

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH December 12, 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; Frank Maher; Bill Munroe; Robert Bollengier, and Mary Walsh. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Interim Superintendent James A. DiPrete; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo; and Student Member Geoffrey Southworth were present. Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley was absent.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Vice Chair Cicero read the District Mission Statement.

OPEN FORUM – None

WELCOMING – New School Committee Members – Chair DeSack recognized and welcomed new School Committee members Mary Walsh of Exeter and Robert Bollengier of West Greenwich. Members Walsh and Bollengier introduced themselves and they each made a

brief statement. Chair DeSack then recognized and welcomed the district's new Superintendent, Dr. Thomas Geismar. Superintendent Geismar expressed that he is excited to be here and spoke briefly about his visit to the district schools earlier in the day. Chair DeSack explained that the committee wrote and approved Superintendent Geismar's employment contract, without modifications, and presented it to him for his signature.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION – Elections of School Committee Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, RIASC Delegate, and SORICO – Vice Chair Cicero moved to nominate Susan DeSack as School Committee Chairperson. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.

Chair DeSack moved to nominate Teri Cicero as Vice Chairperson. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 - 0.

Vice Chair Cicero moved to nominate Gregory Coutcher as Clerk. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.

Vice Chair Cicero moved to nominate Susan DeSack as RI Association of School Committees Delegate. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0.

Member Walsh moved to nominate Teri Cicero as SORICO Delegate. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS – Chair DeSack gave an overview of each School Committee Standing Committee position and members indicated if they were interested in serving. Two additional School Committee Standing Committees recognized and discussed were the Policy Subcommittee and the Health and Wellness Subcommittee. Vice Chair Cicero expressed her interest in continuing to serve on the policy subcommittee. There was a discussion regarding former member Bill Clay who has offered to continue to sit on the policy subcommittee as a community representative. Consensus of the committee was to allow Mr. Clay to continue on the policy subcommittee as a community volunteer. Vice Chair Cicero said that the policy subcommittee will continue to follow the same procedure it has in the past. Vice Chair Cicero requested that members submit all policy reviews/modifications/recommendations in writing to the policy subcommittee. Superintendent Geismar asked for clarification regarding the policy subcommittees' role. He indicated that he would like to see staff and Administration have the opportunity to review policies and offer input into the policy process; as well as the opportunity to review these policies with the policy subcommittee. In response to Superintendent Geismar's inquiry, Chair DeSack confirmed that the policy subcommittee would not bring a policy forward to the School Committee prior to the Superintendent having

the opportunity to review it with his staff.

The outcome of the School Committee Organization Assignments is as follows:

Graduation Team (2) Mary Walsh, Teri Cicero

Exeter Town Council Liaison (1) Mary Walsh

WG Town Council Liaison (1) Gregory Coutcher

Curriculum Director Liaison (1) Susan DeSack

Legislation Action Group (1) Bill Munroe

Food Service Liaison (1) Frank Maher

Career & Tech. Centers (1) Susan DeSack

SALT Visit Reps (2) Teri Cicero, Bob Bollengier

District Improvement (3) Mary Walsh, Bob Bollengier, Susan DeSack

Transportation Subcommittee (2) Frank Maher, Bob Bollengier

Policy Subcommittee (2) Teri Cicero, Bob Bollengier, (Bill Clay)

Health and Wellness (2) Frank Maher, Mary Walsh

REVIEW IMPORTANT DATES – In reference to the 2007 School Committee Meeting Dates Schedule, consensus of the committee was to reschedule the December 4, 2007 meeting to December 11, 2007.

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – On behalf of the student body, Student Member Geoffrey Southworth welcomed new School Committee members. He then gave a brief overview of the very successful Hunger Awareness Dinner which raised \$750 for Exeter

and West Greenwich families in need.

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

Chair DeSack requested that consent agenda item, B. PERSONNEL, 1. Appointments, a. Request to Hire 0.5 FTE Literacy Coach at the Senior High School be pulled for discussion.

Member Bollengier asked for clarification regarding the nature of the legal fees listed on the Expenditures by Vendor Report (Bills). Director of Administration Robert Ross conveyed that these expenditures were for legal fees acquired due to a Special Education hearing.

Member Maher moved to accept the consent agenda with item, B., 1., a. pulled. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of November 28, 2006, Special Meeting Minutes of October 17, 21, 28, November 4, and November 18, 2006

B. Personnel Items

2. Leaves of absence

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

C. Bills – In the amount of \$118,694.32

D. Home School Approvals

End Consent Agenda

Chair DeSack reviewed the correspondence.

Correspondence (1) Wednesday, January 31, 2007 Joint Meeting Invitation; (2) Approved 2007-2008 Budget Development Timeline; (3) E-mail from Vice Chair Cicero and Clerk Coutcher regarding Agenda Request for December 12, 2006 School Committee Meeting

Members did not express any concerns regarding Correspondence.

MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS – Superintendent – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Superintendent's Monthly Status Report.

Business – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Business Director's Monthly Status Report.

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Curriculum – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Curriculum Director’s Monthly Status Report.

Special Services – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Special Services Director’s Monthly Status Report.

Maintenance – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Maintenance Director’s Monthly Status Report.

MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – Policy Committee Report – Vice Chair Cicero referenced the Policy Committee Report and said that it contained a list of all of the policies that need to be reviewed. She said that she anticipates it will take approximately nine months to complete this task. Vice Chair Cicero confirmed that the policy committee will set up a meeting to review these policies with Superintendent Geismar. Chair DeSack asked members to inform the policy committee of any other policies they would like added to the list for review.

NEW BUSINESS – Implications of the Face-to-Face Meeting with RIDE – Chair DeSack said that this agenda item is related to the personnel item pulled from tonight’s consent agenda. Interim Superintendent DiPrete said this is important work. The Rhode Island Department of Education’s new diploma system directly impacts curriculum,

assessments, and how the district teaches; and it challenges K-12 students. He gave an overview of the state's new High School Regulations. Interim Superintendent DiPrete referenced the district's recent hiring of a Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements Coordinator and explained that it is now necessary to also supplement the program at the high school when it comes to literacy; since there are presently numerous students without the required support and contractually the district can no longer purchase these services as it did last school year. He said that he is requesting the committees' permission to hire an additional 0.5 FTE Literacy Coach at the Senior High School for the remainder of the 2006 – 2007 school year in order to meet state regulations. Principal Boulé explained that during the 2007 – 2008 budget process she will propose increasing the Senior High School Literacy Coach position from a 0.5 FTE to a 1.0 FTE in order to meet state regulations. Superintendent Geismar, Interim Superintendent DiPrete, and members exchanged views on the processes of teaching and learning to read. Interim Superintendent DiPrete recommended the committee move forward with the temporary hire through the end of the 2006 – 2007 school year, pending a mid-way report/study on the district's K-12 literacy challenge situation. Consensus was that Administration will submit a K-12 literacy report to the School Committee during the budget process in order to make certain that the hiring of an additional 0.5 FTE Literacy Coach at the High School for the 2007 – 2008 school year is indeed needed. In response to Vice Chair Cicero's inquiry, Interim Superintendent DiPrete confirmed that the Literacy Coach job

description will specify Reading Specialist Certification is required. Chair DeSack said the appointment request will be voted on at the end of tonight's agenda. Member Munroe

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asked questions relating to when children should be able to read and voiced his concern that the district may end up wanting to hire literacy coaches at every grade level.

Schedule a School Committee Retreat for January to Discuss Rules on Bylaws – Superintendent Geismar and members discussed the potential format and benefits of scheduling a School Committee Retreat which is included in the package the committee purchased when it hired NESDEC to conduct the Superintendent search. Member Munroe voiced his opinion that it is the committees' duty to save taxpayers money and that a Retreat could be held without incurring expenses. Consensus of the committee was to table this item until the January 23, 2006 meeting agenda.

Policies – Review and Adoption - #6205 – Employee Protection from Bloodborne Pathogens – 1st Reading – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy #6205.

#7605 Promotion-Retention Policy – 1st Reading – Principal Thompson referenced policy language on page 2 and expressed his

concern that it omits key components of the Jr. High School's Retention Policy. Chair DeSack requested that Principal Thompson, Superintendent Geismar, and the policy subcommittee meet to discuss and address Principal Thompson's concerns. Principal Boulé will also inform the policy subcommittee of concerns she has relating to this policy. Principal Myers voiced her concern that some of the policy language relating to grading is not appropriate at the primary level. Chair DeSack asked that the Superintendent review all policies prior to them coming before the committee.

