

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

November 19, 2008

(approved as amended 12-10-08)

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair	Mr. Martin Schlichter, Principal, GMS
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair	Mr. Tom Lecklider, Principal, LMS
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member	Mr. Robert Manseau, Principal, CHS
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member	Michael Clark, Student Representative
Mrs. Dot Beauregard, Board Member	Alison Lajoie, Student Representative
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Superintendent	Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator	
Ms. Amanda Lecaroz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction	

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

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2) Review & Revision of Agenda

There were no revisions to the agenda.

3) School Board Members' Comments

a) Board Member Comments

Mrs. Couture reported that the NHSBA Board of Directors met last night. NHSBA members were concerned that school board members were participating as their own district's delegate. (FYI – Mrs. Couture is on the NHSBA Board of Directors) Mr. Boehm volunteered to attend the NHSBA meetings in the future. The next meeting will be January 17, 2009.

Mrs. Jewett commented on the excellent behavior of the children that attended the Seussical musical at CHS.

Mr. Miller commented that every CHS team qualified for their tournament this fall.

b) Student Representative Comments

Michael Clark and Alison Lajoie gave an update to the Board regarding high school events. They reported on Make a Difference Week and the Food Drive, noting that GMS is leading with 1577 items, LMS has collected 689 items, and CHS has 422. The CHS varsity football team is headed to the championship game on Saturday when they will face Franklin. The representatives' report also included updates on the Student Council's Waterville Valley trip, Trebuchet Day at CHS, Seussical the musical, and the Key Club's trick or treat event for Unicef. All events were very successful. On December 11, the Student Council will be hosting a Region IV meeting. The National Honor Society induction will be held on November 20 where 21 new members will be inducted. The representatives also mentioned that a new club will begin at CHS – the Environmental Club, which will be run by a senior for her senior project.

4) Community Input

There was no community input.

5) Principals' Reports

a) CHS

1) Peace Pole

Mr. Manseau and Mr. Mower, CHS Tech Ed teacher, presented a proposal for a peace pole project at CHS. CHS Technology Department would like to form a collaborative learning project that brings students and community

together, celebrating the desire for world peace. Students would build and erect a permanent “peace pole” that will have several sides with the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” written in several different world languages. Mr. Mower indicated that Board permission is needed to create a committee and develop a plan for implementation. The staff involved plans to hold public hearing meetings to gather community input for the project. Mr. Mower will bring the final plan for the peace pole to the Board for approval.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to give permission to CHS faculty and students interested to create an exploratory committee for community input on the peace pole proposal. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. Manseau reported that CHS progress reports were sent home on Friday. There was a safety search last week that resulted in many supportive responses from parents.

Mr. Manseau informed Board members about snow plowing concerns in the student parking lot. He indicated that a tree near the power gate would need to be removed in order to facilitate snow plowing in that area. Mrs. Couture expressed concerns over removing the tree and felt that if the tree is a spruce it should be relocated. Board members discussed the issue and arrived at a consensus.

Board consensus: It is to be determined if the tree near the power gate is a spruce or a pine. If the tree is a spruce, it is to be relocated. If it is a pine, it can be removed.

Mr. Manseau reported that CHS was contacted by Princeton Review who offers SAT Prep Courses to students on campus. He indicated that these courses can be costly and queried about surveying parents to determine their interest in having their children participate in the courses. Dr. Cutler suggested gathering the information by using the Alert Now system, which has a short survey option.

Mr. Manseau reported that CHS has decided that it would be beneficial to begin the practice of collecting class dues. Collecting class dues, which are placed in the student activity account, will help seniors pay for and/or offset the costs of traditional and expensive high school activities including, but not limited to, homecoming, semi-formal, prom, and graduation events.

Mr. Boehm and Mr. Miller expressed concerns about Edline. Mr. Manseau indicated he will investigate their concerns.

b) LMS

Mr. Lecklider reported on the Veteran’s Day ceremony, which was very successful. He also indicated that Mix Up Lunch, a nation-wide event where students ‘seating is ‘mixed up’ and they are given activities and have discussions, was a huge success at LMS. Mr. Lecklider acknowledged staff effort with Edline, which was implemented three weeks ago and has been successful. Computer Education teacher, Robin Corbeil, has been coordinating with the local cable channel to air student video projects. He reported that the CHAT team has been working to assist struggling students with behavior problems; and the Student Council recognizes students who are cooperating with core values each month at a special breakfast.

c) GMS

Mr. Schlichter reported on the District Food Drive that has been an excellent event between all three schools. He thanked high school students for picking up the donations at GMS. The Veteran’s Day celebration at GMS was well received and Parent/Teacher conferences were well attended. He reported that GMS is involved in the Envisions Math program; the SERFA program has been restructured for students that are most in need, including those students in the SERFA groups; and GMS is using an online program to identify exceptional students.

1) Kindergarten Plan

Dr. Cutler presented the final draft of the Kindergarten Plan. She noted that the staffing model was revised to reflect 2.5 teachers and 2.5 paraprofessionals. Dr. Cutler indicated that an increase or decrease in staffing would depend on enrollment. The plan includes revised staffing needs, facility needs, curriculum, transportation, a long-term statement, and a timeline from the presentation of kindergarten to registration/screening to implementation. A Board decision is required for the transportation proposal.

Mr. Martin indicated that Board approval of the plan is necessary to facilitate delivery of the portable classrooms for the opening of school in September 2009.

Dr. Cutler also presented lease costs and diagrams for both reconditioned and new portable classroom units with bathrooms that the Board asked for previously. She recommended two new 28 x 76 two-classroom units, and one new 28 x 42 one-classroom. Dr. Cutler also included a kindergarten programming plan and the District's legal recommendation for the implementation of kindergarten and clarification of kindergarten funding.

Board members discussed kindergarten costs and facility needs. Board members agreed on the Superintendent's recommendations for portable classrooms, staffing, facility needs, and kindergarten timeline.

Mr. Miller thanked Dr. Cutler, Mr. Schlichter, Ms. Lecaroz, and staff members involved with the development of the kindergarten plan for their hard work. Dr. Cutler asked Board members for approval of a morning pick-up and after drop-off for kindergarten students.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve a minimum morning kindergarten pick up (7:40 – 8:00 am) and an afternoon drop off of students attending kindergarten beginning in September 2009. Parents of kindergarten students are responsible for the midday transportation of kindergarten students. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the final Kindergarten Plan as presented and recommended. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Kim and Jason Shapiro of Litchfield were pleased with the plan, but were concerned with staffing and if portable classrooms would be available for the start of kindergarten in September 2009. Dr. Cutler indicated that if the portable classrooms were not delivered and set up for the start of kindergarten, the District will find short-term space in GMS for kindergarten classes. Materials and equipment will have been received for the implementation of kindergarten. Dr. Cutler assured the Shapiro's that several internal teaching candidates expressed interest in teaching kindergarten.

The Shapiro's were concerned about the Hudson kindergarten litigation and how it may impact kindergarten in Litchfield. Dr. Cutler indicated that at this time public kindergarten is a state law. Hudson's litigation case must go through the legal system; however kindergarten will continue to be implemented in Litchfield until a legal opinion changes this mandate.

Jason Guerrette of Litchfield expressed concerns about the impact of implementing kindergarten in relation to the budget. Mr. Miller indicated that if there were no revenue from the State, it would add approximately \$322,000 to the budget.

Mr. Guerrette commented that if the budget fails kindergarten will be included in the default budget. He suggested kindergarten be placed on a warrant article, contrary to legal opinion. A discussion on the impact and risks of placing kindergarten on a warrant article followed. Dr. Cutler indicated that the State will pay for portable classrooms for 3 years. The town must have a permanent solution at that time.

6) Curriculum Report

1) Curriculum Report

Ms. Lecaroz presented the November 2008 Curriculum Report to the Board. She reported that curriculum committees continue to meet on a regular basis to review and revise K-12 curriculum. Due to the success of the Teachers Teaching Teachers program, the Professional Development Committee is planning a program for the spring. Ms. Lecaroz reported that another group of teachers were trained in the use of Performance Tracker to make individual student achievement data more accessible to classroom teachers to ensure individualized instruction. Each school continues to work on their Assessment Plans. Ms. Lecaroz mentioned that she attended an assessment meeting where districts shared their assessment processes.

7) Recommended Action

a) Business Affairs:

1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes of November 12, 2008

There was a minor revision to the minutes.

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

2) Approval of Final FY10 Proposed Budget

Mr. Martin presented reductions to the budget recommended by the Board members. He highlighted major reductions and noted that the operating budget total, less reductions and excluding kindergarten, is an increase of 2.52% over last year. The FY10 operating budget with kindergarten included is \$19,644,993.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the general fund budget for FY10 at \$19,644,993, which includes kindergarten. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

3) Discussion of Warrant Articles

Mr. Martin mentioned that he asked the Board to consider placing any available funds in Special Education and Grounds & Maintenance Capital Reserve funds. Mrs. Couture indicated that, historically speaking, the Budget Committee has reduced the Special Education budget by the amount of a capital reserve fund. Mr. Martin noted that the District's auditors suggested that the District should have a capital reserve fund for accrued payroll liabilities because of the new accounting standards, which would help offset future tax impacts.

Other warrant articles suggested were: an article for a deputy treasurer (at no cost to the District); an article for the teachers' contract [once negotiations have ended]. Mrs. Jewett suggested a warrant article for \$8M to renovate GMS.

Board members also discussed the CHS storage problem. Mr. Martin indicated that the storage report will be discussed at a January Board meeting.

4) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

8) Superintendent's Report

1) Superintendent's Report

Report is included in packet for review.

2) Community Engagement Plan Update

Dr. Cutler distributed an updated Community Engagement schedule to Board members.

9) Committee Reports

a) Budget Committee

Mr. Miller reported that the Budget Committee met on November 13. There are 38 town budgets to be discussed; 35 have been heard and 3 are scheduled. The Committee will vote on over 20 of those budgets.

b) Selectmen

Mrs. Jewett reported that the Selectmen continue to work with new treasurer and are still working on warrant articles. She also reported that two churches in town are offering to give over 65 turkey dinners to families for Thanksgiving.

c) Other Committees – Legislature

Mr. Boehm reported that he submitted two bills to the Legislature: a bill regarding student representatives to school boards, and a bill stating that any item reduced in the operating budget must also be reduced in the default budget. Mr. Boehm mentioned that he spoke to some people about kindergarten.

10) Old Business

1) 2008 Voter Survey Results Update

Mr. Miller presented the voter survey results from September 2008. 5664 surveys were mailed to individual registered voters; 1154 responses were received; 773 surveys were undeliverable. He indicated that the results were interesting. The results will be available on the District website.

Mrs. Couture mentioned that, after reading the survey comments, it was discouraging to discover that many residents did not have the information that has been presented to the community.

2) **Building Committee Recommendation**

Mr. Chris Pascucci, Building Committee member, and Mr. Jason Guerrette, community member, were present. In June 2008, the Building Committee recommended that no school be put before the voters in March 2009. They also recommended a plan to disseminate information to the community and the press and build upon the good will within the community.

Mr. Miller asked Board members to weigh in on a decision regarding the recommendation from the Building Committee. Mrs. Couture commented that there was some confusion on the comments from the recent voter survey that she felt needed to be clarified before moving forward. Mr. Boehm felt that the Building Committee recommended not putting a new building on the ballot and the Board should support that part of their recommendation.

Mrs. Beauregard made a motion to accept Building Committee's recommendation not to put school on ballot in March 2009. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Board members deferred the second section of the Building Committee's recommendation, 'The Plan', to the December 3 meeting. Mr. Miller will contact the Building Committee Chair to get a consensus of the latter section of their recommendation, as well as their intentions as a committee.

Mr. Guerrette queried about the audio system that was added to the GMS fire safety system, which was recommended as a result of the fire/safety inspection this past summer. Dr. Cutler responded that the audio for the fire safety system has been delayed for one year due to a misunderstanding. The delay is acceptable to the Fire Chief and the Building/Health Inspector.

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

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

Mrs. Couture made a motion to go into non-public session at 10:03 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 roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

14) **Return to Public Session**

Mr. Boehm made a motion to return to public session at 10:24 p.m. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

15) **Adjourn**

Mr. Boehm made a motion to adjourn at 10:25 p.m. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

16) **Upcoming Meetings**

> *Litchfield School Board: December 3, 10, 17, 2008 – CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Secretary