

***THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE  
February 28, 2013 MEETING  
Joint Board of Education Committee***

**December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Amy Safran, Peg Reyer, Wendy King, David Fitzgibbons
DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Jim Olson, Kc Nelson-Oliveria, Arthur Robbins, Liz Tracy, Julia Grabowski, Miriam Morrissey
ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Lon Seidman, Adam Conrad, Loretta McCluskey, Judie McCann, Jeff Burzin
REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Laurie Tomlinson, Jennifer Clark, Mary- Beth Harrigan, Chris Riley, Mario Gioco, Ann Monaghan, Elaine Fitzgibbons

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

Audience of Citizens: 7 citizens

**CALL TO ORDER**

Supervision District Committee Chair Wendy King called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

The Chairs of the Deep River, Essex Boards and Region 4 Board of Education called their respective Boards to order at 7:25 p.m. The Chester Board did not have a quorum.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the October 04, 2012 regular meeting of the Joint Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – no comments were made

**OTHER ITEMS** –

The boards moved into a non-meeting for the purposes of a negotiations discussion regarding the Teachers Contract for 2013-16. Administration, Attorney Kevin Roy of Shipman and Goodwin,

and any Town Selectmen or Board of Finance members who were present were invited to stay for the non-meeting.

The Board moved back into public session at 8:10 p.m.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed teacher's contract. Region 4 Board members Ann Monaghan, Mario Gioco, and Laurie Ann Tomlinson voiced concerns regarding the percent increases in salaries included in the contract and the fact that they did not feel ready to place a vote yet. Other members noted that the appointed representatives from each Board, who sit on the Joint BOE Negotiating Committee, had been meeting and negotiating on a good faith basis since July.

Jennifer Clark voiced the need for the Board members to follow parliamentary rules during their discussion of the contract. She made a motion to vote to ratify the contract as presented. Jim Olson seconded the motion. On discussion Ann Monaghan, Mario Gioco and Laurie Ann Tomlinson continued to voice concerns. Jeff Burzin noted that the districts have traditionally underpaid their teachers, and that the Boards can vote the contract down, but it would then go to costly binding arbitration. Chris Riley noted that the contract is an investment in a school system that's doing well and needs good teachers. Jennifer Clark noted that as Board members they need to trust in the process, and trust that the chosen Board representation on the negotiating committee has studied the issues and negotiated in good faith.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River (unanimous), Essex (unanimous), and Region 4 Boards (4 Yes, 2 No – Laurie Ann Tomlinson & Mario Gioco, 1 Abstention – Ann Monaghan = Passed) VOTED to ratify the Agreement between the Chester Board of Education, Deep River Board of Education, Essex Board of Education, Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education, the Region #4 Supervision District Committee and the Regional 4 Education Association for July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016. Chester did not have a quorum and the contract will not be considered ratified until the Chester BOE votes to approve as well. If the Chester BOE does not vote to ratify the contract it will move to binding arbitration. *(Note: The Chester Board of Education VOTED to ratify the agreement (6 Yes, 1 No – Ashley Marsh) at a special meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012)*

The Boards recognized Jonathan Rapp and Thomas Peterlik for their donations to the Food Services Programs and their dedication to improving student access to local and fresh foods. Lon Seidman spoke about sitting on the committee that interviewed Thomas Peterlik for the position of the Director of Food Services a few years ago. Mr. Seidman noted that, as discussed during his interview, Mr. Peterlik has worked hard to find healthy things to serve that the students like to eat. Additionally, Mr. Peterlik and Mr. Rapp have raised a substantial amount of money for the Food Services Program in order to support student access to local and fresh foods. Mr. Seidman introduced State Representative Phil Miller who was present to recognize Mr. Peterlik's and Mr. Rapp's innovations and actions done in the best interest of the health of our students with a legislative citation from the State Senate. Mr. Peterlik thanked the Board for their support and for having him as part of the team.

Director of Technology Pam Murphy gave a brief preview of the new website prototype. The site is still in the design phase, but many of its features were demonstrated to the Board. She plans to finish the final design phase soon. The website is planned to be up and functioning by sometime in January.

Joe Spurgeon of Lindberg & Ripple, and Business Manager Garth Sawyer led a presentation regarding health insurance matters for budget planning purposes. Mr. Spurgeon explained that Lindberg & Ripple is the district's insurance consultant, and as such is responsible for many aspects of the employee benefit plan; including involvement in negotiations, and providing strategies for negotiation, as well as providing support, education, and market studies for the district(s). He specializes in working with municipalities and has been working with Region 4 schools for about 15 years through Lindberg & Ripple. He provided a very preliminary budget projection of the cost of the plans. He explained that the district is a self-funded group, liable for all claims incurred by employees and retirees. The only exception is that it also holds insurance for individual stop-loss protection for any one claimant who exceeds \$100,000 in medical claims in a given year, so that any amount beyond \$100,000 per claimant becomes the liability of the stop-loss carrier. He also explained that the district(s) have hired Anthem to be its third-party administrator for health plans. Mr. Spurgeon explained that he is very conservative in his projections, as he is looking out 20 months or so, but the year-to-date numbers are currently running slightly better than projected. He then reviewed a detailed look at his Claim Projection Model for the next 20 months through July, 2014.

Members were reminded to appoint members to Joint BOE Committees for 1 year terms if they still have any vacancies.

