

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

December 12, 2007

BUDGET WORK SESSION

(approved as amended 1-9-08)

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member
Mrs. Dot Beauregard, Board Member
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Interim Superintendent
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary

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

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2) Review and Revision of Agenda

Revisions to the agenda included the addition of Tech Ed Adjustment under Superintendent's Report; and the addition of an Update on Travel at CHS.

3) Presentations to the Board

>> New Finance/HR Software Presentation

Steve Martin, Business Administrator presented the new Finance/HR software proposal with the assistance of Bruce Ballou, Director of Technology; Deb Mahoney, Director of Human Resource; Jody Bellerive, Chief Accountant; and Bernice Manikas, Payroll Coordinator.

Mr. Martin indicated that the District has been researching Finance/HR software to replace MUNIS for some time, which has been driven by the constant problems with MUNIS. MUNIS was recommended by the Hudson School Board and the software program unilaterally makes decisions on its own, which cause internal inconsistencies that require additional man hours to correct. Such problems with MUNIS includes the following: it is cost prohibitive, there were initial implementation requirements and Tyler Technologies could never agree on the fixes, software bugs exist in payroll and budgeting since the December 2006 upgrade, staff productivity has been impacted as errors in MUNIS (not made by staff) have caused significant accounting problems, the MUNIS Vice President advised us not to upgrade to the next version, and the technology was limiting.

Mr. Martin gave a brief history of the preliminary search process, the purpose of which was to look at all potential vendors, but not go out to bid. He noted that the team [mentioned above] spent two years looking at all vendors in K-12 Finance/HR software with a consistent evaluation process for each vendor. Each vendor was required to have one installed NH SAU customer, be committed to the K-12 market, be an established/proven vendor, and have a strong support operation. Key product requirements included reliability, be feature rich, be easy to manage, have web-based technology, be more intuitive graphical user interface, meet critical needs, and have an integrated solution.

Mr. Martin explained that six products were evaluated: BMSI [Business Management Systems, Inc. of NH], BudgetSense from Unifund, LLC of NH, eFinance Plus by SunGard Pentamation of PA, FundWorks+ [Breen Systems Management, Inc. of VT], ProFund SeQuel [Advanced Data Products, ME], and MUNIS [Tyler

Technologies]. The result of the process was a team decision with a three stage evaluation plan of product demonstrations online/conference, 'hands-on' vendor demonstrations, and in-house hands-on testing of two final products. Two products were eliminated: BMSI was removed as it is primarily for municipal use, and FundWorks+ due to technology, functionality, and an outdated website. After the remaining candidates were thoroughly evaluated, a cost comparison was completed between MUNIS, ProFund, Unifund, and Pentamation as follows:

- MUNIS currently costs \$63,000 per year [we are in the third year of the contract]
- ProFund [ADS] costs \$96,827 for year 1 (purchase/implementation) and \$13,400 per year
- Unifund costs \$110,000-\$120,000 for year 1 (purchase/implementation) and \$22,000-\$24,000 per year
- SunGard Pentamation costs \$188,577 for year 1 (purchase/implementation) and \$25,207 per year
- SunGard Pentamation 3-year ASP costs \$85,000 for year 1 (purchase/implementation) and \$21,000 per year which includes \$3500 start up discount and one concurrent user license at no charge.

Mr. Martin indicated that the team recommendation is that eFinance Plus by SunGard Pentamation is the only product worth pursuing over MUNIS. It was a unanimous recommendation to implement the software and SunGard's ASP service is the most cost effective. SunGard Pentamation is a global leader in software solutions providing fund accounting and HR management solutions. He added that we have already encumbered \$70,000 with a 2008 budget impact of \$75,000 plus \$5,000 in eFinance Plus project costs. Some additional staff compensation will be necessary upon implementation.

Mr. Martin explained that the project timeline included completion of the District's due diligence in December 2007, finalizing the project plan in January/February 2008, Live entry of FY09 purchase requisitions in May 2008, general ledger, HR and purchasing implementation with a possible payroll run in June 2008, and finally live implementation of general ledger, HR, purchasing, and AP by July 1, 2008. A live implementation of payroll could be July 1, 2008, October 1, 2008 or January 2, 2009.

Mr. Martin requested Board approval of the purchase of eFinance Plus by SunGard Pentamation contingent upon finalizing due diligence in order to take advantage of their year end incentive.

Mr. Miller asked if any of the vendors were familiar with MUNIS. Mr. Martin responded that while most of the vendors were familiar with MUNIS, SunGard Pentamation was not very familiar with it.

Mr. Boehm queried if any other districts are using the eFinance software. Mr. Martin indicated that Goffstown, Concord and Portsmouth are using eFinance software and that the District team actually participated in a half-day site visit to demo the product in Goffstown.

