

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 3, 2005

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School Committee held a meeting on this date at

7:00 p.m. in the Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Bill Clay, Paul McFadden, and Frank Maher. William Munroe arrived at 7:40 p.m. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; and Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; were present. Director of Curriculum Philip D. Thornton; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were absent.

Vice Chair Cicero and Superintendent Seitsinger left the meeting momentarily at this time.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Clerk Coutcher read the District Mission statement.

OPEN FORUM – None

PRESENTATION – None

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Director of Administration
Robert Ross gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member McFadden requested agenda item C. Bills be pulled from the consent agenda.

Member Clay requested agenda items B. Personnel Items, 1. Appointments, a. Maureen Pontarelli as Mentor Coordinator Grades K-6, b. Anne Arvidson as Mentor Coordinator Grades 7-12, e. Christine Scott as .5 FTE Middle School Science Teacher effective August 29, 2005, f. Erica Pasquazzi as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Math Teacher effective August 29, 2005, g. Karen Robinson as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Chemistry Teacher effective August 29, 2005, h. John A. Ward as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Guidance Counselor effective August 29, 2005, i. Michael Buckley as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School History Teacher effective August 29, 2005, be pulled from the consent agenda.

Member Clay moved to accept the consent agenda with agenda items C. Bills, B. Personnel Items, 1. Appointments, a., b., e., f., g., h., and i. pulled. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 5 – 0.

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The following items were approved:

A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of July 19, 2005

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

c. Nancy Daley as Curriculum Director effective August 15, 2005

d. Craig Belanger as Sr. High School Assistant Football Coach for the 2005-2006 season

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

4. Teacher Recalls – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Susan Vivieros as 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher to the Alternative Education Program

b. Lori Geyer as Special Education .5 FTE Teacher at Lineham School

c. Alicia Bailey as 1.0 FTE Foreign Language Teacher at the Senior High School

5. Grievances

End of Consent Agenda

Superintendent Seitsinger returned from the interview to the meeting at this time, (7:05 p.m.).

Superintendent Seitsinger reviewed the correspondence:

D. Correspondence – (1) Memo from the Superintendent to Chair DeSack

regarding September, (2) Memo from the Superintendent to School

Committee members regarding Student Population, (3) Memo from the

Superintendent to School Committee Members regarding Contract Language

NEW BUSINESS-School Committee Calendar 2005 – 2006 – Superintendent Seitsinger reviewed the School Committee Calendar for the 2005 – 2006 school year.

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Member Clay moved to accept the School Committee Calendar 2005 - 2005. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 5 - 0.

Vice Chair Cicero returned to the meeting at this time, (7:09 p.m.).

Harassment Policy-Employees #6249 – 1st Reading – Member McFadden expressed concern with some language in this policy, as he feels it allows too much latitude. Also, Member McFadden requested the sexual harassment policy be brought forward for revision at the same time, as the two policies are very closely related. Member Clay explained the policy committee is currently focusing on policy revisions that are more pressing and of higher priority and that Policy #6249 needs to be in place by September 1, 2005. After discussion took place regarding this issue, consensus of the committee was to bring forward to the next agenda Harassment Policy-Employees #6249 as a 2nd Reading with Member McFadden's suggested revisions. Member McFadden agreed to forward his suggested revisions for Policy #6249 to Superintendent Seitsinger so he can then forward them to the policy committee. Member Clay noted that he would need specific comments on Member McFadden's suggested changes.

Chair DeSack moved to move up agenda item VII. Unfinished Business, E. Epi-Pen – Update to this time. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0

Superintendent Seitsinger referenced a letter he received today from Laidlaw Education Services' Vice President of Operations Cliff Gibson. He explained that Mr. Gibson followed through with his promise to bring the district's concerns to Laidlaw's corporate office. Superintendent Seitsinger read and excerpt from the letter which confirmed Laidlaw will revise its policy to include provisions that will allow drivers and monitors who are willing and able, to be trained in the administration of epinephrine by auto injector in the event of an emergency. The Superintendent explained he has already contacted Laidlaw's office regarding making arrangements for training and is hopeful to accomplish this task prior to the opening of school.

