

*Our mission is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that challenge and engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. (2007)*

**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD - SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NO. 27**

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**March 11, 2009**

**(approved as amended 3-18-09)**

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair (*excused*)  
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair  
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member  
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member  
Mr. Jason Guerrette, Board Member Elect  
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Superintendent  
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator  
Mrs. Deb Mahoney, Director of Human Resources  
Mrs. Laura Rothhaus, Assistant Principal, GMS  
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

**1) Public Session – Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance 6:30 p.m.**

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She announced that Mr. Miller and Mrs. Beaugard were unable to attend the meeting.

**2) Review and Revision of Agenda**

Revisions included: Under Recommended Action, Business Affairs: the removal of the March 4, 2009 Draft Minutes, which were not available and will be read at the next Board meeting.

**3) Presentations to the Board**

1) Teens for Jeans Sophomore Project

Kimberly Carelli, a sophomore at CHS, presented a proposal for her sophomore project. She decided to focus on Teen Homelessness and would like permission to run a clothing drive for Teens for Jeans. This program is a national drive that collects gently used jeans for homeless teens. For every pair of jeans donated at CHS, the donor will be eligible for a raffle drawing. She hopes to offer prizes such as corsages for proms, free pizza, free coffee, sandwiches and soft drinks, etc. that she will solicit from local businesses.

Mrs. Couture queried as to the length of the drive. Ms. Carelli indicated she would collect for at least two weeks.

Mr. Boehm asked about the organization sponsoring the drive. Ms. Carelli indicated that Aeropostle is sponsoring the event.

Dr. Cutler complimented Ms. Carelli stating that she was proud of her initiative to speak to the Board. She explained that normally a student would not need Board permission to this type of project, but because outside business will be contacted, the proposal requires Board approval.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the Teens for Jeans Sophomore Project as presented. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

Mr. Boehm mentioned that Jordans Furniture is collecting prom gowns for students who are unable to purchase them.

2) CHS Student Council Quilt Raffle

Mrs. Rothhaus announced that the Student Council is proposing a quilt raffle to support a sunshine fund to assist students who do not have the funds to participate in various school activities. She added that Kathy Eckles, the Drivers Education teacher, donated a hand-made quilt to raffle. She asked for Board approval for the fundraiser. Mrs. Couture queried about where tickets would be sold. Mrs. Rothhaus indicated that tickets will cost \$2.00 for 1 or \$5.00 for 3 and would be available at sporting events. She added that the Student Council hopes to raise \$500.

Mrs. Couture asked about the length of time tickets would be sold. Mrs. Rothhaus indicated tickets would be sold throughout the month of March.

Mrs. Jewett was concerned that we would be setting a precedent by approving this type of fundraiser. Mrs. Couture requested that the Board receive an annual list of fundraisers that are held in the District.

Mr. Martin commented that this is an admirable cause and commended the Student Council. He added that people should not hesitate to participate due to apprehension that a precedent is being set.

Mrs. Jewett expressed that she would like students to take the initiative to help with community projects.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the Student Council Quilt Raffle fundraiser. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

**4) School Board Members' Comments**

- Correspondence/Announcements

Dr. Cutler announced that Michael Clark, a CHS student, is a Daughters of the American Revolution scholarship winner. She also announced that Alyssa Paquin, a CHS student, was the second place winner in the French Oratorical contest. Ms. Paquin is the first ever entrant from CHS in the contest.

Mrs. Couture congratulated Mr. Clark and Ms. Paquin on their achievements.

Mrs. Couture announced that the CHS Girls Basketball team played in the finals at Plymouth last Saturday and came in second in the Class M series. She added that the CHS Boys Basketball team will play in the playoffs beginning this evening.

**5) Community Input**

Mr. Jason Guerrette, 11 Perry Court, thanked voters in Litchfield for his election to the Board. He expressed that he was humbled at the outcome and believes he will work well with the Board.

**6) Recommended Action**

a) Business Affairs

1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes February 18, 2009

Some minor revisions were made to the minutes.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

b) Public Minutes of March 4, 2009

The minutes of March 4 were not available and will be read at the next Board meeting.

2) Election Results

Mrs. Couture reviewed 2009 Election Results with the Board. She reported that the FY2010 District Budget passed, the 2009-2012 Teachers Contract article failed, the Assistant Treasurer article passed, the Special Education Capital Reserve article passed, and the printing of the tally of Board and Budget Committee votes on ballot articles passed. Mrs. Couture also reported that the Governor signed an amendment to the law that required these tallies to be printed on the ballot. The amendment makes the printing of the tallies optional.

Mr. Boehm commented that all contract articles in Hudson failed, as well as the kindergarten article. Hudson will pursue their kindergarten litigation.

3) Business Administrator's Report – February 2009

Board members discussed receiving electronic copies of the financial report. Mr. Martin mentioned that the District would begin publishing business reports to the website.

Mr. Martin reported that our annual audit was received and reviewed by the Board, and that there were no material findings. The audit report was included in the Annual Report. He also reported that the District completed its first federal audit and submitted all forms to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse as required by the Single Audit of federal funds.

Mr. Martin reported that staff training on the eFinancePLUS Employee Access Center software and 403(b) has been completed. Mr. Martin met with the FEMA representative to review the process for receiving federal reimbursement for some of the ice storm expenses. He filed a claim with the District's insurance carrier; however, the cost for the Food Service freezer was rejected because the damage was caused by an electrical problem.

Mr. Martin is forecasting that the District will spend to the budget. A revised forecast will be provided in May after completing the April forecast. Mr. Martin indicated that the District is waiting for the final word from Governor Lynch to determine if any stimulus money can be used for school repairs/construction. He noted that he prepared a list of GMS items to consider with assistance from Dan Cecil of Harriman. The following items are potential areas that can be "shovel ready": replacement of all exterior windows (\$350,000); replacement of all lighting fixtures (\$375,000); replacement of all exterior doors and frames (\$75,000); complete upgrade of electrical system (\$1M); life safety/ADA upgrades (\$150,000); a sprinkler system (\$500,000).

Mr. Murdough has advised that he expects that any approved projects will be in the \$50,000 - \$500,000 range and that he would be more open to energy efficiency or water remediation projects for GMS.

Mr. Martin conducted a site visit at GMS with Schiavi Leasing, the Litchfield building inspector, and the Litchfield fire department to agree on a tentative placement of the two additional kindergarten portables. The single portable will be placed between the current portable and the paved area, possibly sharing the walkway ramp; the double portable will be placed perpendicular to the current portable. A paved area for emergency vehicles between the portables will be necessary for emergency access vehicles. He added that a site plan will be prepared and the lease for the portables has been signed.

Mrs. Couture queried about the cost of the additional paving and who would bear the cost. Mr. Martin affirmed that the State would cover the cost of the paving.

Mr. Martin reported that the District has worked out an agreement with the Litchfield fire department to allow the District to obtain gasoline and diesel fuel for District vehicles/equipment from their tanks. The District set up an account with the fire department's fuel vendor and will be purchasing fuel that will be delivered to the town's tanks. This will reduce the cost of fuel to the District as the fuel we purchase is not subject to taxes. Mr. Martin also reported that the District will complete the inventory of the technology contents of the POD at GMS. A list of equipment to be disposed will be presented to the Board for approval. A date will be set to allow the public the opportunity to take any equipment approved for disposal. Mr. Martin further reported that Food Service is behind in posting revenues to the general ledger due to a file server problem with the Mealtime point-of-sale database. The problem has been resolved and the revenues should be caught up this month.

Mr. Boehm commented that the town purchased a generator and the District should investigate the cost of installing connections to hook up the generator in case of another emergency (e.g. the recent ice storm). Dr. Cutler agreed and commented that it would make sense to work together with the town to be more prepared for emergency situations.

4) FY10 Final Budget Recommendations/Approval

Mr. Martin reviewed the FY10 final budget recommendations with the Board. He asked for Board approval on the FY10 Recommended Budget total of \$20,727,636 in order to complete the MS-22 and submit it to the State.

**Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the FY10 Recommended Budget total of \$20,727,636. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.**

Mr. Boehm suggested monitoring the revenues from the State as the Board may need to consider reductions to the budget.

5)           GMS Kindergarten Portables Update

This item was included in the February Business Administrator's Report.

6)           CHS Storage Facility Update

Mr. Martin presented a status report from the Storage Committee. He reported that the Committee has completed the first phase of its mission to deliver a proposal to the Board to solve the current storage space problem in the District and meet the storage needs of the District for the foreseeable future. The Board asked the Committee to consider the costs of three alternate construction materials: metal, wood frame, and concrete block. Currently we are using approximately 9,300 sf of building and container space for storage, which does not include a significant amount of outside storage. The Committee considered four goals: move storage spaces being used inside the buildings to free up space for educational purposes; provide storage space for items [temporarily stored outside] that have been added to support CHS' expanded programs; consolidate storage to remove the containers and PODs at GMS and CHS; build in sufficient growth space to provide adequate storage space for the foreseeable future.

In speaking with the District's attorney, he stated that the use of impact fees for this project would be an acceptable purpose because the project would free up needed space inside the building for program needs, and this space is identified in the Litchfield Capital Improvement Plan. The District received an updated estimate of the high school impact fees balance as \$299,000. The Committee discussed the operational needs of how the stored items will be used with Mr. Dan Cecil of Harriman and discussed the size of the building the District would be able to construct with the impact fees. After reviewing the inventory, Mr. Cecil estimated that depending on the construction materials used, the District can finance additional storage space in the 3,250-3,900 sf range, which is much less than the 11,800 sf needed for the inventory. It was agreed that this project could be completed over the summer.

Mr. Martin asked for the Board's direction in moving forward. He requested the Board change the scope of the project from a long-term strategy to one of building a facility with the most capacity for the available funds. He also recommended that the Board approve a request to the Selectmen for authorization to use up to \$30,000 from the high school impact fee account for architectural and engineering fees for this project, and advise the Selectmen the Board's intent to use the total balance of high school impact fees available to finance the construction of this storage space.

Mrs. Couture suggested deferring the Board decision in order to review the proposal more thoroughly and to have the discussion with a full Board.

Mrs. Jewett was concerned with the cost of the architectural and engineering fees. She suggested researching what other towns have done.

Dr. Cutler reminded the Board that the SAU occupies an entire wing that diminishes storage at the high school. She indicated that the Board does not need to make a final decision tonight, but to approve the use of the impact fees for architectural and engineering fees, and state their intentions to make a future request for the balance of the impact fees to fund this project. Mrs. Couture agreed that the Board could approve the request, but that the District cannot spend any money before the Board makes its final decision.

**Mr. Boehm made a motion to request authorization from the Selectmen to use up to, but not to exceed \$30,000 from high school impact fees for architectural and engineering fees. The Board intends to make a future request for the balance of the high school impact fees to fund the District storage project. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.**

7)           Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

7) **New Business**

a) **Alumni Survey**

Dr. Cutler reviewed the draft survey questions with Board members. The survey is for students who graduated from CHS over the last six years. The survey will be interactive on the CHS website and mailed to alumni.

Board members commented on the questions and suggested revisions and suggested additions relative to foreign language courses, where students are residing while attending college, and acquisition of a degree from college.

8) **Old Business**

1) **Policies: 1<sup>st</sup> Reading**

a) Personnel Policies (GA)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

b) Background Investigation & Criminal Records Check (GBCD)

Dr. Cutler indicated that the policy be tabled as more information is needed.

c) Anti-Fraternization (GBCC) (related to Employee/Student Relations policy)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

d) Employee/Student Relations (old, GBH; new, GBEBB)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy. Mr. Boehm was concerned with the section regarding non-disclosure of student information by staff members. He felt that teachers who recommend high achieving students to outside organizations that offer high achievement programs should acquire parental permission from the student's parents. Dr. Cutler explained that some of the offers consist of scholarship opportunities and she felt that students should not be deprived of any opportunities.

Mrs. Couture mentioned that the policy states that staff are not allowed to disclose any information other than directory information, but could not recall the District's policy definition of directory information. Mrs. Flynn clarified that the policy that contains directory information is *Student Records Policy & Procedures (JRA, JRA-R)*. She suggested including a reference to the policy and procedures in the Employee/Student Relations policy.

