

**LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 19, 2011**

**DRAFT**

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the high school Library Media Center.

Present were: Ms. Carr, Vice-Chair; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Messrs. Gorman, Katzin, Noone, Shuhi and Mr. Simone, Chair (at 7:10 p.m.). Mr. Falcetti was absent.

Also present were: Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Buccitelli; Mr. Zaremski; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Longobucco; Ms. Kubisek; the public and the press.

MOTION made by Ms. Fabbri and seconded by Mr. Noone: to add to the agenda for a second reading and possible action on the following policies:

- a. Second reading – Policy # 4119.0/4219.0 Duties of Personnel/Job Descriptions
- b. Second reading – Policy # 4119.1 Teacher
- c. Second reading – Policy # 4120/4220 Athletic Coaches
- d. Second reading – Policy #4126 Consultants
- e. Second reading – Policy # 4127 Student Teachers

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

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Gorman: to move item VI a. to occur after the consent agenda.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Fabbri and seconded by Mr. Shuhi: to approve the consent agenda:

- a. Approve the Minutes of Regular Meeting October 5, 2011.
- b. Approve the payment of invoices for 2011-2012 budget as required.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Mr. Noone and Mr. Shuhi abstained.

Mr. Simone arrived at 7:10 p.m.

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New Business

Dr. Wheeler introduced the two law firms that were selected by a sub-committee of the Board to present their proposals to the full Board.

Attorney Frederick Dorsey from Siegel, O'Connor, O'Donnell, and Beck, PC; partner since 1989; specializations; public sector cases; Special Education cases; experience with Boards of Education; background in finance; economics.

Board members discussed: number of attorney's in firm; use of associate attorney; direct calls from Board members; having a contact person; rates quoted; seven hours of pro bono work; portal to portal fees; mileage fees and copying fees.

Attorney Christine Chinni and Attorney Craig Meuser, of Chinni & Meuser, P.C. outlined the following: small firm; dedicated to schools; 5 1/2 years as a firm; efficient use of time; two work as a team; either one available in crisis; no portal to portal or mileage reimbursement.

Board members discussed: two hours of pro bono work; number of districts represented; time intensive activities may be difficult for two people; needs of Litchfield can be met; handle calls through contact person; and follow Superintendent's suggestions for calls from Board members or administration.

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC / PTO - Ms. Fabbri reported on the STPC activities: winner of the web site ad for the year book from Mr. Prescott's class is sophomore, Alena Mullee.

Ms. Moore reported on the following PTO activities: parent's night out on Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> at Center School and fall fundraisers are on line for all to view.

- b. LHS Student Council - Joe Wihbey reported on the student council activities at the high school.
- c. Correspondence
  - Steve Simonin commented on LHS CAPT and AP testing data; need for after school availability of teachers or student help.
  - Ms. Fabbri read a letter from Ms. Garden regarding first grade reading curriculum; class time issues; leveling in middle school; need for differentiated instruction.

- Mr. Simone commented that the trees and grass are installed at Center School and thanked those who donated trees: Mr. John Acerbi, Litchfield Hills Nursery; Chris Korn; Jack and Roberta Healey; Tony and Barbara Crowe; Andrienne and Joe Longobucco; Bill and Allie Neller; and Gary and Deb Wheeler.

d. Administrators' Report

Ms. Longobucco reported on Center School activities: thanks to all the volunteer firefighters who participated in fire prevention week and those people who helped with the tree planting.

Dr. Wheeler reported on Intermediate School activities: 6<sup>th</sup> grade field trip tomorrow to Waterfowl Conservatory; fire prevention rescheduled and FISH food drive taking place.

Ms. Della Volpe reported on High School activities: boys' soccer versus Wamogo game under the lights October 18<sup>th</sup>; fundraiser for the yearbook to take place at Bunnell Farm.

Mr. Zaremski reported on the following: "The Highland Transition Academy" as a transition program for youngsters 18-21 years old.

Mr. Crowe reported on the following: window shades installed at Center School and savings of \$16,000 on domestic hot water at LHS following installation of new propane hot water heater.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler reported on the following:

- Attended October 18<sup>th</sup> Litchfield Area Business Association meeting to hear presentations from Governor Malloy.
- Attended LEF meeting; discussed their upcoming fundraiser proposals.
- Discussion through CABA, CAPSS and CONNCASE of burden of proof in Special Education; requesting that the burden of proof be put on the party bringing any due process suit. Dr. Wheeler requested the Board adopt a resolution to the State BOE

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to adopt the resolution, that the Litchfield Board of Education requests that the State of Connecticut Board of Education take immediate action to repeal or revise the regulation concerning burden of proof in Special Education due process hearings to place the burden of proof on the moving party.

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

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Old Business

Mr. Shuhi commented on two items discussed last meeting: purchase of *Inform* Software and purchase of two iPads.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to direct the Superintendent to return the iPads.

Need for efficient method of student attendance in emergencies such as a bomb threat last May led to purchase of one device for each school, also used in teacher observations; superintendent's needs in carrying out responsibilities; discussion and sampling of *Inform* software resulted in decision that not best option for district; need to communicate when changes are made.

MOTION failed. Mr. Shuhi voted in the affirmative. All other votes were in the negative. Ms. Fabbri abstained.

New Business

Dr. Wheeler reported that the student achievement data was presented to the Curriculum and Personnel Committee in great detail at the last meeting. The report for this meeting is a shortened version.

Mr. O'Connell reported on the student achievement report, now posted on district website.

Board members discussed: showing 6 years of results; more growth in lower grades than middle school; AP courses will be further discussed at November 10<sup>th</sup> Curriculum, Programs and Personnel Committee meeting.

Board members discussed legal representation: Dr. Wheeler and Mr. Zaremski have worked with both firms and are comfortable with both; two hours of pro bono with Ms. Chinni and Mr. Meuser and seven with Mr. Dorsey; priority contact has to be main lawyer and not assistant; fees charged; location of offices; contract length; possible negotiation of fees and contract years; and need to assess contract every year.

MOTION made by Ms. Fabbri and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve hiring Frederick Dorsey as Board's attorney for 1 year contract.

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

Committee Reports

Curriculum and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that at the last meeting the student achievement data was presented along with the impressive music curriculum presented by Mr. Porri.

Finance - Mr. Noone reported that the committee met this evening and discussed the following: capital budget adjustments; a truck, tractor, fields, and \$41,000 current balance in student activities athletics account.

Facilities and Technology - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee discussed the following: capital request items; OCR status; database work; *Inform* Product; state web site; Bring Your Own Technology planning; district technology plan.

Policy - Ms. Carr reported that the committee will meet October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Policies

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to approve the following policies as presented:

- a. Policy # 4119.0/4219.0 Duties of Personnel/Job Descriptions
- b. Policy # 4119.1 Teacher
- c. Policy # 4120/4220 Athletic Coaches
- d. Policy #4126 Consultants
- e. Policy # 4127 Student Teachers.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Shuhi: 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