Vice Chair Cicero expressed how pleased she was that Laidlaw decided to reassess their policy and publicly extended recognition and thanks to Senator Breene and Representative Sullivan for their efforts in helping to bring this change. She requested consent from the committee to send thank you letters to Senator Breene and Representative Sullivan for their efforts. She also thanked parent Susan Woolohojian for her concern and dedication to this effort. Vice Chair Cicero also requested the committee allow her be involved in organizing the training with Administration. She expressed she felt it was important there is a checklist of all drivers and monitors being trained and to address the HIPA act and parental contact through letters.

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Member Coutcher voiced his concern regarding text in Laidlaw's letter which states "will allow drivers and monitors who are willing and able, to be trained" and suggested making certain students carrying epi-pens are assigned with drivers and monitors that have been trained.

Superintendent Seitsinger communicated that Laidlaw's policy revision is being developed nationally and recommended reviewing the revised policy once it is made available, rather than reviewing this local letter to Exeter-West Greenwich School District.

Chair DeSack recognized and thanked Vice Chair Cicero, Clerk Coutcher, and Member Clay for all their hard work and extra efforts regarding this issue. Representative Sullivan and parent Susan Woolohojian also thanked committee members for their hard work and commitment to this issue. The epi-pen issue will be placed back on the agenda as soon as Administration receives copy of Laidlaw's revised policy.

Concurrent Enrollment – Superintendent Seitsinger communicated this was a 1st Reading of Policy # 7602-Concurrent Enrollment and

explained notations made on page 2, section - Committee on Graduation of the enclosed copies were made because a committee on graduation has not had to meet in the past 6-years, as Principal Boulé has regular meetings with students and their parents in danger of not graduating. This policy will be carried over to the next agenda for a 2nd Reading and will include an attachment of the old policy in order to allow members to compare the new with the old and see the revisions that are made. Consensus was all future major policy revisions brought before School Committee members will include an attachment of the old policy and/or change bars to be included on minor revisions made to policies brought forward to members.

Grant Writer – Chair DeSack asked if it is appropriate for the district to try to attract grant writers and to incur the cost for such services. She communicated grant writing takes an enormous amount of time but also can generate a substantial amount of money for the district. She suggested that a grant writer could be paid benefits and a percentage of the total dollar amount they bring into the district.

Member McFadden expressed grant writing is an excellent idea; however he is hesitant to create a new position and suggested creating a temporary position.

Member Munroe arrived at this time, (7:40 p.m.).

After discussion of this matter, consensus was to allow Member

Maher and Chair DeSack to research what funds other districts have generated from grants over the past 5-years and to bring the information back to committee members for review.

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Superintendent Seitsinger explained one of the primary responsibilities of the district's Director of Curriculum is to write grants and support faculty in their writing of grants. He explained the writing of an individual federal grant can take well over one-month and it is a very intense process. The Superintendent then recognized and introduced the district's new Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley who was present in the audience and welcomed her to the district.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Jr. – Sr. High School Septic System – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross explained the electrical switching controls have been changed on the Jr. – Sr. High School Septic System and all other hardware will be watched over the next year, as recommended by Director of Maintenance William Plumley at a previous meeting.

Sodexo Meal Price Increase – After lengthy discussion regarding employee meal price increases, meal choices, and the availability of alternate establishments in which to purchase a meal, the amount of

time an employee is allotted to eat lunch, and the average cost of meal prices offered to employees at similar facilities, consensus was to establish a fair employee meal price. Members had differences of opinions on what would be a fair employee meal price, and made suggestions ranging from \$2.50 - \$6.00.

Clerk Coutcher moved to accept Mr. Ross' recommendations and employees will pay the highest amount of \$2.50. Seconded by Member Clay.

Discussion:

Member McFadden communicated he did not think \$4.00 is an unreasonable amount for an employee to pay for lunch.

The motion was repeated by Chair DeSack. Voted 4 – 3. Members McFadden, Munroe, and Maher voted no. Chair DeSack reminded members that this issue will be entertained again next year after a review of this coming year's performance.

