

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 28, 2012

Approved 12/12/2012

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, November 28, 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 press and members of the public.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Carr: to add to the agenda as VII i. a discussion on snow days.

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

Approve Minutes

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 17, 2012 as written with the following corrections: on page 3072 under Ms. Della Volpe's report the last sentence should read "Polychoral," and on page 3073 in the first full paragraph change "no writing date" to "no writing data."

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve the minutes of the special meeting October 22, 2012.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Mr. Simone, Ms. Carr, Mr. Katzin, Ms. Rosser, and Mr. Waugh abstained.

Approve Payment of Invoices

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve payment of invoices for 2012-2013 as required.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Mr. Simon abstained. Mr. Lathrop distributed a copy of "Town of Litchfield Board of Education Expenditure Report 2012-2013," outlining program 5.

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC – none
PTO – Ms. Moore reported: Book Fair at C.S. next week; PJ's and hot cocoa night on Friday from 5:30 – 7:00; L.I.S. Book Fair week of the 11th aligning with the music concerts schedule.
- b. Student Council- Blaise Pope reported on the Student Council activities at the high school.
- c. Public Comment – none.
- d. Correspondence –
 - Letter from the State Department responding to the letter sent by the Board regarding sequestration effect on the district.
 - Letter from Senator Blumenthal responding to the same.
 - Telephone call from Chris Murphy's office regarding aide available to discuss same topic.
 - A letter from the Lyons family praising the school for the wonderful experience their children had while attending Litchfield schools.
 - From Ed Connection: Annual report; fall update; overview of programs provided to Litchfield.
 - Mr. Waugh reported on the annual CABE/CAPSS conference that he and Dr. Wheeler attended: PD workshops are highly recommended but funding is usually not provided. Also, Dr. Wheeler did district proud when she spoke about the SEED pilot program after being asked by the Commissioner.
- e. Administrator's Reports
 - Ms. Della Volpe reported - TSA canned food drive successful; blood drive successful; Mr. English received TSA Advisor of the Year recently; AOK Club update, Kathy Johnson, advisor; Nov. 2nd girls night out 4-6th grade; Peer mediator group being trained for mediation with student conflicts; and music concerts next week.
 - Ms. Murphy reported - Smart Board from LEF awarded; mid-Dec. 5th graders go to discovery center in Torrington for tolerance and diversity training; Library Media Specialist Debbie Benedict Orado presented to a National conference on, "Make Just One Change."
 - Ms. Turner reported - successful Veterans' Day program; successful PD day on Guided Reading, guided reading workshop; and videotaping teacher's lessons to share.

Superintendent's Report

- a. Update on November 1st enrollment; budget implications; to be further discussion with the Curriculum, Programs and Personnel Committee.
- b. Staffing Update: we are fully staffed.

Old Business

- a. Honor Roll Criteria - Dr. Wheeler reported on the current Honor Roll Criteria including: purpose of Honor Roll; number of students placed on Honor Roll; M.S 7th grade – 48, 8th grade – 57; 9th grade – 32; 10th grade – 34; 11th grade – 37; 12th grade - 34; continue as is; collapsing from 3 to 2 levels; or change the qualifications.

Board members discussed: purpose of weighing grades; concern with ratio of females to males; correlation between grades; objective measurement; subjective nature of grading system is a problem; need for rigor; GPA based; Honor Society qualifications require volunteering; including leadership and service; school does not always see volunteer service when it is done outside of school; outstanding honors more than grades; some schools allow C grades if it balances with an A; all volunteer activities should count toward requirements for Honor Society; need for consistency in classrooms; need to look into grading process; community recognition; purpose to recognize students regardless of track they are on; possible community service needed for graduation; need for input from Administration; conference about personalized learning; standard based grading system; grading practices; different departments follow different formats; performance in AP classes; possibly up the grades from A- to A; teacher's grading practices discussed in CPT; take back to committee.

New Business

- a. Leave of Absence Request

MOTION made by Mr. Katzin and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve a leave of Absence for Randi Zanesky from November 29th to the end of this school year.

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

- b. c. and d. Out of State Field Trips

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Shuhi: to approve Out of State/ Overnight Field Trip request to NY City, NY; Out of State Field trip request to Six Flags New England, MA; and Out of State Field Trip request to New York City, NY as presented by the music department.

Board members discussed: cost of Broadway shows; need for scholarship fund to fund some students; funds are available; need for proper wording to make funds available while still being sensitive to student needs.

