

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee  
Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 11, 2008

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Nessacus Regional Middle School, Dalton, MA, on Thursday, September 11, 2008, was called to order by Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley (7:06 p.m.), Goddard, Gordon, Grallert, Harvey (7:06 p.m.), Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Yates (7:06 p.m.), and Carroll-Lombardi.

Absent: Member Welts.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, Business Manager Marge Foster, CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling, Recording Secretary Mary Jo Keiper, and Members of the Audience.

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

Chair Carroll-Lombardi asked for a moment of silence to remember the victims of September 11, 2001. Members Farley, Harvey, and Yates took their seats following the moment of silence.

The Chair asked that a member make a motion to move Article 3508, C., Summer Program Speakers, to the beginning of the meeting.

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

*To move Article 9508, C., Summer Program Speakers, to the beginning of the meeting.*

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Superintendent introduced Special Services Director Connie West, who introduced Wahconah student Ruth Kirchner (Credit Recovery Camp), Wahconah senior/graduate Paige Emerson (Project Jumpstart), Craneville student Dominic Annand (Terrific Trees Camp), Wahconah student Teresa Lemon (Preschool Camp volunteer), and Craneville kindergartener Donovan Keegan (CRA Partnership Camp). Each of these students described his/her experience during the summer. Mrs. West thanked the Committee for inviting the students and Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked the kids for sharing their summer camp experiences.

ARTICLE 9507      RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE – None.

ARTICLE 9508      STUDENT AFFAIRS

A.                Wahconah Report – None.

B.                Opening Day Speeches by Seniors Andrew Klem and Kathryn Reed

The students were introduced by Principal James Conro and presented the speeches they had given to staff on opening day. Mr. Klem talked about his special fourth grade teacher who had made a tremendous

difference in his education. Mrs. Furlong helped him to build the foundation that grew stronger with each grade level. Kathryn Reed described her journey through the grades at Central Berkshire, stating she should send a thank you note to every one of her teachers. She thanked the Committee for maintaining the high level of excellence that is a tradition in this school district. Miss Reed also commented on the revamping of the Wahconah facility.

C. Summer Program Speakers: Casey Evangelisto, Xander Tuck, Domenic Annand, Paige Emerson, Teresa Lemon, and Donovan Keegan

Taken up earlier.

ARTICLE 9509 SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of August 28, 2008

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

*To accept the minutes of the regular meeting of August 28, 2008.*

Ayes: Eleven members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: Members Bantjes and Les.

Motion carried.

ARTICLE 9510 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

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

*To approve Warrant No. 2009-10, in the total amount of \$1,080,941.69, as printed.*

Warrant No. 2009-10, dated September 11, 2008

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Operating Expenses

Accounts Payable	\$324,993.09	
Insurance Payment	<u>\$316,612.49</u>	
		\$641,605.58
Transfers		\$74,785.64
Federal Funds		\$28,283.50
School Lunch		\$7,797.66
Summer Drama		\$171.63
WRHS Student Fees Revolving		\$192.00
Literacy Learning Revolving		\$61.12
WRHS Girls' Soccer Revolving		\$15.97
WRHS Football Revolving		\$504.40
Berkshire Trail Pre-school		\$3,358.44
NRMS Vending Revolving		\$806.00
Berkshire Trail Capital		\$90,971.25
Nessacus Capital		\$222,381.25
Wahconah Capital		\$2,300.00

Short Term Bond Capital	\$1,738.00
Kittredge Capital	\$5,506.20
WRHS Renovation	<u>\$463.05</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$1,080,941.69

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

*To approve Warrant No. 2009-9A, Payroll, dated September 11, 2008, in the total amount of \$164.40.*

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Abstention: Member Hopper.

Motion carried.

B. Gifts and Contributions

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

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the following gifts and contributions to the William Manning Scholarship, as recommended by the district treasurer:*

*\$50.00 from William and Elizabeth Roberts, in memory of Marion Manning*

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9511 COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair announced the attendance of two guests, Glenn Koocher of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and State Representative Denis Guyer, both very busy men. She stated the Committee appreciated their taking the time to be there.

A. Glenn Koocher, Executive Director MASC

MASC executive director Glenn Koocher spoke about the restructuring of the Department of Education under the direction of the new Governor and his "Readiness Project" for education. Mr. Koocher stated restructuring, regionalization and consolidation would be encouraged by the new leadership, noting only two exceptions have been granted: the divorcing of Plymouth/Carver and the restructuring of the superintendency unions in Northern Berkshire. The following points were made by Mr. Koocher: savings come from closing schools and sharing resources; consolidation puts demands on staff; there are various models of regions, many of which maintain independent school committees that share one superintendent; it is unlikely the DOE would support a de-regionalization. Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked Mr. Koocher for his concise overview.

B. GIC Report

Member L. Chivers reported the finance subcommittee heard a report from the GIC committee at its last meeting. Finance subcommittee has lots of concerns and questions about the GIC, including how far the

Committee can go without adopting Section 19. The subcommittee did not feel it ready to make a decision and, although the deadline is very close, the GIC committee will continue to meet.

C. Representative Denis Guyer

The Representative stated he is in the GIC and believes it to be a very good plan. He thanked the Committee for inviting him, stating he was happy to be in attendance.

Representative Guyer reported on recent legislative accomplishments: \$300 million has been added to Chapter 70 funding; Circuit Breaker is fully funded; “pothole funding has been restored; regional transportation reimbursement to Central Berkshire has increased by \$350, 000 to \$375,000; early education funding has been expanded and health care has been reformed; per pupil spending has increased by \$1,000/pupil. Mr. Guyer talked about various issues impacting those districts experiencing reduced enrollments and bills he and others have proposed to adjust the formulas to benefit those districts. He also stated it is difficult to communicate the geographical problems of Western Mass. and Cape Cod to those legislators from Boston and other urban areas. Representative Guyer offered to meet on a regular basis with one or two members of the Committee and to bring the district’s concerns back to Boston.

A discussion period followed. Subjects included the mandates of the state and federal governments and their lack of funding and the GIC as it regards collective bargaining and the need to adopt Chapter 32B, section 19.

The Chair thanked Representative Guyer for his efforts on behalf of the district and for his assistance with the legislation that will allow the Wahconah project to go forward. Mr. Guyer cautioned the Committee that the proposed legislation is likely to take several months for passage. He encouraged the District to stay in touch with MASC and MARS and to choose two members to act as legislative liaisons to meet with him.

The Committee took a ten-minute recess.

D. Report of the Chair

Chair Carroll-Lombardi announced a special School Committee retreat and planning session she would like to set for October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Only one member was uncertain that he could attend; therefore the planning session will be held on October 2, 2008, 7:00 p.m., at the Sugar Hill Assisted Care facility.

Mrs. Carroll-Lombardi distributed and briefly reviewed several handouts. Members Henderson and Les, along with Superintendent Harlan and the Chair will attend a meeting at the Omni Parker House on September 24<sup>th</sup>; a rally to support the defeat of ballot Question 1 will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at Park Square in Pittsfield; MASC has asked for a forum to hear requests to change the Chapter 70 formula.

E. Delegates – MASC/MASS Joint Conference

The selection of delegates will be brought back to the Committee on the September 25<sup>th</sup> agenda.

ARTICLE 9512 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Education

Member J. Chivers reported the subcommittee had met and reviewed the District Improvement Plan and the CPR (Coordinated Program Review) and the corrective action plan. Special Services Director Connie West presented to the subcommittee a breakdown. He noted Mrs. West has done a great job and that it has required more administrative time. She is currently working on a financial plan for next year. The subcommittee hopes to meet regularly on the first Thursday of each month, except for October.

## 2. Finance

Member L. Chivers reported the subcommittee had a long meeting on September 8<sup>th</sup>. They heard the report of the GIC committee.

Superintendent Harlan reported that on August 22<sup>nd</sup> the district learned the ballot question for funding was incorrectly worded in the Dalton warrant article. Dalton and district administrators talked with bond counsel to find a remedy. Dalton's language and posting process invalidated the approval of the project, since approval by all seven towns was required. The district could go back to the towns for a revote, risking defeat of a Proposition 2 ½ override in Dalton, or ask Representative Gayer and Senator Downing to file a home rule petition. The bill has been filed; however, expenses incurred so far become the liability of the school district. The Committee discussed the problem and how it occurred.

Finance Subcommittee also reviewed the Superintendent's District Improvement Plan as well as numerous informational items regarding the budget, student activity funds report, snowplowing bid, HVAC bid, and energy savings. A meeting of the seven town advisory committee will be posted for October 16<sup>th</sup>.

## 3. Policy Review

### a. Second Reading Revisions to Policy 5705: Eligibility for Co-Curricular Activities 1

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading revisions to Policy 5705: Eligibility for Co-Curricular Activities, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.*

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 4. Personnel

The subcommittee will meet on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Central Office.

### B. Others

#### 1. Wahconah Building Committee

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER FARLEY

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the Wahconah science lab project proposal of Barry Architects, Inc., dated August 28, 2008 and amended by the building committee, September 2, 2008, subject to the posting of the appropriate performance bond and at a cost not to exceed \$9,000, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee and subject to funding.*

Mr. Barry has signed a preliminary contract subject to funding. SABIC needs this before the volunteer work can be done. Member Harvey stated if the Committee votes the above motion, SABIC can go forward.

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9513 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Open House Schedules

Superintendent Harlan read the following open house schedules.

- Becket Washington School, Thursday, September 18, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Kittredge School, Thursday, September 18, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Craneville School, Thursday, September 18, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Berkshire Trail Elementary School, Thursday, September 18, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Nessacus Regional Middle School, Wednesday, September 17, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- Wahconah Regional High School will hold parent teacher conferences in November and again in March 2009.
- Note: All schools will hold parent teacher conferences on the afternoon of November 20<sup>th</sup> and one evening during that week.

2. Opening Day Attendance

The September 2, 2008 opening day attendance figures were presented, along with opening day figures from 2007 and the official October 1, 2007 enrollments by school. In response to a question regarding the 29 preschoolers in Becket Washington last year versus the 13 kindergarteners at Becket Washington this year, the Superintendent stated those preschoolers had gone to their home schools for kindergarten.

B. Recommendations – None.

C. Other – None.

ARTICLE 9514 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent's Review of Personnel Changes

The following personnel changes were noted; all salaries are set in accordance with existing contracts.

- Karin Prouty, half-time elementary music teacher, initially appointed August 30, 2007, has resigned effective September 1, 2008.
- Barbara Hutchinson has been appointed special education teacher at Wahconah Regional High School, effective August 28, 2008, at step D-12.
- Patricia Conroy-Shepley has been appointed full-time grade 2 teacher at Craneville School, effective August 28, 2008. Ms. Conroy-Shepley was half-time grade 2 teacher at Craneville in 2007-08.
- Mary Shea has been appointed math/social studies resource room teacher and special education grade 8 liaison at Nessacus Regional Middle School, effective August 28, 2008, at step B-1.
- Timothy Webb has been appointed custodian at Craneville School (second shift, 3:00 – 11:30 p.m.) effective September 2, 2008. Mr. Webb has been a custodian at Wahconah Regional High School.

- Arthur Mottor has been appointed custodian at Kittredge and Becket Washington Schools (second shift, 3:00 – 11:30 p.m.), effective September 4, 2008. Mr. Mottor has been a custodian at Kittredge and Craneville Schools.
- Robert Sacchetti has been appointed custodian at Wahconah Regional High School (second shift, 3:00 – 11:30 p.m.), effective September 4, 2008. Mr. Sacchetti has been a custodian at Becket Washington School.
- Timothy Dowling has been appointed paraprofessional at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, 3 hours/day, effective August 28, 2008.
- Kimberly Tuck has been appointed paraprofessional (preschool) at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, 3.8 hours/day, effective August 28, 2008.
- Nicole Laurel has been appointed paraprofessional (preschool) at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, 3.8 hours/day, effective August 28, 2008.
- Ctaci Jones has been appointed paraprofessional at Nessacus Regional Middle School, 3.8 hours/day (Title I grant funded), effective August 28, 2008.

ARTICLE 9515 OLD BUSINESS

A. Flag Display

Assistant Superintendent Stankiewicz reported the job description for custodian includes the responsibility of raising and lowering the flag. All principals have been instructed to observe flag etiquette.

B. Dogs on School Property

Mr. Stankiewicz reported a Dalton bylaw covers length of leash and restrictions from private property and/or public ways. The Superintendent will check on posting of signs on school properties as well.

ARTICLE 9516 NEW BUSINESS

ARTICLE 9517 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

*To adjourn the meeting at 9:59 p.m.*

Ayes: Thirteen members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.