

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
February 20, 2008
(approved as written 3-12-08)

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member
Mrs. Dot Beaugard, Board Member
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Interim Superintendent
Ms. Amanda Lecaroz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Martin Schlichter, Principal GMS
Mr. Tom Lecklider, Principal LMS
Mr. Robert Manseau, Principal CHS
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary

1) **Non-Public Session: RSA 92-A3II (a-c)**

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

Mrs. Couture made a motion to go into non-public session at 6:02 p.m. under RSA 92-A3II (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 vote: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes.

2) **Return to Public Session**

Mrs. Couture made a motion to return to public session at 6:37 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mrs. Beaugard, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

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

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

4) **Review and Revision of Agenda**

5) **Presentations to the Board**

1) **NECAP Assessment Summary – Amanda Lecaroz**

Ms. Lecaroz presented the Fall 2007 NECAP Assessment Summary to the Board. The NECAP was given to students in grades 3-8 this past October. The results are used for accountability purposes as required by NCLB and to monitor curriculum implementation. The results in grades 3-8 indicated that the overall percentage of students scoring proficient and above in Reading was 71% as compared to 73% for the State, 66% in math as compared to 66% for the State, and 42% in writing as compared to 48% for the State. NECAP reading and math tests were given to students in grade 11 and in writing to grades 5, 8, and 11. Grade 11 results will be released later this month. Teachers at GMS and LMS participated in test item analysis of the test items in an effort to inform teachers on expectations and student performance. Each school identified areas of strength and needed growth for each building and subject area. CHS will engage in this project at the end of March after their scores have been released.

Ms. Lecaroz included charts to show the percentage of proficiency of the students over the last three years as well as the percentage of proficiency for whole school as related to the Special Education population. The results reflect on the previous year's instruction and informs us about our instructional program overall. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that major changes in the math curriculum will go into effect this coming year. She added that the Special Education results in math as compared to the state average are within acceptable averages.

Ms. Lecaroz explained that the charts reflected that the lower grades were higher than the State average in Reading, but a decline began at grade 4 and their scores were lower than the State average. A similar result was reflected with Special Education students in those grades. As a result, Special Education teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialized Reading teachers were targeted to provide more instruction to the students directly and improvement funds are being used to train middle school teachers.

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Lecaroz for a three-year tracking module for Special Education students. Dr. Cutler noted that the Commissioner of Education is trying to get growth models approved in the State. Mrs. Couture queried about the use of instructional time in relation to improving student learning. Mr. Lecklider indicated that he has noticed trend at the middle school where content becomes much more difficult and many content reading passages on the assessment tests are social studies and science content. He noted that middle school students appear to struggle with content reading. Mr. Lecklider added that the design we have currently should be capable of reaching students. Mr. Schlichter observed that at the elementary level in grades 3 and 4 there needs to be much more non-fiction reading.

Ms. Lecaroz explained that the writing results reflected that grade 4 is above the State average, whereas grade 7 is well below the State average. We are writing the curriculum and next year will target the concern in professional development. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that no grade 7 Special Education students scored proficient. Dr. Cutler observed that when it comes to writing we want to be a school district and not a district of schools. We would like a common assessment and program for grades K-12. She added that we are studying a systematic approach to writing and are close to bringing it to the Board for approval.

Mrs. Beauregard inquired about the writing assessment process. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that there are approximately ten questions in vocabulary, spelling, conventions, and then the writing prompts. The actual writing piece is where the students are lacking and unsure of how they are expected to write. She added that writing is not a requirement of AYP in New Hampshire.

Mr. Miller commented that the middle school grade distributions and NECAP writing results appeared to be inconsistent. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that grades on report cards are a combination of academic and non-academic factors. We are 80%-90% complete in aligning the curriculum and when it is completed we will bring it to the Board. She added that overall we would like to see the NECAP scores higher and continue to address the issues. We should see more of an impact next October.

2) Math Curriculum Committee Course Proposal – Amanda Lecaroz

Ms. Lecaroz presented the Math Curriculum Committee's course proposal to the Board. The Committee is proposing to take an integrated approach to traditional math. They are not proposing to drop integrated math. Integrated math is a three-year program where algebra, geometry, and algebra II are included in each year and emphasizes conceptual understanding over rote memorization. We have found that students are weak in basic skills and computational fluency, and it is causing difficulties for transfer students and college admissions. Traditional math is common in American high schools where algebra, geometry, and algebra II are in a sequential pattern over three years. Weaknesses are in problem solving and critical thinking, as well as lacking real-world application.

Ms. Lecaroz indicated that the problem with implementing two separate programs [integrated math and traditional math] are scheduling conflicts and finding teachers able to and comfortable with teaching both integrated and traditional programs. The Committee is recommending a "Blend" of integrated and traditional programs where a traditional sequence of math courses can be taught using an integrated approach to grades 8-12.

Mrs. Couture was concerned that the integrated piece will be lost. Diane Angelini, a CHS math teacher, indicated that we will include many integrated aspects into the traditional units. Irene Martin, a CHS math teacher, commented that an integrated math textbook is so embedded that many resources are needed for research to find the concepts that are not outlined for instruction. This results in requiring 5 hours to teach 1 hour of integrated math. Mr. Manseau indicated that currently there is curriculum chaos in the math program at CHS. He suggested giving all students integrated math with the fluency of traditional math, which will result in more curricular clarity and consistency in the number of math classes in relation to the number of teachers we currently have at CHS. This may take a few years to phase in, but a decision needs to be made this year.

Mr. Miller asked Student Representative Michael Clark for his input. Mr. Clark felt that given the information presented and noting that students who have taken three years of traditional math with a fourth in integrated to help traditional math make sense, a blended course would be more helpful.

Ms. Angelini and Ms. Martin gave a mini-lesson to show what integrated vs. traditional vs. a blend would look like.

Ms. Lecaroz observed that a blended math program that gives a traditional math sequence, an integrated, and a real world application is the approach the Committee is recommending. Curriculum alignment is not a possibility because of the many different math courses currently. She added that projects will be provided as resources to reinforce the applications of a blended course. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that all the research we have done is moving toward a blended approach and we are comfortable with a three year process to implement it in phases.

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Lecaroz to provide responses at the next curriculum meeting to questions regarding the percentage of transfer students that are affected, what other countries are doing in math, and if it helps to find teachers to teach both integrated and traditional. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that she can design a professional development plan for the Board to review.

Mr. Manseau was concerned with developing a program of studies to go to print next month in relation to a decision to implement a blended math program. Ms. Lecaroz indicated she would have the responses to Mr. Miller's questions by the next Board meeting. She added that when reviewing minutes from 2001 there were concerns raised about not having public input on the issue. The Board discussed public input on a blended program and decided to schedule community input for the March 26 meeting.

3) **NH Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Robert Manseau**

Mr. Manseau discussed the NH Youth Risk Behavior Survey previously distributed to the Board. The NH Youth Risk Behavior Survey is a high school youth health risk behavior assessment tool designed and administered by the CDC. This survey is conducted biennially under the auspices of the NH DOE in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Manseau indicated that there are caveats that state that this information may not be totally reliable.

Mr. Manseau highlighted some risk behavior percentages for CHS youths riding in cars with someone who is drinking alcohol, carrying weapons, fighting, relationship or sexual violence, suicide related behavior, alcohol use, marijuana use, other drug use, and sexual intercourse. He indicated that some of this data is alarming, however, some may not be totally reliable or accurate. Mr. Manseau observed that we have to be aware of what is going on and be able to do our best to provide the services that students need to feel safe at school.

Mrs. Couture indicated that much of this behavior begins in middle school and needs to be addressed early. Mr. Lecklider agreed and noted that is why the DARE program has been instituted. Student Representative Michael Clark commented that he took the survey in advisory and cautioned that some data is more reliable than other data. For example, alcohol use and drug use are more weighted than weapons and sex, and students are more skeptical to answer questions that are more personal.

6) **School Board Members' Comments**

Michael Clark, Student Representative, reported that the Student Council had its LEA carnation sale and raised over \$500, which will be used for a senior scholarship; they are planning an Oscar's night; the Council attended a winter workshop at Winnisquam High School; held new elections for grade 9 and 10 student representatives and secretary; and there will be a Pep Rally for the Girls' JV basketball team. A semi-formal dance was recently held, but there was not a huge turnout.

7) Principals' Reports

Mr. Schlichter reported that it has been tough winter at GMS as there have been many leaks over past two weeks due to amount of snow on the roof throughout the building, excluding 1930 building. He also reported that the fire alarm system dialer needs to be repaired. A productive workshop day was held on Monday with the GMS staff who are looking at things in a district perspective and becoming more optimistic through the new school process. Mr. Schlichter thanked students, the PTO, and parents for their support. He added that the Kids Voting will relate to naming the GMS mascot (tiger); and on Tuesday, February 26, Litchfield Cable will come to GMS to video the building.

Mr. Lecklinder welcomed the new Math tutor, Dawn Desmaris, who is working with low achievers. He reported that the Girls' basketball team was defeated in the championship as was the Boys' basketball team. The Girls team placed 4th in the TriCounty league. The Washington, DC trip is scheduled for May 13-16 and he thanked Joe Stapleton for helping with the fundraiser. The workshop day on Monday went well and the staff participated in a NECAP test item analysis. Teachers noticed a pattern where our students did not score well; plans and solutions were discussed to address this concern. Mr. Lecklinder concluded his report stating that PBIS is going well at LMS.

Mr. Manseau distributed a grade comparison for the first semester at CHS. He indicated that this data only begins to work after year three. He observed that the faculty is trying to establish places to identify progress and suggested that in spite of the fact that we changed the failure grade from 60 to 65, grades for Ds and Fs actual went down. Mr. Miller requested the actual data without grade 9 included.

Mr. Manseau reported that the NEASC report has just been received and he will disseminate it beginning tomorrow. He also reported that CHS student, Nick Dube, has been selected to be a candidate for the Presidential Scholars of the United States program. Mr. Manseau suggested that the Board begin discussions on a date for graduation. Dr. Cutler indicated that the Board will discuss it at their next meeting.

- 1) Grade Distributions
- 2) Course Selections

Grade distributions and Course selections for LMS and CHS were distributed to Board members.

8) Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutler distributed her report to the Board.

Dr. Cutler distributed a draft meeting calendar to the Board reflecting one meeting in July 2008, two in August, and meetings resuming to the first, second and fourth Wednesday in each month of the 2008-2009 school year calendar.

Dr. Cutler updated the Board on the CHS traffic study indicating that we are waiting for feedback from the NRPC and a meeting has been scheduled for March 12.

Dr. Cutler reported that none of the beef that has been recently recalled from Westland was distributed in our schools.

9) Community Input

There was no community input.

10) Old Business

- a) New School Information Meetings Update

Date: February 20, 2008
Campbell High School

Litchfield Board of Education
Public Session – 6:30 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Non-Public Session

Mr. Miller updated the Board on the BUILD Committee's plans. There is a meeting scheduled with Stage Crossing for March 4. The Committee will be distributing the information ahead of time. Ms. Becky Moore, a member of the Committee, suggested a Board member attend to explain the process for the proposed new school and answer questions. BUILD will hold an organizational meeting on March 5 and they have been collecting names and addresses of residents who are willing to put signs supporting the proposed new school on their lawns. The Committee will be printing and distributing flyers as well.

b) New School Fact Sheet for HLN

Dr. Cutler presented four draft fact sheet designs regarding the proposed new school. Board members discussed the layouts and suggested revisions to Layout D, which will become an insert for the HLN once it is revised and copied.

11) Adjourn

Mr. Boehm made a motion to adjourn at 9:57 p.m. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

12) Upcoming Meetings

> *Litchfield School Board: March 5, 12, 26, 2008 – CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Secretary