

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee
Regular Meeting

Thursday, April 10, 2008

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Kittredge School, Hinsdale, MA on Thursday, April 10, 2008, was called to order by Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Goddard (7:20 p.m.), Gordon, Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts, Carroll-Lombardi.

Absent: Members Bantjes, Farley and Yates.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, Business Manager Margaret Balzotti, Recording Secretary Mary Jo Keiper, and Members of the Audience.

For the record, Chair Carroll-Lombardi does not vote unless noted.

ARTICLE 9417 RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

The Chair welcomed those in the audience. Member Harvey stepped away from the table and offered a resolution in support of the Chair, stating Mrs. Carroll-Lombardi has gone far above what is expected in contributing her time and that he stands behind and supports her as School Committee Chair.

ARTICLE 9418 STUDENT AFFAIRS

A. Wahconah Report - None

B. Recognition of Kittredge Students

Kittredge Principal David Kotowski welcomed everyone to his school. For many years the school has produced a spring play and this year's "Annie" was a fabulous musical. He introduced producer Michelle Pyser who noted this was her seventh year in the program. She introduced cast members Colette Basiliere, Rebecca Steele, Nicholas Juliano, Callie Higgins, Taylor Powers, Caitlyn Hookie, and Forrest McKnight, and credited the Kittredge PTO for their sponsorship as well as director Shannon Petersoli, Chris Hookie (lighting), Lily Juliano (choreograph and vocal coach) and others who had assisted with the 60-student production. Mr. Kotowski presented Mrs. Pyser with flowers.

ARTICLE 9419 SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 27, 2008

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

To accept the minutes of the regular meeting of March 27, 2008, as printed.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9420 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2008-38, in the total amount of \$702,836.75, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-38, dated April 3, 2008

PAYROLL

Operating Expenses	\$504,147.33
Craneville Homework Revolving	\$154.59
Becket Preschool Revolving	\$826.80
School Lunch	\$16,712.80
Federal Funds	<u>\$41,746.06</u>
Sub-total	\$563,587.58
FICA (Operating)	<u>\$6,292.65</u>
Total Payroll	\$569,880.23
Transfers (Deductions)	<u>\$132,956.52</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL & DEDUCTIONS	\$702,836.75

Ayes: Seven members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: Members Hopper, Morton, Welts.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2008-39, in the total amount of \$384,197.52, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-39, dated April 10, 2008

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Operating Expenses

Accounts Payable	\$308,468.31	
Insurance Payment	<u>\$985.16</u>	
		\$309,453.47
Transfers		\$161.32
Federal Funds		\$11,453.82
Circuit Breaker		\$47,828.21
School Lunch		\$4,708.28
Athletic Independent Games		\$700.00
Nessacus Student Activity Fund		\$1,800.00
Kittredge Library Revolving Fund		\$2,000.00
Literacy Learning Classroom Revolving Fund		\$123.04
Medicaid		\$3,015.81
WRHS Cross Country Revolving		\$500.00
WRHS Nordic Skiing Revolving		\$600.20
WRHS Boys' Basketball Revolving		\$1,040.00
WRHS Girls' Basketball Revolving		\$250.00
WRHS Hockey Revolving		\$154.00

CBRSD Gift Revolving Fund	<u>\$409.37</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$384,197.52

Ayes: Nine members.
Nays: None.
Abstention: Member Morton.
Motion carried unanimously.

B. Gifts and Contributions

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the following contribution: \$1,500 to the art department at Wahconah Regional High School, from Berkshire Bank and Berkshire Insurance Group.

The Chair thanked the donor for the gift.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9421 COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of the Chair

The Chair reminded the Committee she had emailed members regarding their attendance on April 24th. Since it appears there will be a quorum, the meeting will be held as scheduled.

The annual MASC Day on the Hill is scheduled at the Statehouse on April 29th. The Chair encouraged members to attend this really important event, as it presents a good opportunity to voice concerns to legislators.

The Chair thanked members L. Chivers, Henderson, Les and Yates for visiting the towns with her and central office administrators.

B. Annual Town Meeting Dates

Members were reminded of the annual town meeting dates. The following volunteered to attend:

Cummington – Amy Grallert	May 2, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Dalton – Laurie Chivers, Susan Carroll- Lombardi, and others	May 5, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Windsor – John Bantjes (in absentia)	May 5, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Becket – Dana Welts and John Les	May 10, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Washington – Mr. Yates will be asked	May 10, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Hinsdale – Alysa Goddard (in absentia) and David Morton	May 21, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Peru – Allan Gordon	June 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

For those meetings on the same evenings, the Superintendent will attend in Becket and Windsor; Assistant Superintendent Stankiewicz will attend in Dalton and Washington.

ARTICLE 9422 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Education

Member J. Chivers reported the subcommittee would have recommendations under New Business.

2. Finance

Member L. Chivers reported there had been no meeting. In response to a question from a member Business Manager Balzotti stated the district is waiting to hear on the increase in Chapter 70 funding.

3. Policy Review

a. Second Reading Policy Adoptions/Revisions

In Member Bantjes's absence, Member J. Chivers reported and made the following recommendations.

- 3100: Conduct of Teachers (Staff Conduct)

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading revisions to Policy 3100, Conduct of Teachers (Staff Conduct), as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

- 5760: Complaint Procedure for Alleged Discriminatory or (Harassing) Condition

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading revisions to Policy 5760, Complaint Procedure for Alleged Discriminatory or Harassing Condition, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

- 6515: Student-to-Student Harassment

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading adoption of Policy 6515, Student-to-Student Harassment, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

- 6740: Education for Pregnant Students

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading revisions to Policy 6740, Education for Pregnant Students, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Personnel

B. Others

1. Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee

Member Henderson reported the Study Committee is planning an open house on April 29th which will include a presentation and refreshments. A motion to approve bonding for the repairs and renovations will be made under New Business.

Member Goddard arrived.

2. GIC Committee

Member Welts reported the Committee will set another meeting when Joel Berrera can attend. (Mr. Berrera is a consultant to Massachusetts municipalities and school districts concerning the GIC and a recognized authority on the subject in the Commonwealth.) Southern Berkshire and Adams Cheshire districts may join Central Berkshire in researching the GIC.

3. School Health Advisory Committee – No report.

4. Ad Hoc Letter Writing Committee

Chair Carroll-Lombardi reported the legislative action letter writing committee had met. A letter has been drafted and will be reviewed and revised by the Committee at their next meeting.

ARTICLE 9423 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. District Report Card

This report has been delayed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

B. Recommendations

1. Proposed Special Services Secretarial Staff Reorganization, Effective July 1, 2008

Acting Special Services Director Connie West addressed the Committee regarding a proposed reorganization of the special services office staff. She reviewed the history of staffing in her office and

distributed a comparison between the current configuration and the proposed configuration, which includes a replacement of some secretarial hours with paraprofessional hours. The total number of staff hours will be reduced, leaving approximately \$13,000 per year for additional direct services to students. Member Goddard noted that special services are provided to district students aged 3 – 22.

Current Organization

Secretary to Administrator	40 hours/week (grant funded)
Secretary	24 hours/week (operating budget)
Secretary	35 hours/week (operating budget); 5 hours/week (grant funded)

Proposed Reorganization

Secretary to Administrator	40 hours/week (operating budget)
Secretary	19 hours/week (operating budget); 13 hours/week (grant funded)
Project Secretary	8 hours/week (grant funded)
Paraprofessional	19 hours/week (grant funded)

The reorganization results in a reduction in overall secretarial time of 24 hours/week (grant funded) and the addition of 19 hours for a district-wide paraprofessional who will perform a variety of duties.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the reduction of 24 hours/week secretarial time in the special services office, effective July 1, 2008, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Member L. Chivers asked that authorization for the paraprofessional hours (listed under New Business) be brought forward and included in the current motion. Member J. Chivers agreed to change his motion:

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the reduction of 24 hours/week secretarial time in the special services office, effective July 1, 2008, as recommended by the Superintendent and

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes an additional 19 hour/week district-wide paraprofessional position for the special services department, effective July 1, 2008, as requested by the Acting Director of Special Services, and recommended by the Superintendent.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent Harlan thanked Mrs. West for her presentation.

C. Other – None.

ARTICLE 9424 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent's Review of Personnel Changes

Superintendent Harlan introduced Diane Koch, who has been appointed Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, effective November 24, 2008. Mrs. Koch has resigned her current position of Secretary to the Wahconah Principal, also effective November 24, 2008. The Committee welcomed Mrs. Koch.

ARTICLE 9425 OLD BUSINESS

A. Executive Session (Strategy Regarding Negotiations)

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To move Old Business to the end of the meeting.

Ayes: Eleven members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously

ARTICLE 9426 NEW BUSINESS

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the addition of new business to the agenda.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Member J. Chivers asked that the Committee consider approval of a field trip under New Business.

A. Approval of Overnight Field Trip – Girls' Track Team Members

MOVE BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARVEY

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves an overnight field trip on May 9 and 10, 2008 for qualified members of the girls' track team to participate in the state track meet, as recommended by the Education Subcommittee.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. School Calendar Approval – 2008-09

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER GORDON

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the 2008-09 school year calendar, as presented, with the addition of Good Friday as a school day (attached to the official minutes) and recommended by the Education Subcommittee.

Superintendent Harlan and Assistant Superintendent Stankiewicz had recommended school not be in session on Good Friday; the subcommittee replaced it as a school day. The highest absences on Good Friday this year were at the high school, Nessacus experienced fewer absences and the elementary schools had fewer absences yet. The following points were made regarding Good Friday: only one other county district goes to school on Good Friday; each year the absences will diminish; parents don't get the day off, necessitating day care for those whose parents work. Regarding the two full weeks of holiday vacation, it is expected the district will realize energy savings.

Ayes: Nine members.
Nays: Members Henderson and Welts.
Motion carried.

C. School Choice Openings

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the school choice openings for the 2008-09 school year as shown on the projection (attached to the official minutes) and recommended by the Superintendent.

The optimum elementary population on the projection is 18 students/class in grades K-2 and 22 students/class in grades 3-5. Incoming students produce about \$5,000 per regular day student and \$5,000 plus stipend based on disability for a special needs student. School choice students are accepted through graduation. Member J. Chivers expressed concern regarding classes that show high openings, when the loss of a few students might allow one less classroom.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: Member J. Chivers.
Motion carried.

D. Wahconah Bond Vote

WHEREAS, the Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee has recommended borrowing \$1,437,000 for repair, equipping and furnishing of renovations to Wahconah Regional High School; it was

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the sum of \$1,437,000 is appropriated for the repair, equipping and furnishing of renovations to Wahconah Regional High School and that the appropriation be raised by incurring debt by the issuance of bonds or notes under Section 16 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws as amended and

That within seven days of the date hereof, the District Secretary be and is hereby instructed to notify in writing the Select Boards of each of the member Towns of the District as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized, as required by Chapter 71, Section 16(d) of the General Laws.

Member L. Chivers encouraged support of the bonding, noting a recognized building committee will be established. Member Hopper asked about the effect of grant money for the science lab; Member Henderson stated the amount can be revised as the bonding authority allows borrowing up to the approved amount. It was also noted that the vote must pass in all seven towns and the total amount includes the revised cost of the skylights. Member Henderson reported the study committee will have informational meetings in each of the seven towns prior to their annual town meetings. The Wahconah SAC has been recruited to get the word out.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

E. Authorization for Treasurer to Apply for State Qualification of Bonds

MOVED BY MEMBER HOPPER, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the District Treasurer is authorized to file an application with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Municipal Finance Oversight Board to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any and all bonds or notes of the District authorized by this vote or pursuant to any prior vote of the District, and to provide such information and execute such documents as the Municipal Finance Oversight Board of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts may require.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

F. Authorization for Additional Paraprofessional, Special Services

Taken up under Superintendent's Recommendations as part of another motion.

G. Vote of Confidence

MOVED BY MEMBER HARVEY, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That School Committee members vote their confidence in School Committee Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi.

It was noted that Committee members have been trained to not respond to members of the audience at the time their comments are made. It was also pointed out that most constituents agree that Mrs. Carroll-Lombardi is doing a good job.

MOVED BY MEMBER WELTS, SECONDED BY MEMBER GODDARD

To amend the motion to include Superintendent Donna Harlan.

Vote on the amendment

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vote on the amended motion

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9427 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

A. School Visitations

School Committee members were reminded to contact principals to arrange visits to the schools during the month of April.

Member Hopper reported another successful March mini-course season at Craneville as well as an amazing simple machine fair.

Member Henderson distributed a response from Representative Guyer to a discussion she had had with him. The packet included questions from Representative Guyer and research she had pulled together on another school district. The Chair and other members expressed concern that Mrs. Henderson's activities

may be considered representative of the entire Committee. The Chair will refer the questions raised by Mr. Guyer to appropriate subcommittees. Superintendent Harlan suggested that all of Mr. Guyer's questions have already been addressed. The Representative and other local legislators will be invited to the May 22nd School Committee meeting.

Member L. Chivers reported the Wahconah production of "Oklahoma" was fabulous.

Member Hopper congratulated former school committee member Jake Eberwein on his appointment as Pittsfield's Superintendent.

Member Grallert encouraged members to attend the Day on the Hill. It is a good opportunity to speak with our legislators.

ARTICLE 9425 OLD BUSINESS

A. Executive Session (Strategy Regarding Negotiations)

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. LES

To go into executive session at 8:07 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B, paragraph 3, "to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining..."

The Chair stated the Committee would reconvene in open session following the executive session for the purpose of adjournment.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Goddard, Gordon, Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts, Carroll-Lombardi.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Member Les left the meeting during executive session.

The Committee came out of executive session at 9:30 p.m.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To adjourn the meeting at 9:31 p.m.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.