

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
CHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
May 26, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Chester Board of Education was held on Thursday, May 26, 2016. In attendance Tom Englert, Becky Iselin, John Stack, Robert Bibbiani, Arthur Henick, Charlene Fearon, John Ropiak and Maria Scherber. Also in attendance were Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent, Kristina Martineau, Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Joanne Beekley, Principal, Garth Sawyer, Business Manager and Kelley Frazier, Clerk. Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

Chair David Fitzgibbons called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Arthur Henick and seconded by John Ropiak the Chester Board of Education **VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2016 and the Accounts Payable report.

Amendments:

Ms. Fearon thanked everyone who participated in the Teacher Appreciation breakfast. She shared a letter of thanks from Dr. Beekley.

STUDENT REPORT

Dr. Beekley introduced Mae Carpenter, Jolie Edwards, Erin Ward and Kaitlyn Whaples as each presented their own invention convention project and discussed their accomplishments at the State Convention. Dr. Levy congratulated the children on their projects and awards.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time

OTHER ITEMS:

Principal's Update

Dr. Beekley noted we are in end of the year mode. Tomorrow morning at 9:00am there will be a short Memorial Day program. There are many end-of-the-year activities. Field Day, a school BBQ, Sixth Grade Night and Step-up Day will take place in the coming weeks. She thanked the Board for their support this year.

Financial Status Report – Mr. Garth Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer gave the financial status for Chester Elementary School. Currently, the school is projecting a surplus. He will keep the Board informed of any developments that may arise.

Cafeteria Report – Mr. Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer gave a status report on the cafeteria budget. He indicated that the cafeteria program is staying within the original budgeted subsidy.

Mr. Englert is concerned that items are now being purchased with surplus funds. He feels that we are not being transparent with the citizens of the town. Mr. Fitzgibbons noted that the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen are aware of the purchases. Mr. Stack felt that the agreement with the town was to purchase these items if there was a surplus at the end of the year. Mr. Englert feels that the surplus should be returned to the town and then the purchases should go in next year's budget. These items were taken out purposefully and are not in the budget information online. Dr. Levy noted that this was discussed in the presentation. These were not placed in the budget because earlier in the process, we would not have known if we had a surplus. Mr. Englert feels going forward the request should remain in the budget and go through the budget process. Mr. Englert feels that these are valid requests, but are not transparent to the taxpayer. Dr. Levy noted that a footnote can be put in the documentation informing the public.

Committee Reports

The Finance Committee discussed insurance and the expected increases. The next meeting will be held on September 27, 2016.

The next Curriculum Committee Meeting will be held on September 19, 2016.

The Policy Committee will meet next on September 19, 2016.

OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Supervision District Committee Update

The budget was approved. The Region 4 budget was also approved in spite of low community turnout. Postcards may be beneficial in the future to make Chester citizens aware of the vote. The timing of the primary may have affected low turnout. Low turnout is also seen in other local towns.

LEARN

Ms. Fearon gave an update. The budget was discussed and State funding cuts are expected. The Principal from East Lyme discussed his areas of focus and goals. The meeting included a visit to the Connecticut River Academy.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Martineau noted that work will be done to align standards for the math curriculum over the summer. She met with the Math Resource Committee to decide who will be part of the pilot program. A recommendation for new resources will be available soon. A timeline for implementation and for feedback collected from teachers will be determined, as well as, the assessments data needed. This will not have a significant impact on the budget.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

District Update – Information and Communication

Dr. Levy discussed payment for students attending magnet schools. She noted that LEARN is trying to maintain the costs for this year, but she expects this to increase next year. Different magnets charge different costs. She feels that the state funding formula for magnet schools needs to be revised. Region 4 is being federally funded for a lunch program Monday through Thursday at Deep River Elementary. Students up to the age of 18 are welcome. Lunch must be eaten at the school. We have almost finished the budget process. Chester will vote on May 31st. She

discussed what DRG our schools have been placed. This placement is used for comparisons. Dr. Levy discussed state budget reduction and their impact on local funding. Things are very tight. A tuition policy is being worked on to allow students to come to our district.

Every school will use one-to-one technology. Grades 4, 5, 6 will have Chromebooks. Ethics and appropriateness will be discussed with students. The high school is moving forward investigating the feasibility of the International Baccalaureate program. The NEASC process will take place in November.

We will have a strategic planning event to focus various stakeholders on specific areas of interest in September.

The program to bring students from China will not occur. There is hope that next year we may be able to do begin this program. We will begin with 2 or 3 students.

Mr. Stack asked how we plan for less support of the budget if it should occur in the future. We have little control of mandated expenses. Dr. Levy noted that the state needs to have sweeping educational changes so that it does not come out of the tax base. She is hopeful a change will occur in the future.

Discussion Regarding Any Pending Policies – Standing Item

Policies #5118, #4134, #4138/4238, #4147/44247, #4152.6/4252.6 and #4212.42 were briefly discussed and will be voted on at the next Joint Board of Education Meeting. Dr. Levy asked for board members to email any concerns directly to her.

Mr. Englert had various questions which Dr. Levy was able to answer. Mr. Englert and Mr. Bibbiani feels that Policy #4152.6/4252.6's wording is vague.

Discussion and possible Vote to Renew the Agreement Concerning the Establishment and Operation of an Interim Collaborative Preschool Program dated February 13, 2008.

The criteria is very specific for the peer program.

Upon a motion made by Rob Bibbiani and seconded by Arthur Henick the Chester Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to renew the Agreement Concerning the Establishment and Operation of an Interim Collaborative Preschool Program dated February 13, 2008 for renewal for a one year increment upon agreement (vote) of all signing parties (Boards of Education for Chester, Deep River, Essex and the Regional Supervision District Committee) no later than June 30, 2016.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Comment.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Joint BOE next regular meeting (June 2, 2016 @ 700pm)
- Chester next regular meeting (Sept. 22, 2016 @ 7:00pm)
- BOE Self-evaluation (TBD)

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:24 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley Frazier, Secretary