

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH October 24, 2006

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Paul McFadden; Frank Maher; Bill Munroe; and Bill Clay. Interim Superintendent James DiPrete; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were present. Student Member Geoffrey Southworth arrived at 7:06 p.m.

ORDER –Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

OPEN FORUM – Members recognized Interim Superintendent DiPrete and announced that he recently received the National Association of State Boards of Education Distinguished Service Award. The NASBE is a national group that represents all the regent-type boards across the country. The award is given annually to three state board of education members in recognition of outstanding service to public

education. The Distinguished Service Award recognizes the contributions of those who serve on state boards of education across the nation. The Committee offered congratulation to Interim Superintendent DiPrete and presented him with its Apple Award recognition.

Community member/parent Martha Morro asked the Committee what policies it has in place to protect students from sexual predators. Member Clay explained the district has a policy that requires potential employees and school volunteers to undergo a background screening prior to being offered employment status or given access to school children. Ms. Morro asked why the Committee does not require a DCYF check as well. And she questioned whether or not vendors at the Metcalf School Christmas bazaar undergo background checks. Chair DeSack said the Committee is unprepared to answer Ms. Morro's questions at this time. Chair DeSack said the Committee will take Ms. Morro's inquiry under advisement, will verify whether the Committee can require a DCYF check, will add this item to the next regular School Committee meeting agenda, and will bring any relevant information forward at that time.

Student Member Geoffrey Southworth arrived at this time (7:06 p.m.).

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Geoffrey Southworth said that last week's high school NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) visitors were pleased

with the high school. He said the visitors found that “we are all happy here”. Geoffrey then gave a brief summary of how well various high school sports teams are doing.

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APT – Metcalf Playground – PTA president Sharon Walsh introduced herself and reported the group is now officially recognized as the “PTA”. Ms. Walsh explained that through fundraising and grants the PTA is planning to make improvements to the Metcalf School playground this year. She said that they have been given a preliminary design from the playground equipment company they have selected and that their plan is to have the School Committee signoff on the project since the PTA will be gifting the equipment to the school district. Kerry Moretti, chairperson of the playground committee, gave an overview of the proposed improvements. She said that the PTA would like to install a rock climbing wall and will report the dimensions of it to the School Committee prior to seeking approval to install it. Ms. Moretti gave a summary of the overall timeline for the project. She said that to date \$6,900 has been raised - which will take care of the basketball courts. Chair DeSack told PTA members that they should contact Director of Administration Robert Ross should they have any clarifying/technical questions concerning this project.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Interim Superintendent DiPrete gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member McFadden pulled consent agenda item, Executive Session Minutes of October 3, 2006.

Member Clay moved to accept the consent agenda with item, Executive Session Minutes of October 3, 2006 pulled. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of September 26, 2006, Regular Minutes of October 10, 2006, Executive Session I Minutes of October 10, 2006, Executive Session II Minutes of October 10, 2006,

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments - (As Recommended by the Interim Superintendent)-(No Change to Budgeted FTE's)

a. Kim Weindel as Junior High School Cheerleading Coach, Stipend \$1,201.00, effective for the 2006 – 2007 season

b. Gregg Charest and Glenn Zienowicz as Sr. High School Drama Program Co-Advisors, Stipend \$1,544.50 each, effective for the 2006 – 2007 school year

c. Michael Buckley as Sr. High School Academic Decathlon Advisor, Stipend \$1,717.00, effective for the 2006 – 2007 school year

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d. Anne Arvidson as Sr. High School Multicultural Club Advisor, Stipend \$1,717.00, effective for the 2006 – 2007 school year

e. Marcy Ward as Sr. High School Co-Advisor (with Mark Bartley) to the Class of 2009, Stipend one-half of \$1,030.00, effective for the 2006 – 2007 school year

f. Michael Newsome as Metcalf School Behavior Specialist, Salary \$30,900.00, effective October 27, 2006

2. Leaves of absence – (As Recommended by the Interim Superintendent) – (ENCLOSED)

a. Request from Jacqueline Mears for a Parental Leave of Absence from her position as a .67 FTE Job – Share Sr. High School Foreign Language Teacher, for the remainder of the 2006 – 2007 school year, beginning on Nov. 2, 2006

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

C. Bills – (ENCLOSED) – In the amount of \$ 352,526.11

D. Home School Approvals – (As Recommended by the Interim Superintendent)

1. GREENE – Hannah, Noah, Mason

2. STRACENSKY - Henry

End Consent Agenda

E. Correspondence – (1) Memo to School Committee Members from Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley Regarding ACT Update, (2) October 16, 2006 Memo from Principal Thompson Regarding Conversion of Art Room

NEW BUSINESS – Student Enrollment – Member McFadden and Director of Administration Robert Ross briefly discussed this year’s budget.

