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

Payment of Invoices

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: approve the payment of FY 2016-17 invoices on Accounts Payable warrant # 2017-17 dated 2/16/2017 in the amount of \$242,078.21 Accounts Payable # 2017-18 dated 3/2/2017 in the amount of \$306,521.05 and on Food Service warrant dated 2/15/2017 in the amount of \$13,070.06.

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

Mr. Simone reported that LHS has been honored and recognized by Newsweek magazine as 11th in State and 364 in the Nation.

Mr. Simone reported that LIS has been honored as a "School of Distinction."

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: handout of fundraiser April 22nd; 35 registered; upcoming retro dodge ball tournament; open to all; launched "You Make a Difference," parents make a donation in recognition of employee; 5 honored so far; and kids enjoy this.
- e. Other public comment –
 - Stephanie Round commented: need safe, friendly school climate.
 - Ms. Tenney commented: thank Board for all they do; read letter from "Litchfield Concerned citizens; concerned about practices of school system including trust, transparency, collaboration; climate and teacher turnover and possible survey needed for more transparency.
 - Ms. Bongiolatti commented: continued from letter – issues with Transportation contract never sent out to bid, violation of State laws, and conflict of interest with Chairperson.
 - Mr. Hatfield commented: continued from letter – read State Statute regarding bidding rules and regulations that need to be put in agenda and presented to town Boards.

Litchfield Board of Education Meeting, March 1, 2017

- Ms. Kracht commented: continued from letter – need for communication and transparency, FOI concerns, web site issues, Executive Session issues, and update on Superintendent Goals.
- Ms. Stockno commented: continued from letter – issues with transparency and conflict of interest, read statement of town ethics issues, issues with the Chairs management of transportation can be violation, and need for Board of Ed Policies to align with Board of Ethics Policies.
- Ms. Lowrey commented: continued from letter - issues with collaboration with community, FOI concerns, need for Board Chair to not discuss transportation contract with Superintendent, need for communication with contracts, no evidence that savings were gained, possible ethics violation, and need to work together.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Pavlick: to add to the agenda as VI a. a discussion on the MOU maintenance agreement.

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

f. Correspondence-

- Email from Stacy Carosella Morgan regarding FOI request.
- Email from Annamari Curtiss regarding School Fuel Program.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI ALL MOU's over last 5 years.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI teacher tenure.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI Request for Gift Letter.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI Superintendent Goals and progress 2016-2017 Mid-Year Update.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI Approved MOU 12-7-16.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI LEA Grievances over the last 5 years.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI Request regarding BOE correspondence dated 2/1/17 from John DuFour.
- Email from Litchfield Concerned Citizens regarding FOI Request: Renzullo exit interview comments re: chair Simone.
- Email from Becky Stull to Mr. Ammary regarding class size issues for the 3rd grade.
- Email from Becky Stull to the Board regarding class size issues for the 3rd grade.
- Email from Heather Boesch-Wages regarding BOE Newsletter.
- Letter from EdAdvance regarding scholarships available.

g. Administrators' Report

- Mr. Ammary reported: registration for preschool at 48 students for next year; 38 registered for Kindergarten with 10 pending; Dr. Seuss Day soon; National Honor Society to visit to read and write.

- Ms. Haggard reported: parent forum March 20th; CSCI survey information at next CPP meeting; Pre K outreach success; PD update; collaboration with Prevention Council; SRBI update; and enrichment and gifted process update.
- Mr. Fiorillo reported: report during budget presentation.
- Ms. Della Volpe reported: in process of NEASC 2 year update; drafting CAPSTONE update; Guidance input; required for graduation; website updates; scheduling updates for students for next year; 40 year swim team record broken; jazz band performances soon and school play ongoing.
- Ms. Kubisek reported: conferences rescheduled due to weather delays; good attendance; included a worksheet student filled out regarding strengths and weaknesses and another Friday Fun Night scheduled.
- Ms. Murphy reported: LIS recognized as a School of Distinction; top 10% in State; and thanks to the Board, teachers and staff to help achieve this distinction.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Turner reported on the budget.

Old Business

a. MOU discussion.

Board members discussed the MOU status including: counter offer from the Selectmen reviewed; issues with offer; no option to get out of agreement; and effective May 7th maintenance budget will return to BOE.

