

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, May 1, 2012, in the board room at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Robinson
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
C. McCubbin, Sec. (absent)	R. Bienkowski
R. Gaines	4 Staff
W. Hart (absent)	60 Public
K. Alexander	3 Press
J. Vouros	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. and requested to add two items to the agenda.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to add to the agenda a discussion and possible vote on the district technology plan. Mr. Gaines seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to add to the agenda a discussion and possible action on making two nurses full time. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Mrs. Leidlein asked that, based on information received tonight, the Board remove the update of the high school bullying concerns.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to remove the high school bullying concerns removed from the agenda. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Item 1 - Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2012. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the minutes of April 12, 2012.

Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to approve the minutes of April 24, 2012. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to approve the Newtown High School field trips, the donations from Taunton Press for the Newtown High School drama club and yearbook, and the personnel items which included the resignations for retirement for Virginia Snowden, teacher at Reed School, and Nancy Maxwell, teacher at Newtown Middle School, the resignation of Jill Dunn, teacher at Head O'Meadow School, and the resignation of Dr. Michael Regan, Director of Pupil Personnel Services. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Item 2 – Public Participation

Kinga Walsh, 21 Horseshoe Ridge Road, attended the meeting at Hawley regarding start time changes. The daycare issue brought up that if there were not enough students to have the before-school program at Hawley School and those students were transported to Sandy Hook School and then back to Hawley, what would be the transportation costs. She asked what the difference was between a bid and contract as they were being used during the transportation discussion. She asked to see what was in the bid and the contract. She is concerned about the \$1M budget reduction as we cannot go below the current budget amount. What will the Board do to get the people

out to vote? Also, if full-day kindergarten is not implemented, is the cost for the noon day buses in the budget? She suggested bringing in an independent auditor to resolve questions on where the money goes.

Mrs. Leidlein stated that money for mid-day bus runs is not in the budget.

Jennifer Sims, 78 Possum Ridge, is a St. Rose parent who is concerned about Reed students on their buses with elementary children.

Michelle Assante, 16 Wendover Road, referred to Mrs. Leidlein's email which said the Hawley School time change was not a budget issue but a result of the contract and reduction of buses. She thought they presented a bid that would allow us to reduce 4 buses. The bus company offered additional reductions of 2 to 4 buses.

Mrs. Leidlein said the contract stated a daily rate not the number of buses.

Mrs. Assante said 2 more buses were reduced and John Kortze said to reduce 2 more. The only scenario after that was with Hawley School on the same tier.

Mrs. Leidlein said putting Hawley on the same tier has to do with staff development.

Mrs. Assante asked what it would cost for the elementary buses to be on the early schedule.

Mrs. Leidlein stated that we didn't look at that because it doesn't work time-wise. It means we would have to add buses.

Andrew Gardner, 4 Mt. Pleasant Terrace, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, spoke about losing his bus driver who is dedicated. It isn't fair to drive them out of business.

### Item 3 – Reports

#### Correspondence:

Mrs. Leidlein said several emails were received regarding St. Rose buses, Hawley start times, full-day kindergarten and budget concerns.

#### Chair Report:

Mrs. Leidlein was contacted by Mrs. Llodra regarding the various board chairs having a public Q & A program regarding the budget. It will be moderated by Curtiss Clark from the *Bee* and will be held May 7, 2012 at the municipal center from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The public can submit questions ahead of time through the *Bee*.

#### Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Robinson said that she and Dr. Gejda along with teacher volunteers spent the Sunday and Monday night before the referendum calling to remind people to vote. Last week she attended a Harvard Seminar Wednesday night through Friday which is why she did not attend Legislative Council meeting. The seminar featured Richard Elmore on how the organization has to restructure to increase student learning. Dr. Robinson also addressed the questions regarding declining enrollment and reported on statistics from October 1, 2010 to October 1, 2011. It shows a decline of 151 students excluding preschool but is throughout the district. What we have to look at is a particular grade level to determine if there is enough decline in enrollment to remove a teacher.

#### Subcommittee Chair Reports:

Mr. Vouros spoke about the curriculum meetings he attended with Reed and high school staff.

Mrs. Roche said they will have a first review of the second half of 9000 series policies at the next Board meeting.

#### Item 4 – Old Business

##### Budget:

Mrs. Leidlein said the budget discussion will have to wait until the referendum is passed and asked the Board to request any information that would help them.

