

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.  
Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, June 5, 2012, in the board room at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Robinson
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
C. McCubbin, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
R. Gaines (absent)	2 Staff
W. Hart	50 Public
K. Alexander	2 Press
J. Vouros	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

Item 1 – Student Recognition

The top 5% of the 2012 graduating class were introduced as well as the two students who received the CAFE Student Leadership Award. Mr. Dumais announced that Erin Begg is the salutatorian and Ajit Singh was the valedictorian.

Item 2 – Recognition of Retiring Teachers

Dr. Robinson introduced retiring teachers Nancy Maxwell and Linda Dale Mulholland. The additional retiring teachers unable to attend were Debbie Cowden, Janet Huot and Virginia Snowden.

Mrs. Leidlein asked to remove the salary reclassification item under new business.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that we table the new business salary reclassification item. Mr. McCubbin seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to amend the minutes of May 15, 2012 by adding the following to the end of the copier contract discussion under Old Business:

*Dr. Robinson said she would set up a communication for copier complaints and keep track because that was not something that was being funneled to us.*

*Ms. Roche asked once the copier complaint system is set up if Dr. Robinson can share it with the board. Dr. Robinson replied absolutely.*

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the consent agenda minus the minutes of May 15, 2012, which included the donation to the Newtown High School DECA Club, the scholarship donation from the Compass Group, the teachers in the TEAM program, the resignation of Bridget McSweeney, physical education teacher, the extension of the child rearing leave of absence for Laura Schmidt, teacher at Middle Gate School, the childrearing leaving of absence for Amy Hiruo, teacher at Hawley School, and the resignation of Scott Clayton, assistant principal of Newtown High School. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the minutes of May 15, 2012. Mrs. Roche seconded.

Mr. McCubbin seconded the amendment to the minutes of May 15, 2012.

Vote on the amendment: 5 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Hart)

Vote on the minutes: 5 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Hart)

Item 4 – Public Participation

Carla Kron, 4 Clapboard Ridge Road, requested that Chartwells improve labeling on their food offerings and have more options for students with allergies such as gluten and dairy as well as peanuts.

Item 7 – New Business

Chartwells Contract for the 2012-2013 School Year:

Mr. Bienkowski spoke about the new federal guidelines, the price increase, and a federal requirement which allows a reimbursement. He introduced George Sotille, Chartwells district manager, who introduced Dan Shields, director of dining services, and Jill Patterson, resident dietician. There are mandatory USDA changes which have to be met. With this amendment to their contract they are indicating an increase of 10 cents per lunch.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education approve the one-year renewal of Chartwells agreement for the period July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.  
Mr. Hart seconded.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if they would be addressing allergies.

Ms. Patterson said they meet with parents individually to give them physician forms and make adjustments for their children.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if there would be a time when high school students can make their own food choices.

Mr. Sotille feels this will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Roche requested that there be information on the Chartwells website for parents with concerns about allergies.

Vote: 5 ayes, 1 nay (Mrs. Roche)

MOTION: Mr. Hart moved that the Board of Education approve the increase in the cost for school lunches to \$2.60 at the elementary schools, \$2.85 at the middle and intermediate schools and \$3.10 at the high school. Mr. Alexander seconded.

Vote: 5 ayes, 1 nay (Mrs. Roche)

Item 5 – Reports

Correspondence: Mr. McCubbin said there was correspondence regarding support for full day kindergarten, against the cut in the education budget, voting no on the budget for increased costs and a number of miscellaneous subjects.

Chair report: Mrs. Leidlein mentioned there would be a Legislative Council meeting the following night.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Robinson spoke about the junior/senior projects presented last week.

Students in Chris Lee's AP music theory class had their compositions performed by the high school orchestra last Friday and Monday.

Two Perkins Grants have been awarded to the high school. One is for \$39,583 for our capstone/student success plans and \$29,464 for transition to postsecondary school/career transitions and student success plans.

Item 6 – Old Business

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education approve policies 9212 through 9400. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

Item 7 – New Business (continued)

Healthy Food Certification Statement:

Dr. Robinson said we vote to not participate because it affects the various fund raising bake sales, class activities, and vending machines, which can only have water or 100% juice. It would also affect our culinary program.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that on behalf of the Newtown Board of Education pursuant to section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes, we hereby certify that all food items offered for sale to students in the school (s) under our jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education will not meet said standards during the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Such certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises, whether or not school sponsored.

Mr. Hart seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

First Read of Policy 8-300 Acceptable use of Technology:

Mrs. Leidlein stated there is a constraint to passing this policy.

Dr. Robinson said this is a new requirement for E-rate reimbursement and has to be to the State before June 30, 2012. This is a small amount of money to help pay for our phone and broadband services.

Mrs. Leidlein read the statement added to our policy:

*The District recognizes its responsibility to educate students regarding appropriate behavior on social networking and chat room sites about cyberbullying. Therefore, students shall be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.*

Mr. Bienkowski said we receive from \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year.

Dr. Robinson added that our phone systems, cell phones and anything that makes that type of connection are eligible for this reimbursement.

Mrs. Roche asked if guidelines had been established. Dr. Gejda said this policy is under instruction and students have an acceptable use of technology policy that we also make parents aware of.

Item 8 – 2012-2013 Budget Discussion

Ron presented the draft list of cuts with additional needs. Items discussed included the director of music position, special education ESs on buses, the middle school moving up ceremony costs, and enrollment.

Mr. McCubbin questioned the travel and conference expenses.

Dr. Gejda stated that most workshops are mandated training which includes PBIS and NEASC. The most expensive workshop is for our technology department to run our systems.

Mr. Hart would like to see some specifics so the administration can explain where they appear in the budget.

Mrs. Roche asked if we have training mapped out for next year and provide a list of what is required by the state. She also wants to know where it is listed in the budget. In the new legislation there is a requirement for PLCs for 30 hours. She asked how this would be tracked since there will no longer be CEUs.

Dr. Gejda said we are required to provide 18 hours of professional development at no cost to the teacher. That has always been our guide. We have a system in place of tracking the professional development we offer and will continue to do that.

Mr. Vouros feels it is difficult to approve full day kindergarten if we were going to cut teachers and programs. He proposed a program called enhanced daycare which is the parents pay to keep the child in kindergarten to the end of the day. The program comes under the Department of Public Health. He spoke to Donna Culbert who called the state and found that we are qualified to do this. We have to decide how much it will cost for the parents. He suggested trying it for one year.

Mr. Hart said if we had this program we would have to go back to mid day bus runs.

Mr. McCubbin said this would be less of a burden on the taxpayers and helps parents.

Mrs. Roche is concerned about asking parents to pay for this program.

Mr. McCubbin stated it would be cheaper than paying a daycare facility.

Mr. Hart was concerned we would not achieve the educational gain we expected having the full day kindergarten program. We are proposing this for education, not daycare.

Mrs. Leidlein asked what additional information the Board would want to discuss this further.

Mr. Alexander said he would look for a similar amount of information that we received in support of full day kindergarten to make this a preferred option.

Mr. Hart asked for more information about cutting two teachers at Reed and wants to look at the class sizes and enrollment there.

Mrs. Roche said Reed is trying to make a lot of changes. We have to look at that before removing teachers. She prefers not to make any changes there.

Mrs. Leidlein wanted more information on the high school pay to play for trips to be sure we still want to fund trips. She also wants to understand the in and out of district transportation for \$199,588.

Mr. Bienkowski said this relates to the detailed schedule showing \$230,734 as a reduction. The BOE budget had already shown a reduction of two buses. We are making a major change from a system that hasn't been changed in many years. He is concerned that we are trying to lower the budget but will not give us flexibility to give options. The impact of the grants is important also.

Mrs. Roche asked for the savings between having the owner/operators and All Star if we had them next year.

Mr. Bienkowski said that would depend on what profile is used.

Mr. Hart said this year we are paying \$393 per day for each bus. We have 33 regular route buses. The new buses are \$310 per day for a savings of \$503,773. For kindergarten runs we currently pay \$94.43 and we will pay \$55.00 for 11 runs which is a savings of \$79,000 for a total of \$582,000 using the same 33 buses. We've taken out 4 buses for a savings of \$810,000 plus took one staff member out. Total savings would be approximately \$900,000.

Mrs. Roche asked Mr. Bienkowski for that information on a spreadsheet.

Mr. Bienkowski said we have to keep in mind that we will have a different structure next year.

Mrs. Roche said there should be 4 fewer buses.

Mr. Bienkowski said we are running more than 4 less buses on the proposed schedule. We need some direction on how to put this together. There are still options to consider but we have to make a decision to move forward.

Mr. Vouros said some MTM runs can be pulled.

Mr. Bienkowski stated we have the ability to add and delete buses every year. That decision will be made when we have a budget.

Mrs. Roche asked that all budget information be attached to the minutes.

Dr. Robinson said the teachers' union decided to put early retirement off until next September with information expected back to us by January. We are waiting to get the costs for enhanced day care from the district that has that program.

Mrs. Roche asked what the amount was if we take full day kindergarten off the table.

Mr. Bienkowski said the amount is \$513,272 for the total program.

Mr. Vouros asked if it was possible to cut \$100,000 from central office.

Dr. Robinson said two years ago we took 2 people out of central office. We don't have excess people.

Item 9 – Public Participation – none

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to go into executive session for the evaluation of the superintendent and invited Attorney Fred Dorsey and Dr. Robinson. Mr. Alexander seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

Item 10 – Executive Session

Executive session began at 10:40 p.m.

Item 11 – Possible Vote – None

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to adjourn. Mr. Hart seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

Item 12 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Cody McCubbin  
Secretary