#### Assistant Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beekley's report was moved up to this point in the agenda. Dr. Beekley and her administrative intern, Andrea Ricci presented results from a survey required by P.A. 11-232 and State anti-bullying legislation. The survey is provided by the State Department of Education. It was given to Grades 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and offered to all parents and guardians, and all staff members. Due to many constraints in interpreting the data, it must be taken for face value and simply used as a baseline for future surveys. Board member Ann Monaghan suggested that if any areas of concern were to arise, the schools could look into more detail on those issues, if needed.

Dr. Beekley presented information to the Boards regarding details of Professional Development (PD). She handed out a matrix showing district-wide and school-based PD in order to demonstrate exactly what teachers are learning and doing during required Professional Development time.

Dr. Beekley discussed curriculum work being done by English teachers across all grade levels and in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Their goal is to finish working on it by April to allow distribution to all teachers for feedback and subsequent adjustments to be made over the summer. Elaine Fitzgibbons asked whether or not the increased use of texts per the requirements of the CCSS, will have a budgetary impact? Dr. Beekley responded that for the purposes of the CCSS, texts are not just ink and paper textbooks. Teachers can go on-line for non-copyrighted, free material, including video, artwork, and music. There is a broader-based definition of what constitutes a text than ever before. There will be a need to invest in non-fiction work and to continue at the same general levels as boards are currently funding. Ms. Fitzgibbons asked how the curriculum committees determine and handle any gaps in the curriculum. Dr. Beekley responded that all of the curriculum committees work off of the national standards. Ms. Fitzgibbons stated her hope that the committees will try to move us forward and be on the leading edge and doing even better than the standards.

## 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 March.

Dr. Levy presented the newly revised district-wide school calendars for 2012-13 and 2013-14. The Supervision District Committee voted earlier in the evening to approve the revisions recommended by the Joint BOE Calendar Committee. The revised calendar for 2013-14 is more consistent with local and LEARN regional calendars. Changes in the newly revised calendar also create more full weeks, fewer half days, and an earlier ending to school. In relation to some of the changes, Dr. Levy discussed her recent meeting with local representatives of Veterans in Chester, Deep River & Essex. They were very happy to have the discussion and overwhelmingly in favor of holding school on Veteran's Day and helping in the preparations and programs for the schools.

Dr. Levy updated the Boards on the status of the new Manufacturing Program at VRHS in conjunction with Whelen. She recently visited the newest group of students starting the program. They are excited. She reported that the program is phenomenal and student excitement just keeps growing. She feels Region 4 is poised to offer a tuition-based magnet manufacturing school, and asked the Boards to consider looking at that idea seriously and explore that path in future years to fill a need.

She discussed the upcoming meetings of the Preschool and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Study Committees who are still at work. At their last meeting subcommittees presented some preliminary findings and the Preschool Study Committee will have representatives from the State Department of Education visiting at their meeting next week.

She discussed information she provided to the Boards with respect to their questions regarding charter and magnet schools and the Boards' responsibilities.

The presentation of the draft of the Supervision District budget for 2013-14 was tabled until the Supervision District Budget Workshop I scheduled for Monday, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> in just 4 days.

### Committee Reports

Joint BOE Policy Committee member Jennifer Clark explained the current work being done by the Committee and she reviewed the process for policy approval, along with the expectations for Board Members during the First and Second Reading Process. The Second Reading and vote on proposed policies from this evening will occur at the next Joint BOE meeting in 2 months on February 28<sup>th</sup>. She asked that members please share their input with their Board representatives and/or the Superintendent with plenty of lead time before the next meeting and the Second Reading and Vote.

The Joint BOE Policy Committee Chair Elaine Fitzgibbons reported that they will meet again on October 16<sup>th</sup> when they will continue their systematic review of all policies older than 2002.

**There was a First Reading on the following policies:**

- #5145.51 Peer Sexual Harassment – tabled for further legal review
- #1230 Booster Clubs
- #1330 Use of School Facilities

Joint BOE Finance Committee – Mr. Sawyer reported that they had to cancel their planned November meeting due to inclement weather. They will be meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee - Chair Mary-Beth Harrigan reported that Committee will meet again on January 16<sup>th</sup>. She briefly reviewed what the Committee looked at during their last meeting.

Dr. Levy reported that she had talked with Bryan Mahoney's office at the State. He told her that they will be looking at the applications for the Regionalization Grant in the next week or so. Twenty-one applications are in the running for funds.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** none made

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to move into Executive Session at 9:53 p.m. to perform the mid-year evaluation of the Superintendent. They invited Dr. Levy into the Executive Session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Personnel – mid-year evaluation of the Superintendent

The Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards moved out of Executive Session at 10:08 p.m.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Next regular Joint BOE meeting is February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
Presentation and VOTE on proposed Supervision District budget for 2013-14 (Feb.)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River and Essex Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn 10:08 p.m.

The Region 4 Board of Education remained in order to discuss the following business:

There was a second reading on Policy #6146 Graduation Requirements (the first reading was held at their regular Board meeting on Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>). There was a brief discussion.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board of Education unanimously VOTED to approve revisions to Policy #6146 Graduation Requirements (addition of the Capstone Experience) as presented.

In response to a presentation made during the November 29<sup>th</sup> Region 4 Board meeting, the Board acted as follows:

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board of Education unanimously VOTED to accept the donation for the construction of dugouts for the baseball/softball field at Valley Regional High School as presented at the November 29<sup>th</sup> Region 4 Board meeting. All costs are to be covered by funds and materials collected by the Valley Baseball Boosters Club and all construction aspects are to be coordinated through Director of Facilities, Bruce Glowac.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board VOTED to adjourn at 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jennifer Bryan, Clerk