

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH April 14, 2009

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; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Valerie Zuercher; Mark Rafanelli, Robert Bollengier, and Mary Walsh. Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; was absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; and Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley, were present. Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar and Student Member Katherine Matook were absent. Attorney Vincent Ragosta arrived at 8:02 p.m.

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

OPEN FORUM – None

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – None

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

Member Bollengier moved to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 6 – 0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of March 24, 2009; Executive Session Minutes of March 24, 2009; Executive Session Minutes of March 31, 2009

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

a. Letter of Resignation from Judith Savino, for the purpose of Retirement, from her position as 1.0 FTE Secretary at Wawaloam School, effective June 26, 2009

b. Letter of Resignation from Dorothy Manning, for the purpose of Retirement, from her position as 1.0 FTE Teacher Assistant at Lineham Preschool, effective June 26, 2009

4. Grievances

C. Bills – In the amount of \$257,571.79

End Consent Agenda

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Members did not express any questions concerning regarding Correspondence.

Correspondence – (1) April 7, 2009 RIDE Memorandum regarding FY 2009 Revised Education Aid; (2) March 24, 2009 NEACS Letter to Denise Boulé Regarding EWG Senior High School’s Accreditation; (3) April 6, 2009 Office of Economic Recovery and Reinvestment State of RI and Providence Plantations Regarding Receipt of EWG Projects submitted for funding consideration

Monthly Budget Status Reports – Superintendent –

Business

Curriculum

Special Education

Maintenance

Technology – Superintendent Geismar recognized Technology Administrator David Wright who he invited to tonight’s meeting to address Member Bollengier’s questions concerning the mention of “Arthur” in recent Technology Status Reports.

Mr. Wright reported that “Arthur” is new and runs great. It is storage for student and staff accounts and backup to the storage device. The storage is full and there are plans to expand. The system is running very well. Mr. Wright said that he wrote in his Status Reports about

“Arthur” so that the School Committee is aware of what the IT Department is doing. In response to Member Rafanelli’s inquiry, Mr. Wright reported that right now the storage is pretty full, students use 100% of the bandwidth every day, this is the students’ daily storage system, a student can log in at any computer throughout the district to access his/her account, and the system is utilized to its fullest extent. The IT Department constantly modifies the amount of storage space.

Monthly Subcommittee Report(s) – Kindergarten Subcommittee – Member Walsh reported that it is the consensus of the kindergarten subcommittee to hold the kindergarten enrollment cutoff to age 5 by September 1 with no exceptions. With regard to 1st grade enrollment, state law requires a student to be age 6 by September 1. Since neighboring towns are more flexible about the kindergarten September 1 deadline, the subcommittee is recommending establishing September 1 as the first grade cutoff but adding an allowance for a child who turns six between September 1 and September 30 to be enrolled in first grade provided the child passes a district screening assessment for eligibility. In fairness to those parents who have gone on the idea of the current policy in preparation for enrollment next fall, a stipulation is being recommended for the 2009 – 2010 school year only that the superintendent may use the old criteria to allow children who turn six prior to December 31 and who have completed an accredited kindergarten program to enroll in first grade. Those children would

still take the assessment and

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parents would be counseled regarding placement. Member Walsh advised that the first grade teachers are quite opposed to this recommendation because they believe that most children in this age group may be too young and immature to sit still in the classroom. A lengthy comprehensive discussion ensued regarding entrance assessments, allowances for those families who have already planned for next school year under the old policy, flexibility in state law that allows districts to waiver the mandatory kindergarten requirement to first grade age eligible students who shall be placed in first grade, waivers to and the legalities of denying enrollment to new students relocating from another state, and the need to circumvent in-district parents from getting around the kindergarten cutoff date by sending their child to a private kindergarten program in order to then enroll them in grade 1 at EWG.

Monthly Budget Projection 2008 – 2009 – Superintendent Geismar gave a brief overview of the monthly budget projection. Director of Administration Robert Ross answered Chair DeSack’s clarifying questions regarding benefits figures.

Budget Discussion/Charter Discussion/Workshop/DFM –

Superintendent Geismar reported that he recently met with the Board of Canvassers to prepare for a smooth assembly at the District Financial Meeting (DFM) . The Boards understand there is the potential to end up with two venues if there is a large turnout. The IT Department has been working to set up two-way audio and video communications between the auditorium and the gymnasium. In the event that two venues are used, at least one moderator will be needed in the gymnasium to serve as a channel of communication between voters and Chair DeSack. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m., a press table will be set up in the auditorium, the library will house visitors, and the Girl Scouts will once again provide childcare in the junior high gymnasium. Dr. Geismar said that he will send out an informational e-mail about the DFM tomorrow. In response to Chair DeSack's inquiry, Dr. Geismar said that he spoke with West Greenwich Town Council President Bob Butler this morning, and it does not appear that the amendments to the budget will be pulled.

NEW BUSINESS – Policies – Review and Adoption - #8700-School Health Program – 1st Reading – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy 8700.

#8702-Managing Communicable and Infectious Diseases – 1st Reading – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding policy 8702.

#8703-Immunizations and Physical Examination of Students – 1st

Reading – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy 8703.

#8704-Managing Medical Emergencies – 1st Reading Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy 8704.

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#8706-Managing Diabetes Among School Children – 1st Reading Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy 8706.

#8707-Managing Severe Allergies in the School Setting – 1st Reading Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Policy 8707.

#8303-Enrollment Requirement—Kindergarten and First Grade – Revision – Member Bollengier made a motion to move the policy [#8303-Enrollment Requirement—Kindergarten and First Grade]. Seconded by Member Walsh. Voted 5 – 1 in favor. Clerk Coutcher voted no.

Formulate Charter Change Committee – Superintendent Geismar said that the School Committee had expressed a desire to form a charter

change committee. This item was added to tonight's agenda for discussion and/or to decide who should sit on the committee. Consensus of the School Committee was to have the following individuals sit on the charter change committee:

- One Town Council Member from each town**
- One School Committee Member from each town**
- Two Community Members from each town**

Director of Administration Robert Ross will not sit on the Committee but will be called upon as needed. Clerk Coutcher and Member Rafanelli volunteered to serve on the committee representing the School Committee.

It was agreed that a communication will be posted on the district website explaining that the District is seeking two volunteer community members from each town to serve on a subcommittee to look at a charter change. The posting shall remain on the District website for two-weeks, include a deadline to apply, and instruct interested parties to submit a letter of interest to Superintendent Geismar. The communication shall be posted in the manner of a regular school committee meeting agenda. The selection process shall be by lottery.

Member Walsh moved on the makeup of the Charter Change Subcommittee as stated. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 –

0 in favor.

Approval of Senior Class Trip – Clerk Coutcher moved and Member Bollengier seconded to approve the Senior Class trip. Voted 6 – 0 in favor.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Out of District Transportation – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported that the State mandated out of district transportation

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passed in legislation so school districts do have to partake in state run transportation. EWG will be part of the first cohort going in September. Special Education savings estimates equal about \$74,000. Mr. Ross said Administration is hopeful that the District will do as well or better with regular education transportation. Member Bollengier clarified that the legislation passed but if there is no savings to the district it is not mandated to jump on. Mr. Ross agreed.

Capital Project Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported the District is ready to do prequalifying bids for the summer work on the capital project final phase. Luis Torrado Architects has recommended prequalifying because Mr. Torrado anticipates a lot of bids and some bidders may not have experience with tight timelines

and performing work on school environment projects. Member Bollengier commented on the recent e-mails sent out by Mr. Torrado to Building Committee members. He said that he does not want Building Committee members to start taking votes by e-mail. Mr. Ross agreed.

Attorney Ragosta arrived at this time, (8:02 p.m.).

In response to Clerk Coutcher's inquiry regarding the finishing of Metcalf's gymnasium floor, Mr. Ross said that he will check on the status.

REPORTS/COMMENTS – None

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Monday, April 20, 2009-District Financial Meeting; Tuesday, April 28, 2009-School Committee Meeting-(Junior High Presentation); Tuesday, May 12, 2009-School Committee Meeting-(Lineham/Wawaloam Presentation) – (meeting at Wawaloam); Tuesday, May 26, 2009- School Committee Meeting--(High School Presentation)

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Member Bollengier moved to go into Executive Session at 8:03 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (a)(9) – CBA – Grievance(s), and 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – Negotiation Discussion, and 42-46-5 (2) CBA - Pending Litigation and 42-46-5 (a)(1) - Personnel. Seconded Member

-----Zuercher. Voted 6 – 0 in favor.

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:08 p.m.

Member Bollengier moved to reconvene to Open Session. Seconded by Member Walsh.

Voted 6 – 0 in favor.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:18 p.m.

No votes were taken during Executive Session.

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ADJOURNMENT – Member Bollengier moved to adjourn at 8:18 p.m. Seconded by Member Walsh. Voted 6 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned 8:18 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK