

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE
Dec. 07, 2017 MEETING**

Joint Board of Education Committee

October 05, 2017

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, October 05, 2017 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:

David Fitzgibbons, Robert Bibbiani,
Charlene Fearon, John Ropiak, Maria
Scherber, Becky Iselin, Tom Englert

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Michelle Grow, Miriam Morrissey, Nelle
Andrews, Paula Weglarz, Tracy Dickson,
Imran Munawar, Tadia Ciaglo

ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Lon Seidman, Adam Conrad, DG Fitton, Loretta
McCluskey, Mark Watson,

REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Chris Riley, Jennifer Clark, Mario Gioco,
Jane Cavanaugh, Leigh Rankin

Also in attendance: Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent; Kristina Martineau, Assistant
Superintendent; Kim Allen, Business Manager & Jennifer Bryan, Board Clerk.

Audience of Citizens: 1

CALL TO ORDER

Supervision District Committee Chair David Fitzgibbons called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

The Chairs of the Chester, Deep River, Essex Boards and Region 4 Boards of Education called their respective Boards to order at 7:09 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the June 01, 2017 regular meeting of the Joint Board.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River Board (5 Yes; 0 No; 2 Abstentions – Nelle Andrews & Michelle Grow = Passed) and Region 4 Board (3 Yes; 0 No; 2 Abstentions – Mario Gioco and Jennifer Clark = Passed) VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the June 01, 2017 regular meeting of the Joint Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments were made

OTHER ITEMS – The scheduled update on the Celebrate Learning Program was not given.

REPORTS

Financial Status Update

Ms. Allen gave a brief, high level financial update for each district. More detail will be given at the individual board meetings in November. No audits are complete yet, so all numbers are subject to the final audits reports.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Levy recognized the dedication and service of all of the current Board members who have volunteered their time on their respective Boards, some for many, many years, and who would not be returning after the November elections. She stated that both personally, and on behalf of administration, she would like to thank them for their service and time spent caring about the children in all three of our towns. She noted that it is a very difficult volunteer position.

In reference to the current state budget situation, Dr. Levy talked about finding efficiencies at both the district and the state level. She reported that she has requested a quote from Blum & Shapiro with regards to their fee for looking at all of our payroll operations, and purchases, in order to find efficiencies within current overhead and supply needs.

Dr. Levy also discussed initiating a five year bid process on contracted services. This will help us to discern which services we need to maintain and which vendors will provide those services most efficiently.

The proposed calendar of regular BOE meetings and budget workshops for Jan.-Dec. 2018 was presented for discussion and possible approval. It follows the same general format as past years. There was a brief discussion.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the BOE meeting calendar for 2018 as presented.

Proposed revisions to the minutes of the April 6, 2017 Joint BOE meeting which would more accurately reflect and clarify the votes taken with regards to participation in the CSDE's Healthy Food Certification and the allowance of food exemptions were briefly discussed.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester Board of Education unanimously VOTED to revise the April 06, 2017 Joint BOE minutes as follows: "...to renew certification that all food items sold to students ~~during school hours~~ at any time other than those covered by exemption, will meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards to qualify for CSDE's Healthy Food Certification and monetary compensation from the State."

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River Board of Education unanimously VOTED to revise the April 06, 2017 Joint BOE minutes as follows: "...to renew certification that all food items sold to students ~~during school hours~~ at any time other than those covered by exemption,

will meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards to qualify for CSDE's Healthy Food Certification and monetary compensation from the State."

On motion duly made and seconded, the Essex Board of Education unanimously VOTED to revise the April 06, 2017 Joint BOE minutes as follows: "...to renew certification that all food items sold to students ~~during school hours~~ *at any time* other than those covered by exemption, will meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards to qualify for CSDE's Healthy Food Certification and monetary compensation from the State."

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board of Education VOTED (4 Yes; 0 No; 1 abstention – Leigh Rankin = motion PASSED) to revise the April 06, 2017 Joint BOE minutes as follows: "...to renew certification that all food items sold to students ~~during school hours~~ *at any time* other than those covered by exemption, will meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards to qualify for CSDE's Healthy Food Certification and monetary compensation from the State."