Mr. Alexander requested clarification on full-day kindergarten costs and any additional busing costs. The budget doesn't contain costs for mid-day school runs. We need the exact costs with the busing back in.

Mr. Vouros wanted to know the legal costs we are incurring and in what areas. He asked for a detailed breakdown as to where the legal costs are for the district. He also asked to know when the Human Resources Director was hired and her job description. We are all concerned about transportation issues and want to provide information for the public.

Mrs. Roche wants to know what the transportation costs would be for the tiers and if MTM buses were going to All Star. She also wants a complete breakdown of where transportation money is going for all the options and have another discussion with All Star. We want to know how the tiers were designed.

Mrs. Leidlein wants a better understanding of bus routes this year and what All Star will do next year and also MTM for next year. She wants to see it broken down by transportation company, what is budgeted for and what changes were made in who will be taking over the routes. She asked for a breakdown by school for each company for this year and next year.

##### Review of Transportation Discussions:

Mrs. Leidlein said after the meeting at Hawley School many are concerned about daycare with the time change, extended time in school and safety concerns with more parents picking up children.

Mrs. Roche said at the St. Rose meeting there was concern if there weren't enough children signed up for the Education Connection program for before and after school daycare. What happens if the minimum of 18 students are not participating?  
Dr. Robinson said Mrs. Peters was going to conduct a survey of Hawley parents to see if there was interest. Education Connection would be willing to bring them into another location.

Mrs. Roche said there were also St. Rose concerns that they were not informed earlier in the process and why they had to share tiers with Reed with concerns about the age difference riding the same buses. The spoke about videos, the safety on the buses, student behavior, getting to school on time, and keeping the same bus stops.  
Mr. Alexander asked if their questions were answered at the meeting to which Mrs. Roche said they were for the most part.

**Discussion of Superintendent's Evaluation:**

Mrs. Leidlein said the Board agreed to have a member of CAFE, Nick Caruso, to assist in the Superintendent's evaluation. In speaking to him we found he was not available for the next two months. We spoke to two attorneys, Floyd Dugas and Fred Dorsey, who have similar rates at \$225 per hour.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to hire Fred Dorsey as a consultant to help in the Superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mr. Alexander asked if there was anyone else from CAFE who could do this.

Mrs. Leidlein said there wasn't.

Mr. Gaines asked if he was asked to recommend someone else

Mrs. Roche did not ask if there was anyone else.

Mr. Gaines feels we should check with them before we spend \$225 per hour.

Mrs. Roche said we should move forward and already spoke to Mr. Dorsey. We have to decide tonight.

Mr. Vouros asked if there was someone else at CAFE.

Dr. Robinson said she was not sure of Patrice McCarthy does this. She reminded the Board that this was not deadline driven and could be done when Mr. Caruso was available.

Mrs. Leidlein said she wanted this done before June 30.

Mr. Gaines feels we should pursue CAFE further before we hire an outside attorney and was not comfortable hiring Fred Dorsey without knowing anything about him. A decision should wait until we check with CAFE.

Mr. Vouros said he knew Fred Dorsey was legal counsel for the Board of Education in Newtown and is sure he is well qualified.

Vote: 3 ayes 2 nays – Richard and Keith

Mrs. Leidlein would check with CAFE to see if anyone else is available.

**Item 5 – New Business****Copier Contract:**

Mr. Bienkowski spoke about the current contract which is for four years. Five companies requested our RFP and we received two proposals. One was from Aztec and the other from Oce, our current provider. The difference between them is \$2,420 per year. Our budget is based on our estimated cost of \$210,000 this year. Oce is a larger company and we have been satisfied with their service. He recommends Oce with a proposal for \$216,000. It also includes a buy out of \$49,000 which is a significant savings. We can apply it to this fiscal year and/or to the future year.

Mrs. Roche asked about maintenance of the machines and asked if there was anything in the contract about how soon they respond to addressing machines that break down constantly.

Mr. Bienkowski said the service rep reports to the school. If we have continuing problems not due to the environment conditions in the schools that we can't control, we expect to have a loaner brought in.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if it was advisable to negotiate a 4-year contract or would we get a better deal after a year.

Mr. Bienkowski said it would be more costly to do a yearly contract.

Mrs. Leidlein was concerned about approving a contract over what we have in our budget.

Mr. Bienkowski said he feels they will get it to the \$210,000 budget amount.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education approve a four-year contract with Oce North America effective July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2017, which is based on their proposal dated April 25, 2012. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Current Expenditure Balance Disposition:

Mr. Bienkowski said at the last meeting he told the Board he would bring them suggestions for spending the remaining balances from this fiscal year which total \$222,000. He provided a prioritized list of items from plant maintenance and technology. Mr. Gaines felt that technology licensing was very important.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education authorize the expenditure of projected year-end balance funds from the 2011-12 fiscal year to be spent in priority order listed for Building & Site maintenance projects and technology. These expenditures shall be within the actual remaining balance, estimated in March to be \$222,000. The Board will be updated on the actual disposition of funds at each subsequent Board of Education meeting. The funds will be expended equally to the extent possible between the two departments. Mr. Alexander seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski said the only maintenance projects this year is the paving of the front parking lot at the middle school.

Mrs. Amodeo said the middle school machines are 8 years old. Virtual desktop licensing is her first priority.

Mr. Gaines questioned the lead times on the maintenance projects to get them done in this budget year.

Mr. Faiella said they can be bid quickly and did not see a problem getting them done.

Mrs. Leidlein was concerned about the \$222,000 being a surplus prior to knowing the final budget amount.

Mr. Alexander said we should approve this to get things done in this budget year, have the middle school paving done first and leave the technology list alone for now.

Mr. Gaines said we can wait until the budget is passed and still have time prior to end of this budget year to implement projects.

Mr. Faiella said they would be done after school is out.

Mr. Bienkowski said we need to have contracts and commitments on the work issued prior to June 30.

Dr. Robinson stated our next meeting is May 15 the same night as the referendum. If it doesn't pass we would be holding up this project.

Mrs. Leidlein wasn't comfortable doing this until the budget passes.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education table this discussion until the next meeting. Mrs. Roche seconded.

Vote: 5 ayes

**School Messenger Account:**

Mrs. Leidlein asked if the Board would like their own account to send information separately.

Mr. Gaines feels there are times a town side communication system would be good. He asked what controls there would be.

Mr. Alexander asked if there would be a cost.

Mrs. Amodeo said the cost would be an additional \$100 per year per person.

Mr. Gaines asked how often this would be used.

Mrs. Leidlein said not very often. It would be more a form of convenience and a way to expedite matters.

Dr. Robinson supported this because there are times there is a delay for her to send out information.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board Chair School messenger account be set up. Mr. Vouros seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Mr. Alexander stated that if Board members disagree with any communication from that they can speak to it at a Board meeting. Also, anything sent out should be mentioned at a Board meeting.

Mrs. Leidlein said she would also send the message to the Board members.

Vote: 5 ayes

**Review of Director of Pupil Services Hiring Plan:**

Dr. Robinson said Dr. Regan's position is under the administrators' contract. She went over the process outline (see attached).

Mr. Vouros suggested that another educator be involved in the prescreening along with Dr. Gejda and Mrs. Libby. He would also like to be on the interview committee and suggested that someone from the middle school be on also.

Mrs. Roche asked when Dr. Robinson needed to know which Board members would be involved to which she said prior to June 11.

Mr. Alexander feels other Board members should be involved in this discussion.

Mrs. Roche asked to send the timeline to the Board members and attach it to the minutes.

**Technology Plan:**

Mr. Alexander said this report needs to be submitted to the State every 3 years.

Mrs. Amodeo spoke about the technology committee and that the plan needs to be to the State by June 15. The goals have changed but the plan is predominantly the same. It makes each district look at what they are doing and set goals.

Dr. Gejda said we are required to see that students who reach 8<sup>th</sup> grade are technologically proficient. Our strategic plan is also connected with students having access to technology.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education accept the district technology plan to be forwarded to the State of Connecticut. Mr. Gaines seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

**Nurses Contract:**

Dr. Robinson this moves the two existing positions to FTE status.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education approve the hiring of two school nurses to fill the IEP requirements. Mr. Alexander seconded.

Dr. Robinson said both are unique positions that exist in contracted services. The nurse at Head O'Meadow will replace a contracted nurse. It's less expensive to have our own nurses.

Mr. Gaines would like to know what the contracted services costs are.

Dr. Robinson said it is less expensive to have our own.

Mrs. Leidlein asked for the cost of benefits and that we would wait until we can get the cost comparisons.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to table the discussion for the two nursing positions.

Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Mrs. Leidlein asked that during public participation any reference to an individual or program not be made. Speak generally with no discussion of personnel items.

