

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

May 6, 2009

(approved as amended 5-20-09)

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Vice Chair
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Board Member
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member
Mr. Jason Guerrette, Board Member
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Superintendent
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

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

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2) Review and Revision of Agenda

Revisions to the agenda included: under Presentations to the Board: the addition of CHS ELO Partnership, Authorization for Trip to Puerto Rico; under Superintendent's Report: Swine Flu Update.

3) School Board Members' Comments

Mrs. Couture commended the excellent behavior of the students that participated in the CHS Music trip.

Mr. Boehm commented that after the musical performance there was a semi-professional jazz band practice session and two trombone players from CHS joined them for an hour.

Mrs. Jewett thanked all the students that helped on Clean Up Day. She also thanked the people who planted flowers last year on Albuquerque.

Mr. Miller announced it is Teacher Appreciation Week and thanked all the teachers in the District for their hard work.

4) Presentations to the Board

1) CHS ELO Partnership – Authorization for Trip to Puerto Rico

Justin Ballou, CHS Senior Class Advisor, presented a proposal for authorization to book a trip to Puerto Rico as part of a CHS/Nashua South extended learning opportunities partnership. He thanked the Board for allowing his presentation on short notice. He explained that this trip will be conducted the same as the previous trip to Hawaii where students intensively studied the culture through disciplines of social and physical science. Mr. Ballou indicated that Nashua asked CHS to partner with them on the Puerto Rico trip. He reported that currently 20 students and 5-7 parents are interested in the trip. He is looking for Board approval to book the trip under the Independent Study Program.

Mr. Boehm asked if chaperones would be paying their cost for the trip. Mr. Ballou indicated that chaperones, as well as students, would pay a discounted rate.

Mrs. Couture queried about fundraisers for the trip. Mr. Ballou indicated that they would be required to do the same fundraisers as Nashua and would be sharing all components and benefits of the trip.

Mr. Boehm made a motion to approve the CHS ELO trip to Puerto Rico from February 18-27, 2010. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

2) Mosquito Control Discussion – Al Raccio

This item was postponed to a future meeting date, TBD.

3) eProcurement Card Proposal – Steve Martin

Mr. Martin presented a proposal for purchasing through an electronic procurement card for the District. He explained that we are in process of updating policies and the purchasing policy is due to be revised. Mr. Martin is proposing to modernize the procurement process, which will address problems such as: the purchasing processes, staff reimbursements, and petty cash issues. Modernizing the purchasing process targets orders under \$2500 by moving from a paper oriented purchase order system to electronic online ordering for smaller orders. He cited a successful example of an Illinois school system that moved to an electronic procurement card system and was able to reduce purchase orders drastically, as well as the amount of checks written each year. Mr. Martin noted that the savings to the Litchfield School District would be realized in the same way; reducing the number of purchase orders and checks written each year.

Mr. Martin explained that a procurement card is similar to a credit card without a revolving line of credit. Use and authorization parameters can be reviewed and managed via the internet by District management. The ASBO p-Card Program is a corporate MasterCard Program agreement issued by the Montreal Bank through Harris Bank, Chicago, IL and Illinois ASBO handles the prime administration of the program. The advantages of an association sponsored program are: a single contract; it creates a user group/support network; carries negotiation clout; and results in rebates that are distributed to each participating district. Currently, 300+ school districts participate in the program; 15 New Hampshire districts.

Mr. Martin explained there are three types of cards: individual, department, and ghost cards. Individual cards, which would be used by Litchfield, are covered by fraud protection and misuse insurance. School districts can choose a billing cycle cut off date (the 5th of the month or the 20th). There is a late payment fee, which can be controlled with pre-planning and online usage monitoring reports. Program benefits include: reduction in paper processing/billing; reduce vendor transaction costs; quicker shipment of orders; reduce issues with partially filled orders; eliminates multiple vendor payments to one single monthly payment; easy online administration; control on spending limits and accepted vendors.

