

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH September 13, 2011

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 Gregory Coutcher, Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Mark Rafanelli; Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden, and Claudine Pande. Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice Chairperson was absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar, Director of Administration Robert V. Ross, and Attorney Brad Gorham (left the meeting at 6:10 p.m.) were present.

ORDER – Chair Coutcher called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Member McFadden read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – None

Member McFadden made a motion that under New Business, item V., section B. be moved up on the agenda; seconded by Member Donovan; and voted 6 – 0 in favor. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS – Admission to Kindergarten Appeal – Dr. Geismar reported that Mr. Christopher Foley contacted him regarding his

daughter who will turn (5) five on October 6. She misses the September 1 cutoff date in state law and in School Committee policy 8303 for entry into kindergarten. She also misses the cutoff for entry into the first grade the following year. Mr. Foley asked the superintendent to waive the cutoff date and to allow his daughter to enroll in kindergarten. He also asked the superintendent to allow his daughter to enroll in first grade next year if she attended a private kindergarten this year. The Superintendent denied both of Mr. Foley's requests. Mr. Foley asked for a hearing with the School Committee to appeal the superintendent's decision.

Dr. Geismar stated that he just spoke with Mr. Foley on the telephone, and Mr. Foley told him that he is not here tonight because he has been out of town and he would like to arrange for another appointment.

Member McFadden made a motion to deny the request [from Mr. Foley to waive the age requirements for entrance into kindergarten and first grade in policy 8303]; seconded by Member Rafanelli.

Attorney Gorham verified that the School Committee has ample precedents for denial. He said that Mr. Foley could subsequently appeal to the Commissioner of Education and then the Board of Regents.

Voted 6 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Attorney Gorham (and his stenographer) left the meeting at this time, (6:10 p.m.).

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

Member Pande made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Clerk Zuercher seconded the motion.

In response to Member Rafanelli's inquiry, Dr. Geismar said it would not take long to fill the positions vacated by Ms. Arvidson from within the faculty.

Voted 6 – 0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Minutes of August 23, 2011

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with Regret)

a. Letter of Resignation from Anne Arvidson resigning her positions as Senior High School Mentor Coordinator, National Honor Society Advisor, Multicultural Club Advisor, GSA Advisor, effective August 22, 2011

b. Letter of Resignation from Dean Waterman resigning his position as Assistant Boys' Varsity Soccer Coach, effective August 24, 2011

4. Grievances

5. Non-Renewals

6. Recalls

7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$165,590.79; Accruals in the amount of \$5,161.17

D. Home School Approvals

1. (4) Four Student

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – None

NEW BUSINESS – Jr. High Washington, DC 2012 Trip Proposal – The Superintendent recommended that the School Committee approve the Jr. High Washington, DC 2012 trip proposal.

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Clerk Zuercher moved to approve [the Jr. High Washington, DC 2012

Trip Proposal]; seconded by Member Rafanelli; and voted 6 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Chair Coutcher apologized for inadvertently skipping over agenda items, Budget Update 2011 – 2012 and Monthly Status Reports.

Monthly Status Reports – Superintendent – Dr. Geismar responded to Member Pande’s concern that the math curriculum will change again and he offered assurance that writing the math curriculum under the direction of the Dana Center will be beneficial.

Business – In response to Member McFadden’s inquiry regarding the Business Status Report, Mr. Ross said that the RFP for the cafeteria improvements is still in the bidding process. The schedule for performing the work will be conditional upon the responsive bidder to complete the projects in the agreed time with minimal interruptions to the school lunch program. The School Committee will be informed before the bid is awarded.

In response to Member Pande’s inquiry regarding Wawaloam’s playground, Mr. Ross gave a brief overview of the playground repairs that are needed and the materials that could be used to meet all safety requirements. Mr. Ross said he talked with Jimmy Franklin of the Maintenance Department about leveling and mulching the area in the interim of Director of Maintenance Bill Plumley’s return to work next Monday.

Clerk Zuercher left the meeting at this time, (6:23 p.m.).

Special Education – In response to Member Pande’s inquiry, Dr. Geismar said that he has always envisioned the new Parent Resource Center at Lineham School to service grades K – 12. He said he would seek clarification from Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar to confirm.

Clerk Zuercher returned at this time, (6:25 p.m.).

Member Pande said that she would like to see a K-12 District Resource Center.

Business – In response to Member Donovan’s inquires, Mr. Ross reported that the final piece of required information to complete the FY2011 year-end audit was submitted to the auditor today. Typically, one-month after that the audit report is completed. Next, Mr. Ross identified contractors by project and reported the status of each capital project. Lastly, Mr. Ross said that he would be attending the Healthy School Coalition breakfast on September 23 and asked members to let him know if any of them are interested in attending.

Maintenance – None

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Technology – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Technology Status Report.

Budget Update 2011 – 2012 – Mr. Ross referenced his 2011 – 2012 Budget memo and provided rationale for holding spending levels to 65% in order to control expenses and maintain fiscal integrity in anticipation of the various budget threats that may be forthcoming.

Approve Calendar Changes due to Hurricane Irene – Dr. Geismar referenced the two calendar change proposals he enclosed in members packets and said that since that went to print, he talked with the union president and principals and concluded, in his point of view, to recommend option 1.

Option 1: Move graduation from Saturday, June 9, 2012 to Saturday, June 16, 2012 and move the last day of school from Tuesday, June 12, 2012 to Monday, June 18, 2012. Make June 19, 20, 21, 22, and 25 make up days if needed.

Option 2: Eliminate Thursday, February 23, and Friday, February 24 from the Winter break and eliminate Thursday, April 19 and Friday, April 20 from the Spring break to make up the four days missed. Graduation would stay on Saturday, June 9.

Dr. Geismar said that Principal Butler agrees that moving graduation

will have the least negative impact on people and provides a cushion for the 171 days of instruction requirement for seniors.

A discussion ensued and each member offered a viewpoint for the option he or she supported. Member Pande voiced support for option 2. She said that she has discussed this matter with families. The families she has spoken with like option 2.

Member McFadden moved to adopt option (1) one; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted 5 – 1 in favor. Member Pande dissented. The motion carried.

Chair Coutcher summarized that graduation will now take place on June 16, 2011.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Approve Consultant Agreement with Grant Writer – Dr. Geismar requested School Committee approval of the grant writer agreement from Alicia Condon of Allie's Inkwell Company. He reported that last year Ms. Condon's consultant fees cost the district \$7,000 and her work brought the district grants totaling \$35,000.

Member McFadden left the meeting at this time, (6:59 p.m.).

Members discussed involving department chairs to locate sources.

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Member McFadden returned to the meeting at this time, (7:02 p.m.).

Dr. Geismar said he liked the idea to have support from the faculty. He offered assurance of good custodianship and reports back to the School Committee if the agreement is approved.

Member McFadden moved for approval of the Grant Writer; seconded by Clerk Zuercher.

Members asked clarifying questions and voiced his or her recommendations. Member Pande pointed out that the dates on the agreement need to be modified. Consensus of the School Committee was that Dr. Geismar would meet with Department Chairs to get information about what grants they would like to pursue. The dates on the contract will change to reflect a service period of September 15, 2011 to March 15, 2012. This is a renewal of last year's agreement for up to \$9,000 on a pay as you go basis.

Vote 6 – 0. The motion carried.

Discussion Regarding Track Operations and Sports Supervision – In follow up to the discussion that took place at the last meeting, Dr. Geismar recommended forming an ad hoc committee to study how to provide more time for the AD to perform his duties. He recommended

that Principal Butler, Principal Smith, the Athletic Director, the Superintendent, and a member of the School Committee serve on the subcommittee. Member Rafanelli suggested that this may be a discussion for next year and said that he would like to be a part of the discussion. Member Pande said that she would like to be on the committee but she does not want to table this to next year. Dr. Geismar said he would schedule a meeting.

Capital Project Update – Dr. Geismar reported the new water system project at Metcalf School has passed inspection and the electrical work will be completed tomorrow. Once testing is completed and the Department of Health signs off, the switch to the new system will be made. The contractor, architect, and Building Committee will meet to discuss costs incurred because of delays to this project.

Reports/Comments – Member Pande informed members that the PTA would be sponsoring a fabulous anti bully assembly tomorrow at Metcalf. Next, she informed Principal Butler that she heard from a parent that someone invited a new student who was sitting alone in the cafeteria to sit at his or her table. This act of kindness made a difference and made an impact on the ninth grade student. Clerk Zuercher suggested that it would be nice if that student could be acknowledged perhaps over the PA system.

Important Dates and Meetings – Wednesday, September 14, 2011-Building Committee Meeting; Wednesday, September 21,

2011-Building Committee Meeting; Tuesday,

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**September 27, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Wednesday,
September 28, 2011-Building Committee Meeting**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – None

**Adjournment – Member Rafanelli moved to adjourn; seconded by
Clerk Zuercher; and voted 6 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:17
p.m.**

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK