

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Westbrook High School Library

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of January 12, 2010, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Alaimo in the Westbrook High School library.

Members Present:      Matthew Alaimo              Maureen Westbrook      Myrn Keryc  
                                 Lee Bridgewater              Marti White              Sally Greaves  
                                 Joseph Campbell              Pat Labbadia

Absent:                      Delia Adorno

Also Present:              Patricia Charles, Superintendent; Charles McWilliams, Business Manager;  
                                 Katharine Bishop, Philip House, Principals; Michele Hammond, Curriculum  
                                 Leader; English/Language Arts Dept. Teachers; Community members

II. PLEDGE

III. PUBLIC COMMENT:      None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of December 8, 2009 – Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mr. Campbell to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2009 meeting. **Vote unanimous.**

V. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Payment of January bills: Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to pay bills in the amount of \$208,089.21 and grant vouchers in the amount of \$8,425.34, for a total of all vouchers in the amount of \$216,514.55. **Vote unanimous.**
- B. Budget: Moved by Mrs. Bridgewater and seconded by Mrs. White to approve the budget for the period ending January 31, 2010. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. **Health Insurance**—Mr. McWilliams reported that the monthly report is not available until after 1/12/10 and he will forward it to board members. Valerie Koch and Larry Ganim were introduced to answer questions regarding health insurance.

Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to move to Item. VI on the agenda.

VI. **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**- Bridget Galiger and Kelsey Campbell reported on high school activities including mid-terms, music program concert on December 17, swine-flu vaccine availability to students and Bridget's acceptance to Johnson and Wales University.

Continued discussion on Health Insurance:

Ms. Koch explained the process of renewal of the insurance and provided a timeline for receiving quotes from several companies. There was discussion on the reserve fund and Ms. Koch cautioned the temptation to consistently lower the reserve, citing that claims go in cycles, usually 3-5 years of good and 3-5 years of bad. Mr. Ganim said that Anthem is one of the most competitively priced plans in the state. He said that Westbrook has a good successful plan. They are hopeful that they will receive Anthems renewal quote within two weeks, which will provide the information needed to compare health insurance quotes from other vendors. They will do the best they can to get a low rate for Westbrook. Ms. Koch noted that insurance companies are reacting to what is going on with the government proposal for health insurance.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

**A. Out of State Field Trips** – None.

**B. PreK-12 English/Language Arts curriculum review and adoption:** Steve Albrecht, Diane Lewis and the English/Language arts teachers presented their curriculum to the Board for approval. Michele Hammond, Curriculum Leader, talked about the work of the Professional Learning Communities . Diane Lewis expressed appreciation to all of the department members involved in writing the curriculum and Steve Albrecht confirmed the great sense of accomplishment and recognized the countless hours the department worked at writing the curriculum. The following teachers were recognized for their intensive work with the PreK-12 English/Language Arts curriculum:, Heather Gersz, Madeline Carmody, Lori Freeman, Ginny White, Theresa Paulsen, Catherine Dowler, Cecilia Cloutier, Laurie Kukta, Diana Burns, Leslie Harrington, Jessica Brown, Nancy Wengefeld, Jane Novarro, Tammy Overchuk, Monica Selmont, Tara Sanford, Liz Sahadi, Kathleen Womer-Zocco, Nancy Malafronte, Craig Hall, and Caitlin Eichler.

*Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mr. Campbell to approve the adoption of the PreK-12 English/Language Art curriculum. Vote unanimous.*

**C. RTTT grant (CT Race to the Top):** Dr. Charles reported that she, Matt Alaimo, and Diana Burns attended a 12/21/09 meeting regarding Connecticut Race to the Top. The Commission is asking each Board of Education to consider signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the state to help CT qualify for this federal competitive grant. The grant focuses on implementing reform in 4 key areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

With an overarching goal of:

- Driving substantial gains in student achievement
- Improving high school graduation and college enrollment
- Narrowing achievement gaps

Westbrook will stand to receive \$19,092. Dr. Charles said that there is a considerable investment of time and money that she feared would cost Westbrook more than the

grant money that will be awarded. It was decided to “wait and see”, as there will be another opportunity to participate.