Mr. Martin indicated that this is a voluntary program. He reviewed an overview of the purchasing process:

- continue to use eFinancePLUS requisition process to document expenditures and general ledger charging;
- reduce line items entered to object code total;
- accounting records will include copies of charge slips to document purchases;
- no mailing of purchase orders
- Board members can decide if they would like to see purchase orders printed with the manifest or the monthly charge bill.

Mr. Martin indicated that cards would be distributed to those employees that make purchases. He will meet with the District treasurer and Citizens Bank to set up ACH (Automatic Clearing House) procedures. Some cards will be kept at the SAU Office and Accounts Payable will match charge slips to the monthly statements. Mr. Martin asked Board members for their approval to begin the p-Card application process.

Mrs. Couture queried about any risks associated with the program. Mr. Martin indicated that misuse is a risk, but fraud protection and misuse insurance, as well as online usage reports are available to lessen the likelihood that this will occur. Mr. Martin pointed out that the bank will require disciplinary action in the event of any misuse. He added that late payment fees are the only real risks, but are able to be controlled.

Board Consensus: for the Business Administrator to begin the p-Card application process for the District.

5) **Community Input**

There was no community input.

6) **Recommended Action**

a) **Business Affairs**

- 1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes April 22, 2009

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

2) Business Administrator's Report – April 2009

Mr. Martin presented the April Financial report to the Board. He reported that:

- Dan Cecil of Harriman provided a preliminary plan for the storage building.
- There is no information on the energy efficiency block grant from Federal stimulus at this time.
- He received a FEMA exit interview to sign.
- FEMA did not cover the GMS freezer repair cost; he requested confirmation of the non-coverage.
- The rest of year spending forecast has been completed.
- He is currently forecasting an under spend of approximately \$150,000 – together with unanticipated revenues, he is forecasting a year end general fund unreserved fund balance of \$201,000.

Mr. Martin reported on the 2009-2010 budget distribution status indicating that a subject area code will be added to track kindergarten expenses. He indicated that he is working with Sungard to get an eFinancePLUS budget report that will show all budgetary and expenditure history, salary, and notes details within the same report. The final health insurance rate increase was 3.1% as opposed to the max rate of 4.0% used in the budget; however, we will be forecasting an over spend in this account due to several employee changes in coverage that have increased usage over the budgeted amount. Mr. Martin noted that we will be over spending CHS athletic transportation budget in 2010 to be compliant with NH Department of Safety administrative rules. The District will no longer be allowed to rent a small van for transporting small teams, but must use a First Student bus. He also reported that the Energy Buying Group fuel oil bid was awarded to Fred Fuller at \$1.895 per gallon through April 30, 2010.

Mr. Martin reported that there has been no work done on the CHS storage building as we need to resubmit the request for impact fees to the Selectmen.

Mr. Guerrette queried as to the necessity of bleaching each wall at GMS. He indicated that he does not want people to think there is mold present. Mr. Martin responded that the whole building has a moisture problem and bleaching is a preventative measure as well as a disinfectant agent. Mr. Guerrette asked that the next time an Air Quality report is completed at GMS that this be addressed.

Mr. Martin continued his business report. He announced that the Technology Give Away is schedule for May 16 at GMS. He also reported that Litchfield lost power this past weekend and the Food Service Department lost \$1,400 of perishable food items.

Mr. Miller thanked the Fire Chief for contacting the School Board members and the Selectmen regarding the power loss relative to the schools.

3) Superintendent's Report – April 2009

The Superintendent's Report for April was deferred from the April 22 Board meeting.

Dr. Cutler updated the Board on the H1N1 Flu, indicating that the NH DHHS has been very active during this crisis. Dr. Cutler reported that she participated in several conference calls and the District followed all protocols. There are no cases of H1N1 Flu in Litchfield. The NH DHHS recommends that parents have to be very vigilant with handwashing. We are asking that parents keep their children home from school if they are sick. H1N1 advisories were posted on the District website last week and updated today.

4) Technology Stimulus Update

Dr. Cutler reported that the District has been awarded a \$4,000 technology grant for middle school students' digital portfolio storage. There is a state requirement for the development of student electronic portfolios.

5) IDEA Stimulus Update

Dr. Cutler reported that the District has been awarded \$343,940 in IDEA funds. These funds, part of a reimbursement program, will be allocated over two years. Dr. Cutler added that she will have more information for Board members after the Superintendents' meeting on Friday.

6) Acceptance of Donations

Dr. Cutler reported that an anonymous donor has given the District a \$3,000 donation for two specific programs. \$1,500 must be spent on the purchase of 10 guitars for the music program at LMS. \$1,500 must be spent on the FIRST program at CHS.

Mr. Boehm made a motion to accept the anonymous donation of \$3,000, with \$1,500 to be spent on the purchase of 10 guitars for the LMS music program, and \$1,500 to be spent on the CHS FIRST program. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0; Mrs. Couture was not present for the vote.

7) Annual Fundraisers Report

The School Board previously requested a list of all fundraisers that are held within the District. This report was distributed to the Board.

Dr. Cutler distributed emergency District contacts to Board members.

8) Meeting Dates

a) School Board Workshop – June 3

Dr. Cutler explained that each year the Board participates in professional development activities. The NHSBA has agreed to conduct a two hour Board workshop for the Litchfield School Board on June 3. She asked Board members for suggested topics from Board members to forward to Mr. Comstock at the NHSBA prior to the workshop.

b) July/August Meeting Dates

Dr. Cutler discussed possible meeting dates during July and August with the Board. It was decided that the Board would meet on July 15 and 29, and August 12 and 26.

9) March & April Enrollment

March and April enrollment was distributed to the Board. There are 1,583 PreK-12 students enrolled in the District. Dr. Cutler reported that there are 97 first grade registrations and 68 kindergarten registrations.

10) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

7) **New Business**

1) Acoustic Shell Proposal

Dr. Cutler presented a proposal from the CHS Friends of Music. She indicated that the FOM is offering to pay \$5,000 of the cost for an acoustic shell that has been requested for several years. They are requesting the District pay the remaining \$2,075 of the cost. There is a considerable discount if the product is purchased by June 30. The FOM has purchased many enhancements for the District over the years and respectfully requests this assistance from the Board.

Mrs. Jewett and Mr. Guerrette were not in favor of spending District funds for the acoustic shell. Mrs. Jewett suggested the Board consider the topic at a meeting in June. Mr. Guerrette commented that the FOM should continue raising the funds for the shell and that in these economic times the Board should not spend money. Mrs. Couture clarified that one should not assume that all Board members are ready to approve the request for the remaining funds for the shell. She suggested that perhaps the FOM could ask the vendor for a deeper price reduction and allow the FOM to pay for the remaining balance in installments. Board members agreed to revisit the topic at the June 17 meeting.

2) **Job Descriptions**

a) School Monitor

Dr. Cutler presented the School Monitor job description to the Board. A recommendation has been made that monitors have mandatory First Aid/CPR training for the safety of our students. There are currently nine employees in this category. The budgetary impact of the recommendation is \$95 per person in salary/benefits, and \$600 for the training; a total of \$1,500. This item has not been budgeted for 2009-2010.

Dr. Cutler suggested that the Board can approve this job description now and amend it next year to include the training. Board members agreed to approve the School Monitor job description without the training option.

Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the School Monitor job description as presented. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

8) Old Business

1) Language Arts Curriculum Approval

The approval of the proposed Language Arts curriculum was tabled from April 22. Mr. Guerrette indicated that he communicated with Ms. Lecaroz in relation to his questions about the proposed Language Arts curriculum. He commented that he has many questions. He referred to the Curriculum Development policy relative to community involvement in curriculum development. Dr. Cutler indicated that curriculum meetings are held and parents are offered attendance; however, parents rarely attend the meetings. The Language Arts curricula is not a controversial part of the curriculum that would necessitate community involvement. She added that there is a craft to curriculum development and a professional bank of information from which to draw.

