

**WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Tuesday, February 8, 2011**

**Minutes –Regular Meeting**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of February 8, 2011 was called to order by Matthew Alaimo, Chair at 7:00 p.m. in the Westbrook High School library.

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

Also Present: Dr. Patricia Charles, Superintendent; Administrators Robert Hale, Katherine Bishop, Sp. Ed. Director Kathleen Onofrio; Business Manager, Lesley Wysocki; Visual Arts Teachers – Marilyn Toth, Liz Egan, Joseph Biegaj; Curriculum Coach, Michele Hammond; IT Technician, Ben Russell

**II. PLEDGE**

**III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT-** Kelsey Campbell reported that considering the numerous snow days, several activities took place at the high school including a Sunday performance of the band and chorus, Rachel's Challenge, exams, Sara Luft as the American Legion Oratorical Contest local winner, CMEA Festival, and the recent Field Night. She invited the Board to attend a Faculty Recital on Friday, February 11.

Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to add Item C. Snow Day Discussion to the agenda. **Vote unanimous.**

Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to move Item IX. Old Business after Item VII. New Business. **Vote unanimous.**

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT: No comments**

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 11, 2011.
- B. February Enrollment Informational Report
- C. Out of State Field Trip Informational Report: None
- D. Non-Certified Appointments/Resignations: **FYI:** Alice Corrigan was hired as a special education aide at the preschool. Patty Linck has been hired as head cook at WHS and Kathleen Bischoff has been hired as a cafeteria aide.

Moved by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to approve items A through B. **Vote unanimous.**

A discussion on placement of the Financials on the agenda took place – it was suggested Financials be placed before the Consent Agenda.

**VI. FINANCIALS**

- A. Approval of the payment of bills. Moved by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$98,367.33. Moved by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to approve payment of supplemental bills in the amount of \$29,257.92. **Vote unanimous.** Mrs. Wysocki mentioned a correction should

be made that Expenditures are through January 31, not February.

- B. Approval of the Expenditures ending January 31 – Moved by Mrs. Greaves and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to approve expenditures through January 31, 2011. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. Insurance Report:: The Board reviewed the monthly insurance report.
- D. Update on Budget Software – Mrs. Wysocki reported that training was cancelled due to inclement weather and will now take place on February 23-25.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Seward and Monde Report** – Mrs. Wysocki reviewed the Seward and Monde report, and explained adjustments to State Reports ED001 and ED006. She said the full report would be available soon and that she has no concerns.
- B. **Curriculum Review:** Mrs. Hammond introduced members of the Visual Arts Department: Marilyn Toth, Elizabeth Egan, and Joseph Biegaj. The Board viewed an entertaining presentation on the art curriculum and each teacher talked about the curriculum at each of their schools and how it connects to other disciplines. The art department teachers were praised for their work on the curriculum. Moved by Mr. Labbadia and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to approve the visual arts curriculum as presented. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. **Snow Discussion:** Dr. Charles informed the Board that six snow days have been taken so far this year. She suggested the Board consider developing a policy for the future should we need to let people know in advance that if we use too many snow days that February or April vacations may be affected. It was concluded that a decision did not need to be made at this meeting, however, if snow days go beyond 8, a determination will need to be made as to how to make up the required days.

## VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. **NESDEC 2010-11 Enrollment Projection Report** – Dr. Charles provided an enrollment projection report prepared by the New England School Development Council. She showed a visual that forecasts decreasing enrollment due to fewer births to Westbrook families and fluctuation of people moving in and out of Westbrook, and the real estate market downturn. The Board had considerable discussion on this topic, concluding that with the additional graduation requirements from the state, a decrease in enrollment does not necessarily indicate a decrease in staff for the future.
- B. **Climate Survey** – Diana Burns shared the results of a survey given to students, staff and parents on school climate and stated the information helped to identify areas where focus is needed and areas in which we excel as a district. Highlights of the survey indicated that our students feel safe in our schools, school rules for discipline are fair, most agreed they have friends at school and are learning a lot in school. Areas indicating room for growth include students cheating on homework or tests, and although students did not indicate a problem of students being picked on, parents viewed it as happening more often.
- C. **High School Computer Use** – Bob Hale and Ben Russell led the Board in a conversation about moving from a print-based environment to a digital focus through a 1:1 laptop program. A PowerPoint presented by Jonathan Costa at the Shoreline Principal's meeting was used as a basis for the discussion. Mr. Hale said the future of work and learning is going to be digital. He reported that there is free software to help in doing things in a cost effective

way. Mr. Hale told the Board “they are there” in their discussions on 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. He said that a five-year plan is too long. His vision is to see the English Department acquire a “netbook” cart in the spring which would open up the computer lab to other classrooms and allow the English Department the benefit of immediate access in their classrooms. He also suggested piloting use of cell phones, netbooks and other personal equipment to expedite the transition to one-to-one access. Mr. Russell talked about management of acceptable risk using a positive approach on the use of the technology.

#### **IX OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. 2011-2012 Budget** –The Board continued its discussion on the 2011-2012 budget. Dr. Charles provided a prioritized list of cuts to bring the percentage down if that determination is made. It was suggested that the mandated graduation requirements be made public as it will have an impact on the budget, and even with enrollment down, the cost of implementing the requirements will bring additional costs to the district. The discussion included the impact of the cost of special education. Mrs. Onofrio is in the process of extrapolating data on special education. Mrs. Bishop expressed the importance of explaining to the public that if we did not have one-on-one with these children, they would be outplaced and that is more costly. The Board discussed the use of the insurance reserve. Mr. Labbadia expressed concern of using the reserve to pay for ongoing things in the budget.
- B. Budget Workshop** Dr. Charles will advertise the budget workshop scheduled for February 16 on “Alert Now”. It was suggested advertising on the town green. Dr. Charles will look into acquiring a permit if necessary. Mr. Hale said he had a sandwich board available. The marquis will be updated as soon as the snow is cleared.

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

- A. Policy** - Mrs. White reported the policy committee met recently on a policy on graduation requirements. Mrs. White will email committee members for a date for the next meeting.
- B. Communications Subcommittee** – No report. The committee agreed to meet on February 16 at 6:00 p.m.
- C. Long Range Plan** –Mr. Alaimo will schedule a date for LRP.

The Board agreed to meet on February 16 at 6:30 p.m. on negotiations prior to the Budget Workshop at 7:00 p.m.

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

#### **XII. PERSONNEL**

- A. Professional Appointments** – Dr. Charles recommended the hire of Jen Pernal at the elementary level as a part-time Pre-K teacher to address the growing needs of our preschool population. Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater. **Vote unanimous.**
- B. Resignation** – Dr. Charles recommended the Board accept the resignation of James Crawford and thanked him for his 37.5 years of service. Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. Resignation** - Dr. Charles recommended the Board accept the resignation of Kathleen Onofrio and thanked her for her leadership in the special education department in the

past three years. Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. White. **Vote unanimous.**

**D. Superintendent Midyear Evaluation – Executive Session**

Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to move into Executive Session at 10:23 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

Executive Session: Discussion of matters that would result in the disclosure of exempt matters.

Moved by Mrs. Greaves and seconded by Mrs. Adorno to move back into Regular Session at 11:06 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

**XIII. ADJOURN:** Moved by Mrs. Bridgewater and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to adjourn at 11:07 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Myrn Keryc, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk