

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE
October 3, 2013 MEETING
Joint Board of Education Committee**

August 22, 2013

A regular meeting of the Joint Board of Education Committee was held on Thursday, August 22, 2013 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board Members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Amy Safran, Peg Reyer, Ashley Marsh, Wendy King, David Fitzgibbons
DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Christine Daniels, Mark Malcarne, Jim Olson, Kc Nelson-Oliveria, Arthur Robbins, David Berardis
ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Lon Seidman, Adam Conrad, DG Fitton, Loretta McCluskey, Jeff Burzin
REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Jennifer Clark, Mario Gioco, Ann Monaghan, Elaine Fitzgibbons

Also in attendance: Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent; Joanne Beekley, Assistant Superintendent; Garth Sawyer, Business Manager, Tracy Johnston, Director of Pupil Services, Tyson Stoddard, Supervisor of Special Services, Peter Foxen, Associate Principal John Winthrop Middle School & Jennifer Bryan, Board Clerk.

Audience of Citizens: 1

CALL TO ORDER

Supervision District Committee Chair Wendy King called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

The Chairs of the Chester, Deep River and Essex Boards called their respective Boards to order at 7:10 p.m. The Region 4 Board did not have a quorum at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River and Essex Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the June 06, 2013 regular meeting of the Joint Board. *The Chester Board lost their quorum when a member was called away for a brief time; they regained a quorum later in the meeting and approved this motion at that time.*

PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments were made

OTHER ITEMS –

Pam Murphy, Director of Technology discussed the submittal of a Technology Grant to the State. The grant requires Board approval to submit. It was submitted for the previous week's deadline, with a requirement to submit Board approval in order to continue in the grant evaluation process. Dr. Levy said that they would like to let the State know that they do have Board approval so that the grant can continue the evaluation process.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the submittal of the technology grant as presented. *The Region 4 Board will vote on this at their regularly scheduled individual meeting on September 3. The Chester Board lost their quorum when a member was called away for a brief time; they regained a quorum later in the meeting and approved this motion at that time.*

The report on Celebrate Learning was moved up to this point in the agenda. Dr. Levy talked about the new format this year in which the schedule was divided into 1 week segments covering a variety of topic choices. The feedback regarding this and other program changes has been very positive.

Dr. Levy Ruth introduced Tyson Stoddard, the new Supervisor of Pupil Services. Mr. Stoddard talked briefly about Celebrate Learning and stated that it was a great opportunity to get to know some of the students and their parents this summer. Peter Foxen, Associate Principal at JWMS and Acting Principal for Celebrate Learning shared more information about the program. This summer 175 students participated, showing a large uptick from the approximately 100 who participated in the previous summer. It's believed that having an on-line presence helped encourage participation, along with the innovative ideas and class offerings of Dr. Beekley, Ms. Johnston, and the staff, which were offered to students. Student/parent feedback showed that 94% of respondents would recommend the program to a friend.

The program was run for extended hours this year, and in two different locations; Deep River Elementary School for K-5 student and at John Winthrop Middle School for 6,7, and 8th grade students. A short video of summer highlights was shared. Mr. Foxen also noted that Valley Regional student accumulated approximately 45 volunteer hours helping out with the program.

The discussion regarding future work on a cooperative agreement was moved to this point in the agenda. Attorney Anne Littlefield led a discussion regarding the next logical steps in the process now that the districts received a State grant to develop an agreement. She thoroughly explained and discussed the conflicts waiver that would need to be signed by each of the boards in order for Shipman and Goodwin to work on this agreement. She explained that the districts already have a similar type of cooperative agreement through the formation of the Supervision District, so the process is not foreign to the boards or the community. The purpose of the new agreement would be to further streamline processes and gain academic resources through greater efficiencies of operations. There was a lengthy discussion regarding this process and the next steps needed.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex Boards and the Supervision District Committee (who returned from recess for this vote) unanimously VOTED to permit the Board Chair to execute a conflicts waiver to permit Shipman & Goodwin LLP to work jointly with the Chester, Deep River, Essex, Regional School District No. 4 Boards of Education and the Supervision District Committee for the formation and execution of a new cooperative

agreement regarding a shared governance structure. *The Region 4 Board will vote on this at their regularly scheduled individual meeting on September 3.*

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex Boards, and the Supervision District Committee (who returned from recess for this vote) unanimously VOTED to appoint the members of the Supervision District Committee to work jointly with representatives of the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Regional School District No. 4 Boards of Education for the formation and execution of a new cooperative agreement regarding a shared governance structure. *The Region 4 Board will vote on this at their regularly scheduled individual meeting on September 3.*

Ms. Littlefield said that the Supervision Committee will set up a schedule to tackle subcommittee items and begin work once the Region 4 Board is able to vote on the issues above.

Attorney Anne Littlefield next reviewed the key provisions of the 4 year contract for cafeteria workers, including changes in retirement plans and PPOs.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, and Essex-Boards of Education unanimously 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, and Local 1303-098 of Council No. 4 (Cafeteria Employees) for July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017. *The Region 4 Board will vote on this at their regularly scheduled individual meeting on September 3.*

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. He pointed out anticipated surpluses or deficits for each district for 2012-13. All numbers will need to be verified via independent audit per the normal process. Any surplus funds will be returned to the appropriate towns in the appropriate portions, per normal policy.

Dr. Levy discussed numerous initiatives for 2013-14 including: As of August 27th, identification badges will be required for all people who enter school buildings. She discussed the “stoplight color coding” system for the lanyards in which staff will wear green, substitutes will wear yellow and visitors will wear red. The Security and Safety Committee did external and internal walk-thrus of all buildings to make recommendations that have now been acted on to the extent each building was able to within budgetary means. Administration will be holding a new substitute orientation regarding district procedures and policies. Dr. Levy and Dr. Beekley will be leading that orientation.

Dr. Levy also talked about infusing technology as part of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), as well as providing technology based professional development for all teachers and teaching all students keyboarding.

Dr. Levy updated the Boards on the new Educator Evaluation Plan required by the State. She, and all but three of the administrators, spent an entire week over the summer in a workshop to

learn the new system, and then completed a proficiency test, which all participating administrators passed. The remaining three administrators will complete their five days of training and testing in September. The new evaluation plan coordinates with legislation and CCSS requirements.

New teacher orientation was held over the last two days. Convocation and three days of Professional Development begin on Monday, August 26th. School opens on Thursday, August 29th.

Dr. Beekley shared an instructional video detailing the new Educator Evaluation Plan that will be viewed by all teachers during their upcoming professional development days. The video was a collaborative effort between Matt Talmadge, Kristina Martineau, Mike Barile, and Dr. Beekley. The video will help all of our educators learn and understand the new evaluation document and processes. Dr. Beekley noted that this will be a learning year for everyone and the plan is an incredibly anxiety producing document that still requires a lot of calibrations, which are still moving targets with the State, who hasn't even decided on certain aspects of it yet. However, she stated, all educators and administrators need to learn the document and work together with it. It is aimed at facilitating productive conversations and professional development. Dr. Beekley gave all Board members a copy of the final version which was approved by the State in July. She stated that she really believes in it as a process for educators to improve and excel in their craft.

The document also involves training and calibration throughout the year for administrators as well. There was a discussion regarding the extensive time required by administrators to complete the requirements of the evaluation plan. There was a discussion about various aspects of the new plan. It was noted by Ms. Fitzgibbons, that down the line, it is likely that there may be a budgetary impact, in that there may be a need to hire more administrators to carry out these requirements.

Dr. Levy talked briefly about the new education legislation for this year. They may be discussed in more detail at the upcoming individual BOE meetings in September.

Dr. Levy presented a first reading of the calendar for BOE meetings for Jan. – Dec. 2014. The Boards will have a second reading and vote at the October Joint BOE meetings.

Dr. Levy gave a brief update on new hires at all of the schools. Each Board will meet their new hires in person at their individual meetings in September.

Dr. Levy informed the Boards of the decision to install video/audio cameras to all school buses at a total cost of \$3,000.

Committee Reports

The Policy Committee will meet again on October 15th, 2013.

Joint BOE Finance Committee – will meet again on September 24th, 2013 .

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee - will meet again on Oct. 15th, 2013.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beekley spoke about the many hours of curricular writing accomplished over the summer. This work will continue throughout the upcoming school year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards moved into Executive Session for a Personnel Matter, (the Superintendent's presentation of goals) at 9:10 p.m.

The Boards moved out of Executive Session at 10:00 p.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Next regular Joint BOE meeting is October 03, 2013.

Second Reading and VOTE on BOE meeting calendar for upcoming calendar year (Oct.)

ADJOURNMENT:

On Motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River and Essex Boards of Education unanimously VOTED to adjourn 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bryan, Clerk