New Textbook Adoption – Continuance – Chair DeSack moved to adopt the new textbook “Street Law”. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher.

Discussion:

Member Munroe expressed his feelings this textbook was a poor example of curriculum and its contents misrepresent the laws. Also, the text shows numerous discussions about gay marriages and

should this curriculum be used in the school, he will bring the names of the School Committee members that approve the adoption of this book to the media, churches, etc., as the discussion of gay marriage does not belong in the school. He also noted that gay marriage is against the law in Rhode Island.

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Superintendent Seitsinger reviewed the fact that should a parent in the school district disagree with an assignment in the textbook on specific grounds, they have the option to make an alternative selection.

Chair DeSack reminded members that this particular textbook is on the state textbook approval list and it will be used as a supplemental book in a high school history class.

There was lengthy discussion and debate about discrimination, the rights of gay students/parents, freedom of choice and diversity. Member Clay called the question. Consensus of the committee is to call the question. Vote 4 – 3. Members Munroe, McFadden, and Maher voted no. Thus ending the discussion.

Chair DeSack repeated the motion on the floor to adopt the new textbook.

Member Maher communicated he did not think it was fair he did not get to ask a question he had concerning this issue. Vice Chair Cicero also expressed she did not get to voice her opinion on this issue.

Consensus of committee members was to allow Member Maher and Vice Chair Cicero to speak on the motion.

Member Maher expressed that his opinion on this textbook is based on his outlook as a parent and felt it would be appropriate for a college-age student rather than a high school student, as he felt it contained adult issues. He explained it was difficult for him to say how he would use this textbook if he was a teacher, he may have had a different opinion if he was a teacher, and he understands the school needs diversity.

Superintendent Seitsinger explained Federal Law Title IX specifically states as an organization the district can not discriminate.

Member Munroe communicated he will sue the district should this textbook be adopted.

Vice Chair Cicero explained she reviewed this textbook thoroughly and was impressed with its contents. She said she felt members

were debating about one issue/area of the book that teachers may not even utilize. She read the many different topic headings in the book to members.

Chair DeSack repeated the motion on the floor to adopt the new textbook.

Voted 4 – 2 – 1. Members Munroe and McFadden voted no. Member Maher abstained as he is unsure of how the textbook will be used.

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Mission Statement & Belief Statement – Update – Superintendent Seitsinger explained the next meeting regarding this issue is schedule for August 16, 2005 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. and extended an invitation to all School Committee members.

Lineham Roof – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross communicated Lineham roof repairs began on Monday, August 1, 2005, all is going well, and he anticipates the project will be completed the middle of next week.

Fire Alarm Status/Jr. – Sr. High School and Metcalf School – Director of Administration Robert Ross referenced an enclosed memo to members regarding the Fire Alarm Inspection and Work Update. He

explained the Sr. High school fire alarm project will begin on August 9th and will be completed within 2-weeks of the start date, noting the project will be completed prior to the opening of school.

Member McFadden recalled the motion he made at the previous meeting regarding Metcalf School's fire alarm system and his request to proceed in inquiring quotes to repair Metcalf's fire alarm system, and asked why quotes were not provided at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Ross explained the 4th paragraph of his memo referenced Metcalf specifically and he read it to Member McFadden. He explained to Member McFadden that American Alarm has not yet had a crew available to send to Metcalf School to install a master box or time to provide a quote to the district, and he is trying to follow the direction of the committee to seek a quote while maintaining correct procedural records. He reiterated that American Alarm will be on campus next week and will install a master box at Metcalf School, which is 1 of 43 deficiencies listed on the inspection report for Metcalf School.

Clerk Coutcher reminded members the Exeter Fire Marshall stated, provided the district replaces the radio box, Metcalf School is a safe building.

Member Munroe stated he is suing the school district.

Clerk Coutcher explained the committee instructed Mr. Ross to seek a quote on July 19th in order to get a price to see if the district can afford to make the necessary repairs and then decide whether to go forward with repairs, because Metcalf School is in compliance.

