

*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**  
**June 28, 2006**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**  
**(approved as amended 7-12-06)**

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  
Mr. Martin Schlichter, Principal, GMS  
Ms. Catherine Hamblett, Superintendent  
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, School Board Secretary

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

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2) **Review and Revision of Agenda**

3) **School Board Retreat**

1) District Mission Statement

Mrs. Couture explained that the prior mission statement was developed in 1994, twelve years ago. She distributed a copy of the NHSBA's Visionary Role of School Boards. She noted that when she was reviewing the current mission statement and the NHSBA's vision statement for school boards two questions came to mind: "What are the values we want reflected in our schools," and "What should our students leave the schools with when they graduate?" She commented that the Board should determine what values should be reflected in our district.

Ms. Hamblett attended a workshop that focused on the development of mission statements. She explained that the information presented at the workshop determined that a mission statement is meant to be short and meant to ignite or inspire. It is something that unifies and bonds the district so we are all moving toward same direction. In a mission statement you should state what you want to do; state how you know you are succeeding; and state what will be done to ensure success. Critical questions include: "If we expect all students to learn, what is it we expect them to learn?", "How will we know if they are learning this?", "What will we do when they don't?", "How will we engage students in their own learning?", "What attributes or qualities should students possess at completion?". Ms. Hamblett also explained that characteristics of high performing schools can bring schools in the district into one unified direction. High performing schools achieve because they have common values, intense professional development, honor time; they are data driven; there is continuous monitoring (which is the role of the principals); and observations and conferencing. Ms. Hamblett commented that if a district wishes to sustain success, the mission statement and vision should be displayed everywhere, ensure response to it, use it as a guide during meetings, frequently evaluate policies/procedures with regard to the mission, orient new staff/faculty and respond to failure to act in accordance with it.

Mrs. Couture asked members what values the Board wants reflected in schools. She noted that two areas stood out – schools should be student centered and an atmosphere of respect should be prominent.

Mr. Miller added that respect is an important value as well. Mrs. Couture pointed out that community responsibility plays an important role in the mission statement.

Mr. Boehm commented that responsibility in the middle school is almost non-existent in students and is portrayed in some students' attitudes toward grades. He feels we are not putting enough responsibility on the students. Mrs. Couture indicated that the Board already made a change to the promotion policy, but should implement it for grades seven and eight. Mr. Boehm agreed. He noted that perhaps a parent workshop centered on home/school/student responsibility would be helpful.

Ms. Hamblett added that it is important for the Board to ascertain how students are valued, for example, if students are not achieving, how will we handle it? Mrs. Couture observed that the District should maximize the students' potential. If students are achieving keep them challenged; if they are not achieving maximize their potential to learn. She added that she believes a child should be well-rounded.

Mrs. Beauregard commented that students should be engaged and proud of their school. Mr. Schlichter indicated that our schools should be welcoming places where adults form positive relationships with students. He noted that if we make those connections with the students, schools become effective and have a positive influence on students. The Board agreed.

Mrs. Couture pointed out that we need to make sure we celebrate success. Mr. Boehm and Mrs. Jewett pointed out that it should be real success. Mrs. Jewett mentioned that the assertion that a high percentage of students are on the honor roll is not realistic. Mr. Boehm feels that although some competition is healthy for students, academic achievement positively affects self-esteem.

A brief discussion centered on NCLB student achievement goals. Ms. Hamblett observed that while we recognize performance levels, we do not know anyone's true ability unless we work with them and give them the opportunity to increase their achievement. Mrs. Beauregard indicated that students have to want to achieve. Mrs. Couture noted that the goal should be to get all students to achieve as high as they can. Instruction should provide authentic experiences. Members discussed standardized testing. Mr. Boehm commented that standardized tests and scores are setting a false average. Mrs. Beauregard feels we need to clarify these scores for parents. Ms. Hamblett observed that we must be careful what messages we are giving students as we react to poor academic performance. Mr. Schlichter noted that students in every classroom have mixed abilities and it is difficult to assess them. He added that in our culture there seems to be a mindset that average isn't acceptable. Mrs. Couture interjected that in many people's views a 'B' has become the new average. Mrs. Beauregard commented that we should encourage students who score average (C's) to achieve higher. Mrs. Couture agreed stating that student success should be authentic and legitimate.

Mrs. Couture recapped the discussion. The values important to the Board include: student-centered instruction, respectful atmosphere, responsibility, effective schooling, maximize potential, authentic learning, celebrate success and a home/school/community partnership.

Currently the District's mission statement reads: The Mission Statement of the Litchfield Public Schools, in partnership with parent and the Litchfield community, is to provide and develop a complete education program of the highest quality that enable 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)

After several attempts to rewrite the mission statement, the Board decided to send out some versions to the administrators, faculty and staff, and community for input.

The mission statement proposed by the Board reads: *The Litchfield School District's mission, by partnering with the entire Litchfield community, is to provide a high quality, personalized educational experience that enables all students to achieve intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally and become responsible, productive members of society.*

2) School Board and District Goals for 2007: Work Session

Mrs. Couture distributed a draft of the District goals for 2006-2007. After briefly reviewing the goals, Mrs. Couture recognized that most benchmarks have been met or are ongoing. In an effort to downsize, she indicated that Goal 4

would be a good place to start - *increase student achievement and post graduation aspirations*. She felt this should be implemented in middle school by exposing middle school students to a variety of post graduation opportunities.

Mr. Miller suggested combining Goals 3 and 4 to read: *To provide a personalized, comprehensive educational experience focused on increasing student achievement and post graduation aspirations*.

Mrs. Couture and Mr. Miller suggested that middle school students should be exposed to a wide variety of real life opportunities and the courses needed to achieve that goal. Mrs. Beauregard cautioned not to limit middle school students to one area of interest since most students change their career aspirations many times prior to the last two years of high school. Students should have a well rounded education.

Ms. Hamblett pointed out that the procedure to personalize education should be determined first. Ms. Hamblett will meet with the building principals and recommend benchmarks.

Goal 4a could read something like: *Provide a schools to careers program at the high school and expose middle school students to a variety of real life opportunities (vocational/professional) to help future objectives and the paths needed to get there*.

Mrs. Couture moved on to Goal 5, which reads: *To provide avenues to improve community awareness, understanding and participation in the Litchfield Public Schools*.

Ms. Hamblett, in reviewing the benchmarks of the goals, mentioned that she and Scott Sarsfield will collaborate on an adult education program.

Mr. Miller focused on the goal itself, noting that most people who have children in schools and are involved with the schools (PTO, volunteers, field trips) and usually stay involved after their children have graduated. He suggested that the goal read: *To increase community awareness of student achievements and increase involvement in district educational issues and opportunities in Litchfield Public Schools*.

After some attempts to rewrite the goal, the Board asked Ms. Hamblett to review it with the principals and get community feedback.

Ms. Hamblett reminded that Board that the goals and benchmarks should include contingencies for what can be done when students are not achieving. There need to be measures to take in this case. Mrs. Beauregard suggested generating a list of State approval standards and a tracking system. Mrs. Hamblett informed the Board that Ed Murdough is now in charge of State approval standards as well as facilities standards, which will be a positive alliance for the District.

Mrs. Couture ended the discussion in order to move on to other business.

Mr. Miller acknowledged the receipt of a letter from a parent to add a bus stop because of the increasing number of fifth graders who wait for the school bus.

Mrs. Couture suggested that the Board can review any busing policies in August and that members would like a copy of the bus routes for the coming school year.

7) **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 8:42 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. Mr. Miller seconded. The motion carried by role call vote: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.***

Date: June 28, 2006  
Campbell High School

Litchfield Board of Education  
Public Session - 6:30 p.m.  
Followed by Non-Public Session

8) **Return to Public Session**

*Mr. Boehm made a motion to return to public session at 10:48 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by role call vote: Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

9) **Adjourn**

*Mrs. Jewett made a motion to adjourn at 10:49 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

10) **Upcoming Meetings**

>>Litchfield School Board: July 12, 2006; July 19, 2006 (if necessary) - CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
School Board Secretary