

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 5, 2012

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, September 5, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield 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; Mr. Zaremski; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Murphy; Ms. Turner; Ms. Kubisek; the public and the press.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to move item VIII a. to item I a.

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

New Business

a. Make Just One Change Presentation

Ms. Benedict, Ms. Tracy, Mr. Conklin, Mr. Markelon, Ms. Sullivan, and Ms. Clementsen) presented on their work that resulted from a book club focused on *Make Just One Change* (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). These teachers presented a professional development activity as the keynote for the district Convocation on August 29. This activity described an instructional tool that the teachers involved in the book study have found to be valuable in engaging students in developing their own questions which has led to higher level thinking involving analysis and synthesis and in problem solving. Teachers have successfully used this strategy in classes from 1st -12th and across most content areas and have documented through video students taking increased responsibility for their own learning. The book club members engaged in work with the authors through SKYPE, and attending a conference over the summer. Thank you to Dr. Wheeler for participating and supporting the book club.

Board members discussed the following: older students are less likely to take risks to ask questions; need to create a climate of asking questions; students must take ownership of learning; need for teachers to allow student research; need to get to synthesis and analysis levels; and radical approach but worth doing.

Approve Minutes

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 15, 2012 with the following corrections: on page 3053 under the second motion the second “All votes were in the affirmative” should be changed to “There were no abstentions;” on page 3054 the top motion please add “Mr. Katzin arrived at 7:25 p.m. and did not participate in the vote;” under Public Comment correct “lead” to “led;” on page 3055 the last sentence should read “with families;” on page 3056 the first paragraph, and second sentence change “entre” to “entrée.”

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

Approve Payment of Invoices

Mr. Lathrop distributed a copy of the final invoices to be transferred to the town budget with payment due on the final payroll for custodial employees.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve payment of invoices for 2012-2013 as required and presented in the Board packet.

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

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve the list presented of accounts payable, payroll, and employee transfers as compiled by Mr. Lathrop and Mr. Fischer.

Board members discussed the following: \$1.1 million; line items; conferences with the town; transitions for next year’s budget; staffing cuts; \$854,000 transferred to maintain buildings; \$80,000 savings will not show until the end of the budget year; and dissatisfaction on process.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative except Ms. Carr who voted in the negative. There were no abstentions.

Tuition Student Request

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the tuition student request from Mr. and Mrs. Craig Goulet for their daughter in grade 4.

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

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MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the tuition student request from Mr. Robert Rousseau for his daughter in grade 9.

MOTION AMENDED by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Ms. Carr: to allow 6 weeks free tuition for student subject to her moving into the district by then.

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

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

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC/PTO - Ms. Fabbri introduced new President Kristen Arnold who reported that the new fundraiser “Yankee Candle” is underway and efforts are being made to increase membership and participation.

Ms. Moore reported on the following PTO activities: new slate of officers including Stacy Morgan and Alisa Patasius as co-Presidents, Kirsten D’Amore-Jenks as Vice President, Kim Roe as secretary and Julie Rooney and Pamela Orde as co-Treasurers; hosted back to school welcome to Sherri Turner; and back to school picnic.

- b. LHS student council: Capri Pitz reported on the high school student council activities. Dr. Wheeler thanked the officers for participating in the discussion of *Make Just One Change* and giving their perspective of the process.
- c. Public Comment
 - Mr. Legendre commented on the problem of bullying in the schools and wondered what steps have been taken to solve the problem since his son was a victim last year. Dr. Wheeler asked him to contact her office for information on new school climate plan.
- d. Correspondence: none.
- e. Administrators’ Report
 - Ms. Murphy reported on LIS: 1st day went very well; and looking forward to a great year.
 - Ms. Della Volpe reported on the H.S.: Smooth start; sports schedules; college fair; and successful wireless installation so far.
 - Ms. Turner reported on C.S.: successful opening with limited tears; bus runs are going very well; and new teacher night next Thursday starting at 5:30 p.m.

- Mr. Simone thanked all the administrators for their help with the transportation which made it run so smoothly.
- Mr. Zaremski reported: extended school year with summer school; 26 students serviced; “A Practical Guide to Connecticut School Law” regarding PPT process; and joint effort from the Park and Rec Department for servicing some of the needs of our students.

Superintendent’s Report

- a. Back to School update: 2012-2013 Enrollment Figures as of September 4th: concerns in 9th grade and Kindergarten, September 2011 total was 1116, September 2012 total is 1044, continuing to investigate the decreasing numbers.

Board members discussed the following: possible adjustment in staffing and number of students going to different schools.

- b. District letter regarding sequestration: a sample letter from CAPS committee, regarding the Budget Control Act and how this issue will impact the district’s operational plan in 2013-2014 (@ \$30,000 in potential reductions).

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to authorize the Superintendent to send the letter to Senators Lieberman and Blumenthal and Congressman Murphy that was presented to the Board; which will affect the 2013-2014 budget year.

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

New Business

- b. 2011-2012 Fiscal Year close information: Mr. Lathrop reviewed an interoffice memo returning \$174,651 to the town and preparations being made for the auditor who will be in district.

Committee Reports

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that the committee will meet on September 20th as September 13th was given to Policy Committee.

Facilities and Technology - Mr. Bongiorno reported that the buildings have been toured and the installation of wireless feed has been very successful so far. Laptops will be released to the 7th and 8th grade students in January. TV production is underway with grant discussion to be held tomorrow evening.

Finance - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee will meet on September 24th.

Policy - Ms. Carr reported that the committee will meet on the 13th which will be a special meeting.

Policies

- a. Second Reading – Policy # 1111 Broadcast of Board of Education meetings.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve Policy # 1111 Broadcast of Board of Education meetings.

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

- b. First Reading – Policy # 5114.1 Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process and regulation. Board members reviewed Policy # 5114.1 Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process and regulation for a first reading. No changes were made, return to BOE for second reading at next regular BOE meeting.

- c. First Reading – Policy # 5118 Non-Resident Attendance and regulation. No changes were made, return to committee.

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