#### Item 6 – Public Participation

Gerry Crean, owner of Aztec, 17 Turnberry Road, Wallingford, CT, said there were inaccuracies regarding service costs. He had an email when this was asked and acknowledged that there was no cost for the Uniflow Project which gives a savings of \$10,000. We had requested a meeting to discuss this bid. The \$49,000 is becoming a part of the next finance section of this contract. He feels the Board should put forth a motion to reopen this item to discuss options. Uniflow is a software product to track print volume. We are proposing Cannon equipment which is owned by OCE.

Kinga Walsh, 21 Horseshoe Ridge Road, said that regarding bullying there is a focus on the athletic department but whatever is decided it should be for all of the students. Any teacher should go through the same training. Regarding combining Reed and St. Rose on the same bus, she is also concerned that her 5<sup>th</sup> grader daughter is getting on the bus with 8<sup>th</sup> graders but she believes the principals will do the right thing.

Jennifer Sims, 78 Possum Ridge, asked how many students will be on the buses from St. Rose and Reed. It should be broken down by grade levels and is concerned with language on the bus.

James Walsh, 3 North Branch Road, asked if cameras on the bus also had sound.

Mrs. Roche said the video with sound would be available for 30 days. The will be located in the front and on the side of the buses. Dr. Epple said she would also work with Mary Maloney.

Alice Mascher, 75 Marlin Road, inquired about the BOE meetings not being available on Channel 17.

Mrs. Leidlein said they are all on the town website.

Mr. Gaines added pending litigation to executive session.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to go into executive session for the evaluation of the Superintendent and pending litigation and invited Dr. Robinson. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Item 7 – Executive Session

Item 8 – Public Session for Vote – no vote taken

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to adjourn. Mr. Vouros seconded. Vote: 5 ayes

Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


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Debbie Leidlein  
Chair



**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUSINESS OFFICE  
3 PRIMROSE STREET  
NEWTOWN, CT 06470**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 27, 2012  
**TO:** The Board of Education   
**FROM:** Ron Bienkowski, Director of Business  
**SUBJECT:** Copier Contract

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By newspaper advertisements on April 20, we solicited proposals for an appropriate fleet of digital copy machines for the district. Five companies responded and asked for the RFP specifications. Two proposals were received for consideration on April 25, the due date.

After review of the proposals received from Aztec and Océ, it appears an award to Océ, our current provider, is in order and recommended for Board approval.

RB:bb  
Attachment


### RFP COST COMPARISONS

		<u>YEAR 1</u>	<u>YEAR 2</u>	<u>YEAR 3</u>	<u>YEAR 4</u>	<u>CONTRACT TOTAL</u>
AZTEC	CATEGORY 1& 2 COMBINED TOTAL	\$213,964	\$213,964	\$213,964	\$213,964	\$855,856
OCE	CATEGORY 1	\$196,840	\$196,840	\$196,840	\$196,840	\$787,360
	CATEGORY 2	<u>\$19,544</u>	<u>\$19,544</u>	<u>\$19,544</u>	<u>\$19,544</u>	<u>\$78,176</u>
	TOTALS	\$216,384	\$216,384	\$216,384	\$216,384	\$865,536
	DIFFERENCE	\$2,420	\$2,420	\$2,420	\$2,420	\$9,680

**DEVIATIONS IN RANKING WILL BE EXPLAINED AT THE BOARD MEETING**

**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUSINESS OFFICE  
3 PRIMROSE STREET  
NEWTOWN, CT 06470**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 27, 2012  
**TO:** The Board of Education   
**FROM:** Ron Bienkowski, Director of Business  
**SUBJECT:** Year-End Expenditure Balance

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At the last Board meeting I indicated that we needed guidance on how we should plan on using any remaining balances from this fiscal year for the benefit of education.

I had suggested spending on plant maintenance projects and technology and I was directed to present priorities for the Board's consideration.

Attached is the project list, with priorities assigned, that was cut from next year's budget. Following that is a technology recommendation.

Any selected items will need lead time to plan so it is appropriate to make decisions now.