**D. Superintendent’s 2010-2011 Budget:** Dr. Charles presented the superintendent’s budget for the 2010-2011 school year, using a PowerPoint presentation. Dr. Charles showed goals and guidelines and went through each line item. Some of the highlights included showing percentage increases based on different health/salary benefits since the health insurance figures are still undetermined. Dr. Charles showed that the bulk of the increase is in the area of salaries and benefits. Certified personnel included a health teacher, minus one elementary teacher and addition of .4 Special Education teacher at the middle school. A .5 special education aide position is needed. Relative to the budget, there was some discussion regarding options for non-certified pension plans. It was suggested that key people be invited to a budget workshop, for example, Paula Fitzgerald and Ray Hayes. That workshop is scheduled tentatively for February 1. Dr. Charles said this is not a status quo year and this is a difficult budget. She stressed the importance of supporting the work of the curriculum writing teams which will require new textbooks.

**E. Communications Plan:** The communications committee revised the Communications Plan for 2009-2012 and presented it to the board for their approval. Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mrs. White to approve the 2009-2012 Communication Plan. **Vote unanimous.**

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS:** Mrs. White brought before the board the following policies for a second reading and approval:

3524.1 Hazardous Material in School

3524.2 - Green Cleaning – a new policy

5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process - changes based upon legislation

5125 – Student Records confidentiality – based on new federal regulations

5141.21 – Administering Medications – new legislation

5141.22 – Communicable and Infectious Diseases – added language for the use of masks to prevent the spread of diseases

5141.25 – Students with Special Health Care Needs – new legislation

5141.27 – First Aid/Emergency Medical Care – revisions to include AED legal requirements

5141.4 – Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect – new legislative wording

6114 – Emergency Plan – revision based on new legislation

6140 – Curriculum – new wording in legislation

6141 – Curriculum Design/Modification/Approval

*Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mr. Alaimo to approve the above-mentioned policies with the legal updates as required. Vote unanimous.*

## **IX. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

- A. **Enrollment** – Dr. Charles reported 970 students enrolled as of January 1, 2010. The October 1 enrollment is 974.
- B. **Midyear Review** – Dr. Charles provided the board members with her goals and accomplishments to date.
- C. **China Application** – Mrs. Bishop, Dr. Charles, and Mrs. Malafronte have submitted applications for approval from the CT Principals’ Academy to participate in the 2010 Shandong Principal and Teacher Shadowing Project. Dr. Charles explained that the goal

is to gain a better understanding of how we can sustain a long-term relationship that provides meaningful learning for both partners. Dr Charles pointed out that although we have initiated the program with visits by school officials, we need to take the next step in establishing long term projects with commitment from both entities. By increasing understanding of the schools' cultures and structures, we can better deliver a program that will benefit *all* the students and staff involved.

- D. **Administrator(s) Reports** – Mr. House invited board members to attend the middle school winter concert on 1/13/10 at 7:00 p.m. He also reported having received a letter from NEASC accepting the two-year report. It was suggested the letter be used in budget related materials. Mrs. Bishop reported that an aide hired for a student who is no longer enrolled in the district was cut.

#### **X. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT**

- A. **Policy** - Marti White reported the next policy meeting is scheduled for 1/21/10 at 6:00 p.m.
- B. **Communications Subcommittee** – Myrn Keryc reported that the Communications Committee discussed communication of the budget to various town groups, including Council of Beaches, Safe Harbor, Worthington Manor, Senior Center, PTO's, etc.
- C. **Long Range Plan** – No report at this time.

#### **XI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

#### **XII. PERSONNEL**

- A. **Professional Appointments** - None
- B. **Non-Certified Appointments/Resignations** - None

Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mr. Campbell to move into Executive Session at 10:02 p.m. **Vote Unanimous.**

Discussion of matters that would result in the disclosure of exempt matters. Moved by Mrs. Greaves and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to move back into Regular Session at 10:50 pm. **Vote unanimous.**

**XIIVI. ADJOURN:** Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. White to adjourn at 10:57 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Myrn Keryc, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk