

Note: Per C.G.S. 10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at the next regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and voted upon.

CHAPLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Chaplin, Connecticut
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2011

Chairperson Rachel O’Neill called the meeting to order at 6:39 PM. Present were Board members Annemarie Burnham, Stephanie Harrington, Angelina Pearce and Jean Lambert. Administrators present were Interim Superintendent Kenneth Henrici and Principal Dan White. Unable to attend were Board members John Bolduc and Megan Hicks.

2. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD:

A letter was received from Acting Commissioner George Coleman regarding the school calendar and closures. School must be in session 180 days and completed by June 30th with no exceptions allowed.

A letter was received from Instructional Assistant Carolyn Fox asking the Board to take days from the April vacation to make up snow days.

Dick Weingart presented a letter from the Chaplin Board of Finance requesting a 0% budget increase and information on enrollment projections and staffing.

Marita Dubitsky presented a petition with 77 signatures from parents to cancel either February or April vacation to make up snow days. Most parents are in favor of cancelling the February vacation.

3. COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUDIENCE:

Sandy Dunnack who works on the school calendar along with Barbara Walters encouraged other Superintendents and districts to think creatively and get input from the staff when establishing the school calendar.

A parent suggested taking days from the February and April vacation to make up snow days. At this time, it is too late to cancel February vacation as parents and teachers have already made vacation plans.

A grandmother expressed concerns with being stressed about making up snow days and hopes to keep the February break.

Barry Howard suggested the Board explore other options to make up snow days such as eliminating the day off for President’s Day and going to school on Saturdays.

4. INFORMATION ITEMS:

A. Monthly Report:

The monthly report was presented along with a synopsis of current activities in the TAG program and school-wide enrichment. Despite the overabundance of snow days, teachers have been working hard the past month focusing on many educational activities. During the month of January, the Pre-K studied the Middle Ages. A few of the activities included: building catapults, dressing up

like kings and queens, visiting Higgins Armory and performing “Stone Soup” for Family Friday. Pre-K theme for February is Western.

1st grade has been studying the reasons for the seasons in science and they are getting ready to move into a unit on shadows as they celebrated Ground Hog day. Even though 1st grade is enjoying winter and having fun in the snow, they are hoping his prediction is correct and that spring will be early this year!

In reading, 1st graders have been reading various versions of the Ukrainian folk tale “The Mitten” and comparing and contrasting each version. They have also been working on reading like a writer and carefully noticing the author’s craft within the great literature they are reading about winter. They are trying to include what can be noticed in writing like dialogue, action words, sensory describing words, onomatopoeia (sound words), and carefully choosing words. They are ready to publish their third story this week!

In Math, 1st graders are getting efficient at problem solving following a routine that helps to envision the actions, think about if they are going to have more or less after they are done solving, and working on recording their thinking so that anyone who looks at the work can figure out how it was solved. Lastly, they are now creating surveys and think about how to analyze and represent our data to show what was learned.

Grade 6 has been busy working on Writing on Demand, studying Ancient Greece, and learning chemistry. Their field study to the Connecticut Science Museum was snowed out and they look forward to March 1st when the trip has been rescheduled. After getting snowed out twice, World Class Reader’s finally met. The group had to meet during recess/lunch to accommodate the next scheduled presentation of books. Despite the shortened time for discussion and presentation, the club was successful. Besides teacher led groups, this group included two student led groups. Next World Class Reader’s group is scheduled for March 16th.

On Monday, February 7th, two CES students were selected to represent Chaplin for the state-wide celebration of the arts banquet. Lauren Foster was selected for outstanding Artistic ability and Matthew Hohman was selected for outstanding musical ability. The students, along with their families, teachers and Principal were treated to a buffet dinner and dance performance at the Aqua Turf.

As you can see, many good things continue to happen at Chaplin Elementary School!

B. Principal Report: No Report

C. Superintendent Report:

The Superintendent held a meeting today (2/9) with school administrators from Chaplin, Hampton, and Scotland and Region #11 to coordinate the school calendar for next year and will include discussing when snow days are used.

The K-12 Curriculum/Vertical teaming meeting with administrators and sixth grade teachers was postponed to February 24th due to snow. There is a hard push towards Algebra I in 8th grade to comply with the Secondary School Reform Act. This will have implication regarding Grade 6 Math.

D. Enrollment/Staff/Facility Update:

Enrollment is at 196 students (up from 174 last year) with no staff changes.

