

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2014

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield High School Media/Center.

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

Also present were: Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Lathrop; Mr. Zaremski; Ms. Murphy; Ms. Turner; Ms. Kubisek; the public and the press.

Dr. Wheeler stated that Principal Kristen Della Volpe has been placed on Administrative Leave and per advice of counsel no further comment on this personnel matter will be made.

Approve Minutes

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the minutes of regular meeting December 18, 2013 as submitted.

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

Approve Payment of Invoices

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve payment of invoices on Accounts Payable warrant dated 1/9/2014 in the amount of \$85,587.73 and approve payment of invoices on Food Service warrant dated 1/9/2014 in the amount of \$66,960.43.

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

Public Comment and Correspondence

- STPC – no report
- PTO – the parent academy scheduled for next week has been postponed.
- LHS – student council – none.
- Other Public Comment
 - Mr. Dranginis commented on L.I.S. students participating in swim team; showcase displaying past swim awards.
 - Mr. Sobek commented on need for Board to consider the incident of DUI not an isolated event; alcohol killing teens.
 - Mr. Glander commented on drug survey; type of punishments given to students; need to review expulsion policy.

- Correspondence
 - Several thank you notes for holiday cookies.
 - Letter from Jean Fitzgerald regarding reduction in enrollment.
 - Letter from John Donnelly regarding threat assessment survey.
 - Letter from John Sosnovsky regarding drugs in high school.
- e. Administrators' Report
 - Ms. Turner reported – January 13th meeting with incoming Kindergarten parents with follow-up sessions in February, March and April.
 - Mr. Lathrop reported – financial report distributed; 60% laptops configuration has begun; Jan. 20th parent meeting for laptop questions; facility walk through today with Homeland Security Department; update on food service program and state audit in March.

Superintendent's Report

- a. Litchfield Prevention Council – will not endorse student attitude and behavior survey; need direction from Board.

Board discussed: reason for not supporting; possible alternative survey; timing not to interfere with educational process; done during flex time; anonymous; administrative council supports survey; parent concerns for 7th and 8th grade; appropriate for high school; need to move forward; funding issues; \$3.00/student; possible survey for recent graduates; done by professionals; reliable and valid; need for comprehensive perspective; need to consider plans after survey results are received; tone of questions for younger students; and parents could opt out.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Carr: to move forward with administering the survey to students in grades 7-12.

Board discussed: steps after receiving data; input from other districts who have done survey and what they have done with the results to help students; need for opt out letter to be made available; help from OWL; on website and at high school.

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

- b. SPI/DPI – 5 sub-groups; student with needs; 2 years ago baseline; 88 target; progress to achieve student score; must maintain 88; 12/13 CMT 89; CAPT 86.6; graduation rates on target; areas in need of improvement are sub groups in CMT; students with disability and students who qualify for free and reduced lunch; CAPT writing and science met target; math and reading did not; school performance indices; C.S. classified as “Transitioning”; 100% participation rate; 85.1 out of 88; intervention in reading support; coaching for teachers; dropping enrollment issues; model lessons; give feedback; SRBI support; L.I.S. classified as “Excelling”; 100% participation rate; target of 90 in all four areas; sub group not achieving in math, reading and writing; action plan .4 supplemental skills teachers;

2.8 total; use increasingly complex texts; concept of close reading for PD days; 7 & 8 classified as “Excelling”; 90.5 score; met target in all 4 content areas; high needs students met target; L.H.S. – classified as “Transitioning”; SPI – 87.9; met target in all areas other than reading; SLO - student learning objectives done; test taking strategies done; need to problem solve; and concern with students with disability and need to go from transitioning to maintaining or excelling.

Board discussed: SRBI teacher; working directly with students; team of teachers for student’s needs; not a pull out situation; more done within the classroom.

- c. Preliminary information on Superintendent’s Budget proposal – 13/14 preliminary budget increase for this year 4.93%; anticipate further reduction in collaboration with Board; need to present what we need to community; 4 years very tight budget; administrative priorities include – maintain existing opportunities for all students; protect quality of instruction in core content areas; expand capacity for using technology to deliver and access the curriculum; increase capacity for addressing academic and mental health needs; maintain reasonable class size tied to enrollment declines; areas of significant savings; areas of greatest increase; FTE’s and school security infrastructure.

Board discussed: increase in Pre K good idea; use of grants; free and reduced lunch student needs; grant increase by \$20,000; need for mental health support; state input; need to make known that increase includes 2% salary; HSA perspective; not cost saving but is a way to slow the rate of increase; no reliable data on HSA to predict savings; and trend in increasing class size, reduce teachers and continuing academic support positions.

Old Business

- a. 2014-2015 – School Calendar

MOTION made by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Mr. Clock: to approve the 2014-2015 School Year Calendar as submitted.

Board discussed: possibly attend on Veterans’ Day; take time to honor Vets during that day and not during a different school day; possibly start school for students on the 27th; issues with AP exams; transition for kids; aligned with Region 6 as per Board request; shared services; no students on Columbus Day and Presidents day but concerned about Veterans’ Day; contracted as days off; \$6,000 extra for busing for VoAg program if not aligned.

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

New Business

- a. Out of State Field Trip information – Jennifer Murphy – tabled.

Committee Reports

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - to meet tomorrow night.

Facilities and Technology - to meet Monday night.

Finance – meeting cancelled January 6th.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Shuhi: to move to Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining issues.

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

Executive Session

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

Dr. Wheeler and Mr. Lathrop were invited to attend.

Open session resumed at 8:34 p.m.

MOTION made by Mr. Bongiorno and seconded by Ms. Carr: to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding with AFSCME as presented.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

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

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