

CHAPLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION
CHAPLIN, CONNECTICUT
MEETING MINUTES
February 11, 2015 6:30 P.M.
Chaplin Elementary School
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Members of the public may address the Board regarding items on the agenda. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand during discussion of the pertinent agenda item and wait to be recognized by the Board Chair. Individual comments shall be limited to two minutes.

1. Call to Order – *Chairperson Sanders called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.*
2. Board Chairperson’s Report

Chairperson Sanders welcomed members of the audience and invited those who wished to comment on agenda items to do so as those agenda items arose during the meeting.

She reported that the Board received four pieces of written correspondence:

1. *A thank-you card from Anne Burnham for a flower arrangement the Board sent in January upon learning of the death of Ms. Burnham’s mother;*
2. *Three letters from the CEA: (a) A request for a meeting with the Board pursuant to Article 6 of the current teacher contract; (b) A request for negotiations regarding the rate of pay for part-time teachers who work beyond their contracted hours; and (c) a FOIA request for certain timekeeping and pay records for part-time teachers. Chairperson Sanders indicated that she would forward all three letters to the Board’s attorney for responses.*

Ms. Sanders also reported on the CABA Area 3 Legislative Breakfast she attended in January, where the key issues discussed were the impact of magnet school tuition on small districts; the impact of high-cost special education programs on small districts given the unreasonably high threshold a district’s costs have to reach before the state will provide an excess cost grant, and the perceived shortage of funds available to districts to offset state educational mandates.

Finally, Ms. Sanders noted that she, Superintendent Henrici, the Board Chairs from Scotland and Hampton and the Boards of Selectmen from all three Region 11 towns are working with our insurance agency to review bids for health insurance for next year.

3. Approval of Minutes and Financial Statement
 - A. Approval of Minutes – December 10, 2014
 - B. Approval of Amended Minutes – November 12, 2014
 - C. Approval of Financial Statement

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A quorum not being present, the Board reviewed all three documents and accepted comments and corrections to them but did not formally approve them. Superintendent Henrici reported that because of continuing unexpected expenses, he expects the district to exceed its 2014-2015 budget by about \$110,000. He has made the Chair of the Board of Finance and First Selectman Rose aware of this. Principal King reported that per discussion at the December BOE meeting, she has added two lines to the budget: one for STEM academy tuition and another for special education costs for STEM academy students.

4. Monthly Report (CES Staff)

5. Administrative Reports

- A. Principal's Report included a school systems review of talent, academics, culture and climate and operations.
- *The talent portion focused on professional learning, data teams and staffing.*
 - *The academics portion provided information on NWEA Assessments, academic programs, the recent vertical team meeting and standards based report cards.*
 - *The culture and climate report focused on the newsletter and the upcoming town hall meeting and family and community engagement.*
 - *The Operations report dealt with technology upgrades at Chaplin Elementary School and maintenance and improvement of the boiler system.*

B. Superintendent's Report

- *Superintendent Henrici attended a Small District Superintendent's Meeting on February 4, where the group agreed to focus on two key issues: (1) The inadequacy of the state's excess cost grant funding for small districts with high per-student costs; and (2) magnet school tuition. A subcommittee of three Superintendents, including Mr. Henrici, will visit senior members of the education committee to lobby them regarding these issues.*
- *Chaplin school staff participated in a vertical team meeting with staff from Scotland and Hampton schools and Parish Hill as part of an ongoing effort to coordinate elementary, middle and high school curricula so that rising middle school students are appropriately prepared.*
- *Mr. Henrici reported that the flashing on the CES roof was installed backwards when the building was first built, and it resulted in leaks earlier this year and*

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must be repaired. The repair estimate is approximately \$8,000. We have filed an insurance claim to cover the damage, so the cost to the district after the \$5,000 deductible will be about \$3,000.

- *Superintendent Henrici and Board Chairperson Sanders will attend a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) meeting on February 18 to request assistance from the town in covering some of CES' unexpected capital expenses, including the roof repairs discussed above.*
- *Shared services – The search for a Business Manager continues. As of now, there is a lack of qualified candidates.*
- *The district is applying for a technology grant to support the costs of preparing to administer the SBAC. The application is due February 13.*

6. Business Carried Over from Last Meeting (“Old” Business)

A. Final Approval of Board Policies

- a. #6171.2 – Pre-School Special Education
- b. #6172.4 – Title 1 Parent Involvement

A quorum not being present, the Board was unable to approve these policies and will add them to next month's meeting agenda.