Budget 2007 – 2008 – Director of Administration Robert Ross explained that directors and principals are in the process of meeting and reviewing budgets. He referenced a RIASBO meeting scheduled for this coming Thursday morning and said that at that meeting Mr. Peter Scheiffer of the RI Department of Management will specifically talk about what the legislated 5.25 cap on appropriations means for the district going forward this year. Mr. Ross said he anticipates that this will be a challenging year for the district and for all districts across the state. Chair DeSack said that she will also attend the meeting and she will mail copies of any pertinent information handed out at the meeting to members for their review. She suggested that the January 9, 2006 School Committee meeting focus primarily on budget discussion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – SAT Prep Course Program – Consensus of the committee was to table this item until the next School Committee

meeting, (January 9, 2007) since Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley is absent from tonight's meeting.

Metcalf Fire Alarm – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported phase one of the Metcalf fire alarm project will begin on January 2, 2007. He said that AFA is the successful bidder, their references have been checked, the project has been reviewed

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with the architect firm, and all components of the project are on target. Mr. Ross said that phase two of the project will be part of the budget discussion process. At the District Financial Meeting, phase two will be submitted as a capital request item. Mr. Ross confirmed that the project is scheduled to take place from approximately 3:30 to 11:30 p.m.; without disruption to classes and with minimal disruption to extracurricular activities.

Policies – Review and Adoption - #6405 – Screening Potential Employees and School Volunteers – Amendment – Chair DeSack said that all policies currently in the works, including first readings and amendments, will be reviewed by the policy subcommittee and the appropriate parties, then submitted to the Superintendent for his review. Once this process is complete, a policy subcommittee member will notify Chair DeSack when the subcommittee is ready to bring a policy forward. These policies will be tabled indefinitely,

pending notification from the policy subcommittee to the chairperson.

REPORTS/COMMENTS – Chair DeSack pulled consent agenda item (enclosed in the supplemental packet) B. Personnel Items, 1. Appointments, a. Request to Hire 0.5 FTE Literacy Coach at the Senior High School for discussion.

Chair DeSack moved to hire a 0.5 FTE Literacy Coach at the Senior High School until the end of the 2006 – 2007 school year. Seconded by Member Bollengier.

In response to Member Bollengier’s clarifying question, Chair DeSack confirmed that due to state mandates this position is being created until the end of the 2006-2007 school year. This matter will be readdressed during the budget cycle at which time administration will present the committee with an entire literacy plan which will give the committee a better picture of whether it needs to create this position on a permanent basis in the future.

Voted 7 – 0.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Friday, December 22, 2006 through Monday, January 1, 2007 – Winter Recess; Tuesday, January 2, 2006 – Superintendent Thomas Geismar’s effective start date; Friday, January 5, 2007 – First Draft of Superintendent’s Budget

available for School Committee members; Tuesday, January 9, 2006 – School Committee Meeting; Wednesday, January 10, 2007 – Special Education Budget Workshop; Monday, January 15, 2006 – Martin Luther King Day; Tuesday, January 16, 2007 – Elementary Budget Workshop; Thursday, January 18, 2007 – Junior High School Budget Workshop; Monday, January 22, 2007 – Districtwide/Facilities/Athletics Budget Workshop; Tuesday, January 23, 2006 – School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, January 30, 2007 Senior High School Budget Workshop; Wednesday, January 31, 2007 – Town Council/School Committee Joint Meeting

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EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Chair DeSack moved to go into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) – Collective Bargaining Agreement/Negotiation Discussion. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:30 p.m.

Chair DeSack moved to reconvene to Open Session. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:59 p.m.

Chair DeSack called the meeting back to order in Open Session in accordance with RIGL 42-46-2 (b) at 9:59 p.m.

A vote was taken during Executive Session to appoint Member Bollengier and Clerk Coutcher to the negotiation team for the upcoming teachers' contract.

ADJOURNMENT – Member Bollengier moved to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. Seconded by Member Walsh. Voted 7 – 0. Meeting adjourned 10:00 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK