

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE May 06, 2010 MEETING
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 Board of Education**

March 04, 2010

A regular meeting of the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education was held on Thursday March 04, 2010, in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board members in attendance: Linda Hall, Richard Strauss, Duane Gates, Chris Riley, Laurie Ann Tomlinson, Pamela Christman, Mary-Beth Harrigan, Jennifer Clark & Elaine Fitzgibbons as well as Senior Student Representatives: Paige Gregory & Junior Student Representatives Patrick Campbell and Shin-Yi Lee

Also in attendance:

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Ruth I. Levy, Business Manager Garth Sawyer; Valley Regional Principal Ian Neviasser; John Winthrop Middle School Principal Dave Russell, Board Clerk: Jennifer Bryan

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Linda Hall called the meeting to order at 7: 02 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the minutes from the regular meeting of January 07, 2010, and the Accounts Payable Report.

OTHER ITEMS

Not needed

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

6 citizens were present

REPORTS

Student Representatives

Senior Student Representative Erin Thomas was unable to attend due to school work.

Senior Student Representative Paige Gregory reported on the recent blood drive at VRHS that exceeded their goal. VRHS was in the top 10% of all schools for total amount of donations, which qualifies the school to receive a scholarship through Bob's furniture. She also discussed some of the efforts the school is making a move towards being more green, such as turning off computers & lights after hours. Some highlights of recent student achievements include the mock trial team winning their competition at Yale and the gymnastics team winning State.

Junior Student Representative Patrick Campbell reported on other accomplishments at VRHS. Many students participated in the Shoreline Alliance Art Show. Almost 20 won individual awards and VRHS won the Outstanding School award. The girl's indoor track 4x8 team won states. He also reported that CAPT testing has begun and efforts are being made to help the students succeed, such as breakfast being provided each day and morale boosting posters being placed in hallways.

Junior Student Representative Shin-Yi Lee noted that the Sound of Music will be presented March 26-28th. She reported an effort to invite community seniors to all events for free, including a special screening of the musical. CMT testing will begin soon. The writing lab is doing well. Ms. Schmidt has been working with students on writing projects from many disciplines, and the students feel it has been very helpful.

Principals Update

VRHS – Principal Neviaser added to the student representatives’ reports by saying that 152 sophomores are being tested on CAPT. He was also happy to report that one indoor track team member, Alison Gates, has also qualified for New Englands in Boston and he congratulated her on that accomplishment. In addition, he further noted that the Outstanding School Shoreline Alliance award mentioned by Patrick Campbell has been awarded to VRHS for the past 15 years, which is quite an accomplishment. Principal Neviaser also informed the Board that after many requests from parents and students, a sailing club is being formed at VRHS with almost 20 students who have already expressed an interest. Many local organizations are involved. In closing he reported that many VRHS students returned to their former elementary schools to read to the students there in as a celebration for Read Across America Day.

JWMS – Principal David Russell introduced CeCe Hogdsley & Lexi Riggio-McGrath, school leadership members and on the soccer team. CeCe reported on activities at JWMS including the play, winter sports club, international art exchange with schools throughout Brazil, debate club, and the ski club. Lexi discussed some classes who had been studying the holocaust, and who were able to listen to a holocaust survivor last week. Spring sports will be starting soon. She also reported on a recent competition to build solar cars from kits provided by UCONN to compete in a race involving students from across CT. This year’s musical is Oklahoma. She noted that the musical is an excellent way for students to express themselves through drama, song and dance. The play will be held April 23rd and 24th.

Principal Russell stated that a committee would be interviewing candidates soon for the open Net Tech position at JWMS.

Committee Reports

Financial Status Update including Region 4 Audit and Finance Committee

Business Manager Garth Sawyer reviewed the financial status report making note of particular items of interest. He is currently projecting an approximate \$ 18,000 surplus for Region 4, barring any unanticipated special education costs. Mr. Sawyer also discussed recommended budget transfers for vote later. He explained that a decrease equals a transfer out and an increase equals a transfer into an Object code, for a net change of \$0; the over all budget does not change.

Region 4 Audit and Finance Committee - Committee chair Richard Strauss reported that the Committee had met earlier in the week and discussed the current year’s budget, the budget process, grant funding, & they continued working on looking at the financial implications of unification of PK-6 with Region 4.

The Joint PK-12 Committees, Policy, Curriculum and Finance, are all scheduled to meet again later in March.

There was a discussion regarding the Grant Funding report showing Title 1 funds and IDEA grant money. Board members requested that the information be made a part of the budget document so that citizens can more easily see the grant money that is being used to help fund the schools.

Also discussed was the cafeteria financial status report for FY2009-10 thus far.

On motion duly made and seconded the Region 4 Board of Education unanimously VOTED to receive the financial status report as presented.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following recommended budget transfers:

Object 100 Salaries Decrease by \$8,983
Object 200 Fringe Benefits Decrease by \$ 28,347
Object 300 Purchased Services Decrease by \$8,200
Object 400 Rentals & Repairs Increase by \$57,500
Object 500 Other Outside Services Decrease by \$21,970
Object 800 Other Miscellaneous Decrease by \$50,000

Object 900 Debt Service & Transfers Increase by \$60,000

These transfers will show in the next financial status's revised budget column.

Region 4 Photovoltaic Solar Building Committee

Duane Gates spoke for Mr. Glowac who was unable to attend the evening's meeting. He quickly reviewed the history of the project and the recent rejection of the ED049 by the Bureau of School Facilities due to Board resolutions that were not building specific enough, although the intent was clear. He explained that all that is needed this evening is a vote to clarify the resolutions to specify the proposed project location as JWMS

Dr. Levy reminded the Board that Mr. Glowac mentioned that the Committee would be coming back to the Board this month to request action to clarify the Board's prior resolution for re-submission of the ED049 to the State. She directed the Board's attention to their enclosure regarding the resolutions that are needed per the State's requirement.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following Board Resolutions as presented:

RESOLUTION #1

For the purpose of clarifying the language of an affirmative vote made on April 2, 2009, the board resolves that the minutes of the April 2, 2009 Joint Board of Education minutes which contain the Region 4 Board of Education Special Meeting minutes shall be corrected and accepted to read as follows.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Region 4 Board unanimously VOTED to authorize an expenditure of up to \$10,000 total out of line items #5540 (advertising) and #5340 (Technical services) of the 2008-09 Region 4 Budget to fund a newspaper ad for a Request for Proposal for professional services to prepare specifications for the construction and installation of a building integrated Photovoltaic array at John Winthrop Middle School and professional fees for an architect to complete the above stated work as needed.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following Board Resolution:

RESOLUTION #2

For the purpose of clarifying the language of an affirmative vote made on May 4, 2009, the board resolves that the minutes of the May 4, 2009 Region 4 Board of Education Special Meeting minutes shall be corrected and accepted to read as follows.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the educational specifications for the Region 4 Photovoltaic Solar School Building Project proposed for John Winthrop Middle School as presented. (See attachment)

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following Board Resolution:

RESOLUTION #3

For the purpose of clarifying the language of an affirmative vote made on May 4, 2009, the board resolves that the minutes of the May 4, 2009 Region 4 Board of Education Special Meeting minutes shall be corrected and accepted to read as follows.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board VOTED (4 yes, 1 opposed – Mary- Beth Harrigan) and motion passed to approve the Region 4 Photovoltaic Solar School Building Project to be constructed at John Winthrop Middle School as proposed by the Region 4 Solar Project Building Committee and accept the recommendations of the Committee to move the authorization of the project and its cost, not to exceed \$994,000 to a District Meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote at a District meeting for the towns of Chester, Deep River, and Essex, CT.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following Board Resolution:

RESOLUTION #4

For the purpose of clarifying the language of an affirmative vote made on June 11, 2009, the board resolves that the minutes of the June 11, 2009 Region 4 Board of Education Special Meeting minutes shall be corrected and accepted to read as follows.

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED, to approve the draft of the ED049 (school construction grant application) as recommended by the Region 4 Solar Building Committee, for the Region 4 integrated Solar Photovoltaic Solar Building Project to be constructed at John Winthrop Middle School and to submit the EDO49 application to the Bureau of School Facilities as authorized by the vote of the electors at the District Meeting of May 13, 2009.

