

*The Mission of the Litchfield Schools, in partnership with parents and the Litchfield community, is to provide and develop a complete education program of the highest quality that enables students to develop intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally and be capable of adapting to a changing world and its technology. The School Board recognizes this mission statement as its guiding principle. (1994)*

**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD**  
**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**October 18, 2006**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**  
**(approved as amended 10-25-06)**

Present:

Mrs. Cindy Couture, Chair  
Mrs. Dot Beauregard, Vice Chair  
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member  
Mr. Dennis Miller, Board Member  
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member  
Ms. Catherine Hamblett, Superintendent  
Mr. Stephen Martin, Business Administrator  
Mrs. Ronda Gregg, Director of Special Services  
Mrs. Deb Mahoney, Director of Human Resources  
Mr. Martin Schlichter, Principal, GMS  
Mr. Tom Lecklider, Principal, LMS  
Mr. Michael Parent, Principal, CHS  
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, School Board Secretary

1) **Public Session – Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance**

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

a) Introduction of Student Representatives

Mrs. Couture welcomed Gina O’Leary, one of the CHS Student Representatives to the Board. She also extended a welcome to Jay Vance who could not attend.

2) **Review and Revision of Agenda**

Under Business Affairs: the addition of Impact Fee Update; under Budget Presentations: the addition of District – wide Debt Services.

3) **Recommended Action**

a) **Business Affairs**

1) Business Administrator’s Report – September 2006

Mr. Martin distributed the September Financial Report, which covers July, August and September of 2006. He reported that the audit is completed with no findings of concern. We are currently waiting for a draft of the final report. He added that all required State reports have been submitted on time. Mr. Martin reported that he is currently forecasting a fiscal 2007 year-end general fund balance of just over \$24,000. He also mentioned that there is a change in the way the CHS Yearbook is being produced. He noted that it was to be offered as a course, which triggered salaries, benefits, and production cost being included in the 2007 operating budget’s self-funded programs function. However, it is now being offered as an after school activity and the production expenses will not fall under the self-funded program.

Mr. Martin reported that he is currently forecasting for FY2007 an under spend of \$60,000 in the salary accounts and another \$15,000 in the benefits accounts. This is a far tighter benefit projection in than in any previous year. This may be the first time that the Superintendent’s requested \$50,000 under spend must come from other areas. He also mentioned that the proximity locks for the new CHS security system have been installed and staff will be issued their new key cards. GMS and LMS have implemented the online building maintenance work order system and Mr. Martin is working with Ms. Ayer to get CHS operational. In Technology, software updates and hardware upgrades have been completed. We still have many PC’s to be refurbished and distributed to the schools. We will be using

School Dude software for implementing an online technology help desk solution with a November 1 target implementation date. We received a donation of 40 computers from the IRS and received a notice that we will receive up to an additional 60.

Mr. Martin reported that three problems in transportation are being worked on: 1) the traffic congestion at CHS is causing buses to leave late and having a domino effect at GMS; 2) a bus accident that reduced the available buses; 3) the block time changes at CHS and travel times to and from Nashua North/South technology centers caused problems for students getting to and from classes on time. Two students have been issued waivers to drive themselves to and from these classes because of related internships and coursework. This is the only reason waivers may be issued.

Ms. Hamblett clarified that permission for these students to drive themselves to the technical centers is a new procedure, but we encourage students to take buses to and from technical/vocational centers. In this case the students had to be back to school from the Nashua location for work and project related reasons.

Mr. Boehm raised a concern about GMS students sitting on the buses when they arrive at school in the morning. Mr. Schlichter commented that he will look into the issue and Mr. Martin will follow up with First Student.

#### 2) CHS Traffic Study Update

Mr. Martin reported that he met with the NRPC, Litchfield Police Department, Litchfield Fire Department and CHS Administrators and discussed the traffic issue at CHS. NRPC conducted an on-site study. Mr. Martin will get the data from the traffic counts taken by NRPC. The NRPC proposed the following changes: making the road at the east of the school a one way heading toward the south lot; blocking off the south parking lot to the drive at the front of the school which will direct students parking in the south lot to exit through the south entrance. The south entry is proposed for entry and exits during daylight hours only. Mr. Gerard DeCosta, Town of Litchfield Road Agent, acknowledged in writing that he is in agreement with this study being tested.

Ms. Hamblett mentioned that there has been a verbal agreement with residents to the west and the south of CHS concerning the arrival and departure patterns. Ms. Hamblett asked if the NRPC looked at the gated entrance on the Talent Road side as a possible solution. Mr. Martin informed her that they looked at each entrance/exit and were told by the Fire Chief not to use the Talent Road exit at all as it is always to be an emergency access entrance.

Mrs. Beauregard stated she is a neighbor of CHS. She was very concerned about the commitment the District made with neighbors/abutters of the high school. She felt that a decision should not be made until this information is presented to abutters and neighbors of CHS. Mrs. Beauregard feels strongly that it is a major issue to make the south entrance a two-way entrance/exit and the neighbors should have a chance to talk to the Board.

Gina O'Leary, Student Representative, commented about the back up of buses when departing CHS.

Mr. Martin indicated that the NRPC, Police Department and Fire Department recommended that a test be done for one week to see if the suggested solution will work. Board members discussed the issue and Mrs. Couture noted that the issue be sent back to the group for more options. Mr. Martin felt that a representative from the NRPC, Chief Scofield and Chief O'Brion could come to a Board meeting to explain the recommendation and answer questions. Mrs. Couture suggested that the Board hold a special meeting with the group and CHS neighbors to discuss options; or a Board member could act as liaison, taking information to the neighbors and bringing feedback to the group to come up with another solution. No Board member volunteered, so Mrs. Couture asked to be informed of the meeting time with NRPC and she would try to attend. Some administrators and Board members felt the consultants and Chiefs should attend a Board meeting. Plans for communications with abutters are being considered.

#### 3) Impact Fee Update

Mr. Martin reported that the Selectmen kept the request for Elementary Impact Fees tabled because Mr. Raccio had a concern and was not present to address it. They will be meeting on Monday night to discuss it.

#### 3a) Budget Items

Mr. Martin asked for Board direction on the discussion of missed items in budget presentations. Mrs. Couture suggested that Mr. Martin can update the Board on any changes once all the budget presentations are made.

- 4) Draft School Board Minutes:  
a) Public Minutes of September 20, 2006 (Attachment #1)

There were minor revisions to the minutes.

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

- b) Public Minutes of September 27, 2006 (Attachment #2)

Minor revisions were made to the minutes.

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

4) **Proposed FY08 Budget Presentation**

1) Special Services

Mrs. Gregg presented the proposed Special Services budget for FY08 to the Board. Proposed new positions include:

- GMS – extending paraprofessionals hours from 5.5 to 6.0 hours/day and changing their total work days from 185 to 183 days per year; a 1:1 individual paraprofessional; a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Special Education teacher; increase the COTA hours to 30/week.
- LMS – moving a Special Educations teacher from a grant and include in the budget.
- CHS – put the Senior Mentor program into the budget as it has been grant funded for three years and may not be funded next year.
- District – a full time school psychologist to replace consultants now used; expand Special Education Secretary from 15 hours to 35 hours at CHS; Special Education Coordinator.

Mrs. Gregg reviewed non-salary and benefit budget changes with the Board, which will result in a 7.5% decrease for the FY08 fiscal year.

5) **Student Representatives Comments**

Mrs. Couture moved the Student Representatives Comments up. Ms. O’Leary commented about the issue of final exams in relation to students with an ‘A’ average. She noted that students feel they should not have to take a final exam if they receive an ‘A’ as a final grade in a subject. Ms. Hamblett mentioned that the Student Council is working on the issue with Mr. McDonough. Once complete, they will discuss the change with Mr. Parent.

**Budget Presentations Continued**

2) GMS

Mr. Schlichter presented the proposed GMS budget for FY08 to the Board. He noted that new/expanded positions include a recess/lunch monitor; a Reading tutor for the SERFA program; and an assistant for the higher performing students. Mr. Schlichter reviewed budget changes with the Board. He also mentioned that he would like to move the Grade 2/Grade 3 Summer Reading program into the budget. Additionally, he would like to implement the Granite State Fitness program.

3) LMS

Mr. Lecklider presented the proposed LMS budget for FY08 to the Board. New/expanded positions include expanding the school year clerical position to a full year position; a Reading teacher, a Health/Physical Education teacher; and a full time Enrichment Specialist for higher achievers. Mr. Lecklider reviewed budget changes with the Board.

Mr. Martin indicated that he will facilitate next week’s Administrative meeting where directors and principals will begin prioritizing their budgets for FY08.

4) CHS

Mr. Parent presented the proposed CHS budget for FY08 to the Board. He noted that new/expanded positions include expanding the part-time attendance secretary to full time in order to monitor the main entrance, buzz people into the building and check identification as well as complete needed clerical tasks; expand part-time Music teacher to full time; expand part-time Physical Education teacher to full time; a full time Social Studies teacher; a full time English teacher; a full time World Language teacher; an additional guidance counselor; an additional Tech

Education teacher and/or a half-time Art teacher; and a Reading specialist or teacher. Mr. Parent then gave a detailed overview of his budget request.

5) Debt Services

Mr. Martin distributed the Debt Services portion of the proposed budget for FY08 to the Board.

5) Salary Guidelines

Mrs. Mahoney returned to discuss proposed Salary Guidelines and recommendations for FY08 at the Board's request. She clarified that the proposed recommendations are only adjustments to salary ranges and schedules. She explained that we are trying to determine the budget for Level 1. The SAU has recommended no overall adjustment to the current non-bargaining schedules, but recommended maintaining step increases within the schedules (3%). She raised a concern for those who are the top of their pay scale in this option as they would remain at current hourly rates.

Mr. Boehm suggested a 1.5% inflation adjustment be added to all salary schedules, which would also apply to those at the top of their pay scale. He wanted to know if there was any longevity included at the top step of the salary schedules. Mrs. Mahoney informed him that there is currently no longevity provision, but if desired longevity would work out to an hourly rate that would be added to their wages.

Mrs. Beauregard asked if there were a sufficient number of steps in the salary schedules. Mrs. Mahoney indicated that we should maintain the number of steps and hourly rates we have.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to increase salary schedules by 1.5% for budgeting purposes. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 4-1-0 with Mr. Miller voting in the negative.***

Mrs. Mahoney recommended a salary range adjustment for administrators at 1.85% as well as a 1% experience step within range. Mr. Martin noted that this would bring administrators as a group almost to the midpoint of the salary range of last year. Mr. Miller pointed out that we weren't going to come back every year to adjust salary ranges. Mrs. Beauregard raised a concern about the budget and suggested a 1.5% increase to the salary ranges. Mrs. Mahoney added that is in addition to the 1% increase for experience. The Board discussed the issue briefly.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to accept the salary recommendation to increase administrators' salary range by 1.85% with a 1% increase in the salary range for satisfactory performance for budgeting purposes. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 4-1-0 with Mrs. Jewett voting in the negative.***

Mrs. Mahoney recommended a hold on adjustments for SAU staff positions. She indicated that she is waiting for salary comparison data and the Board can review these adjustments at a later date.

Mrs. Mahoney recommended a 3% increase for all other positions within the District that do not fall within schedule or range.

***Mr. Boehm made a motion to accept the salary and hourly rate recommendation to increase compensation for all other positions in the District by 3% for budgeting purposes. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.***

6) **Community Input**

There was no community input.

7) **Superintendent's Report**

a) Enrollment Projections

Ms. Hamblett distributed the NHSBA enrollment projections for the second Friday (9/8/06) to the Board. The Board will review the packet and discuss it at a future meeting. Copies were given to Mr. Miller for distribution at the next Budget Committee meeting.

b) September Enrollment Report

Ms. Hamblett reported that the District enrollments for September were 1663. On October 2 enrollments were at 1664 students in the District.

Ms. Hamblett reported that First Student held an October dinner for employees and families. Mr. Martin, Ms. Hamblett, Mr. O'Malley and Mrs. Maghakian attended the dinner where bus drivers were thanked for their work and recognized for their years of service.

Ms. Hamblett reminded the Board of an item discussed last year – substitute nurses' salaries. She would like to place it on the October 25<sup>th</sup> agenda and provide the back-up to the Board prior to the meeting. Proposed increases will be reviewed. Ms. Hamblett complimented school nurses for their preparation of the rationale behind the need for these increases.

**8) School Board Members' Comments/Committee Reports**

- 1) Budget Committee
- 2) Selectmen

Mrs. Couture deferred the School Board Members' Comments/Committee Reports to the next meeting.

**9) 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 10:26 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. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried by role call vote: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

**10) Return to Public Session**

*Mrs. Jewett made a motion to return to public session at 10:39 p.m. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried by role call vote: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

**11) Adjourn**

*Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

**12) Upcoming Meetings**

*>Litchfield School Board: October 25, 2006 - CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
School Board Secretary