

***THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE  
Feb 25, 2016 MEETING  
Joint Board of Education Committee***

**December 03, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, December 03 , 2015 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	David Fitzgibbons, Arthur Henick, Robert Bibbiani, Charlene Fearon, John Stack, John Ropiak, Maria Scherber, Vacancy, Vacancy
DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Michelle Grow, Miriam Morrissey, Hadley Kornacki, Paula Weglarz, Tracy Dickson, Imran Munawar, Tatria Ciaglo
ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Lon Seidman, Adam Conrad, DG Fitton, Loretta McCluskey, Mark Watson, Carolyn Rotella
REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Chris Riley, Jennifer Clark, Mario Gioco, Susan Hollister, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Jane Cavanaugh, Jim Olson

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

Audience of Citizens: 1 present

**CALL TO ORDER**

Supervision District Committee Chair Chris Riley called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

The Chairs of the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Board of Education called their respective Boards to order at 7:10 p.m.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the October 01, 2015 regular meeting of the Joint Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – no comments were made

**OTHER ITEMS –**

Thomas Peterlik presented the Boards with a donation of \$4000. The money was raised during the Dinners at the Farm events held over the summer and run by Jonathan Rapp of the River Tavern.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to accept the very generous donation of \$4000 from Dinners at the Farm, to be divided evenly between the food service programs of Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4.

The Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards moved into Executive Session at 7:13 p.m. for the purpose of negotiations – specifically to review the key provisions in teachers’ contract. Invited into the Executive Session were the following: Attorney Kevin Roy, Superintendent Ruth Levy, Assistant Superintendent Kristina Martineau, and Business Manager Garth Sawyer.

The Boards moved back into public session at 7:43 p.m.

On motion duly made and seconded the Chester Board (5 Yes, 2 abstained - Arthur Henick and Maria Scherber = motion passed), Deep River Board (unanimous ), Essex Board (unanimous ), and Region 4 (6 yes, 1 no -Mario Gioco = motion passed) Board VOTED to ratify the *Agreement between the Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 Boards of Education, Region #4 Supervision Committee and the Regional 4 Education Association for July 01. 2016 – June 30, 2019.*

## **REPORTS**

### Financial Status Update

Mr. Sawyer gave a brief, high level financial update for each district. More detail will be given at the individual board meetings in January.

### Superintendent’s Report

There was a discussion regarding the current daily rate of pay for Substitutes in our districts compared to surrounding districts. Dr. Levy reported that due to the lower rate paid by our districts (\$75 / day) compared to most of the surrounding districts, our schools are having a hard time finding suitable substitutes when needed. She stated that this taxes existing staff and impacts student academics because we are in competition for a small pool of qualified substitutes, with surrounding towns who are paying more. Therefore many substitute-needed positions are left unfilled on any given day.

Dr. Levy presented three proposals for consideration; raising the rate from \$75 to either \$80, \$85, or \$90 per day. A discussion was then held. It was also noted that some districts pay their retired teachers at a higher substitute rate than the normal daily rate, and that may be something to consider in the future as well. Many different aspects and considerations were discussed.

Chris Riley made a motion to increase to the daily rate from \$75 to \$80 for non-certified substitutes and from \$75 to \$85 for substitutes who are certified.

The discussion continued. Other Board members asked for more information, including whether or not the current budget can accommodate an increase in the rate for the remainder of this year. The administration answered that yes, they believe the moderately small increase could be absorbed into the current budget. Dr. Levy asked the Boards to consider some movement on this issue this evening. Additionally, Administration will go back to gather even more information,

including the idea of a higher rate for recently retired teachers from our districts and present further proposals and their budget implications for next year at a later date.

The motion was seconded by DG Fitton.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester (unanimous), Deep River (unanimous), Essex (unanimous), and Region 4 (6 yes, 1 abstained – Mario Gioco = motion passed) Boards VOTED to approve the increase of the daily substitute pay rate to \$80 for substitutes who are not certified, and to \$85 for substitutes who are certified.

Dr. Levy briefly discussed the December 2<sup>nd</sup> All Boards Workshop run by Jonathan Costa that was meant to help focus Board goals and work on strategic planning for the next 5 years. Dr. Levy noted that now the Supervision District will need to decide who to hire to help them work their way through this process. Dr. Levy reported that Mr. Costa has already met with administrators over the summer, and he will be meeting with the community in February. Dr. Levy will highly recommend to the Supervision District that they consider hiring Mr. Costa to facilitate the 5 year strategic planning process that will begin next year. The process will include the formation of a task force that will include representation from all of the stakeholders.

Dr. Levy asked to hold the presentation of the draft Supervision District 2015-16 budget, as they will be holding their first budget workshop next Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Levy shared a 5 minute video of last evening's Valley Regional musical performance and she also shared DVD copies of the Veterans Day Program recently held at the High School.

#### Committee Reports

The Joint BOE Policy Committee met on November 16<sup>th</sup>. A Chair has not been chosen yet. Dr. Levy reported that they discussed several policies, two of which are on for a first reading this evening. She presented a brief review of Policies #5141 and #5141.4 Both of which have arisen from legislative mandates approved this summer. Via the normal process, these will be placed on the individual BOE meetings in January for questions and discussion and will be back before the Joint BOE for a possible vote at the February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. However, Dr. Levy did ask that Boards consider voting on 5141 this evening due to the fact that the legislation will go already went into effect as of July 1 2015, and if the policy is not voted on this evening, they will not be able to vote until February 25<sup>th</sup> at the next scheduled Joint BOE meeting.

On motion duly made and seconded the Chester (5 yes, 1 no-Maria Scherber, 1 abstained – Rob Bibbiani = motion passed), Deep River (unanimous), Essex (unanimous), and Region 4 (unanimous) Boards VOTED to approve revisions to policy #5141 as presented.

The Boards were asked to review policy #5141.4, which will be on their individual Board meetings in January. Board members were asked to submit any questions well in advance of the February 25<sup>th</sup> Joint BOE and planned vote on the policy.

Joint BOE Finance Committee Report - Committee Chair Mark Watson reported that they met on November 17, 2015. They finished a multi-year review of the business procedures manual, which now has the auditor's approval. The Finance Committee will now be passing this along to the Policy Committee for their consideration of updates or revisions needed to any applicable policies in light of the procedure manual. The Committee also reviewed insurance trends and claims activity thus far this year. Although claims were higher than anticipated, the Financial

Reserves are in good shape. The Committee also discussed the reporting requirements going into effect soon due to the Affordable Care Act.

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee – Committee Chair, David Fitzgibbons reported that they met on November 16, 2015 with all Boards represented except for Dee River. The Committee learned about the Next Generation Science Standards recently approved by the CT Board of Education. They also discussed SAT testing for 11th grade students. A Social Studies teacher reported on K-12 Social Studies curriculum and the partnership with local historical societies. The International Baccalaureate program was also briefly discussed. The Committee gave their approval to two course proposals for VRHS; Introduction to Computer Programming and Mobile Application Development.

#### Assistant Superintendent's Report

Assistant Superintendent Martineau gave an update on Professional Development and Curriculum. She discussed the upcoming full PD day scheduled for February and said they have worked out what teachers are most asking for, and as a result will be holding a Tech Summit. The day will be differentiated into 30 different workshop options, depending on teacher needs, to help advance technology initiatives within the schools. The workshops are being led by teacher volunteers who are currently using the applicable technology in their classrooms and who are excited to share their expertise with their K-8 colleagues. Most of the high school teachers will be focusing on their required NEASC report revision work that day.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No comments were made

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- New BOE Member Orientation & Welcome to Central Office Workshop on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> @ 6-8 p.m.
- Next Regular Joint BOE Meeting February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jennifer Bryan, Clerk