Alternate Transportation – Chair DeSack referenced a memo enclosure from Director of Administration Robert Ross and explained that the memo is simply to notify members of a proposed joint meeting concerning alternative transportation options. Chair DeSack polled members to see who is interested in attending. Vice Chair Cicero, Clerk Coutcher,

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and Members Maher and Munroe expressed interest in attending. Chair DeSack said that this meeting will need to be posted.

Format Corrections to Policies 7603 and 7604 – Member Clay explained that policies 7603 and 7604 require slight format corrections and summarized the necessary slight, non-substantive modifications needed.

Member Clay moved to accept the changes to Policy #7603 as presented. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.

Member Clay moved to correct Policy #7604 as shown. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

Consensus was to have the Superintendent's secretary distribute corrected policies #7603 and #7604 to policy book holders.

Request for High School Music Storage and Equipment – Director of Administration Robert Ross and members had a lengthy discussion regarding the high school music department's submittal of a request to purchase \$7,838 worth of music storage and equipment. Mr. Ross explained this request is a carryover from the cuts made in the 2005 – 2006 budget. Last year the music department had requested to purchase these items along with chairs and music stands; however,

due to budget cuts the district appropriated funds to purchase only the chairs and music stands. The music department was under the impression that since they had requested to order the music storage and equipment last year that the process would carry over to this year. They thought that it was already in the 2006 – 2007 budget and did not ask for it again. Member Munroe expressed his opinion that this purchase request should be added to the budget for the upcoming year. Members discussed the structure, cost, and necessity of the storage cabinets.

Chair DeSack moved to hold on the High School Music Storage and Equipment discussion until after discussing agenda item, Additional Health Care Payment; and to move up agenda item, Additional Health Care Payment to this time. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.

Additional Health Care Payment – Director of Administration Robert Ross said that he attended a WB Community Health quarterly board meeting. After the meeting Mr. Ross spoke with the executive director about the district's account and its projected condition going forward. His response to Mr. Ross was that historically the district has made it through the worst part and that he foresees the district's account returning to its regular position or to a breakeven position. Mr. Ross said that with two significant claims completed the district may be able to self correct but there is no guarantee. If the district does not pay the additional payment of \$235,000 it will reflect in the

premiums. The rates are set the end of March and embedded in the premium.

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Members discussed the fact that the teachers' contract is up for negotiation. Member McFadden recommended not making the additional payment in order to accurately reflect the higher premium and to have the deficit negotiated in the contract rather than making the additional payment which will shift the burden directly onto the district. Clerk Coutcher expressed his concern that if the district does not make the additional payment, as Mr. Ross has advised, premiums could increase as much as 65% next year. Clerk Coutcher said that he would like Mr. Ross to provide members with a financial analysis. Chair DeSack said that the committee does not have enough information concerning this issue to make a decision at this time and asked Mr. Ross to provide an analysis to address Member McFadden's and Clerk Coutcher's concerns/suggestions.

Member McFadden reiterated that not paying the additional payment will put the district in a stronger negotiating position.

This item will carry over to the next agenda. Members reverted to the discussion of Request for High School Music Storage and Equipment – Member Munroe suggested waiting on this item until the additional

health care payment is decided. Chair DeSack said that if the musical equipment is stolen it will cost the district more than the cost of the storage cabinets since the district will be responsible for theft. Chair DeSack recommended that the Committee appropriate enough funds to purchase the storage cabinets only.

Member Clay moved to buy storage cabinets in the amount of \$5,500. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Convening a Sub Committee on Health Care – Chair DeSack surveyed the Committee to see who is interested in serving on the Health Care sub committee and reminded members this service will involve a time commitment. Clerk Coutcher and Member Munroe expressed their interest in serving on the sub committee. Member Munroe said he would forgo his previous pledge to attend the joint meeting on alternate transportation options in order to fulfill this commitment.

Policies – Review and Adoption - #6250 – Sexual Harassment - Employees – Adoption – Member Clay moved to adopt policy #6250 – Sexual Harassment – Employees. Seconded by Member Munroe. Voted 7 – 0.

