

MINUTES
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #10
BOARD OF EDUCATION
December 10, 2007

Members Present: Joseph Arcuri, Catherine Bergstrom, Jeanne Doerr, Beth Duffy, Barbara Gilbert, Paul Omichinski, Elaine Schiavone, Ray Sikora, Karen Sullivan

Absent: Phil Penn

Also Present: Paula Schwartz – Superintendent
David Lenihan – Business Manager
Michael Landry – Assistant Superintendent
Jacqueline Evans – Student Representative

- I. Call to Order - A call to order, at 7:32 pm for the Board of Education organizational meeting, was made by Superintendent Schwartz, and was held in the Har-Bur Middle School Media Center.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance - The Pledge was recited.
- III. Election of Officers for '07-'08 (one-year term). A **motion** to nominate P. Omichinski as Chairman was made by C. Bergstrom and seconded by R. Sikora. No other nominations made. All in favor none opposed. A **motion** to nominate B. Duffy as Vice Chairman was made by J. Arcuri and seconded by K. Sullivan. No other nominations made. All in favor none opposed. A **motion** to nominate J. Arcuri as Treasurer was made by B. Duffy and seconded by J. Dorr. No other nominations made. All in favor none opposed. A **motion** to nominate R. Sikora as Secretary was made by B. Duffy and seconded by J. Dorr. No other nominations made. All in favor none opposed.

A **motion** to adjourn the organizational meeting and begin the regular Board of Education meeting was made by B. Duffy and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed. The regular Board of Education meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Chairman Paul Omichinski.

-
- III. Communications, Resignations – P. Schwartz introduced new Superintendent, Alan Beitman, currently superintendent in Monroe.

Resignations include Marie Moore, part-time Spanish teacher at LSM and Cheryl LaPointe, Speech Pathologist at HCS. Resignations are effective January 2008.

Congratulations to LSM Math Team for their 1st place win in the Western Math League. The high scorers are Adam Woomer, Duan Zhang, Ryan Surveski, Stephen Sikora, Phil Lubik, Colleen Duffy and Alexandria Lopez.

LSM senior, Alexis Veith, was named to the NSCAA High School All American team in girls' soccer. The awards ceremony will be held in Baltimore on January 19th.

Crew team received a \$10,168 grant from the Main Street Community Foundation and a \$14,000 grant from the Farmington Savings Bank to buy a new boat trailer.

Har-Bur received grant to install a traverse wall in the gym. and purchase pedometers.

- IV. Consent Agenda - A **motion** to approve the regular BOE meeting of November 13, 2007 and financial report of November 30, 2007 was made by B. Duffy and seconded by R. Sikora.

Corrections include Section IV second paragraph in regard to the October 15th meeting, should read "The committee narrowed the field to 3 finalists and will meet with them Thursday or Friday." On page 3, motion to approve 5 year LSM football program... was made by C. Bergstrom, not K. Bergstrom. On page 3, Item C, it should be noted that parents will have the ability to opt out their child from participating in topics of teen sexuality.

- V. Student Representative Report - J. Evans worked with Karissa Neihoff to develop a student survey on the types of extracurricular activities students would like to see expanded or introduced.

- VI. Public Participation – None.

- VII. Business –

A. Introduction of new superintendent was done earlier.

B. Report of Class of 2007. Pam Lazaroski presented a report about data on the class of 2007 in a PowerPoint presentation. Some highlights include the fact that many students choose colleges and universities within the State, with UConn and CCSU being the top two choices. Factors influencing their decisions included best value for the money, size, close proximity to home, availability of classes, and scholarships and financial aid. Although SAT scores were higher than the State average, they were down from last year. More students took AP courses than in prior years. In SAT ratings, within its DRG, Region 10 was 15 out of 18 in the verbal portion 12 out of 18 in Math, and 11 out of 18 in writing.

C. Discussion with Boards of Selectmen and Finance from Burlington & Harwinton regarding the 2008-09 budget. Ted Scheidel, Burlington's 1st Selectman stated it was a pleasure working with the Board of Education over the past several years, and introduced Kathy Zabel, the incoming 1st Selectman. Items that will impact the town's budget this coming year include: property re-evaluation in 2008; property tax relief for seniors; possible improvement and/or add-on to town hall; and renovations to Lake Garda and Whigville firehouses. Real estate is off 10-20% and an increase of 1.5 million or more in the school budget would be a hardship on the town.

Art Johansson requested that actuals be included in the budget format.

Frank Chiaramonte, Harwinton's 1st selectman discussed the highlights and goals of his town. It too will be undergoing re-evaluation in 2008. The grand list has increased 1.5 – 2%. There are 34 new building lots in various stages of completion. New recreation fields; acquisition of more open space; an ambulance facility; more programs for seniors as well as property tax relief are some of the goals for 2008.

D. Presentation of World Language Program. Beth Lapman gave an overview of the District's World Language Program. Currently, students in the 3rd grade may begin taking Spanish, which by the time they reach the 9th grade is at the Spanish III level. Mandarin Chinese which began

at Tunxis, then moved in-house, but was offered in the evenings, now consists of Chinese I during the day and Chinese II in the evening. French is still a strong and popular course.

E. Schiavone asked why Latin Is not offered. B. Lapman stated it may be considered in the future. R. Sikora suggested establishing a consortium with other local schools so more languages could be offered. P. Schwartz publicly thanked Beth for expanding and enhancing the World Language Program.

- E. Link-Crew Program – Transition from 8th to 9th grade. P. Bogen gave an overview of this program, which has been successful at other schools. The goal is to assist 8th graders into transitioning successfully to high school by pairing no more than six 8th graders with two Junior or Senior students. All incoming 8th graders would be required to participate. Two teachers would be selected to run the program and will be trained in 2008. The goal is to implement this program in the Fall of '08.

VIII. Action –

- A. Discussion and Approval of New Courses. M. Landry introduced 5 new courses beginning with American Studies, a blend of language arts and social studies, for the 11th/12th grades. Another new course, Contemporary Issues, will utilize newspapers, magazines and other media. A **motion** to approve these two courses was made by B. Duffy and seconded by R. Sikora. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries

Advanced Clay would be a ½ year course focusing on using clay as an art form. A **motion** to approve the course was made by B. Duffy and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.

Recording Technology would be a ½ year course focusing on sound productions. A **motion** to approve the course was made by J. Dorr and seconded by B. Gilbert. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.

Digital Photography would be a ½ year course. A **motion** to approve the course was made by B. Duffy and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.

R. Sikora and B. Gilbert suggested offering some of these courses in the evenings for adults, something that may be considered in the future.

- B. Discussion and Approval of New Textbooks. Four new history books are being offered to replace textbooks that are 15 years old and no longer published. A **motion** to approve the new textbooks was made by R. Sikora and seconded by B. Duffy. All in favor none opposed. P. Omichiniski suggested looking into subscribing online for textbooks not only for cost savings, but also to alleviate the weight of all the textbooks students carry.
- C. 1st reading of Revised Policy #5141.21 Student Medication. The only change to the policy is the addition of Optometrist as an authorized prescriber.

D. 1st reading of Revision to Region 10 Educational Organization Chart Policy #2101. A **motion** to accept the 1st reading of both policies was made by R. Sikora and seconded by B. Duffy. All in favor none opposed.

P. Penn had suggested, in writing, that Region 10 community be changed to electors. However, P. Omichinski favored keeping the word community as that word encompasses all citizens and not just those who vote.

E. Discussion & Approval of 2008-09 School Calendar. Three options were proposed. In Option A, school starts at the end of August, offers a full week off in February, and an end date of June 15 if no snow days. About 30 staff members were pleased with this option. In Option B, school begins on September 1, ends on June 18th if no snow days, and offers a full week off in February. About 38 staff members were pleased with this option. In Option C, school begins on September 2 and ends on June 15 if no snow days, and offers 3 days off in February. About 15 staff members were pleased with this option. A **motion** to approve Option C was made by R. Sikora and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed.

VIII. Board Committee Reports

- A. Facilities and Grounds Committee – Nothing to report. Next meeting scheduled for January, 2008.
- B. CREC Committee – Nothing to report.
- C. Curriculum Committee – New books, courses and World Language presentation were discussed earlier. Next meeting scheduled for January.
- D. Negotiations Committee – Secretaries contract to be negotiated in the Spring of 2008.
- E. Technology Committee – Nothing to report.
- F. Building Committee – Met last week. Physical construction is about 99% complete and meetings are down to once a month. Anticipate another 3 months for punch list completion and another 6 months to wrap up paperwork.
- G. Community Relations Committee – Alexis Maislen, hired as the new Communication Specialist. Newsletter going out in January '08. Next meeting scheduled for January 28, 2008.
- H. CAFE Conference Report. B. Duffy read P. Penn's report on sessions he attended. B. Duffy attended sessions on high school reform, teacher retention and media skills. J. Dorr attended sessions on trends in public education, early care, workforce demands, recruiting and retaining staff, and assessing superintendent/principals.

As this was Superintendent Paula Schwartz's last BOE meeting, she stated it had been a pleasure working with the Board and serving the Region 10 community, and expressed confidence in the Board's ability to meet the upcoming challenges such as the budget proposal, field space, etc.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting was made by B. Gilbert and seconded by E. Schiavone. Meeting ended at 10:27 pm.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting will be held on January 14, 2008 at Lake Garda School.