E. Discussion of Present 2010-2011 School Calendar due to Snow Days:

Superintendent Henrici reported that making up snow days is a tough situation and you can't please everyone as noted by parents. There is a need to maintain continuity of instruction. He indicated that if having school during the last week in June is not an option, other options to be considered include: cancel all or part of the February vacation (extremely short notice), cancel all or part of the April vacation, roll back 183 instructional days to 182, 181, or 180 days with a minimum of 900 hours instruction (Chaplin Elementary has 183 days), have school on President's Day to gain a day, or use a combination of the above options. Mr. Henrici recommended not having school during the last week of June. There are five staff members who indicated to Principal White that they had vacation plans for February and a few had commitments for the April vacation.

Motion to amend present school calendar and make February 14-17 school days and roll back total number of days to 182 with the last day of school June 20th, was made by Annemarie Burnham, seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

Motion to discuss agenda Item #6 here, was made by Stephanie Harrington, seconded by Annemarie Burnham and carried unanimously.

5. PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY 2011-2012 BUDGET:

The Board was presented with a proposed budget with a 0% increase. Superintendent Henrici reported that these are tough times and drafting the budget presents challenges that will have staffing implications. Increases are for health insurance (estimated at 15%), oil, electricity and the bus contract.

Motion for tentative approval of the 2011-2012 Budget as presented, was made by Annemarie Burnham, seconded by Angelina Pearce and carried unanimously.

The Board commended district and school administration for drafting a budget with a 0% increase per request from the Board of Finance.

6. DISCUSSION OF DRAFT OF 2011-2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR:

The Board was presented with a draft of the school calendar that mirrors the EASTCONN calendar. The first day for students is August 31st. Stephanie Harrington suggested revising a change if there are 4 or more snow days. Rachel O'Neill suggested removing February vacation and moving April vacation closer to Good Friday.

Motion to modify 2011-2012 School Calendar to make February vacation February 17th and 20th, move April vacation to April 9th-13th and make February 10th an early release day with school ending on June 13th, was made by Annemarie Burnham, seconded by Stephanie Harrington and carried unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:

A. Approval of Minutes: January 26, 2011

Motion to approve the minutes of January 26, 2011, was made by Stephanie Harrington, seconded by Annemarie Burnham and carried with one abstention by Angelina Pearce.

B. Approval of Financial Statement:

46% of the budget has been spent to date.

Motion to approve the Financial Statement, was made by Stephanie Harrington, seconded by Annemarie Burnham and carried unanimously.

C. Discussion of New Medication Policies:

School Nurse Charlene Petrone presented new CT statutes regarding the administration of life saving medications after school.

Motion for tentative approval of New Medication Policy, was made by Annemarie Burnham, seconded by Stephanie Harrington and carried unanimously.

D. Crime Bond Quote Options:

The Board was presented with insurance quote from CERMA for Crime Bond (employee theft) that was previously covered by the town. Business Manager Noelle Cormier recommended option #2.

Motion to approve Option #2 for Crime Bond, was made by Annemarie Burnham, seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

Rachel O'Neill asked for a list of services that were previously covered by the town.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Committees May Report Information to the Board):

A. CABE/EASTCONN:

EASTCONN held a groundbreaking for their new building with completion expected by October 1st. Services in Willimantic will be consolidated with Hampton.

B. Educational & Board Policies: Discussed already

C. Personnel & Supervision Policies: No Report

D. Central Office:

A budget was adopted in the amount of \$404,399.

E. Building, Grounds & Insurance:

Principal White did a walkthrough the attic and found no damp or wet spots with everything looking structurally sound. The roof is being monitored while the snow is melting.

F. Transportation:

First Student will be notified of change in vacation schedule.

G. Public Relations:

Parent input considered to make up snow days.

H. School Readiness/Discovery:

The school is ready for the NEYAC accreditation site visit that will be held between February 28th and March 15th.

I. Technology: No Report

9. SECOND AUDIENCE/COMMUNICATIONS:

Barbara Walters asked if the same measures for families will be given to teachers regarding vacation plans with the changed February vacation. The Board consensus was that no one should be penalized for the short notice.

Sandy Dunnack expressed her pleasure with the Board stating they are who is receptive, patient and respectful.

10. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

- Final Approval of School Calendar
- Final Approval of Medical Policy
- Healthy Food Certificate
- Budget

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL AND/OR LEGAL MATTERS: None

12. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn (9:26 PM) was made by Stephanie Harrington, seconded by Annemarie Burnham and carried unanimously.

*Respectfully Submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Secretary*