

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 24, 2009

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield Intermediate School art room.

Present were: Mr. Gorman, Vice-Chairperson; Ms. Carr; Mrs. Fabbri; Mrs. Reardon; Messrs. Falcetti, Noone, Shuhi, Simone; Dr. Wheeler; Ms. Della Volpe; Mrs. Longobucco; Ms. Marinelli; Mr. Buccitelli; Mr. Zaremski; and members of the public.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mrs. Reardon: to approve the consent agenda:

- a. Approve the Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 20, 2009
- b. Approve the payment of invoices and adjustments to line item expenditures for 2008-2009 budget as required

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

Public Comment and Correspondence

Mrs. Fabbri reported on the STPC wrap up for the year including: \$8,800 donated back to the school and thanked the parents and students for all their volunteer efforts. The parent academy fell short and improvements will be made for next year.

Mr. Dranginis commented on the swim program including: contributions from the outside swim team; use of CJR facility; requesting support from the Board; temporary bridge; and contribution amounts.

Mr. Sandrib commented on the need to continue the swim program at LHS.

Mrs. Rein commented on the need for the Board to consider reviewing the English curriculum at the High School and include a general or basic class. Her son failed CP classes and she believes he would have succeeded if there were general classes available.

Mr. D'Andrea commented on the proposed plan for using the CJR facility including the USA program; number of students involved; coaches; cost to students; and Board support.

Board members received the following correspondence:

- A letter from Ms. Rice-Scozzafava thanking her colleagues for all their support in educating her two daughters over the years.
- A letter from the Board of Warden and Burges regarding the farmers market and a response that will be sent by Mr. Katzin.

Mrs. Longobucco reported on a great ending at Center School with moving up held on Friday. A special farewell for the 3 retirees took place.

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Ms. Marinelli reported on a smooth ending at the Intermediate School including: concerts, field day, transition days, moving up ceremonies, celebrations for retirees, signing up for next year, and thanks to the Board for all their support in the upcoming schedule changes.

Ms. Della Volpe reported on the positive ending at the high school including: feedback on the schedule; gearing up for next year's schedule; hiring for 4 positions; and thanks to the Board for all their support.

Mr. Zaremski reported on an article entitled, "Court Affirms Reimbursement for Special Education," from a recent Supreme Court ruling. He also reviewed Special Education statistics for Litchfield.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler reported on the following:

- Confirming summer schedule for committee meeting.
- Hiring process with administrators.
- Due to a budget-based reduction of .6 FTE Math at Litchfield High School, one certified teacher was advised that they would no longer have a position with the district due to a Reduction in Force.

New Business

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Noone: to authorize the Superintendent to accept and act on all resignations and to recruit and appoint certified and non-certified staff throughout the summer prior to the first Board meeting in September.

Board members discussed the following: done every year; slate will be brought forth at the July meeting if at all possible; need for Board involvement in this process; paperwork being finalized for positions; possible input from Personnel Committee; and role of the Board.

MOTION carried: all votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Simone and Mr. Shuhi who voted in the negative.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to authorize the Superintendent to submit all state and federal grant applications (Consolidated grants; IDEA; Adult Education; Titles I,II, IV, V; Perkins; Technology; BESB; Special Education Excess Cost; Transportation; E-Rate; Etc.) as necessary to meet the required submission dates.

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

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Committee ReportsFacilities and Technology

Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee decided to change their regularly scheduled meeting date to the third Monday of each month.

Finance Committee

Mr. Noone reported that the committee met on Monday and discussed the CJR pool issue that was summarized by Dr. Wheeler including: \$60,000 total; \$17,500 from Region 6; \$10,000 from the US Swim Club; \$32,500 from Litchfield, (\$15,000 grant reduces that to \$17,500).

Board members discussed the following: maintenance issues; CJR already reorganizing to open facility so this is only temporary; need for solution for this year; why discrepancy with Region 6 when time in pool is the same; fee goes by numbers; money can come from out of district placement surplus; possible surplus from elimination of Curriculum Coordinator; money from two insurance deferments; setting precedent for other athletics to look for funding like crew or football; unanticipated; creative way to support swimming; need to look at all funding for all sports and extra-curricular activities; and more than 100 students participate.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve funds of \$17,500 to fund the Litchfield Swim Team for one calendar year.