Mrs. Jewett was concerned with a guarantee of support from SunGard Pentamation for the cost quoted. Mr. Martin indicated that SunGard is the leader in data recovery and will handle the conversion from MUNIS as well as evaluate what is and what is not covered. There is a possibility we would have to pay to have this done. He added that each vendor evaluated has some characteristic that was better than MUNIS, but none compared with eFinance.

Mrs. Beauregard asked if it will be easy to compare historical budget data with eFinance. Mr. Martin explained that they will convert one year's worth of data. We will have to manually input two or more years of data, or pay SunGard extra to convert the data.

Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the purchase and implementation of eFinance Plus by SunGard Pentamation contingent upon the completion of due diligence to take advantage of year end discounts and incentives. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. Miller thanked Mr. Martin, Mr. Ballou, Mrs. Mahoney, Mrs. Bellerive, and Mrs. Manikas for their preparation of the presentation and work in researching and evaluating the Finance/HR software vendors. Mr. Martin thanked the Board for their support.

4) **School Board Comments**

Mr. Boehm commented that CHS held a blood drive recently and was impressed with the number of students who donated blood.

Mrs. Jewett commented that last night's music program was very nice. She expressed concerns with men wearing hats inside the building and children running up and down the aisles. Mrs. Jewett also commented that on Saturday the CHS student she has been working with cleaning the sides of the roads finished her project by helping with crafting at the Women's Club.

Mr. Miller acknowledged that the first half hour of the meeting was not televised due to a software problem and that on December 5 the interruptions in the broadcast of the Board meeting was for student privacy reasons only.

5) **Recommended Action**

a) **Business Affairs**

1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes of November 7, 2007

Revisions to the minutes included: under Item 6, Old Business – Policies – a) Administering Medications to Students Policy/Procedures, the last full paragraph of the section will be amended to reflect that the last sentence will read: 'Mrs. Couture wanted to know why student athletes should carry OTC medications for issues that arise while practicing or playing a sport after school'. Other minor revisions were made. Two motions under the Budget Section were revised to read as follows:

'Mrs. Couture made a motion to add \$5,000 to the Superintendent's salary budget.'

'Mr. Miller made a motion to level fund Board members' salaries.'

Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

b) Public Minutes of November 14, 2007

Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

c) Public Minutes of November 16, 2007

The minutes were amended to reflect that Mrs. Jewett left the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

2) Business Administrator's Report – November 2007

Mr. Martin distributed the Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD & A) of the annual financial report for 2007 to the Board. There was no discussion.

Mr. Martin briefly commented on the November 2007 Financial Report. He indicated that there was ongoing budget work on the 2009 budget. The School Board proposed budget for FY09 was submitted to the Budget Committee on schedule. Auditors are still working on the 2007 audit report. Work continued on the District's compliance to the IRS 403(b) regulations. The District hired a new part-time bookkeeper for Food Services, Christine Lavacchia. A purchase order was issued and a contract signed with Honeywell to install the new chimney exhaust fan at CHS. The final cost is \$36,000. Finally, the Technology Department has been working with MAPS testing and the analysis of the MUNIS replacement software.

3) Acceptance of Gift

Mr. Miller shared a letter from Mrs. Laurie Barry, a Litchfield resident who donated \$2,000 toward the recycling baler for CHS. He thanked Mrs. Beauregard for her work soliciting the donation as well as his sincere thanks to Mrs. Barry for her donation.

Mr. Bohem made a motion to accept the donation of \$2,000 toward the purchase of a Vertical Baler for the CHS recycling program. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mrs. Beauregard thanked Mrs. Barry for her generous donation. Mrs. Beauregard reported that the SAU and LMS have been working with the Nashua Boys/Girls Club, who is going to donate physical activity time.

- 4) GMS Floor Plans & Cost – Draft #8 Discussion/Approval
 - a) Pre-Wiring Update

Mr. Martin reported that Mr. Cecil confirmed that pre-wiring at the core level would not be possible. This detracts from the high performing school points needed for the additional 3% in building aid. Mr. Martin added that the high performing schools building aid reimbursement will add approximately \$400,000 to the project cost. It was recommended that the Board not add the additional cost for the 3% building aid reimbursement and go forward with the total project cost of \$22,203,340, bonding \$20,692,550. The Kindergarten addition would be funded through the 75% Kindergarten Construction Grant and Elementary Impact Fees [\$377,697], a zero impact in the tax rate.

Mr. Martin indicated that he will be asking the Board to approve a request for Impact Fees from the Selectmen in the amount of \$32,000 for architectural fees for Harriman. After deducting the architectural fees and the amount to help fund the Kindergarten classrooms in the proposed new building, the balance of elementary Impact Fees will be \$41,412.74.

Dr. Cutler suggested adding a generator to the new school project. There are no generators in any of the District schools and is of great concern for the emergency management plan as residents need a place to go in their time of need. She added that over the next five years the Board should consider adding a generator to each school building.

The Board agreed to Mr. Martin's recommendation not to add an additional cost for high performing schools to the proposed new school construction summary and agreed to consider placing a generator in the project cost.

- 5) Warrant Article Development

The Board discussed potential articles for the 2008 warrant. Suggestions included an article for an assistant treasurer and an article regarding the new RSA that allow a District to print the tally of votes of the Board and/or Budget Committee on the warrant article recommendation. Board members indicated that clarification is needed on the new RSA, which Mr. Martin will provide at the next meeting. Draft warrant articles for 2008 will be prepared for the next meeting.

- 6) Impact Fees

Mr. Martin asked for the Board's approval to request the approval of the use of Elementary Impact Fees for architectural fees.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to request \$32,000 in Elementary Impact Fees from the Selectmen for architectural fees. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mrs. Jewett abstaining.

- 7) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

6) Community Input

There was no community input.

7) Superintendent's Report

- a) Alert Now

Dr. Cutler asked for the Board's approval to purchase the Alert Now system for communication to parents of emergency situations in our schools. She reminded Board members that there was parental concern regarding communication of emergency situations expressed at the last Board meeting. Dr. Cutler indicated that the system enables the District to send emergency messages to the community, similar to a reverse 911 system. This type of communication system will relieve anxiety as well as rumors. She added that it is not an expensive purchase.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the purchase of the Alert Now system for \$4900 to be implemented in the second semester. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- b) Community Awareness for Building Project

Dr. Cutler discussed community awareness for the proposed new elementary school with the Board. She suggested the Board prepare a communication plan to keep the community-at-large informed about the building project. Dr. Cutler reviewed several ideas of communication that included: handouts, weekly articles in the local newspaper, informational meetings at residents' homes, PowerPoint presentations, and establishing a core communication group.

Mr. Miller indicated that Ms. Caprioglio, Building Committee Chair, spoke to Doug Orlando to head the Publicity Committee as he was instrumental in the last two proposed building projects. Dr. Cutler commented that the informational meetings that were held in Windham when the new school was proposed were very successful. She added that Board members accompanied community members to the meetings to answer questions and show support. Mrs. Couture suggested planning two information nights to recruit hosts for additional information meetings.

Dr. Cutler offered to call Ms. Caprioglio and Mr. Orlando to schedule an organizational meeting.

c) Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutler reviewed her report on how her time was spent in the District during the past month. The report contains meetings, community events, and any concerns expressed by the community.

d) District Newsletter – Winter Edition

Dr. Cutler deferred to Mrs. Flynn to speak to the Newsletter item. Mrs. Flynn reviewed the articles with the Board and commended the student correspondents from GMS and LMS for their hard work on such excellent news articles. Dr. Cutler indicated that articles are being written to balance the newsletter with academics.

e) Kindergarten Update

Dr. Cutler reported that there was no Kindergarten update available.

f) Slogo Update

Dr. Cutler explained that the slogo contest was not as successful as hoped. There was only one response from a student at CHS, Tyler Merrill. She thanked Tyler for his submission. Dr. Cutler suggested that the District Slogo be tabled for a future discussion. The Board agreed and the item was tabled.

g) Tech Ed Adjustment

Dr. Cutler asked for the Board's approval to adjust the 50% Tech Ed position by adding another period. This is a position for a Project Lead the Way course. Dr. Cutler would like to post the position as a 65% position.

Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve adjusting the 50% Tech Ed position to a 65% position. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

h) Update on Travel at CHS

Dr. Cutler informed the Board that the Quebec and Puerto Rico trips were cancelled due to insufficient student participation.

8) Old Business

District Goals

Dr. Cutler asked the Board to comment on the draft goals as we are nearing the beginning of 2008 and the 2007-2008 goals should be in place.

Mrs. Couture commented that the second goal needed clear wording. Mr. Miller suggested that the goal be revised to reflect the following wording: *Develop confident, responsible and productive students with post-graduate aspirations.*

Dr. Cutler suggested a survey for high school reunion attendants in relation to goal 2c. Mrs. Couture suggested inviting students who have graduated from CHS to a forum regarding their views on how the District prepared them

for college both in middle school and high school. Suggestions were made to hold a forum over holiday break or spring break. Mrs. Couture suggested planning a forum for next winter.

Dr. Cutler commented that the goals are a good start, but a strategic planning piece is needed to align schools with District goals. Mrs. Couture indicated that an exit survey, which is tracked, is given to graduating high school students. Mr. Boehm queried as to the questions on the survey.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to adopt the recommended 2007-2008 District Goals as revised. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

9) Information/Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

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

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

Mr. Boehm made a motion to go into non-public session at 9:08 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. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

11) Return to Public Session

Mrs. Jewett made a motion to return to public session at 9:45 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

12) Adjourn

Mrs. Jewett made a motion to adjourn at 9:46 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

13) Upcoming Meetings

>Litchfield School Board: December 19, 2007 - January 2, 9, 30, 2008 - CHS Media Room – 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Secretary