

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 3, 2010

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, March 3, 2010, at the Litchfield Intermediate School Art room.

Present were: Mr. Katzin; Ms. Carr; Mrs. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Messrs. Falcetti, Gorman, Noone, Shuhi, Simone; Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Buccitelli; Mr. Zaremski; Ms. Della Volpe; Mrs. Longobucco; Ms. Marinelli; the public and the press.

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Ms. Carr: to approve the consent agenda with the following corrections, on page 2022 under STPC the rescheduled date should be May 12th and correct the spelling of Lagattuta:

- a. Approve the Minutes of Regular Meeting February 24, 2010.
- b. Approve the payment of invoices for 2009-2010 budget as required.

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

Public Comment and Correspondence

Mrs. Fabbri reported that the parent academy was held last Saturday and was well attended with great information shared.

Mrs. Della Volpe reported on the Student Council activities at the high school.

Veronica Birdsall updated the Board on her participation in the State Student Advisory Council. The council's focus for this year is improvement in the overall educational experience for students and teachers. A student feedback form was developed to allow teachers to receive feedback from students. Several school districts are using the form this year, possibly LHS will participate. This is voluntary for teachers. The form is available on the State Department of Education website.

Ms. Shipp, commented on concerns over science electives being eliminated; pool costs not being covered; foreign language course eliminations; and possible suggestions for finding the funding for these programs.

Mr. Tourtellotte commented on the importance of the STPC's parent presentation on substance abuse prevention; finding ways to fund the electives, music and pool by possibly putting pressure on the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance.

Jen Pavlick, student, commented on her concerns over Science courses being eliminated along with the 4th year Latin for next year, and how it would affect her senior schedule.

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Mr. Birdsall commented on how elimination of music, language and science electives would be a mistake.

Phil Simonin, student, commented on how the opportunity to excel will be taken away from student at the high school if the science electives, swim team, music and languages are cut.

Mr. McGrath commented on his concerns over how easy it is to make cuts but impossible to bring back the courses in the future.

Veronica Birdsall, student; commented that cutting science and other courses will reduce opportunities for students in Litchfield.

Mr. Markelon commented on Science electives at the high school and how they enhance the high school's reputation and support the mission statement.

Mr. Sandrib commented on his concerns over the possible elimination of the swim program which servers many students and enhances college transcripts for many.

Matt Markelon, student, commented on how elimination of Science classes would reduce the student's competitive edge when applying to college.

Mr. Dranginis commented that he does not advocate reducing any classes for a pool, and wondered why other sports are fully funded and swim team is not.

Mr. D'Andrea commented that Swim USA would fund the swim program with the same amount as last year (\$10,000).

Ms. Pratt commented that by eliminating the Science classes there will be a great disservice to the students, both high end students and students who would like to try different courses.

Alexis Macchiaroli, student, commented on how much coaches and Science teachers support students, if programs are eliminated think of the lessons students will not be learning.

Mr. Simonin commented that this is not only the Board's issue but a town issue especially when a new town hall is under consideration and these courses would help students better compete in college admission process.

Mr. Pavlick commented that the Board should cut nothing so students can have the same opportunity that they deserve.

Ms. Cosgrove commented on picking Litchfield to live for the quality of education and rigor of classes; these cuts will sabotage what the schools have done.

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Mr. Crowe commented that people here tonight can't just approach the Board of Education, walk away and assume it will happen; but should also attend the Board of Finance meeting to express the same concerns and then organize and vote.

Aiden Dyer, student, commented how he developed an interest in Science and swimming and is outraged that funding is cancelled for both.

David Wilson, Board of Finance member, commented that the Board of Finance only does what the public is asking us to do; people need to speak up if they are willing to pay for the increase in the budget.

Ed Gadomski, Board of Finance member, commented that mandates are stumbling blocks and we have to work smarter with the money we do have.

Samantha Butwill, student, commented that perhaps an anonymous survey of value of courses could help determine which courses could be saved and eliminated.