Mr. Boehm felt that staff should not arbitrarily recommend students to outside organizations. Mrs. Couture suggested that this is a high school issue.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 2-1-0, with Mr. Boehm voting in the negative.***

e) Employee Gifts and Solicitations (old, GBI; new, GBEBBC)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

f) Staff Health Examinations (old, GBE; new, GBGA)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

g) Personnel Records (old, GBL; new, GBJ)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

h) Highly Qualified Teachers (GCAA)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy. Dr. Cutler addressed Board members' questions regarding the necessity of the policy. She indicated that this policy has been recommended by the NHSBA.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

i) Professional Staff Contracts (GCB)

Board members reviewed revisions to the policy.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

2) Job Descriptions

a) Classroom Teacher

b) Special Education Teacher

Board members reviewed the revisions and clarifications that were made to the physical requirements section of the job descriptions. Board members previously requested clarification in this area.

***Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the Classroom Teacher and Special Education Teacher job descriptions as amended. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.***

9) Committee Reports

1) Building Committee

Mrs. Couture distributed a Draft FAQ questionnaire from the Building Committee. Board members reviewed the topics and questions and assigned the appropriate District staff to address the topics and gather information for the Committee.

2) Selectmen

Mrs. Jewett expressed that Selectmen were pleased about the articles that passed and disappointed about those that failed. She reported that Selectmen will be considering reducing department budgets.

3) Legislative

Mr. Boehm reported the status of the House bills relative to the Education Committee. He also reported about bills relative to requiring parental consent for psychological evaluations by school districts, home schooling, and truancy. He added that a three day legislative session is scheduled for March 24, 25, and 26 in order for the legislature to complete all bills and send them to the Senate.

Board members suggested moving the March 25 meeting up to March 18. Dr. Cutler will notify the Board Chair and principals to determine their availability for the meeting.

Mr. Boehm mentioned that some CHS music students will perform the National Anthem at the State House on March 25.

10) Community Input

Mr. Guerrette, 11 Perry Court, queried about the GMS repairs that were listed in the February Business Administrator's report in relation to the federal stimulus funds New Hampshire will be receiving. Mr. Martin confirmed that the repairs listed are shovel-ready projects as confirmed by Dan Cecil of Harriman.

Mr. Guerrette questioned if these projects could be completed independently. Mr. Martin affirmed that any of the repair projects could be prioritized and done independently.

Mr. Guerrette commented that a sprinkler system was one of the items listed as being considered in relation to the stimulus funds. He indicated that installing sprinklers alleviated a myriad of issues. Mr. Martin clarified that the

cost associated with the sprinkler system is only for the sprinklers. He added that if sprinklers were installed the ceiling tiles would have to be replaced and that it would be very unlikely that such a project could be done over the summer.

Mr. Guerrette queried as to what areas would be heated in the storage facility discussed this evening. Mr. Martin indicated that only the office area and the paper storage areas would be heated. Mr. Guerrette wanted to know if the storage building would require sprinklers. Mr. Martin indicated that because people would not be housed inside sprinklers would not be required.

Mrs. Couture acknowledged that the Board received enrollment numbers for the month of February. She observed that there were 90 1<sup>st</sup> grade registrations as of February 20 and 105 have been projected. She also noted that there were 59 kindergarten registrations as of February 20.

Dr. Cutler announced that recommendations for kindergarten teacher positions will be discussed with the Board at the next meeting.

**11) Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3II (a-c)**

*[Minutes of Non-Public Session are written under separate cover.]*

*Mrs. Jewett made a motion to go into non-public session at 8:49 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. (c) Matters, which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

**12) Return to Public Session**

*Mr. Boehm made a motion to return to public session at 9:03 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

Mrs. Jewett queried about the signs posted on the high school building regarding the restriction of skateboarding, rollerblading, and scooters within 50 feet of the building perimeter. Mrs. Couture indicated that the 50 foot restriction is inclusive of the walkways around the building.

**13) Adjourn**

*Mrs. Jewett made a motion to adjourn at 9:04 p.m. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.*

**14) Upcoming Meetings**

*>Litchfield School Board: March 25, 2009 - CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
School Board Administrative Assistant