B. Busing Services Update

Bus service seems to be operating smoothly, and neither Superintendent Henrici nor Principal King are aware of any issues beyond individual ones that arise from time to time. The Board agreed that this no longer needs to be a monthly agenda item.

C. Sick Bank Policy Update

Chairperson Sanders reported that after the December 2014 Board meeting she had, per discussion with CEA Co-President Nila Otilige, instructed the Board's attorney to remove the language in the draft MOU that she understood to be the sticking point to reaching final agreement. The Board's attorney sent a revised draft to CEA rep Mike Casey, who responded with further changes to a different section of the agreement as well as raising concerns based on the language of the underlying contract. Ms. Otilige stated that she and the teachers did not want to reopen the underlying contract. Mr. Casey, who was present at the meeting, stated that he did not have concerns with the underlying contract. Ms. Sanders noted that there seems to be a significant communication gap between the parties and agreed to seek an appropriate way to discuss the document with the Board's attorney, the Superintendent, CEA representative Casey, and the CEA Co-Presidents present in order to close the communication gap.

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D. Tri-Town School Study Update

The Selectmen of the three towns intend to hold a meeting at which Milone and MacBroom will present to members of all involved Boards of Education. There was an attempt to schedule this meeting in January, but the date was unworkable for Board Chairs.

7. New Business

A. School Calendar 2015-2016

Principal King presented the proposed school calendar, which includes 183 school days and six either full- or half-day professional development opportunities for staff. Superintendent Henrici reported that the start and end dates and holidays on the proposed calendar are consistent with those proposed in Scotland and Hampton, and largely consistent with Parish Hill.

B. FY 2015-2016 Budget

Superintendent Henrici presented a preliminary 2015-2016 budget proposal. For the first time in several years, this budget includes a sizeable increase (4.5%). He explained that the significant unexpected costs the district incurred for special education programs last year will continue next year, and our health insurance costs will increase by 17.5%. The budget reflects a 2 FTE reduction in non-certified staff, achieved by not replacing staff who have left and by realigning existing staff to most efficiently meet the needs in the building, and a 1.2 FTE reduction in certified staff, achieved by the elimination of one position and the realignment of another. Superintendent Henrici noted that this budget includes projected tuition for the 12 Chaplin students who currently attend the STEM academy, two of whom also have special education expenses. Given that more grades will open next year, we may see that figure increase. Board Chairperson Sanders urged Superintendent Henrici and Principal King to increase the budget allowance for STEM students, so we are not caught short if the number increases significantly, even though that means presenting a higher-cost budget to the town up front. CES Teacher Nancy Doughton asked whether the district has a plan to encourage students to stay in Chaplin, rather than attending the STEM academy. Superintendent Henrici said that there is always an effort to retain present students but that students who have a passion for and are extremely interested in a theme-based magnet should have the opportunity to attend. Chairperson Sanders noted that the number of Chaplin students attending the STEM academy had been far greater than anticipated when the school first opened, and that the Board's attention last year and this year has been focused on managing the unexpected impact of STEM tuition on the budget, particularly where students previously unknown to the district have moved into town over the summer and immediately enrolled. She agreed that the Board should begin to take a more strategic approach to handling STEM enrollment going forward.

C. Process Planning for Superintendent's Annual Performance Review

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The Central Office Committee has decided to use the same process as last year for compiling input into Superintendent Henrici's annual performance review. Angelina Pearce will coordinate input from the Chaplin BOE, as she did last year.

8. Committee Reports

- A. Policy Committee – *The two policies presented for final approval in February will carry forward to the March agenda.*
- B. Negotiations Committee – *Chairperson Sanders will set a meeting to review the Paraprofessionals' contract in preparation for negotiations, which are due to begin very soon.*
- C. Central Office Committee – *The Central Office Committee was given three 2015-16 budget options, with varied line item amounts for the business manager/financial consultant position. The Committee will meet again to adopt a 2015-16 budget.*
- D. By-Laws Review Special Committee – *The committee has not yet met.*

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- *Carry forward items:*
 - o *Approval of minutes from November, December and February meetings*
 - o *Approval of financial statements from December and February*
 - o *Approval of two policies*
- *Final approval of 2015-16 school calendar*
- *Final approval of 2015-16 budget*
- *Update on the CES TAG program*
- *Information update on how to contact Board of Education members*

10. Adjournment at 8:34 pm.