New Business

a. Out-of-State Field Trip – Grade 5, NY Ellis Island/Statue of Liberty, May 3, 2017.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the Out-Of-State Field Trip – Grade 5, NY Ellis Island/Statute of Liberty, May 3, 2017.

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

b. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip – Grade 8, Close Up, Washington, DC – 6/25-30/2017.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the Out-Of-State/Overnight Field Trip – Grade 8, Close Up, Washington, DC – 6/25-30/2017.

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

- c. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip – Grades 9-12, Close Up, Washington, DC – 6/25-30/2017.

MOTION made by Mr. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip – Grades 9-12, Close Up, Washington, DC.

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

- d. French III Online Proposal.

Superintendent Turner reviewed the following: parents' participation; phasing out French; 7 students involved; online options reviewed; cannot find teacher to cover; and need for 3 consecutive credits in world language.

Board members discussed the following: negative input from parents regarding online program offered; only option now; approved by Principal; \$640 per year cost of online class; has had success with students; vouchers issued; standard course of study; and has to be accredited for credit.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Clock: to approve the French III online course for 7 students and to make contributions for the program of \$640 and if parents choose a different online course, then parent will receive \$640 voucher towards that course and will not pay a higher amount and if it is less then no credit will be given.

- e. 2017-2018 BOE Budget Review.

Superintendent Turner and Mr. Fiorillo presented the 2017-2018 budget review including the following: budget development process; Nov. 10th – May 10th; developed by staff and principals; Superintendent Budget Highlights; proposed 3.1% increase; \$17,890,901 total; 75% salaries and benefits; same academic standards; legacy program; focus on needs; district accomplishments; pre – K through 12; 364th in America's top high school in nation; operational highlights; safety and security; energy efficiency initiative; campus beautification; food services; continuing shared services; custodial services; Finance input; Special Ed records program; taxpayers in mind; graphic representation of budget; 75% people costs; regular instructions up 3.5%; Special Ed up 1.5%; pupil services down 8.3%; salaries and wages up 4.4%; 58% of budget; enrollment levels; 946 students; 28 outplaced; 4 in Legacy; stable as building; outplaced students are our responsibility; employee benefits up 8.2%; district wide services up 9.6%; plant operation up 12.2%; information technology down 31.4%; regular transportation down 1.0%; outside tuition down 40.7%; custodial services under town operating system; budgeted \$1,100,000; transfer back from town to school; next step; BOE receive books; go to Board of Finance tomorrow; budget will be available in Central Office and online.

Board discussed the following: March 15 to BOE for vote; town hall meeting; 83 students in 8th grade; effects on budget with Vo-ag enrollment; some students accepted don't always go; private school enrollments not known until end of year; preschool enrollment; need tables for CS; from 1987; can be dangerous; possible temporary fix for the time being; Selectmen's budget came in at 1% increase; need to talk before the 15th; cost of Legacy program, \$3,900; funding for auditorium; use fees collected for use of auditorium and money from the general fund; have budget workshops at committee meetings; have budget discussion at the March 8th special meeting when the community is invited; and Central Office available for any questions from the Board.

Committee Reports

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - Ms. Stone reported that the committee met on 2/2 and discussed the following: new science standards; are ahead of requirements; are model for other districts; require Chemistry be mandatory; what is needed for requirements; LMS and LHS program of studies; switching to entrepreneurship program at LHS; PE changes; pilot mountain biking; new requirements; Legacy Program; French covered; 3 credits for Chemistry might have to revisit Policy requirements.

Finance Committee - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee met on Monday and discussed the following: year to date budget; overages and adjustments; budget workshop; technology budget where going; and audit of system.

Ed Advance - Ms. Carr reported that the committee met and discussed the need for another building to be located in Torrington or Winsted for special services needed.

Policy – the Committee met on February 16th.

Policy Review

- a. Review
 - i. Policy # 1130 Board of Education Hearings – policy reviewed. No changes made.
- b. First Reading
 - i. Policy #1111 Broadcast of Board of Education Meetings – no changes made. Return at next regular BOE meeting for Second Reading.
 - ii. Policy # 1112 News Media Relations – no changes made. Return at next regular BOE meeting for Second Reading.
- c. Second Reading
 - i. Policy # 1110 Communications with the Public

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve Policy # 1110 Communications with the Public as amended.

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

- ii. Policy # 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual Harassment

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve Policy # 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual Harassment as written.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

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

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