Supervision District Committee Update

Linda Hall reported that a Supervision District Committee Workshop will be scheduled soon to focus on becoming the central committee to put peripheral committees in place in order to work on the unification effort.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

In Assistant Superintendent Dugas' absence Dr. Levy reported that Ms. Dugas has been working with individual curriculum content areas bringing together K-12 faculty to match our standards with state and national standards. Language Arts has been rolling out PK-6 curriculum, to be spread through the middle school and high school. CAPT testing has begun, and students, staff, and families seem to be taking it in stride this year and all working through it, giving it the due diligence and focus that it requires. She has been seeing the families and schools working together well on this.

Report on School Improvement Plans

Principal Russell reported that JWMS faculty revisited Performance Pathways at their last Professional Development Day.

Principal Neviasser reported that VRHS faculty continued data team work when their last presenter was unable to attend due to inclement weather.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Levy reported that so far we have only had one full snow day and a few delayed starts due to inclement weather.

The Valley Courier had a wonderful article and pictures on-line covering the Student Art Gallery opening at Central Office recently. The opening enjoyed a wonderful turnout and there community members are still coming through to view the artwork.

She also reported on the budget process thus far. All budgets are in full development mode.

Dr. Levy discussed the proposed Region 4 budget for 2010-11. Expenditures for the proposed 2010-11 budget total \$16,992,527 or a total expenditures increase of 1.71% . This is the number that the Board will be voting on to carry to public hearing. It should be noted that there is an anticipated decrease in the excess costs grant revenue because of reductions the State has said they will make in that grant. Therefore the increase in net billings to the towns will reflect a 2.14% increase due to that anticipated decrease in state funding revenues. This is based on the best estimate as to the projections being made currently by the State.

A discussion on the budget was held.

The board then took action on a number of items, including those they were unable to act on at the February 22nd Joint BOE meeting due to the lack of a quorum.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Supervision District Committee's recommendation to approve the proposed Supervision District budget for 2010-2011 in the amount of \$5, 811,233 (five million, eight hundred eleven thousand, two hundred thirty-three dollars)

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to increase the John Winthrop Middle School and Valley Regional High School student lunch price from \$2.50 to \$2.75 and the staff lunch price from \$3.25 to \$3.75 effective for school year 2010-11.

Richard Strauss read an e-mail from First Selectman Tom Marsh that he had received a few hours prior to the meeting, that Mr. Marsh had asked be shared with the Board and administration. In it he requested that all education employees be asked to take a wage freeze for next year.

Dr. Levy noted that wage increases for teachers are negotiated and under contract. She explained that if the Boards formally go to the teachers with this request, and end up in arbitration, the contracts would need to be negotiated with 5 individual boards, which could result in 5 different contracts and create a level of disjoint beyond even what this district has ever seen. In addition there would be the cost of legal counsel and the cost of the arbitration process multiplied by a factor of 5. She also reminded the Board that with regards to a wage freeze, last year, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and the Business Manager took a 0% salary increase and in addition they gave up their mileage account, resulting in a pay cut. This year, recognizing that financial difficulties still exist, the Early Retirement Incentive Plan was created and aimed at providing some financial assistance to the districts. In addition, the administration negotiated a 1% increase for teachers for next year plus a 17.25% insurance cost share, which is one of the highest in the surrounding area. Also negotiated was a salary reopener after one year to determine the two following years. If the contracts are reopened early, all other language and issues, not just salaries, would be open to renegotiation, possibly to the detriment of the Boards. In addition, there would be more liability at the already planned salary reopener. Dr. Levy noted that if the boards wish to direct her to open up formal talks, it must be voted on and approved by all five boards. Due to the difficulty and time constraints of that process at such a late date in the budget process, she recommended gathering the Joint Board Teacher's Negotiation Committee, which includes members from all boards, to consider Mr. Marsh's request and make a formal recommendation for action. If the Committee recommends a formal request be made to the teacher's union, there will be an upfront financial impact due to attorney and arbitration fees.

