

***THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE  
October 06, 2011 MEETING  
Joint Board of Education Committee***

**August 25<sup>th</sup> , 2011**

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, August 25, 2011 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION: Lianne Ruty, Amy Safran, Wendy King,  
Jim Gordon, Laurie Rubinow arrived 7:10 p.m.  
- quorum reached at 7:10 p.m.

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION: Christine Daniels, Gale Dilger, Dave  
Berardis, Lauri Ann Wichtowski , Mark  
Malcarne, James Olson

ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION: Lon Seidman, Jeffrey Burzin, , Suzanne  
Helchowski, Mark Watson

REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION: Linda Hall, Jennifer Clark, Mary Beth  
Harrigan, Chris Riley, Pamela Christman,  
Elaine Fitzgibbons, Duane Gates,

Also in attendance: Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent; Ian Neviaser, Assistant  
Superintendent; Garth Sawyer, Business Manager, Pam Murphy, Directory of  
Technology, Peter Foxen, Associate Principal JWMS & Jennifer Bryan, Board Clerk.

Audience of Citizens: 3 present

**CALL TO ORDER**

Supervision District Committee Chair Lon Seidman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

The Chairs of the Deep River, Essex Boards and Region 4 Board of Education called their  
respective Boards to order at 7:06 p.m.

Chester did not have a quorum. Chester reached a quorum 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  
June 02, 2011 regular meeting of the Joint Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – no comments were made

## **OTHER ITEMS**

Celebrate Learning Principal and JWMS Associate Principal Peter Foxen gave an overview of Celebrate Learning 2011, the summer academic enrichment program. One hundred and four students in grades 1- 9 attended in order to enhance literacy and math skills over the summer. The Boards also viewed a video showing some of the activities that students participated in. Dr. Levy stated the importance of the program noting that these are students who enjoyed learning, and are ready to partake in their next grade level's curriculum this Fall. She told the Boards to be aware that they may be asking for support to provide transportation in future years to increase participation. 80-85% of recommended students actually attended this summer.

Director of Technology, Pam Murphy provided an overview of the new district website as well as the newly enacted Applitrack program for the electronic submission of application materials. She also discussed the need for Board members to use their Region 4 e-mail addresses for all Board related messaging.

The district page is up, but the other schools new pages will be coming on-line in November & December.

She reminded BOE members that they all have district e-mail accounts. She has programmed it to automatically forward to their personal e-mail addresses for ease of checking. But if you're using your personal e-mail for BOE business, they are subject to FOIA laws. Therefore, when responding to BOE business, for member privacy, the administration urges you to use Region 4 e-mail for sending messages in order to protect personal e-mail accounts. Mrs. Murphy will e-mail basic instructions for use to all members.

## **REPORTS**

Superintendent Levy discussed hurricane preparedness in light of the forecast for Hurricane Irene to hit our area on August 27<sup>th</sup>. She has been in contact with town halls, state police and emergency management officials. Tomorrow they will make a decision about whether or not to hold the Camp Hazen grade 9 overnight scheduled for Monday the 28<sup>th</sup>. If the decision to cancel is made, an AlertNow message will go to all incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade families.

In addition, JWMS is an emergency evacuation site. Should the school be opened for this, Dr. Levy will be on site. If there are widespread power outages, the offices will need to be closed on Monday and school opening for convocations or academics may be delayed. Dr. Levy said she will remain vigilant and stay in close contact. She is still hoping for an on-time start.

2011-12 initiatives include:

Full Day Kindergarten for 2012-13 school year, this is a culmination of 4 years of study and planning for it. They will be educating public about this need at various community groups meetings.

Linda Hall noted that in November the Early Childhood Council will be holding a meeting with a panel discussion on the importance of Full Day Kindergarten.

Also, the districts are now in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the current strategic plan, so they will be working through the year, with LEARN as a facilitator, to make it a total community process. There will be approximately 18 people serving on the steering committee, made up of BOE, public, business, teachers, parents, community members.

Work with Performance Plus will continue, and they now expect active use by teachers in all areas, since they have now all have been trained on the system. The schools will be using it to allow data to actively inform instructional decisions.

Instructional rounds will continue this year.

The administrative team continues to look at changing demographics and the appropriate responses that will be needed.

September 7<sup>th</sup> will be a BOE workshop for all sitting (new and veteran) as well as perspective BOE members interested in running in November. Jack Giordano and Anne Littlefield will be presenting at the workshop.

Dr. Levy passed out a timeline for the Strategic Planning Process. Work begins with the first Strategic Planning Steering Committee meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> and will continue throughout the year. The Joint BOE will be voting on the plan on April 5<sup>th</sup> after work has been completed.

Dr. Levy gave a brief overview of Legislative Updates for this year. Some highlights include bullying legislation, special education legislation, and other more minor changes.

Dr. Levy has been named to the Legislative Committee through CAPSS (CT Assoc of Public School Superintendents)

#### Sister Cities Project / Haiti

This summer Dr. Levy spent a fair amount of time learning about this project. The administration across all 5 schools has taken on a fund raising project for procuring and sending reading materials, in addition to training teachers to better educate students in Haiti. This will include a teacher exchange, and include student leaders to assist in the effort. They will be starting small with the potential to grow, as well as uniting the 3 towns in this effort as a PK-12 district. She will keep the boards informed as the year progresses, but she is hoping to make it an ongoing commitment.

#### 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 September. The main volatility, as always, was in unanticipated costs due to Special Education matters.

District-wide, everyone did well. No requests for additional appropriations were needed last year.

#### Committee Reports

The Joint BOE Policy Committee Chair Elaine Fitzgibbons reported that there were 5 members present at their August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

There was a first reading and emergency VOTE on the recommended revisions to policy #1140, Community Relations, enacting the use of a community backpack on the districts website to replace paper handouts which are no longer the most efficient or green means of mass communication.

Mr. Seidman provided background on the issue and explained that the website is more efficient means of mass communication. If approved this evening, information will be sent out to all regarding the change in policy. All other aspects remain the same, Central Office still must give all approvals, and some paper copies will be made available for those without internet access. The Boards are being asked to vote quickly so that it can be enacted before school starts. Elaine Fitzgibbons said there was extensive discussion at the policy committee and she feels comfortable recommending this policy.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approved policy #1140, Community Relations, as presented.

There was a first reading on the following recommended policy revisions:

- #5141.4 Reporting Suspected Abuse
- #5141 – Student Health Services

There was a brief discussion regarding possible changes for compliance with State statute and/or language changes; including the possible need for an asterisk regarding the requirement for influenza vaccinations for entry into preschool. These policies will come back for second readings at the October 06<sup>th</sup> Joint BOE meeting.

Joint BOE Finance Committee – Linda Hall reported that they met with several representatives from the BOF and BOS from each town regarding the oversight of the medical insurance fund. It was a good meeting and they decided to meet quarterly regarding the fund's financial health. All present felt there is no problem with how the fund deficit is currently being handled. It is still on target for payoff.

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee - Chair Mary-Beth Harrigan reported on their recent meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup> with 3 members present. She discussed prior Region 4 Board approval of a Geometry textbook, but since then a few other books were published and a different one seems to be a better fit, so the Region 4 Board will need to vote to amend that approval to allow for the different text. In addition, Mr. Neviasser informed the committee about summer curriculum work on math and aligning common core standards.

Ad Hoc committees – Mr. Seidman discussed briefly the work on exploring a Cooperative Agreement. Tonight the Supervision District agreed to begin work on a draft agreement with legal help. They will begin with the financial mechanics of a possible agreement. The next work module will be governance, once the financial mechanics are ironed out. They continue to move forward slowly, but surely. The Joint BOE will continue to be updated as it progresses.

### Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Neviasser reported on summer curriculum work in math, which has the most significant changes in state common core standards coming. They are working on creating smooth transitions from our current district standards to the 2014-15 required standards. Additional work was done on the language arts curriculum, Foreign languages (FLES), and Science curriculum as well as a few other areas.

New teacher orientation was recently held. It included time in the computer lab for Performance Plus training and tutorials created by newly appointed Valley Regional Associate Principal Matt Talmadge. They will continue this initiative throughout the year.

Mr. Neviasser also passed out a high level overview of CMT and CAPT results which were just received. Some very positive gains were made. Some areas need work as well. CAPT scores at high school continue to rise, which is a culmination of good things across all of the schools. These scores are trackable through Performance Plus to help teachers see an individual's academic trajectory all the way through their school career.

Full Day Kindergarten Committee will be meeting again soon to plan support of the upcoming budget process.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** none made

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to move into Executive Session for a personnel matter, the presentation of the Superintendent's Goals, at 9:00 p.m.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Personnel – Presentation of Superintendent's Goals

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to move out of Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Next regular Joint BOE meeting is October 06<sup>th</sup>, 2011
- Second Reading and VOTE on Policy #5141 – Student Health Services
- Second Reading and VOTE on Policy #5141.4 – Reporting Suspected Abuse

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Chester Board of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

### **\*The Essex Board remained in session for the following business:**

Mark Watson made a motion to rescind the request from the elementary sinking fund in the amount of \$12,000 and vote to request a reimbursement of not to exceed \$12,000 for carpet replacement to the BOF. Jeff Burzin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## ADJOURNMENT

Lon Seidman made a motion to adjourn the Essex meeting at 9:40 p.m. Jeff Burzin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**\*The Deep River BOE remained in order for the following business:**

On motion duly made and seconded the Deep River Board unanimously VOTED to accept \$10,000 cash donation to the Deep River Elementary School to be used for desks and chairs

On motion duly made and seconded the Deep River Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:38 p.m.

**\*The Region 4 BOE remained in order for the following business:**

On motion duly made and seconded the Region 4 Board unanimously VOTED to amend the December 1, 2010 adoption vote of a new Geometry textbook to read "VOTED to adopt ....*the recommended Geometry text*"

On motion duly made and seconded the Region 4 Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jennifer Bryan, Clerk