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

Mr. Buccitelli reviewed the \$247,000 surplus from out of district students returning to Litchfield and distributed an outline of possible disbursement of the funds including \$100,000 OPEB liability; and \$60,000 Special Education tuition fund.

Board members discussed the following: possibly prepay athletic trainer; use deferment money and use for the trainer; Board of Finance would like the entire amount returned to them; text book costs; stimulus money; need for input from town; Special Education tuition; Mr. Crowe's needs for the schools next year; possible general education courses added to curriculum; items presented were recommended by the auditors; and need for guidance from the Board. Dr. Wheeler and Mr. Buccitelli will present a report on stimulus fund use and use of end-of-year balance to the Board of Finance at their meeting on July 13.

Curriculum/Programs and Personnel

Mrs. Reardon reported that the committee met last evening and discussed numerous items including the following: new AP courses at the high school; schedule update for the Intermediate school including the Board's input; grades 4 and 5 elementary schedule; grade 6 switch classes; math PD for all teachers K-8; suggest eliminating one Kindergarten section due to low enrollment; critical need for Language Arts support K-3; possibly use the Kindergarten position for those needs to be met; stimulus funds discussed; Superintendent evaluation discussed; and July 15th come up with final discussion of short term goals.

Board members discussed the following: number of new AP classes at high school and their costs; need to follow policy process for AP class inclusions; confusion with having 3 Superintendents in one year; AP classes that are being dropped; program of studies issues; need for staff to teach the courses and students to enroll in them; pressure on seniors to take 7 courses when not necessary for graduation requirements; number of students who did not graduate; chemistry needs for program growth; students attending other high schools instead of Litchfield; independent study issues; need for more support services; levels; elective program; academic program is thriving; need to raise the bar for students but also support them; need for rigor for middle and lower level student; possible use community members to support student needs.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Shuhi: to add 4 AP classes to the program of studies, French, Chemistry; Physics; and U.S. Government and Politics; as proposed.

MOTION failed. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi, Mr. Simone and Mrs. Fabbri voted in the negative.

Following the failed vote, Mrs. Reardon indicated she would like the board to vote on each of the four AP courses in question separately.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum provided the Board approve the curriculum before the start of the school year.

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

MOTION made by Mrs. Reardon and seconded by Mr. Noone: to reinstate the AP French class offered as long as the materials do not exceed \$300.

MOTION failed. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi, Mr. Simone and Mrs. Fabbri voted in the negative.

MOTION made by Mrs. Reardon and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the AP Chemistry class as presented.

MOTION failed. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi; Mr. Simone and Mrs. Fabbri voted in the negative.

MOTION made by Mrs. Reardon and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the AP Physics class for 10 students as presented.

MOTION failed. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi; Mr. Simone and Mrs. Fabbri voted in the negative. Mrs. Reardon abstained.

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Board members discussed the need for a Language Arts K-6 person including the following: supplemental skills; LA coordinator; overlap with LIS; provide direct services to students; modeling; coordinate with teachers; need to post position; position already in place for 4-6 coordinator; find someone to cover K-6 and look for supplemental skills person; Language Arts support more important than class size in Kindergarten; not administrator position; reevaluate each year; possibility of Kindergarten enrollment going up too much to eliminate one section; and no additional costs to system.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mrs. Reardon: to create a posting of a position in Center School for the Supplemental Skills K-6 with no new positions added at Center School.

Board members discussed the following: 4-6 position is already awarded with a stipend; Language Arts and Social Studies coordinators; no one was willing to take on the job for the stipend; similar to the K-6 Language Arts coordinator position of the past; need to build reading program at the elementary school; and benefits to teachers from modeling and coaching.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi and Mr. Simone who voted in the negative. There were no abstentions.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Mr. Simone: to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Reardon, Secretary
Joanne Bertrand, Recording Secretary