A Board member questioned whether or not Chester town employees had their wages frozen last year? A Board member replied that no, in fact the town employees were given raises of over 3% . The reasoning from the town was that although administrator salaries were frozen and mileage accounts cut, the teachers did not accept a pay freeze, so therefore, the town employee salaries were not cut or reduced.

Mr. Gates, a Joint BOE Teacher's Negotiating Committee member, stated that the teacher salaries are already below average with high insurance costs and he feels that attempting to reopen the contracts early would be opening a Pandora's box. Mr. Riley stated that asking for a salary freeze, may seem like a great thing to say, but there is very little practicality behind it. Mr. Strauss stated the need for determining the best process for seriously considering this request and responding appropriately.

After much discussion the Board instructed Dr. Levy to convene a meeting of the Joint Board Teacher's Negotiation Committee to consider Mr. Marsh's request. Dr. Levy thanked the Board for their guidance.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to carry the proposed Regional School District No. 4 budget for school year 2010-11 in the amount of \$16,992,527 (sixteen million, nine hundred ninety-two thousand, five hundred twenty-seven dollars) to Public Hearing on April 08, 2010

Dr. Levy discussed Policy 6172.3 Home Instruction. She reported that although she did look into the question raised at the first reading, that particular question was regarding language in the regulation, which the Board does not act on. However, she did discuss the issue with district's attorney and the Joint BOE Policy Committee and they were advised that both the policy and regulations are in line with the state recommendations. The proposed change in the policy does not impact any of the currently home schooled students.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Joint Board of Education Policy Committee's recommendation to approve Policy 6172.3 Home Instruction.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to accept Rita Michelson's donation of a basketball signed by Jim Calhoun and players to be used as the administration deems fit in accordance with policy.

Audience of Citizens

No comments were made

Executive Session –

The Chair noted that there will be the addition of a confidential student matter to the discussion during executive session.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to move into executive session at 8:17 p.m. to discuss possible action regarding non-renewal of certified staff members and a confidential student matter.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to move out of executive session at 8:37 p.m.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED that the contract employment of the attached list of faculty not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2009-10 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person(s) in writing of this action.

Future Agenda Items

1. Public Hearing for proposed Region 4 budget for 2010-11 (April 8th @ 7:00 p.m.)
2. Region 4 Annual Meeting (May 3rd @ 7:00 p.m.)
3. Referendum on Region 4 Budget for 2010-11 (May 4th noon – 8:00 p.m.)
4. Region 4 Regular BOE Meeting *May 6th @ 7:00 p.m.)
5. Update on engineering by design - *D. Dugas, I. Neviaser, D. Russell*
6. Update on extra curricular activities involving science, technology, engineering & math – *D. Dugas, I. Neviaser, D. Russell*
7. VOTE on Region 4 Building Committee's recommendation to accept that the Central Office Project Number 204-0015) is complete and that the Board of Education disband/dissolve the Building Committee (TBD)

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Christman, Secretary
Jennifer Bryan, Clerk

NON Tenured Teachers
Region 4 Board of Education

	Last	First	School	Tenure Date
1	Kennedy	Megan	JW	6/30/2010
2	Sabia	Cynthia	JW	6/30/2010
3	Bish	Jean	JW	6/30/2011
4	Maher	Nicole	JW	1/30/2012
5	Kaczmarczyk	Laura	JW	6/30/2012
6	Kay	Lyndsay	JW	6/30/2012
7	Bohner	Elise	JW	6/30/2013
8	Bialobrzski	Jessica	VR	6/30/2010
9	McKinney	Sarah	VR	6/30/2010
10	Redhead	Judith	VR	6/30/2010
11	Swan	Jeffrey	VR	6/30/2010
12	Cobb	Teresa	VR	6/30/2011
13	Maiolo	Cynthia	VR	6/30/2011
14	Buchanan	Mary	VR	6/30/2012
15	Bernardi	Jeffrey	VR	6/30/2013
16	Cole	Elizabeth	VR	11/30/2013
17	Talmadge	Matthew	VR & JW	6/30/2011