Dr. Levy discussed her recent visit to the State Legislative Office Building and her meetings with legislators to request language changes to state statutes regarding cooperative agreements. Language changes which would, in part, allow our Supervision District to be recognized as a Local Education Agency (LEA). The minor language changes could also help other small towns across the state. It would provide options and opportunities for more communication with Town Boards of Finance regarding budget development under cooperative agreements.

Dr. Levy and Essex Board Chair Lon Seidman recently prepared a handout outlining problems with the current law, and possible solutions, via the proposed language changes, which she shared with Board members. She reported that she had given a copy of this handout to all local legislators, the Speaker of the House, and other state legislators as well during her visit to the LOB. It provides a bipartisan way of approaching *regionalism*, not regionalization, and keeping voters as a larger part of the process. Chairman Seidman added that this language would add more options to choose from than we currently have. It would also have the state broaden their definition of an LEA. Typically, he said, when you regionalize you give up powers to the region, this proposed language would allow choices of what powers are given or retained, or even taken back, if so desired.

In light of the state budget challenges, Dr. Levy reported that she will likely begin freezing school budgets to help towns. She has already had administrators begin to cut back on the approval of teacher professional development unless it directly affects students. She is also getting ready to hold her second round of budget development meetings with school administrators for 2018-19.

Deep River Board member, Mr. Munawar asked Dr. Levy to give an update on the recent land purchase made by the Region No. 4 Board of Education. Dr. Levy deferred to Region 4 Board Chair Chris Riley, who had given an update earlier in the evening at the Supervision District Committee meeting. He again reviewed the process by which the purchase was discussed, voted upon, and ultimately completed with the use of existing sinking funds and no outside financing. He noted that the purchase was an investment for the future and an opportunity that doesn't come along often, if ever at all, for a school district.

A discussion followed during which some Deep River Board of Education members asked for greater communication about various issues between the four boards of education. Members of

other boards noted that this was a Region 4 Board issue and was discussed at several Region 4 Board meetings. Joint BOE Chair David Fitzgibbons urged everyone, board member, or not, to be more involved in their local boards of education and to address any related matters while those matters are still in the discussion stage.

Committee Reports

Joint BOE Policy Committee Chair Leigh Rankin reported that the Committee met on September 18th and continued their review of old policies. She presented the following policy for a First Read.

➤ #5131.21 Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students

The revised policy language was recommended by Shipman and Goodwin to bring our current policy up to date and into compliance with current law and language. Each Board will have time to discuss this at their individual meetings in November and it will then be on the Dec. 7th Joint BOE agenda for a second reading and a VOTE for approval.

Joint BOE Finance Committee - Committee member Adam Conrad reported that they met on September 26th and discussed the process for purchasing and possible efficiencies to be gained through process streamlining. He noted they had both a lively discussion and a productive meeting.

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee – Committee Chair, David Fitzgibbons reported that they met on September 18th. He noted that two boards were not represented at the meeting, which was too bad because curriculum most directly affects the students. He said they had wonderful discussions regarding critical and creative problem solving, an update on Grade 5 and 6 math curriculum, and NGSS Science curriculum including changes to course sequencing and design at VRHS.

Ad Hoc Cafeteria Committee – Committee member Tatria Ciaglo reported that they met on September 13th. Their main charge will be to determine if a business or service model will be pursued and how services may be combined for cost savings. The Committee will be visiting schools to sample breakfast and lunches. Their first school visit is scheduled for tomorrow morning at Deep River Elementary School.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Assistant Superintendent Martineau gave an update on Professional Development and Curriculum. Last month the PDEC Committee met to unpack the static plan on how it affects curriculum K-12. They drafted two rubrics aligned to focus on critical thinking and problem solving. An upcoming Professional Development (PD) day will be spent working on these further. The PDEC Committee also met today to discuss the PD calendar for the year as they continue to align curriculum with instructional focus. The K-12 content curriculum meetings begin next week. They will be looking for ways to embed instructional focus on critical thinking and creative problem solving.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No comments were made

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next Regular Joint BOE Meeting, December 07, 2017 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Second Reading and VOTE on pending policy (Dec.)

ADJOURNMENT:

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex & Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bryan, Clerk