Ms. Snow-Crane commented on the need for the swim program and how she would pay more taxes for the opportunity for her children to participate in the swim team.

Mr. Sandrib commented that 79% of budget is contractual and the Board should take a hard look at the current contract to find funds.

Mr. Courtney commented that people should go to the Board of Finance meeting to ask for the cuts to be eliminated from the school budget.

Adam Stanley, student, commented that it is tough to see students won't have the opportunity to bond as a swim team if it is eliminated.

Mr. Katzin commented that the budget process is still ongoing the Superintendent did exactly what the Board asked her to do in developing a recommendation that is under 3.0%. Now it is up to the Board to adopt a budget that all agree on with possible compromises needed.

Board members received an invitation from Litchbots who will be participating in the FIRST Robotics Regionals competition at the Convention Center in Hartford on April 1, 2 and 3.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler announced that March is Board of Education Appreciation Month and presented members with a Litchfield Public Schools pen.

Dr. Wheeler attended a CAPSS meeting on Thursday where the commissioner spoke about the RTTT initiative, and indicated that school district regionalism will be supported through the RESC, (Education Connection).

Old Business

A special meeting will be held tomorrow evening, March 4th, in the LIS Art Room to continue the Strategic Plan discussion.

New Business

Receipt of and Action Upon Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools Concerning the Institution of Teacher non-renewals Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151

(Note: No Executive Session was deemed necessary.)

Superintendent Wheeler made the following statement: In my capacity as Superintendent of Schools, I recommend that the Board of Education nonrenew the teaching contract of:

Erin Casey	Kristen Berggren (LTS)
Randi Donahue	Mary Lou Cofrancesco (LTS)
Brooke Hazen	Carrie Gibbs
Amy Killiany	Edward Lok
Elizabeth Landon	Emily McAdam
Matthew McDevitt	Diana Melandez
Lisa Nobes	Seth Newton
Rachel Caporuscio	Kathryn Oparowski
Jessica DeLucia	Peter Perkins
Jennifer Digliani	Nick Primo
Mary Lou Hunchak	Jamie Sidella
Andrew Parker	Benjamin Storrs
Daniel Porri	Keri Sullivan (LTS)
Caitlin Van Stone	Christine Taylor
Christopher Vicare	Julie Tracy
Matthew Wallace	

at the end of the 2009-2010 school year in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151, and that the Board accept, adopt and ratify my determination that these contracts be nonrenewed.

I am making this recommendation for the following reasons, any one or all of which I view to be sufficient basis for the recommended action:

Budgetary concerns, fiscal problems, student enrollment status, concerns about State financial aid, staff reorganization, administrative recommendation, classroom performance, and other due and sufficient cause.

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You should know that the above-named teachers have been advised prior to this meeting that I intended to make this recommendation; and, if the Board takes action, the teacher has the right under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151 to request the reasons for the Board's action to nonrenew his/her contract of employment and that further, depending upon those reasons, may be entitled to a due-process hearing to consider the Board's decision to nonrenew the contract of employment.

I also recommend that I be authorized and instructed to communicate notice of this action in writing to the affected parties and to respond for the Board to any appropriate requests which may be forthcoming from the teacher or his/her representatives as provided in the Teacher Tenure Law.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to move that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151, the Litchfield Board of Education nonrenew the teacher contracts of:

Erin Casey	Kristen Berggren (LTS)
Randi Donahue	Mary Lou Cofrancesco (LTS)
Brooke Hazen	Carrie Gibbs
Amy Killiany	Edward Lok
Elizabeth Landon	Emily McAdam
Matthew McDevitt	Diana Melandez
Lisa Nobes	Seth Newton
Rachel Caporuscio	Kathryn Oparowski
Jessica DeLucia	Peter Perkins
Jennifer Digliani	Nick Primo
Mary Lou Hunchak	Jamie Sidella
Andrew Parker	Benjamin Storrs
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at the end of the 2009-2010 school year as recommended by the Superintendent of School and ratify, adopt and accept the Superintendent's determination that the contracts be nonrenewed.

