

**LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**July 23, 2009**

A special meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Thursday, July 23, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Litchfield Intermediate School cafeteria.

Present were: Mr. Katzin, Chairperson; Messrs. Falcetti, Shuhi, Simone, Noone and Gorman; Mrs. Reardon; Ms. Carr. Mrs. Fabbri was absent. Also present, Dr. Wheeler; Ms. Della Volpe; Mr. Buccitelli; and members of the public.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Gorman: to approve the consent agenda with the following changes:

- Change spelling of the work “fourth” to “forth” on p. 2781.
- Change “Cost’ : to “Cost” on page 2781.
- Mrs. Reardon requested the addition of the words “Following the failed vote, Mrs. Reardon indicated she would like the Board to vote on each of the four AP courses in question separately” to page 2783 after the lines: “MOTION failed. All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Shuhi; Mr. Simone and Mrs. Fabbri voted in the negative.

MOTION carried. All votes in the affirmative. Mr. Simone and Mr. Katzin abstained.

Public Comment and Correspondence

Gary Waugh reported for the Building Committee noting that an agreement had been made with Allied Roofing over the LHS gym roof that includes a full 20-year warranty, inspections for the next five years and a credit of \$10,000. Mr. Waugh asked that Tony Crowe provide the committee with a prioritized list of projects for unspent building funds. He also indicated that repairs to damaged pavement will begin soon.

A number of parents and community members including Micky Wyse, Joanne Creedon, Jeanne McGeehin, Sandra Becker, Rich Sandrib, Michael Rehnquist (student), and Gary Waugh spoke in favor of the proposed AP courses and in offering AP courses generally. Ms. Creedon provided a copy of her statement for the record.

Winnie Harrison urged the board to reconsider sports funding in light of the recent decision to fund the LHS portion of the pool fee for the swim team. She noted that her son plays football and pays an additional fee as do students in several other sports.

Mr. Sandrib indicated that he believes funding for the swim team facility use is justified because it is a Berkshire League sport, as opposed to a club, cooperative or other sport not within the Berkshire League framework.

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Mr. Katzin provided to the board correspondence relating to the Farmers' Market beginning with a letter from Borough Warden Lee Losee that raised issues relating to the location of the market on school property within the borough. That complaint was later rescinded.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler reported/provided on the following:

- Listing of "New Staff Hired and Resignations Through July 23, 2009"
- A report on the process of selecting finalists for each position.
- Report of discussions with the Board of Finance on July 13 regarding use of unanticipated surplus funds. The BOF was generally in agreement about the allocation of the funds but raised some questions regarding the athletic trainer and special education over expenditure allowances. In response to some questions, Mr. Buccitelli explained that the BOF is required to assist the BOE in setting up the mechanisms to allow these funds to be used, and that the BOE must encumber the monies by 6/30 to expend by 7/31 but has a year to liquidate such funds.
- CAPT & CMT presentations to the board on results of 2009 administration will be held in October and November.

Old Business

The board committees should be starting their work on Strategic Planning.

New Business

Dr. Wheeler began the discussion on the proposed AP courses (AP, Chemistry, AP Physics, AP French) by indicating that when the board had met in June and voted on whether to offer the courses to students for the 2009/2010 academic year, the BOE was not aware that the courses had been offered in the past and had been part of the LHS Program of Study. As such, the courses themselves need not be approved by the board. After some discussion, however, it was agreed that new curriculum for these courses would be voted upon by the board.

MOTION made by Mr. Noone and seconded by Ms. Carr: to accept the draft curricula, as submitted to the board, for the reinstated AP courses with the understanding that they will go to the College Board for any revisions.

MOTION carried All votes were in the affirmative except Mr. Simone and Mr. Shuhi voted in the negative and Mr. Falcetti abstained.

Lengthy debate followed. Mr. Shuhi indicated that he was not satisfied with the format of the draft curricula and again voiced his concern that the school district does not have a full set of curricula for all courses K-12 in a standard format that can easily be used/understood by faculty, parents, and community members. In the course of the discussion that followed Mr. Shuhi and Mr. Falcetti and Mr. Simone suggested that the old curricula should be found and used (with modifications). Mr. Noone and Ms. Carr voiced the opinion that old curricula, particularly in the sciences, were likely outdated and had confidence that given the strict requirements and

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oversight of the College Board in approving AP curricula, that it was preferable to move ahead with the proposed draft curricula. Ms. Carr indicated that she and Dr. Wheeler had attended a CABE workshop on curriculum and noted that curriculum is important not only for the immediate task of running a course but for goal setting and assessment of both students and faculty.

Mr. Gorman moved the question.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Gorman to reinstate the 3 AP classes under discussion to the Program of Studies at Litchfield High School.

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

Discussion prior to the vote included Mr. Shuhi's reaffirmation that the courses were originally presented as new offerings and thus were believed to be subject of board approval. He indicated his reluctance to approve courses with low enrollment. Mr. Simone asked about projected enrollment for the courses under discussion and if there was a cut off for courses with low enrollment. Ms. Della Volpe indicated there is no hard and fast cut off and that decisions about running courses balance a number of factors including student need, faculty resources, scheduling, and cost. She pointed out that just as we may run a low enrollment in an AP course under certain circumstances, we will offer math remediation classes for classes of 5 students, if there is need. At present she believed there were 6 students enrolled in AP chemistry, 10 in physics. The French enrollment is low but is being offered concurrently (same class) with French V honors. The AP U.S. Government and Politics approved last month has an enrollment of over 20 students. Honors and regular Academic sections are still available in Chemistry and Physics and so the addition of AP courses in all three disciplines is not limiting opportunities for other students. Mrs. Reardon agreed with Mr. Falcetti that it is the responsibility of the administrators, as opposed to the board, to determine on a case by case basis when enrollments are adequate to support specific courses. She thanked the administration for recognizing the opportunity to offer all four AP courses for the coming year.

Dr. Wheeler presented the board with her "Goals for 2009-2010" and explained, in detail, what she hoped to accomplish in various areas. This document will be included as part of the new evaluation process currently underway.

## Committee Reports

### Facilities and Technology

No report.

### Finance

Mr. Noone noted that an upcoming meeting should be added for 9/29 at 7:00 p.m.

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Curriculum, Programs and Personnel

Mrs. Reardon reported that the committee met earlier that evening.

Policy Committee

The next meeting is scheduled for August 20 at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Simone: to go into Executive Study – Follow-up to Board Self Study - at 8:40 p.m.

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

Dr. Wheeler was invited to attend.

Open session resumed at 9:44 p.m. No action taken.

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Frank Gorman to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tina Reardon, Secretary  
Litchfield Board of Education