

**XETER-WEST GREENWICH September 25, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 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; Robert Bollengier; Frank Maher, and Bill Munroe. Member Mary Walsh was absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; and Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar were present. Student Member Katherine Matook arrived at 7:12 p.m.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 and in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5(a)(8) for Student Hearing(s), written notice having been provided to the individual(s) informing him/her of the right to hold the hearing in Open Session. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Meeting moved to Executive Session at 6:00 p.m.**

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 7:05 p.m.**

**A vote was taken during Executive Session to accept the**

**Superintendent's recommendation, as amended, for disciplinary action. Voted 6 – 0.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order in Open Session at 7:09 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Vice Chair Cicero read the District Mission Statement.**

**OPEN FORUM – None**

**PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Matook is absent.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Superintendent Geismar answered Member Bollengier's clarifying question regarding VI. B. Personnel Items, Appointments.**

**Student Member Matook arrived at this time, (7:12 p.m.).**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 - 0.**

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**The following items were approved:**

**A. Approval of Minutes – Executive Session Minutes of September 11, 2007; Regular Minutes of September 11, 2007**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent) (No Change to Budgeted FTE's) – (ENCLOSED)**

**a. Christopher Anthony as Sr. High School Director of Student Affairs, Salary \$80,000; effective on or about September 26, 2007**

**2. Leaves of Absence**

**a. Pending his appointment as Director of Student Affairs, a request from Christopher Anthony for a one-year leave of absence from his position as 1.0 FTE Sr. High School History Teacher, effective on or about September 26, 2007**

**3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with regret) – (ENCLOSED)**

**a. Resignation from Paul Santa from his position as Assistant Football Coach at the Senior High School, effective immediately**

**4. Grievances**

**5. Recalls**

**6. Sabbaticals**

**C. Bills –In the Amount of \$292,205.31**

**D. Home School Approvals**

## **End Consent Agenda**

**Chair DeSack reverted back to agenda item, PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Matook reported that Student Council has many participants in all grade levels this year and she gave an overview of upcoming planned events at the senior high school such as Spirit Week, Homecoming, and SAT assessment taking.**

**Correspondence – (1) Monthly Sr. High School Discipline Report; (2) Monthly District Suspension Report; (3) September 21, 2007 Memorandum from the Superintendent to the School Committee**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to move up agenda item, VII. D. 2008 – Jr. High School Trip to Washington, DC Proposal, to this time. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0.**

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**NEW BUSINESS – 2008 Washington, DC Trip Proposal – Jr. High – Vice Chair Cicero moved to accept the trip to Washington, DC for 2008. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Member Maher advised jr. high school teachers/trip chaperones**

**Karen Reynolds and Michelle Livsey to contact local legislators in advance to obtain clearance to visit some government offices.**

**Student Hearing 42-46-5(a)(8) – Member Bollengier moved to strike agenda item, Student Hearing from the official agenda. Seconded by Member Munroe. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Member Maher moved to move item, F. VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Transportation Update up to the next item on the agenda. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross updated members on the ongoing transportation issues. He spoke to the out-of-district issues first, since some of those parents are in attendance at tonight's meeting. Mr. Ross presented, as a possible resolution to the out-of-district issues involving Monsignor Clarke/Prout and Forward View/West Bay Christian Academy students, a proposal that will cut approximately 40-minutes from the current bus route schedule and will not incur additional cost to the district. Consensus was reached that Mr. Ross should direct Laidlaw to proceed with the Monsignor Clarke/Prout and Forward View/West Bay Christian Academy resolution. Mr. Ross updated members on additional out-of-district issues relating to the transportation of Compass School and Kingston Hill Academy students. Members discussed group stops for out-of-district and in-district students. It was noted that the policy subcommittee anticipates reviewing and then bringing transportation**

policies to the School Committee by the end of October or the beginning of November. Mr. Ross presented that group stops will not work for at least two families who have contacted his office. Further, he noted that the district's legal council is seeking an advisory opinion from the Commissioner of Education regarding the authority of charter schools as LEA's to require special transportation. Audience member Mary Ellen Thurber, (Compass School parent) requested a copy of the bus route map for Compass School students. Chair DeSack requested that Mr. Ross provide Ms. Thurber with a copy of the map and asked him to schedule a meeting with those parents once the district has received a reply from legal counsel regarding this matter. Mr. Ross gave members a brief review of one last out-of-district issue for one medically fragile student who is transported to Warwick. Should the student attend the out-of-district placement, the district will incur additional transportation costs of approximately \$25,000 to transport the child in the afternoon. Laidlaw will provide morning transportation at no charge. Mr. Ross advised that his office is now in the process of providing the state of Rhode Island with out-of-district transportation data because next September the state is supposed to take on the task of managing Special Education transportation. Lastly, Mr. Ross reported that the status of

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**in-district transportation issues is satisfactory. This item will continue to the next regular meeting agenda.**

**Policies – Review and Adoption - #6312 – Filling Administrator Vacancies - Amendment – Vice Chair Cicero moved that the committee adopt Policy #6312 as amended. Seconded by Member Bollengier.**

**Voted 6 – 0.**

**#8701 – Student Medication – Amendment – Member Bollengier moved that the committee approve Policy #8701 as submitted to the committee for amendment. Member Munroe seconded. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Literacy Handbook – Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley gave a brief overview of the purpose of the Literacy Handbook. She said that this item will be carried over to the next regular meeting agenda so that members may have time to review the handbook. Chair DeSack asked members to bring their copy of the handbook with them to the next regular meeting of October 9, 2007.**

**NEASC Report on Visiting Committee – Sr. High October 2006 – Principal Boulé expressed her opinion that the high school and the district should be commended for a fine NEASC Report. She highlighted some of the positive comments made in the report and also noted that there are some items that need to be addressed. Principal Boulé said that overall the high school is very proud of the**

visiting committees' report. She confirmed that teachers are aware of the report and said that she will send a letter to parents to make them aware of what the report contains. In response to Member Bollengier's clarifying questions, Principal Boulé confirmed that it is not mandatory for high school teachers to present students with a course syllabus; however, students do receive clear instruction with some weekly handouts.

**Emergency Item-Security Fence at Wawaloam School – Superintendent Geismar asked members to review the four fence installation estimates enclosed in their supplemental packets. Member Munroe cautioned members that this item would need to go out to bid prior to consideration for approval by the committee. Superintendent Geismar asked members to consider installing a security fence at Lineham School as well. He explained that Principal Marino is concerned that Lineham students could run off into areas surrounding school grounds. Dr. Geismar pointed out that the lowest quote from Classic Fence of \$4,750 for a six foot fence at Wawaloam School does not exceed \$5,000. The Superintendent said that the low quote for a four foot fence at Lineham School is \$3,350. Chair DeSack said that neither of these items exceeds \$5,000. Members discussed the height of and reasons for the proposed fencing at Wawaloam and Lineham Schools and they discussed reusing fencing that was taken down from the football field area at the sr. high school.**

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**Clerk Coutcher moved to approve the installation of a six foot fence at Wawaloam School, by Classic Fence, in the amount of \$4,750. Seconded by Member Maher.**

**In response to Member Bollengier's inquiry, Superintendent Geismar advised that the district's maintenance department staff would not be able to install the fencing.**

**Vote 5 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.**

**Clerk Coutcher recommended that the committee discuss installing fencing at Lineham School tonight rather than waiting until the next regular School Committee meeting as suggested by Chair DeSack. He recommended installing a six foot fence along the tree line near the neighboring house and cemetery areas and a four foot fence along the tree line near the baseball field. Member Munroe said that installing an additional fence at the Lineham School will exceed \$5,000. and will require going out to bid. Member Munroe emphasized that he is not in agreement with Clerk Coutcher and he advised that he is filing a complaint with the Attorney General's office. Member Munroe said that he cautions the committee since on a previous occasion when he filed a complaint; the Attorney General issued a warning to the committee for not going out to bid. Clerk Coutcher voiced his opinion that this is an emergency situation.**

**Clerk Coutcher moved to approve the installation of a fence at Lineham School as quoted by Classic Fence not to exceed \$4,000. Vote 5 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.**

**Chair DeSack requested the committee take a minute to recognize the Boy Scout sitting in the audience. Sebastian Noordzy of Pack 45-Exeter introduced himself and said that he is attending tonight's meeting as part of the requirement of pursuing his Citizenship on the Community Badge.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Comprehensive Guidance Discussion – Principal Boulé and Sr. High School Guidance Coordinator Elaine Healy gave an overview of the Comprehensive Guidance Plan. They explained what the guidance department is doing to keep students inline with PBGR's. In response to Chair DeSack's inquiry, Mrs. Healy reported that sr. high school guidance counselor/student ratio is 220 to 1 and that in most districts the ratio is 300 – 1. Chair DeSack voiced her concerns with students' input in answering what the district does to help students get to college? She expressed her opinion that she does not think that students feel that they are getting the individual service that is being reported to the committee. Mrs. Healy said that students are reached constantly through advisory and that those students that are not proactive by February are tracked down. Ms. Boulé gave an overview of a 9th grade student's guidance counselor meeting schedule. She answered members' clarifying**

questions regarding guidance counselor accountability. Chair DeSack recommended that the guidance department poll the last three years of graduating seniors to see if they were satisfied with the services