Further move that the Superintendent of Schools be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing to the above-named teachers and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board of Education to any requests for hearing, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the above-named teachers and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statutes 10-151; and further move that the Superintendent be directed that any response to a request for a hearing, if a hearing is required by law, indicate that such hearing is to be before the Board of Education.

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

Dr. Wheeler made a final presentation of the 2010-2011 proposed budget including the following: 2.86% proposed increase; input from two bargaining units, LEA and AFSCME, still remain; distribution of copies of potential areas of savings from Mr. Shuhi; swim team issues and pool issues; and 6% for health medical insurance, at this time, although the final number will not be available until late March.

Board members discussed the following: possibly keeping a place holder for pool coverage; input from Board of Finance; possible fully fund pool; and bargaining unit input.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mrs. Fabbri: to approve a discussion and adjustments to the Superintendent's budget as the Board deems appropriate in the amount of \$16,368,581.

Board members discussed the following: other options to cover pool costs; Region 6 budget should be more equitable with Litchfield's portion to cover pool; Litchfield Coach applied for money from Seherr-Thoss Foundation; possibly put some items in the Selectmen's budget; athletics through Park and Recreation; concern for academics rather than pool; possible range for budget; need to know LEA and AFSCME outcome and possible savings; Board of Finance input needed; consensus needed from Board members; and need to meet for further discussion after the unions reach their decisions.

Board members agreed to schedule a Special Meeting for Monday, March 8 at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION rescinded by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mrs. Fabbri.

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

Policies

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Noone: to adopt Bylaw # 9310 Periodic Review of Policies and Bylaws; #9311 Formulation, Adoption and Amendment of Policies and Bylaws; and rescinding of Policy #4112.8 Employment of Relatives.

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

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mrs. Fabbri: to adopt Policy #9270 Conflict of Interest.

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

The following Bylaws were reviewed by the Board for a First Reading:

- Bylaw #9321 – Meetings, Time Place, Notification of Meetings (revised)
- Bylaw #9323 – Construction/Posting of Agenda (revised – substituted, CABA Bylaw)
- Bylaw #9325 – Meeting Conduct (revised Bylaw, no change to Admin. Regulation)
- Bylaw #9326 – Methods of Operation – Minutes (revised – substituted CABA Bylaw)
- Bylaw #9327 – Electronic Mail Communications (Proposed New Bylaw)
- Bylaw #9330 – Board/School District Records (revised)

The following Bylaws were reviewed, no changes made other than updating of references to CGS.

- Bylaw #9322 – Public and Executive Sessions (reviewed, no revision other than correction references to CGS)
- Bylaw #9325.4 – Actions By the Board (reviewed, no revision corrections to references to CGS)

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to move to Executive Session at 10:05 p.m. to discuss a student disciplinary matter and confidential student records protected by law, and to invite Dr. Wheeler, Ms. Della Volpe and Ms. Kubisek into the session.

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

Executive Session

Present: All the above Board members, the Superintendent, Ms. Della Volpe and Ms. Kubisek.

Open session resumed at 10:30 p.m.

MOTION made by Mr. Gorman and seconded by Mrs. Fabbri: that based upon the evidence in the record, that **Student B** be expelled for a period of one calendar year, effective January 28, 2010 and continuing through January 27, 2011, based on **Student B**'s conduct in possessing and offering for sale and/or distribution a controlled substance, on or about January 14, 2010 subject to the following conditions:

- a) During the period of expulsion, the Board will provide **Student B** with an alternative educational opportunity deemed appropriate by the Administration.

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- b) During the period of his expulsion, **Student B** will not be permitted to be on school grounds and will not be permitted to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities, with the sole exception of his participation in the alternative education opportunity provided by the Board in accordance with the provisions of this motion.

MOTION carried. Mr. Katzin, Mr. Gorman, Mr. Noone, Mr. Falcetti, Mr. Shuhi, Ms. Fabbri, Ms. Rosser voted aye. Mr. Simone voted nay, and Ms. Carr abstained.

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Ms. Carr: to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 p.m.

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

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