RB:bb  
Attachments

Copy: Janet Robinson, Superintendent of Schools  
Gino Faiella, Director of Facilities  
Carmella Amodeo, Director of Technology

**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT**

**PLANT OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE**

**SELECTED DETAILS**

**450 - BUILDING & SITE MAINTENANCE PROJECTS**

		<b>TOTAL 450 - BUILDING &amp; SITE MAINTENANCE PROJECTS FOR 2012-13</b>	
	<b>HAWLEY SCHOOL</b>	<b>27,500</b>	
<b>2</b>	REPLACE STAIR B MULTIPURPOSE ROOM EGRESS	25,000	
	INSTALL SECURITY COVERS AT FIRE PULL STATIONS	2,500	
	<b>SANDY HOOK SCHOOL</b>	<b>80,000</b>	
<b>9</b>	REPAINT ALL INTERNAL STEEL DOORS & FRAMES	28,000	
<b>12</b>	ELECTRICAL UPGRADE AND UPS TO SUPPORT PHONE SYSTEM	22,000	
	CARPET/FLOORING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	20,000	
<b>10</b>	REPLACE CABINETS & COUNTERS IN CLASSROOMS - PHASE I	10,000	
	<b>MIDDLE GATE SCHOOL</b>	<b>35,000</b>	
	CARPET/FLOORING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	20,000	
	REPLACE CEILINGS IN MAIN OFFICE, LIBRARY & REAR HALL	15,000	
	<b>HEAD O' MEADOW SCHOOL</b>	<b>50,000</b>	
<b>8</b>	REPAINT EXTERIOR DOORS, FRAMES, WINDOW FRAMES	20,000	
	INSTALL ACCESS TO REAR BUILDING - STONE DRIVE	15,000	
<b>6</b>	REPLACE SIDEWALKS AT FRONT ISLAND	15,000	
	<b>REED INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL</b>	<b>25,000</b>	
<b>7</b>	REPAINT LOWER LEVEL LOCKERS	25,000	
	<b>NEWTOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>219,000</b>	
	PAVE FRONT PARKING LOT/REAR ACCESS ROAD	110,000	
	CARPET/FLOORING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	30,000	
<b>3</b>	REPLACE CONCRETE STAIRS AT C WING	30,000	
	UPGRADE BATHROOMS IN WING A, 2ND FLOOR	25,000	
<b>1</b>	STRIP & REFINISH A GYM FLOOR TO BLEND REPAIR	14,000	
	INSTALL SOUND SYSTEM IN AUDITORIUM	10,000	
	<b>NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>158,000</b>	
	VISITOR BLEACHERS -FINAL PHASE	45,000	
<b>11</b>	UPGRADE SOUND SYSTEM FOR AUDITORIUM - PHASE I	45,000	
<b>4</b>	REPLACE EXISTING UPS FOR DATA CENTER - CRITICAL SYSTEM	38,000	
<b>5</b>	CONNECT CULINARY REFRIGERATION TO GENERATOR	30,000	
	<b>SYSTEM WIDE</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>302,000</b>	

<b>TOTAL ALL LOCATIONS</b>	<b>594,500</b>
Board Cut	(498,000)
<b>Remaining 12-13</b>	<b>96,500</b>

96,500	2012-13 Budgeted remaining
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Newtown Public Schools  
Technology Department

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**Prioitized Technology Request for 2012-2011 dollars**

1	Licensing for Virtual desktops for NMS ACAD VDI-in-a-box concurrent user 200 for NMS to be used by students. Eliminates immediate need to replace obsolete student desktops	\$35,800.00
2	Desktops to replace NMS teacher stations 26 needed to complete rollout	\$20,930.00
3	Epes move to be hosted by Vendor Eliminates the use of stand-alone copies for School activities accounting	\$1,548.00
4	SNAP move to hosted by Vendor - Eliminates need to replace Dell server bought in 2005	\$5,790.00
5	Replace 58 obsolete NHS staff laptops	\$57,942.00
6	Replace obsolete desktops in two NHS labs	\$41,860.00
7	Destiny move to hosted by Vendor Allows server purchased in 2009 to replace another purchased in 2003	\$999.00
8	SHS VoIP - phone system upgrade Continue VoIP roll out in the District - Voicemail system in use with non-VoIP schools is obsolete and no longer serviced by SBC	\$63,438.00
9	Desktops to replace SHS teacher stations 52 desktops	\$41,860.00
	<b>Total Request</b>	<b><u>\$228,307.00</u></b>

## Summary of District Committee/Special Meetings April 2012

### **Common Core State Standards Update**

A district team will attend the CAPSS Assistant Superintendent's conference on March 30. The conference focused on implementation of the CCSS and the team will be working on further developing the district plan. On May 25, during the District PLC time, there will be a presentation to all staff on the district work to transition to the Common Core State Standards. Details will be forthcoming.

### **District TEAM Coordinating Committee (TCC)**

**Module 5** (Professional Responsibility) is ready to be launched. There are 2 district dates scheduled for facilitated discussions: April 4 and May 14. Please see your building facilitator for further details (*K. Hardy, K. Lowell, K. Boettner, A. Blank, S. Ruddock, B. Virgalla, D. Cowden, A. Salvatore, K. Dreger*). NEXT year, the plan is for these discussions to take place at the building level and will involve more faculty in the conversation.

### **District Technology Curriculum Committee**

All districts must complete and submit to the State Department of Education a three-year technology plan. Newtown's current plan (2009-2012) can be found at the district web site under "District Reports". The committee completed a draft of the new district technology plan (2012-2015) to be sent to Education Connection for review. The plan will also be reviewed and then adopted by the Board of Education and then sent on to be filed with the State Department of Education by the end of this school year.

### **District Math Committee**

This committee continues to plan for implementation of CCSS. The committee identified specific curricular changes for the upcoming year as well as professional development needed in moving forward over the next three years.

### **Teacher Growth Plan Committee**

The Teacher Growth Committee, chaired by Chip Dumais, reviewed draft documents created by the survey subcommittee and discussed the audiences, content, and feedback analysis of the proposed surveys. The entire group will be "rotating" their subcommittee responsibilities to read and review the work of the other subcommittees. It is the intention of the committee to have drafts of all documents completed this spring for review by other constituencies, professional development for evaluators over the summer to ensure consistency and coherency in the application of the plan, and a full pilot in the fall. (*submitted by C. Dumais*)

### **District Literacy Committee**

The DLC is reading and discussing *Navigating the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards* (Peery, Wiggs, Piercy, Lassiter, Cebelak). Members of this committee have also been working on developing parent guides to the district writing program. The complete guides are available online and brochures about those guides were distributed at parent conferences for grades K-8.

### **Strategic Planning Teaching and Learning Subcommittee**

Led by co-chairs Dawn Hochsprung and Jenn Sinal, members of the Teaching and Learning subcommittee for the Strategic Plan, have been meeting in small groups to review and update the work of the original committee. Charged with the task earlier this year, committee members have been researching, discussing and updating the action plan in light of recent mandates. Final recommendations of the subcommittee will be presented to the District Strategic Planning Committee and to the Board of Education. On March 26, the subcommittee reconvened to hear about the progress of each small group in revising the original plan. The topics addressed during the small-group work were summarized and submitted by Dawn Hochsprung and follow on the next page.

The Teaching and Learning subcommittee for the Strategic Plan has been meeting since December to update the strategy for teaching and learning:

**We will develop and implement plans to ensure all staff use effective instructional tools, best practices, assessment data, and intervention resources to improve academic standing, 21st century skills and inspire students to excel.**

Four work groups were formed, each with a specific result for which to make recommendations. Their work to date is briefly summarized below. When the work groups came together, they identified many common themes throughout their work including: 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, professional development, vertical alignment, access to data, and technology. The need to weave the Common Core State Standards throughout the work was highlighted.

- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills** – Focus K-12 teaching and learning on the 21st century skills of communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and research and information fluency.
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century rubrics
  - Streamlining of data management/accessibility
  - Oversight of technology infrastructure (including full wireless access)
  - Integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and technology into curricula and professional development
  - Global awareness
  - Interdisciplinary studies
- **Range of Programs** – Inspire students and staff to excel through a broad range of programs that encourage, excite and ignite student achievement.
  - Staff and student surveys incorporate programs offered/needed to support student needs and interests
  - Course offerings of similar districts
  - Newtown's K-12 extra-curricular programs (academic, social, and athletic)
  - Late buses
  - Increased community involvement
  - Inspiring programs that incorporate higher order thinking
- **Standard of Excellence** – Demonstrate a standard of excellence as evidenced by the consistent implementation of professional practices.
  - Alignment with Professional Growth Plan
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century skills embedded in professional development
  - Consistency among PLCs
  - Incorporation of professional development, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and data into Professional Growth Plan
  - Professional development survey
  - Best practices, model lessons, instructional coaches
  - Strategic communication
  - District PLCs
- **Differentiation** – Utilize differentiated instruction as a fundamental means of providing appropriate interventions for students.
  - Survey created to elicit teachers' feedback on RtI/SRBI