#8514 – Sexual Harassment – Students – Adoption – Clerk Coutcher moved to adopt policy #8514 – Sexual Harassment – Students.

Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.

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#6251 – Prohibited Fraternization between Employees and Students - Adoption – Member McFadden moved to adopt policy #6251 – Prohibited Fraternization between Employees and Students. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

Appearance of Jr. – Sr. High School Grounds – Interim Superintendent gave a brief summary regarding this subject matter to date. Chair DeSack explained the School Committee had requested this item carry over from the last meeting because the Committee had questions specifically for Director of Maintenance Bill Plumley as to why this situation was allowed to occur. Mr. Plumley responded that one of the reasons was that the groundskeeper is an eighteen-year employee and is entitled to the maximum vacation package which he took just prior to the opening of school. Going forward, this employee will stagger his vacation time. Mr. Plumley said that another reason was that his wife had surgery in mid August; therefore, Exeter- West Greenwich was not his main concern at that time. Members and Mr. Plumley discussed that the maintenance department is short staffed, that there is a parent volunteer that has

offered to help, and that Mr. Plumley should unite with the parent volunteer and Principal Boulé in order to implement a schedule during the month of August rather than placing the weight of this assignment on one person's shoulders. Further discussion took place regarding equipment use, liability insurance, and what new equipment the maintenance department is in need of. Mr. Plumley indicated that the maintenance department is in need of a power field striper which costs approximately \$1,800. Chair DeSack suggested that the Boosters Club may be willing to help with this purchase and said that she will ask them. Once Chair DeSack checks with the Boosters Club, she will add this item on to a School Committee agenda for further discussion. Member Clay suggested the Jr. – Sr. High Grounds/Athletic Fields Improvement and Maintenance Plan should indicate who is responsible for carrying out the plan.

SAT Program – Outside Firm – Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley referenced an SAT Prep Alternative Solutions memo enclosure and reported that all the dollar amounts listed reflect the cost per student.

Ms. Daley and members discussed and exchanged ideas regarding SAT prep course cost, scholarships, attendance incentives, the district subsidizing the cost, offering the course to juniors and/or seniors, and students taking the outsource course during the school day. Consensus was to have Ms. Daley research the option of students taking the outsource course during the school day and to have her also research if the district pledges a certain enrollment figures whether the outsource firm (Resolution Group) will offer a

program cost discount. Once Ms. Daley has gathered the requested data she will inform Chair DeSack so that this item can be added to a future agenda.

Metcalf Fire Alarm – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross updated members on the status of the Metcalf fire alarm system bid-spec process. He said that the bid-spec has been drawn and that the local fire marshal should signoff on the drawings this week. Mr. Ross said he will then issue an RFP. He reported that everything is on

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schedule and he anticipates advertising in this Sunday's journal. The length of the RFP is 14-days and all bids will come before the School Committee for review.

Superintendent Search – Chair DeSack reminded members of the change in the location of the November 4, 2006 School Committee Special Meeting. She said that the meeting will take place at Metcalf School Library from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. She asked members to allow time following the meeting to discuss which candidates to bring forward for the second round of interviews.

REPORTS/COMMENTS – Member McFadden requested consent agenda item, Executive Session Minutes of October 3, 2006 be pulled

and referenced its content and briefly discussed with Chair DeSack the matter of when a vote was take to appropriate funds.

Member McFadden moved to accept consent agenda item, Executive Session Minutes of October 3, 2006. Member Clay seconded. Voted 7 – 0.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – November 7, 2006 – Professional Development Day – (No School for Students); November 13, 2006 – Veterans’ Day; November 14, 2006 – School Committee Meeting; November 17, 2006 – Parent/Teacher Conference Day – (No School for Students); November 21, 2006 – General Open School Committee Meeting on Health Care; November 23 & 24 – Thanksgiving Recess; November 28, 2006 – School Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Chair DeSack moved to go into Executive Session at

8:35 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-45-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 for the purpose of discussion regarding Collective Bargaining/Arbitration Issue 42-46-5 (a) (2). Seconded by Member Clay. Voted – 7 – 0.

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:35 p.m.

Chair DeSack called the meeting back to order in open session in

accordance with RIGL 42-46-2(b) at 9:04 p.m.

No votes were taken during Executive Session.

**ADJOURNMENT – Clerk Coutcher moved to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.
Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0. Meeting adjourned 9:05PM**

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK