

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2011

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 9, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield Intermediate School auditorium.

Present were: Mr. Simone, Chairperson; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Messrs. Falcetti; Katzin; and Noone. Mr. Gorman and Mr. Shuhi were absent.

Also present: Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Buccitelli; Ms. DellaVolpe; Ms. Longobucco; Ms. Murphy; Ms. Kubisek; Mr. Zaremski; the public and the press.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the consent agenda with the following correction: on page 2527 under Public Comment and correspondence in the first paragraph change Lutz to Lautz.

- a. Approve the minutes of Regular Meeting January 19, 2011.
- b. Approve the payment of invoices for 2010-2011 budget as required.
- c. Personnel update - Dr. Wheeler presented a letter from Diana Melendez requesting a maternity leave on or about April 26, 2011 to August 26, 2011 and a letter from Wendy Pataky requesting an extension of her unpaid leave of absence for the remainder of the school year.

Board members discussed the need to find a substitute teacher who can teach AP Spanish and encumbered amounts in the budget.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative except Ms. Fabbri who voted in the negative. Mr. Simone abstained.

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC/PTO Update - Ms. Fabbri reported on the following STPC activities: student explanation of the Capstone project; student development and presentation of the website; and thanks to Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Shuhi and Mr. Simone for attendance.

Ms. Moore reported on the following activities for PTO: April 9th first annual JoAnne McCormick Memorial Run and Walk; and book fair the following week at Center School and Litchfield Intermediate School.

- b. LHS Student Council – no report.

c. Other public comment:

- Michelle Shipp commented on the difficulties in choosing how to make up the snow days and suggested staying with the calendar because people have plans to go away.
- Lynn Rice Scozzafava commented on holding fast to the calendar for making up the snow days because people make plans according to the adopted calendar.
- Sandra Newbury commented on putting the February vacation days back into the calendar to make up some snow days.
- Dave Pavlick commented that the students don't need a break now because they had a lot of time off with the snow days and June is a bad idea to make up snow days.
- Polly Brooks commented on attendance fluency for learning subject matter and making up in June is better than in April.
- Kelly Garden commented that June would be too uncomfortable to make up snow days and February vacation would be better for most students and for those with plans, an excused absence.
- Richard Sandrib commented on the great job the Board did with the teacher contract agreement that was just completed and approved.
- John Wages commented on families make plans based on the calendar and make up days should be when the calendar has the timeline for make-up days.
- Jodi Tenney commented on Constant Contact as a valuable means of communication and the calendar was established, and time spent in school is better with teachers and not substitutes so make up snow days should follow the calendar timeline.
- Visko Hatfield commented on finding the most consistent rhythm for kids to get into to make up the snow days to have a positive effect on their grade performance and students are lost in the warm weather.

d. Correspondence:

- A letter from Steven Simonin suggesting that Litchfield students participate in MSG Varsity Challenge.
- A letter from Frank McGowan regarding a student discipline matter.

e. Administrators' Reports

- Mr. Crowe reported on the snow removal, and moisture affecting some doors with frost heaves and blocking them from working properly, which is being addressed immediately.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler reported on the following:

- Special Board meeting to be held on February 16th with the budget on the agenda.

- Informal discussion this Monday night with the Board of Finance regarding the BOE draft budget proposal.
- Possible change in Board meeting scheduled for the 20th of April because it falls during spring vacation.
- Presentation of the Superintendent's recommended budget to the Board including: \$16,799,586 overall increase, 2.53% increase; budget development assumptions; initiatives developed to increase efficiency, 2011-2012 budget development executive summary; history of budget increases; enrollment projections comparison-pre K-12.
- Presentation of Summary of Post Graduate Survey findings including: demographic information; college information; employment; satisfaction information; contact information; good feedback from narratives; and helpful information. Board members discussed the following: not sufficient to gauge performance; limit to recent graduates that have experience with the program that exists today; need for higher response rate; Naviance program will help in the future; having email addresses in the future; and having a starting point.
- Presentation of Enrollment projections developed by Peter Prowda, Ph.D. that were redone due to the large kindergarten enrollment last September and comparing the newer projections including: long term enrollment decline now not as severe as in last projection, decrease in new housing; non-public enrollment declined; Wamogo enrollments are the same; 10 year projected decline until 2020; migration has been positive; and 2018 required to meet the new state graduation requirements.

Old Business

- a. Strategic Plan Discussion - Dr. Wheeler reported that the draft Strategic Plan is now being edited with the help of Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Carr; Mr. Petricone and the Superintendent.

New Business

- a. 2011-2012 Calendar - Board members revisited the 2011-2012 calendar to discuss the April vacation aligning with other Berkshire League schools. Board consensus was to leave the calendar as adopted in October 2010.
- b. Options for make-up of snow days 2010-2011 - Board members discussed the options for make-up of snow days for 2010-2011. We cannot make up days on Saturdays or extend the current school day, need 180 days for graduation and we currently have 181 scheduled; look at taking 22nd and 23rd of February as schools days; PD day to end of year; June 17th would be the last day of school; that would allow five more days to use in June; AP exams need as much instruction before May; June make up days won't help AP students.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Noone: to make February 22 and 23 full school days.

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

- c. Proposal from All-Star - Mr. Simone recused himself from the following discussion regarding All Star transportation. Ms. Carr took over as Chair.

Dr. Wheeler and Mr. Buccitelli presented a proposal from All Star Transportation including: a five year contract extension for busses; proposal for leasing 2 vans for 5 years; ability to expand contract; first year cost same as this year; 12 new busses so less fuel; 2-5 years 3% annual increase; leasing program for the vans; savings on repairs; lease for 4 years so vans are always newer; and comparing proposal to surrounding towns with similar needs.

Board members discussed the following: possible bid process; miles on vans; possible purchase of van may be cheaper; lease will provide substitute when being repaired; spending \$24,000 to save \$8,000; depend on capital to replace van; Board of Finance may prefer the bid process; state requirements of school vehicles; repair garage for All Star; 5 year contract is a lot of money; not enough information; need to replace 2 vans; and need to get info from other towns regarding bus contracts. Dr. Wheeler will include this proposal in her presentation to the Board of Finance on February 14th to seek their input.

Committee Reports

Finance - Mr. Noone reported that the committee met on January 24th and reviewed the budget; All Star proposal; meeting on the 28th to review the budget; 16th special meeting; Board of Finance special meeting on Monday; March 21st where the Board of Ed will formally present their budget; and Board of Ed scheduled to vote April 6th to adopt final budget.

Curriculum and Personnel - Ms. Fabbri reported that the committee will meet tomorrow night to discuss the K-6 language arts curriculum; gender disparity; and proposed change to MS schedule.

Policy

- a. First Reading - Policy #2110 Superintendent of Schools was presented for a first reading but was sent back to committee.
- b. First Reading – Policy # 4110/4200 Concept and Roles in Personnel – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.
- c. First Reading – Policy # 4111/4211 Recruitment and Selection and regulation – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.

- d. First Reading – Policy # 4111.2 Minority Teacher Recruitment Plan – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.
- e. First Reading – Policy # 4111.3 Hiring – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.
- f. First Reading – Policy # 4112.2 Placement on Salary Schedule – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.
- g. First Reading – Policy # 4112.6/4212.6 Personnel Records – no changes noted, return for second reading at next meeting.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

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

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