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they received from the guidance department. Mrs. Healy expressed her opinion that the guidance department is in good shape and that the administration works closely with and in unison with the department. Ms. Boulé said that the guidance department does a good job and that it is one of the few guidance departments that sit with students to fill out and mail college applications. Nancy Daley commented that she has had the opportunity to sit with the Guidance Department several times this year and said that she is amazed at the amount of work they were able to accomplish in one year.

**Policies – Review and Adoption - #8607 – Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities – Including Athletics - Amendment – Member Bollengier moved to adopt Policy 8607 – Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities – Including Athletics as amended. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero.**

Member Bollengier reported that the technical flaws with the language, which Clerk Coutcher had pointed out at the last meeting,

**have been corrected. Clerk Coutcher said that although his concerns have been addressed, his feelings remain the same that the second probationary period should not exist.**

**Voted 3 – 3. Clerk Coutcher, Members Maher and Munroe voted no.**

**Some members explained their reasons for opposing/supporting the policy amendments.**

**Member Coutcher moved to reconsider Policy #8607 – Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities-Including Athletics-Amendment at the next School Committee meeting. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Jr. High School Assistant Principal Search – Superintendent Geismar reported that the interviewing process has been completed and that he anticipates bringing a candidate forward at the next regular School Committee meeting. In response to the Superintendent’s inquiry, Chair DeSack confirmed that, as per the acceptance of amendments made to Policy #6312 – Filling Administrator Vacancies this evening, the finalist shall come before the committee at its next regular meeting. This will allow the committee the opportunity to meet the candidate prior to voting to appoint him/her at the following regular School Committee meeting.**

**Director of Student Affairs Search – This agenda item is complete**

since Christopher Anthony's appointment as Sr. High Director of Student Affairs was approved under the consent agenda earlier this evening.

**Bond Discussion – Director of Administration Robert Ross said that he will invite Louis Torrado, (Torrado LA Architects) to the next Business Meeting in October, one month in**

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advance of the anticipated schedule, to present a feasibility study. Superintendent Geismar reported that Exeter Town Council President Ellis said that he believes there are two citizens from Exeter that are willing to serve on the building committee and that they will be appointed by the Town Council at its next meeting. Chair DeSack reminded members that both Town Councils indicated that they do not wish to have a bond discussion without first having pertinent information to review. Chair DeSack requested that the Superintendent contact both Town Councils to estimate a meeting time for perhaps the second or third week in October at 7:00 p.m. in the High School library.

**Metcalf Fire Alarm – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported that the Metcalf fire alarm project is still not complete. Mr.**

**Ross said that he anticipates that the battery and load tests will be started tomorrow morning and completed by Friday afternoon. He described the holdup as “cautionary measures surrounding the fire alarm”. This item will continue onto the next regular meeting agenda.**

**SAT Prep Course – Superintendent Geismar said that to date students have not responded to an advertisement about the SAT prep course that was recently posted. Dr. Geismar said that he will bring the spring enrollment schedule and advertisement plan to the next regular School Committee meeting. Ms. Boulé said that report cards go home on November 8th and the plan is to look at parent conference night as a way to advertise.**

**REPORTS/COMMENTS - None**

**IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Monday, October 8, 2007-Columbus Day; Tuesday, October 9, 2007-School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, October 23, 2007-School Committee Meeting**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 AND RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 9:25 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (a) (2) – Collective Bargaining Agreement/Negotiation Discussion. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:25 p.m.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to reconvene to Open Session. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:53 p.m.**

**A 6 – 0 vote was taken during Executive Session to have Attorney Ragosta attend the next School Committee meeting and in executive session give the full committee an update on the progress of contract negotiations. Mr. Ragosta will report to the full**

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**committee periodically upon his discretion and he shall have no individual side bars with any School Committee Members.**

**ADJOURNMENT – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn at 9:53 p.m. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 6 – 0. Meeting adjourned 9:53 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO  
CLERK**