Mr. Guerrette queried about the curriculum review cycle and disagreed with spending funds on calculators and new textbooks for curriculum. Board members discussed at length the reasons curriculum is required to be developed and taught based on the State curriculum frameworks. Mr. Guerrette felt that the District should make tough choices in funding curriculum and sacrifice until funding is affordable for the town.

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Language Arts curriculum as presented. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 4-1-0, with Mr. Guerrette voting in the negative.

2) Policies – 2nd Reading & Final Approval

a) Financial Management Plan (DA)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Financial Management Plan policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

b) Annual Budget (DB)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Annual Budget policy. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

c) Budget Preparation (DBC)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Budget Preparation policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

d) Budget Implementation (DBI)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Budget Implementation policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

e) Taxing & Borrowing Authority & Limitations (DC)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Taxing & Borrowing Authority & Limitations policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

f) Funding Proposals & Applications (DD)

Mrs. Jewett made a motion to approve the Funding Proposals & Applications policy. Mrs. Couture seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

g) Audits (DIE)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Audits policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

h) Sales Calls & Demonstrations (DJGA)

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Sales Calls & Demonstrations policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

9) **Committee Reports**

1) Budget Committee

Mr. Guerrette reported that the Budget Committee requested a current head count and breakdown of staff in the District with a comparison of the staff count for the two years prior to the current year.

2) NHSBA

Mrs. Couture reported that she attended the National Delegate & Assembly Conference in San Diego, California at no cost to the town. She attended several workshops and distributed pertinent information to committees and employees. Mrs. Couture added that she received the School Board News publication that highlighted valuable information discussed at the conference and offered to share it with Board members or District administrators who were interested.

3) Selectmen

Mr. Jewett reported that the 275th Anniversary of the Town of Litchfield is set for August 15, 2009 at CHS with limited funds to run the event. She also reported that part of Woodhawk Way has been recently paved, as well as a small portion of Blue Jay Way. A 10 ton limit has been placed on Albuquerque Ave. between Talent Road and Page Road.

4) Legislative

Mr. Boehm reported that the recently passed Accountability bill will be in effect at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. He also noted that a task force will be assigned to monitor compliance with the bill and should not cost school districts much additional money.

5) Grants

Dr. Cutler reported that the Partnerships, Donations, & Grants Committee met this week. Members submitted the Honda grant for the FIRST Program. The Grants Committee is focusing on donations to run the FIRST Program. Plans include running an ad in the HLN to solicit for donations for the FIRST Program and applying for the BAE grant for new FIRST teams. The Committee will ask for a Board decision in September to run the program if the funding is secured.

Dr. Cutler also reported that the Grants Committee is working with Home Depot to secure donations of lumber and supplies for the girls' dugout. Home Depot requested that, if they agree to donate the supplies, a sign stating "Donated by Home Depot" be displayed on the dugout.

Board consensus: A "Donated by Home Depot" sign may be displayed on the girls' dugout if supply donations are secured from Home Depot.

9) **Community Input**

There was no community input.

Mr. Guerrette queried about non-public records. Board member agreed that, due to the subject matter, the discussion should continue in non-public session.

10) **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 9:44 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. Boehm seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes; Mr. Guerrette, yes.

Date: May 6, 2009
Campbell High School

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

11) Return to Public Session

Mrs. Couture made a motion to return to public session at 10:15 p.m. Mr. Guerrette seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes; Mr. Guerrette, yes.

12) Adjourn

Mrs. Couture made a motion to adjourn at 10:17 p.m. Mr. Boehm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

13) Upcoming Meetings

>Litchfield School Board: May 13, 20, 2009 - CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Administrative Assistant