

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

September 24, 2008

(approved as amended 10-1-08)

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, Superintendent
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator
Ms. Amanda Lecaroz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Deb Mahoney, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Martin Schlichter, Principal, GMS
Mr. Tom Lecklider, Principal, LMS
Mr. Robert Manseau, Principal, CHS
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary

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

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2) Review & Revision of Agenda

There are no revisions to the agenda.

3) Presentations

~~ Teacher Recognition

The School Board recognized Margaret Parent for 35 years of service as a teacher in the district. Mr. Miller read a biography of Mrs. Parent to Board members and for the viewing public.

4) School Board Members' Comments

There were no comments.

5) Community Input

There was no community input.

6) Principals' Reports

Mr. Lecklider reported a very smooth school opening. The transition was excellent and he is pleased with the new staff. He indicated that the faculty and administration at LMS plan on focusing on goals to improve student achievement, specifically student goal setting with measurable outcomes. Students will be paired in groups of 15 with a teacher to work on the following goals centered around the acronym BEST: 1) Believe in Yourself; 2) Extend a Helping Hand; 3) Show Respect; 4) Take Responsibility. A goal setting sheet will be completed for each student that will reflect steps toward achieving the goals, evidence of accomplishments, and completion date. The other side of the sheet measures their NECAP goals. Teachers will enter individual scores from 2007 and discuss individually with each student their goal for this year. Mr. Lecklider commented that the data will be very helpful in helping students realize their goals.

Mrs. Couture felt that this is a great idea and commented that the first step in making students care is making them aware.

Mr. Lecklider also reported that the students who participated in Nature's Classroom arrived safely and the trip is going well.

Mr. Schlichter reported that the opening of GMS went well. He thanked Dr. Cutler and Mr. Martin for their help and support with the work that was completed at GMS over the summer. He also thanked Mr. Lynch, Litchfield Building Inspector, and Chief Scofield for their help.

Mr. Schlichter reported that Open House was held last week over two nights and parents were pleased. NWEA testing was completed. He added that there are some high achieving students at GMS this year and would like to discuss programs for these students with the Board. Mr. Schlichter indicated that administrators and faculty will be focusing on three goals: student achievement, a follow the child model, and educating the community on the needs of the facility.

Mr. Manseau reported that he held a parent forum this evening and there was much interest in the college process. Upcoming activities include: Homecoming events, student government elections, soccer games on Friday, a football game on Saturday, and a dance on Saturday night. He reported that he recently attended a New Hampshire School Redesign conference and presented the new CHS report card, which sparked much interest. Mr. Manseau added that CHS received the Sportsmanship of the Year Award and the New Hampshire Scholars initiative has begun. Every student was given a 4 year plan to bring home, discuss with parents, and decide on their participation. He indicated that CHS administrators and faculty will be focusing on student achievement, particularly SAT scores.

Mr. Miller queried about the traffic flow and numbered parking spaces. Mr. Manseau indicated that the numbered parking spaces are working out well and he received positive feedback about the traffic flow.

Mr. Boehm inquired about the status of the Talent Road entrance power gate. Mr. Martin noted that the gate works, but needs power. They are waiting for a trench to be dug to run power to the gate.

7) Curriculum Report

Ms. Lecaroz summarized the district-wide assessment data for the Board. Both the NECAP and NWEA data indicate that the work done district-wide in the area of mathematics is having a positive impact on student achievement. Writing at the middle school level is a significant area of concern. Reading, district-wide, has remained stable at this point. The number of high achieving students appears to be decreasing as they progress through the grades in the district. Our district performed well when compared to the state average in the new Science NECAP, however, inquiry is an area of concern state-wide. Ms. Lecaroz indicated that an action plan will be developed for improving students' ability on mastery of inquiry in Science. She recommended the creation of a task force to create an action plan to address the needs of the higher achieving students, which would be aligned to the School Board goals.

Mr. Schlichter reported that NECAP scores in Reading for Grades 2 and 3 indicated that students performed at or better than the state in all areas assessed [in Reading], and in Grade 4 the data indicated that students performed better than the state in Word Identification/Vocabulary, however, performed below the state average in Literary Comprehension, Initial Understanding, Informational Reading, and Analysis and Interpretation. In writing, the students performed at or better than the state average in Structure of Language and Writing Conventions, and Extending Response. Students performed below the state average in Short Responses. Mr. Schlichter indicated that there will be a change to the SERFA program where the Reading Specialist and tutors will work with very small groups of at-risk students and will focus on comprehension and writing responses.

Mr. Schlichter reported that math scores for students in Grades 2, 3, and 4 were higher than the state average in most areas. In Grade 3, students performed below the state average in Functions and Algebra; in Grade 4, students performed below the state average in Geometry and Measurement. Teachers will focus on the written aspect of math and continue with the implementation of the Envision Math Program. A Friday afternoon math enrichment program is being considered at all grade levels.

Mr. Lecklider reported that LMS will be focusing across content areas in writing using the Six Traits model. The content reading program began last year and will continue at LMS. Teachers will hold discussions with students on their goals regarding achievement. Mr. Lecklider indicated that the My Voice Survey yielded interesting results. Areas of concern included: a lower percentage of students were aware of the school goals; half of the student population was aware of teacher/parent communication; and less than half of the students feel others see them as a leader. LMS will be focusing on improving these feelings with the continuation of the Peer Mentoring Program, the implementation of Edline, and the utilization of BEST groups (student goals). The math tutor will continue as well.

Mr. Manseau reported that the graduation rate is stable at CHS, but the drop out rate is a concern. Five students received their GED, six enrolled in the My Turn Program (an alternative program in Nashua), and five should have been reported the previous year. Board members suggested Mr. Manseau issue a press release with an explanation of the CHS drop out rate.

Mr. Manseau briefly reviewed the data for AP, graduate college plans, NEASC highlighted recommendations, and regular recommendations. He asked Board members to review the SAT data for CHS.

Mr. Miller requested that Mr. Manseau compile a list of the highlighted recommendations that have a financial impact for the budgeting process.

Ms. Lecaroz recommended, in light of the budget timeline, the Curriculum Assessment report be delivered to the Board in August. Board members agreed.

8) Recommended Action

a) Business Affairs:

1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes of September 10, 2008

Mrs. Couture suggested attaching the Town Tax Payment Update to the minutes.

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

2) 2008-2009 Tuition Rates

Mr. Martin distributed proposed tuition rates for 2008-2009. Expended per student last year - Elementary: \$9,351.93, Middle: \$8,812.60, High: \$10,261.01. 50% tuition rates for children of employees.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the 2008-2009 Tuition Rates. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

3) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

9) Budget Work Session

a) SAU & School Board

Mr. Martin distributed the School Board budget for FY2010 and reviewed the new format with the Board. He indicated that salaries were not entered pending the Board's decision on the percentage of salary increases.

Mr. Martin distributed the SAU budget for FY2010 and reviewed the new format with the Board. He highlighted increases and reductions in the SAU budget.

Mr. Martin distributed the Finance budget for FY2010 and reviewed the new format with the Board. He highlighted increases and reductions in the Finance budget.

Mrs. Mahoney distributed the HR budget for FY2010 and reviewed the new format with the Board. She highlighted increases and reductions in the HR budget.

Mr. Martin indicated that the net reduction for the SAU budget, excluding salaries/benefits, is \$88,537.

b) Salary Guidelines

Mr. Martin commented that Board direction for the salary guidelines are for budgetary purposes only. Board members agreed. Mr. Martin indicated that the cost of living has increased 6.04%. Mrs. Mahoney presented the following proposed guidelines: 1) 3% adjustment to salary ranges, with a 1% movement within the range (administrators, site facility managers, building/grounds coordinator); 2) 1.5% adjustment to all pay schedules with 3% between each step (food service, custodians, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, SAU staff); 3) 3% adjustment to those who are not on ranges or schedules (monitors, psychologist, social worker, tutors, COTA, elected officials). Mr. Martin indicated that teachers are currently in negotiations. Board members felt the proposed guidelines were a good start and emphasized that they are for budgetary planning purposes.

Mrs. Mahoney asked the Board for guidance in considering an adjustment to the daily substitute pay rate. Board members asked for market data research before they could make a decision.

Mr. Boehm expressed concern for the need for a storage facility at CHS. Mr. Martin indicated that the committee has been working on the storage issue. An inventory of storage was performed at all schools. The committee will meet to discuss the issue further.

10) Superintendent's Report

1) Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutler indicated that the report was placed in the Board packets. She added that opening day went well and she was pleased that the work at GMS was completed in time for the school to open.

2) Community Engagement Plan Update

Dr. Cutler reviewed the community engagement plan with the Board. She indicated that the Volunteer Brunch went well and that 16 people attended. She included dates for events listed on the community engagement plan. She proposed that Board members select one or two community groups and attend their meetings with updates on district issues and to answer the questions community members may have. She added that this would increase visibility as a Board within the community. Board members discussed the method of communication with each group to check their availability and meeting dates/times. Mrs. Beauregard suggested sending a form letter to each group requesting their meeting dates. Mr. Boehm suggested that the letter instruct the groups to specify the purpose of the meeting will be for the topic(s) the group would like to discuss with Board members.

Dr. Cutler reported that she spoke with Selectman Byron regarding a Joint Meeting. He indicated that the Selectmen wanted more information and asked for agenda topics, which Dr. Cutler proposed to the Board. Board members agreed to the selected topics. Mr. Boehm added Use of Town & School Facilities. Dr. Cutler will forward the agenda topics to the Selectmen for their consideration.

3) Second Friday Enrollments

Dr. Cutler provided Second Friday enrollments for the Board. The report reflects that 6 more students are enrolled at GMS than projected; LMS is up 1 student; and CHS is down 8 students. The District total is 1591 students as of September 12, 2008.

11) Committee Reports

a) Budget Committee

Mr. Miller reported that he did not attend the Budget Committee meeting.

b) Selectmen

Mrs. Jewett reported the town has approximately \$401,000 in back taxes for the last three years. Selectmen are working on budgets and nearing completion.

c) Building Committee

Mrs. Beauregard distributed a draft article regarding the GMS septic system. Board members reviewed the article and suggested minor revisions. Board members suggested submitting the article to the HLN, Nashua Telegraph, and Union Leader, as well as posting it on the District website.

Board Consensus was to print the revised article in the local newspapers and post it on the District website.

Mrs. Beauregard submitted a letter of resignation from the Building Committee. She requested that either Mrs. Jewett or Mr. Boehm replace her in the position.

Dr. Cutler reported that CHS was awarded a certificate of recognition for successful participation in Fulbright Teacher Exchange program. It was suggested that it be framed and displayed at CHS.

12) Policies: 2nd Reading

a) Procedural Safeguards Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability (ACE)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Procedural Safeguards Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability policy for a 2nd reading. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

- b) Programs for Students with Disabilities (IHBA)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Programs for Students with Disabilities policy for a 2nd reading. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

13) 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 9:32 p.m. under RSA91-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. Mrs. Couture 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

Mrs. Couture made a motion to return to public session at 9:51 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

Board members briefly discussed the town tax payment schedule.

15) Adjourn

Mrs. Beauregard made a motion to adjourn at 9:58 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

16) Upcoming Meetings

> *Litchfield School Board: October 1, 8, 22, 2008 – CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Secretary