

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2009

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, October 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the LIS art room.

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

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Mrs. Reardon: to approve the consent agenda:

- a. Approve the Minutes of Regular Meeting, September 23, 2009.
- b. Approve the payment of invoices for 2009-2010 budget as required.
- c. Requests for Extended Leave (Child Rearing): Kathryn Oparowski (LHS Latin) and Lindsay White (LHS Guidance Counselor), to end of 2009-2010 school year; and Michelle Mongeau (LHS Special Education) 12 weeks maternity/child rearing according to FMLA Leave guidelines.

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

Public Comment and Correspondence

Dr. Wheeler reminded the Board of the Building Committee dedication ceremony scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. beginning in the high school lobby.

Mrs. Fabbri reported on the STPC ad for the yearbook that was designed by one of the students, Miranda Gosselin, from the desk top publishing class.

Haley Didomizio reported on the student council activities at the high school.

Mrs. Moore reported on the PTO including the following: pictures at the I.S. tomorrow; pictures next week at Center School; new fundraising initiative selling fleece and t-shirts; the sale will align with the book fair schedule; and joint meeting with STPC tomorrow to discuss upcoming parent academies, including possible topics.

Dr. Wheeler introduced Veronica Birdsall, high school junior, who has been appointed to serve on the State Student Advisory Council. She will be attending meetings and sharing student views with different commissions within the State.

Veronica reported on the following: strong feelings on educational issues; students have a greater voice; total 27 students to serve; will meet 7 times throughout the year; review of possible topics to be covered this year; and speaking to various board and commissions throughout the year.

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Laurie Piwonski distributed a copy of the "Litchfield High School Robotics Team Annual Budget" outline and asked the Board to consider support in funding transportation for the academic team as much as the sports teams are supported.

Board members noted that funding for academic competitions cannot be guaranteed this year but will be discussed in the budget process for next year.

Mr. Costa distributed a letter to Board members requesting that they discuss allowing district administration to use their judgment in allowing inter-scholastic teams to leave school early to attend officially sanctioned athletic events, including the JV Cross Country run in the Nonnewaug Invitational this Friday.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Mr. Gorman: to add to the agenda as VI d. a discussion of JV x-country team early dismissal for an athletic event.

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

Board members received a letter from Kelly Garden supporting Dr. Wheeler's decision to not interrupt the district's school schedules to air President Obama's speech to school children earlier this month. She also stated that she believes that she has the right to be advised if her children's teachers decide to use content from this speech in future classroom instruction.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wheeler reported on the following:

- The 2010-11 budget development process has begun with Nov. 23rd as the meeting date with administrators for justification of requests.
- Attendance at a Greening Our Schools conference October 6th, at the U Conn Torrington Branch that was very informative and the possible savings that can be had by changing behaviors.
- Professional Development held yesterday with Mike Wasta - continuation on improving instruction through collaboration.
- Professional Development held yesterday for the assistants including a follow-up from last year on managing student behaviors.

Board members discussed the following: support for other activities in the budget process along with athletics; reason for holding an early dismissal the next day after a PD day; and PD time is advantageous to instruction so the time is not a loss for students.

Old Business

Dr. Wheeler reported that Bob Petricone will be helping as facilitator for the Strategic Plan Discussion along with district improvement. Board committees are asked to submit topics or items to be discussed during this process.

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New Business

Board members reviewed policy # 5113 Attendance and Excuses, #5113.2 Attendance-Truancy, and #3542 Food Service for a second reading.

MOTION made by Mrs. Reardon and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to adopt Policy #5113 Attendance and Excuses and Policy #5113.2 Attendance-Truancy; and Policy #3542 Food Service as presented with one correction to change the word “absences” to “absence.”

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

Dr. Wheeler and Mr. O’Connell presented the Litchfield 2009 CAPT student performance data in a Power Point including the following: CAPT Performance Report Summary; CAPT Scores - % by Levels; CAPT % Goal or Above; CAPT % Goal or Above LHS: Mixed Cohorts; Cohort % Goal or Above Class of 2011; Litchfield/Berkshire League % Goal or Above 2009; 2009 CAPT Berkshire League- Grade 10 - % Goal or Above; Celebrations; Selected Strategies for Continuous Improvement; Selected Strategies for Continuous Improvement in Mathematics, Science, English, and Social Studies; and Next Steps.

Board members discussed the following: comparing to DRG along with the Berkshire League schools; lack of developmental reading in 7th and 8th grades; assessments Pre K – 12; time for grade level collaboration and subject collaboration; and upcoming CMT report.

Board members reviewed the development of the 2010-2011 District Calendar draft and discussed the following: need for Region 6 calendar before finalizing ours; April vacation issues; contacts made with as many Berkshire school superintendents as possible; PD early dismissals; busing issues with Region 6; and need to put on hold pending additional information from Region 6.

Board members discussed the early dismissal issue for the x-country team on Friday including the following: administration decision; input from Mr. Weaver; survey of Berkshire League schools; still fact finding; release time not in Board policy; date was changed due to error in scheduling; in past have released student if state tournament; need for principal, superintendent and athletic director to come to a decision; not CIAC or tournament; Berkshire League Invitational does run late so team may make it on time; soccer event recognized by CIAC; music students released for festival; and need for administration to decide.

Committee ReportsFacilities and Technology

Mr. Shuhi reported that the next meeting will be held on Monday and the committee will continue discussing the Strategic Plan working toward a completed list to be included.

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Finance Committee

Mr. Noone reported that the committee met earlier this evening and discussed ARRA stabilization fund; funding came directly to Boards of Education; the consensus was to turn the funds over to the town as a budget neutral item in the spirit of good faith. Also discussed the ECS funding. Supervision after school was discussed and the committee felt the \$5,000 cost for additional staff supervision too constraining. The next meeting is scheduled for October 26th and a discussion concerning Robotics funding will be on the agenda.

Curriculum/Programs and Personnel

Mrs. Reardon reported that the committee met October 8th where the high school social studies team presented curricula for all courses. Ms. Della Volpe discussed the process underway for development of the 2010-2011 courses of studies. The technology department will be holding a series of mini tech seminars after school for the next several weeks called "Q-T's" (QuickTech Sessions). Also items for the Strategic Plan were discussed.

Policy Committee

Ms. Carr reported that the next meeting will be held tomorrow evening.

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Ms Carr: to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

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

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