Mr. Ross confirmed the district is currently attempting to get a quote to repair Metcalf's fire alarm system from experts who will write specific design specifications, and he expects to have the quote/breakdown of what has to be done at the next School Committee meeting so the committee can then decide whether to immediately repair the system or to start the bidding process.

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Presentations and Demonstrations of Public Issues on School Premises Policy #6263 – 2nd Reading – Superintendent Seitsinger and Member Clay confirmed this policy was reviewed by the district's legal counsel on two occasions. This item will continue onto the next agenda for adoption.

Vote for Legal Counsel – Chair DeSack reviewed the three legal firms previously interviewed by committee members. She asked if members had any other firms to bring forward for recommendation. There was no response from members. Member McFadden noted

Gorham & Gorham's packet did not include a fee schedule and recommended deferring this decision and tabling this item to the next agenda so that the fee schedule for Gorham & Gorham can be provided to members for their review. Consensus was to address this item at the next meeting.

Update Judgment Action and Fund Collection – Superintendent Seitsinger explained Gorham & Gorham will keep the district updated of the proceedings and the cost will depend on how far proceeding go and could cost anywhere from \$3,000 - \$10,000. Member Coutcher voiced his opinion that this was a waste of taxpayers' money.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – August 23, 2005-School Committee

Meeting, September 13, 2005-School Committee Meeting, August 29, 2005-Teachers

Return, August 31, 2005-Students Return

REPORTS/COMMENTS – Chair DeSack reverted back to items pulled from the consent agenda. Member McFadden requested agenda item C. Bills be pulled from the consent agenda and questioned, (1) What service does the Kent Center provide? (2) Is the service provided during the summertime?

Superintendent Seitsinger will obtain specific details from Director of

Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo to answer Member McFadden's questions and e-mail a response to all members.

Member McFadden moved to accept the following consent agenda item:

C. Bills – August invoices in the amount of \$89,105.41, June 30, 2005 accruals

in the amount of \$29,157.01

with clarification that Superintendent will e-mail a response to members. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 7 – 0.

Member Clay requested agenda items B. Personnel Items, 1. Appointments, a. Maureen Pontarelli as Mentor Coordinator Grades K-6, b. Anne Arvidson as Mentor Coordinator Grades 7-12, e. Christine Scott as .5 FTE Middle School Science Teacher, f. Erica Pasquazzi as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Math Teacher effective August 29, 2005, g. Karen Robinson as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Chemistry Teacher effective August 29, 2005, h. John A. Ward as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Guidance Counselor effective August 29, 2005, i. Michael Buckley as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School History Teacher effective August 29, 2005, be pulled from the consent agenda and asked if appointments e., f., g., h., and i. were new FTE positions. Superintendent Seitsinger explained all were budgeted FTE's and

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none of these were new FTE's. Member Clay suggested making this clarification on future agendas to avoid having to pull items for clarification.

Member Clay explained items a. and b. were tabled at the last meeting until members could review contract language, regarding the Mentoring Coordinator positions, but the language provided tonight does not mention the stipend amount. Superintendent Seitsinger communicated he had provided the stipend amount of \$3,000 at the last meeting and didn't think he needed to include it again.

Member Clay moved to accept the following consent agenda items:

- e. Christine Scott as .5 FTE Middle School Science Teacher
- f. Erica Pasquazzi as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Math Teacher
- g. Karen Robinson as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Chemistry Teacher
- h. John A. Ward as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School Guidance Counselor
- i. Michael Buckley as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School History Teacher

Seconded by Chair DeSack. Voted 7 – 0.

Member McFadden moved to accept consent agenda items B. Personnel Items, 1. Appointments, a. Maureen Pontarelli as Mentor Coordinator Grades K-6, b. Anne Arvidson as Mentor Coordinator Grades 7-12. Seconded by Chair DeSack.

Voted 2 – 5. Vice Chair Cicerio, Clerk Coutcher, Members Munroe, Maher and Clay voted no. Motion denied.

Discussion:

Consensus was, as stated at the last School Committee meeting, members want to review a copy of a signed teachers' contract prior to approving appointments of the two Mentor Coordinators positions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

**Adjournment – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.
Seconded by Chair DeSack. Voted 7 – 0.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK