

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE
April 16, 2015 MEETING
Joint Board of Education Committee**

February 26, 2015

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, February 26, 2015 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION: Arthur Henick, Robert Bibbiani, Rodney Alston, Crystal Sonn, Charlene Fearon

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION: Michelle Grow, Julia Grabowski, Miriam Morrissey, Nelle Andrews, Hadley Kornacki, Peter Corcoran

ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION: Lon Seidman, DG Fitton, Mark Watson, Carolyn Rotella

REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION: Chris Riley, Lauri Wichtowski, Mario Gioco, Jane Cavanaugh, Leigh Rankin

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

Audience of Citizens: none present

CALL TO ORDER

Supervision District Committee Chair Lon Seidman called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

The Chairs of the Chester, Deep River, Essex Boards and Region 4 Board of Education called their respective Boards to order at 7:02 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the December 04, 2014 regular meeting of the Joint Board with the following revision: Under the Financial Status Update – more detailed reports will be provided at the individual meetings in “*January*”, as opposed to September as is currently reported.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester Board of Education VOTED (4 Yes, 1 abstained – Art Henick – Motion passed) to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the December 04, 2014 regular meeting of the Joint Board with the following revision: Under the Financial Status Update – more details will be given at the individual board meetings in “*January*”, as opposed to September as is currently reflected in the minutes.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Deep River Board of Education VOTED (4 Yes, 2 abstained – Julia Grabowski and Peter Corcoran – motion passed) to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the December 04, 2014 regular meeting of the Joint Board with the following revision: Under the Financial Status Update – more details will be given at the individual board meetings in “*January*”, as opposed to September as is currently reflected in the minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments were made

OTHER ITEMS –

Director of Technology, Pam Murphy discussed applications for technology grants that require the Elementary Boards' approvals in order to submit. She explained that the State allowed the grants to be submitted prior to the February deadline on the condition that the applications will only be considered if the Boards vote to submit the grants at tonight's meeting. The State will notify her of the outcome of the applications in April. There was a brief discussion.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex, Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the submission of technology grants to the State as presented.

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.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Levy presented the proposed Supervision District budget approved by the Supervision District Committee earlier in the evening. The budget reflects a 2.29% increase.

There was a brief discussion.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the 2015-16 Supervision District Budget for a total appropriation of Six million, seven hundred eighty-five thousand, two hundred fifty-five dollars (\$6,785,255).

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board VOTED (3 yes, 2 abstained – motion passed) to approve the 2015-16 Supervision District Budget for a total appropriation of Six million, seven hundred eighty-five thousand, two hundred fifty-five dollars (\$6,785,255).

A discussion, previously tabled at the December 4, 2014 Joint BOE meeting, regarding the possibility of a request for proposal (RFP) for legal services was held.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding this issue and various members' reasons for and against the need to do this. At the end of the discussion the consensus was to not issue an RFP at this time and to instead vote approve the appointment of legal counsel at the June meeting, per normal practice.

Dr. Levy discussed a revision to the 2015-16 District Calendar made earlier in the evening at the Supervision District Committee meeting. The dates for spring recess were moved so that they now better align with dates in neighboring districts.

Committee Reports

The Joint BOE Policy Committee held a Second Reading and VOTE on the following policies:

- Policy #6412.101 Wellness Policy
- Policy #4117.4 Non-renewal/Suspension
- Policy #4118.23/4218.23 Conduct
- Policy #4121 Substitute Teachers
- Policy #4131 Staff Development

Chairman Seidman asked to package all of the second readings into one motion, discussion, and vote unless someone asked to pull out a particular policy.

Dr. Levy reported that no comments had been received from anyone since the first reading and the initial minor revisions suggested at that time. A brief discussion was held. Some questions regarding Policy #4121 and insurance requirements for substitutes were answered.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the following policies as presented:

- Policy #6412.101 Wellness Policy
- Policy #4117.4 Non-renewal/Suspension
- Policy #4118.23/4218.23 Conduct
- Policy #4121 Substitute Teachers
- Policy #4131 Staff Development

The Joint BOE Policy Committee recommended the removal of the following policies from the policy manual:

- Policy #4131.1 Exchange Teaching
- Policy #4112.4/4212.4 Health Examination

There was a discussion, and on consensus of the Boards, the recommendation to remove Policy #4112.4/4212.4 Health Examination was tabled and the policy will be sent back to the Joint BOE Policy Committee for further consideration. Some Board members would like to see this policy remain in the manual with the addition of mandatory drug testing for all new employees to the policy. Other members voiced their opposition to a policy of that type.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to remove the following policies from the policy manual, #4131.1 .

The Joint BOE Policy Committee held a first reading on the following policy:

- Policy #4132 Publication or Creation of Materials

Board members were asked to please send any comment to administration or their Board's Policy representatives, or the Policy Committee Chair for consideration. This policy will also be discussed at the individual Board meetings in March and will be up for a second reading and VOTE at the April 16th Joint BOE meeting.

Joint BOE Finance Committee – The Committee is scheduled to meet again on March 31, 2015.

Committee member Carolyn Rotella reported that the Joint BOE Curriculum Committee met on January 20th . They discussed the following: Music K-12 (educators presented to the Committee), Reading K-3, and had a MAP/SBAC Testing update. She reported that those present had the pleasure of listening to a presentation by all of the music teachers. She said they are all doing a phenomenal job and are integrating so many other curriculum areas, such as mathematics, into their music classes.

Dr. Levy updated the Boards on progress by the Region 4 BOE to develop a plan to add grades PK-6 to Region No. 4. She noted that on March 7th the Region 4 BOE will be holding a workshop with each Board's regionalization committee representatives, the three First Selectmen, and Attorney Ann Littlefield to begin writing the plan. All Board members will receive draft copies and have ample time for feedback and input. There will then be a special March 25th Joint BOE meeting planned to vote upon the plan once it has been completed. It would then move to referendum in the three towns on June 9th, 2015.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beekley gave an update on Professional Development and Curriculum.

She discussed the recent full Professional Development (PD) day held on February 17th and reported on what training each grade/or curriculum group participated in. She said it was a very productive day for all involved and she was especially pleased with the collaboration between administrators in order to provide meaningful, differentiated PD.

Dr. Beekley also mentioned that work continues on the yearly requirement to get Board and State approval on the Administrator and Teacher Evaluation Plan. She will bring the plan before the Joint Boards for a vote to submit it to the State. Once State feedback has been received, it will be brought before the Boards again for a vote to approve the plan.

Dr. Beekley also reported on questions selected for the upcoming parent survey. She reported that the administrative team looked at the parent survey and re-looked at the question bank approved by the State in order to select additional questions that would be beneficial to include on the upcoming parent survey. She shared copies of those additional questions with the Board members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No comments were made

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next Regular Joint BOE Meeting, April 16, 2015 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Second Reading and VOTE on pending policies (Apr.)
- Executive Session for Superintendent to Present Self-Evaluation (Apr)
- Vote on Meeting Nutritional Guidelines for Healthy Foods Certification and Reimbursement (Apr.)
- First Reading and possible VOTE regarding Technology Plan - (Apr.)

ADJOURNMENT:

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bryan, Clerk