

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
CHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
January 28, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Chester Board of Education was held on Thursday, January 28, 2016. In attendance 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, Mr. Garth Sawyer, Business Manager and Kelley Frazier, Clerk. Absent: David Fitzgibbons

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Arthur Henick called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Rob Bibbiani and seconded by Charlene Fearon the Chester Board of Education **VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes from the November 23, 2015 regular meeting as amended and the Accounts Payable report.

Amendments

Ms. Fearon will remain on the LEARN Committee.

STUDENT REPORT

Dr. Beekley introduced Jack Guthrie, Abby Amara, Loretta Cecchini and Samantha Brookhart-Bardelli who are Student Leaders at Chester Elementary. They recently attended a Leadership Conference and learned about diversity and the qualities of a good leader. They also discussed a trip to the town hall food pantry and the food collection that the school participated in, as well as the outreach to Gateway in December.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

OTHER ITEMS:

Community and Board Input on 2016-17 Budget

No additional input.

Principal's Update

Dr. Beekley distributed an enrollment report. We have 38 children on the list for Kindergarten next year. Families will be contacted for an upcoming orientation. Dr. Beekley will be submitting the final claim form for the flooding which occurred last summer. The numbers have been verified. We will be reimbursed for the payroll for staff who had to work on this, minus the \$1,000 deductible. After the claim is submitted, this item will be closed.

Financial Status Report – Mr. Garth Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer gave a brief update of the financial status for Chester Elementary School. Currently the school is projecting a surplus. We will keep the Board informed of any developments that may arise. The audit was completed for FY14-15. The town received funds back for last year's surplus.

Cafeteria Report – Mr. Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer gave an update on the status of the cafeteria budget. We had an increase in the average daily meals served. We are staying within our original budgeted subsidy.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance

The Finance Committee meeting will be rescheduled. The insurance representative will be attending.

Policy

Discussed two policies that have to do with non-resident students and tuition. The Committee is reviewing this.

Curriculum

Discussed a music tech elective course for students interested in the music industry and production. Another course discussed was AP Spanish Literature. These were both approved by the Curriculum Committee.

Supervision District Committee Update

There were 2 budget workshops which resulted in a budget that has an increase of 2.78%. We have made additional cuts and the new percentage is 2.17% which will be reflected at the public hearing. Most of this increase is for a Math Coach who will work with the teachers in all four schools. This will go to a public hearing on February 1st.

LEARN

Ms. Fearon discussed the LEARN meeting. Tony Sheridan, from the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, spoke about how important it is for businesses to have students start school after Labor Day. Many businesses hire students for summer positions and it is difficult if students quit their jobs before Labor Day. He hopes that school calendar committees will realize that businesses have a stake in this.

Other Committee Reports

None

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Martineau discussed the International Baccalaureate (I/B) program. Administration and teachers visited a school on Long Island who has been a baccalaureate school for 18 years. She briefly discussed the academic rigor of this program. This program brings many things together so that students are working on many different skills. She noted that this does not take the place of AP courses. There are also courses available in Music,

Art, and Drama. This program allows more students to get involved in one or more aspects of the program. There is some flexibility. They can choose to take courses in the program or to work towards a diploma.

She also discussed the social studies curriculum. She is working with the historical societies from each of our towns to involve them in our curriculum. We will honor the history of all three towns and find what binds us together.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

District Update – Information and Communication

Dr. Levy discussed a program which will develop cultural diversity by tuitioning in students at the high school level from other countries. We are in the exploration process at this time. This will help with declining enrollment and offer our students exciting opportunities. At the March 3rd Region 4 Board Meeting, there will be a presentation on this program as well as the I/B program. Superintendent Levy noted that we are developing our five budgets. On February 8th from 6-7pm there will be a community dinner which will be open to families. Following the dinner, Jonathan Costa will be giving a presentation on the strategic planning process. This will allow the public to begin thinking of how our communities want to move forward. Celebrate Learning will once again be held at Deep River Elementary School. There has been a push from the federal government to provide brown bag breakfast and lunch for our students in need. We would have reimbursement for all children in our district. Students would pick up a brown bag and they have to eat the meal on school grounds. More information will become available soon.

Discussion Regarding Any Pending Policies – Standing Item

#5141.4 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

The changes are purely statutory. This will have a second read at the next Joint Board of Education meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – INTERVIEW POTENTIAL CANDIDATE TO FILL ONE OF TWO BOARD VACANCIES

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Chester Board of Education VOTED to go into Executive Session at 7:45pm to interview potential candidate to fill board vacancy.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:53 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the Chester Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to appoint Rebecca Iselin to the Chester Board of Education effective upon swearing in by Chester Town Clerk.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 10.1 Joint BOE next regular meeting on February 25, 2016 @ 7:00pm (JWMS)
- 10.2 Chester Budget Workshops Feb 03, Feb 18, Mar 16, 2016 (Central Office @6:00pm)
- 10.3 Chester BOE next regular meeting (Mar 24, 2016 at 7:00pm)
- 10.4 Community input for 2016-17 budget (on-going)
- 10.5 BOE Self-evaluation (TBD)

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion duly made and seconded the Chester Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley Frazier, Board Clerk