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

e. 2013 Calendar of meetings for BOE and subcommittees

MOTION made by Ms. Fabbri and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the Litchfield Board of Education Meetings – 2013 as presented with the following amendments: change Thursday, March 14th to Policy Committee Meeting at 6:30 and Thursday, March 21, Curriculum Programs and Personnel; and change Wednesday, September 4 BOE Meeting to September, 11 and cancel Wednesday, September 18 BOE meeting.

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

f. AFSCME Contract adoption

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the AFSCME Contract as submitted.

Board members discussed: highlighted significant changes easier to review; pension contribution changes in 4 years; difference between defined benefit and defined contribution; retirement plan, liabilities; new employee defined contribution plan pre-tax; and saves money for the Board.

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

- f. Consultants: Board members discussed: used for support specialist such as CREC, OT, PT, school medical advisor, technology, business office, and PD consultants; funding in budget; professional services detailed in budget; tech portion in budget; outline of list of responsibilities; wireless project blended in; data consultant does student achievement data that teachers can refer to; expand from elementary school to high school; purpose of facilities support services; develop master list of required activities; use of School Dude system for tracking technology requests and maintenance requests; statutory responsibility for buildings still the Board's; transfer is year-long event; specialized expertise; use expert who knows district to support business manager; Board was informed but not made clear on the duration of the position; need to have better idea of consultants hired; bid process questioned; possible shared agreement with Region 6 in the future; implementation of School Dude; state compliance calendar; budget issues; monitor capital project schedule; district compliance with federal and state requirements; Mr. Tofuri will attend Facilities Committee meetings quarterly; bid process through Finance Committee; encouraged by members of the Board to move ahead on this initiative with positive feedback; Superintendent hires consultants annually; consulting work needed during period of transition in maintenance, facilities, capital and budget; specialized knowledge needed to get the most bang for the buck; need to look at policy for consultants.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to direct the Chairman to consult with Board council regarding the consulting agreement for Mr. Crowe and Ms. Longobucco.

Board members discussed: ask legal opinion; consultants for Technology data and facilities; need for opinion on all consultants; if within boundaries of policy the Board can decide if adjustments need to be made to policy; are we getting value for the money for these positions.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative except Ms. Rosser, Mr. Katzin, Mr. Waugh and Ms. Carr who voted in the negative. There were no abstentions.

- g. Center School schedule change: Ms. Turner reported: student time no change; have specials every day; science lab, science writing included; special time reduced; math and Language Arts direct instruction time increased.

Board members discussed: time cut from art 60 minutes to 45 minutes; K-1 still get 60 minutes; music same changes as art; PE 2 times a week which is an increase; library/technology 45 minutes; 20 minutes for recess; shared with curriculum committee; children have different ways of learning; some do better in the arts; more seat time is not necessarily better instructionally; newer schedule meets all needs; science writing part of LA time; project based learning in library; help teacher expand capacity; and request for copy of specials' schedule.

- h. Board members reviewed the school calendar for snow days. No plan for changes at this time with four cancellations to date.

Committee Reports

Curriculum, Programs and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that the information discussed at the last meeting has already been covered during the meeting.

Facilities and Technology - Mr. Bongiorno reported that the committee met and discussed: computer labs' status; capital committee: facilities projects; C.S. floors; ground water control; security cameras; air conditioner at C.S.; need for Smart Board; furniture request needs need more detail; wiring not capital project; POS for cafeteria rejected; get result December 18th from Capital Committee; sidewalks at C.S.; curbing issues; C.S. parking lot; upgrades in lighting; security lights; possible solar lights; input of CL&P; and gym fixtures changes.

Finance - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee met on the 26th and discussed: pool rental \$52,332, \$17,500 divided CJR, Reg.6, Litchfield; budget; title I up \$16,000 put to PD; Capital budget requests, LIS library; Mac Lab; CAD lab; and math program.

Policy – the committee met on November 15th and drafted the policy that has been sent to the BOE for First Reading at this meeting.

Policies

- a. Draft Policy – Bring Your Own Device/One-to-One Computing – Ms. Carr reviewed, for a first reading, the Suggested LSD BOE Policy Bring Your Own Device/One-to-One Computing, October 15, 2012 including definition of device; security and damages; charging; privacy; software; and insurance.

Board members discussed: possibly not include cell phones on list; could restrict use; input from administration is important; statute statement; transition policy; get to 1 to 1; greater security in school; screen size; difficulty using I phone and review further at the next Board meeting.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

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