LISBON BOARD OF EDUCATION MARCH 16, 2016

LISBON REGIONAL SCHOOL 5:00 PM

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Bob Adams, members Rob Bruce, Rochelle Cacio, Scott Champagne (arrived at 5:30) Owen Clark, Beth Hubbard, Jane King, Steve Sherry, Principal Jackie Daniels, Dean of Students Ben Jellison, Superintendent Pierre Couture, Business Administrator Tina Peabody

Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Karen Bronson presented the Board with a letter she wrote to Principal Daniels with concerns she has about the present academic standards and grading system. She told the Board she was only speaking on her son’s behalf and was not representing the other parents in attendance tonight. She is concerned with the impact the changes have made on her son and feels the education he is receiving has suffered. Her son describes his education as flat, uninteresting, lots of waiting time, dumbed down, learning has slowed down, no one can fail, no one can excel. He is at the point that he wants to be home schooled.

Karen asked who made the decision to implement Common Core Standards at Lisbon.

Pierre explained that Common Core Standards have been developed over many years and have been in place for 4-5 years. It is an initiative that details what K–12 students should know in Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of each grade. The logic behind it is to ratchet up learning and make students better prepared to succeed in college, career, and life. We have NH standards for all the other subjects we teach.

Karen asked what this means when you put it in practice. Pierre said the local educators came up with the curriculum and teachers have the freedom to meet the standards.

Richard Jesseman said his kids are bored and less motivated since we have changed to competencies.

He asked the Board how we are measuring competencies.

Mark Deem said he has done some research and other schools that have competency based curriculums do not grade on habits of learning. He told the Board that VLACS (Virtual Learning Academy Charter School) does not have habits of learning. Mark said his son was on the Principal’s List but since Lisbon changed their system, he is no longer on the list. He is at the point that he would rather his son take all VLACS classes than attend school in Lisbon. Mark thinks it is very important to have a GPA for getting into college.

Pierre thanked those in attendance for voicing their concerns. Jackie said they are meeting and talking about making changes to the grading system next year. Public input will be considered.

Rick asked how they know class rankings and thinks that class rankings may affect other things after high school. He said his kids are not being challenged. The competencies seem to work better for kids that struggle. This is the frustration his kids share with them. Rick said this is a question he asked the Board prior to the implementation of the competencies, will the kids at the high end of the spectrum be challenged?

Karen said if we don’t come up with something in content and competencies our brightest and best students won’t get into the college of their choice.

Kelly Jesseman said she wants to move her kids out of the school. Her son has stopped caring because he is so frustrated. She said all of us here love the school but it’s not working for our children.

Owen told those in attendance that he has kids in school and he has frustrations, too. He let the public know that their comments haven’t been taken lightly. There have been discussions about everyone’s concerns.

Rick’s kids have no incentive to raise their grades when they see a 4. It is unclear to them how they get from a 4 to a 5.

Mr. Lambert said that Mr. Superchi seems to have a good handle on using a rubric. Mr. Superchi explains what is expected, he is more comprehensive on habits of learning, and he makes things clear to the students. Student, Sydney Lambert said he gives them feedback and it gives the student an understanding of his expectations. After talking to Mr. Superchi, she knows what she has to work on to bring her grade up.

Principal Daniels agreed that if the student self-judged and then had teacher input, it would make the habits less subjective.

Rick said teachers are spending more time on kids that are struggling than on the high achievers. It also seems to him that teachers are not covering as much subject matter because we are giving students 3-5 shots to pass the competency.

Karen is very frustrated said they don’t have time to wait and figure this out.

Pierre said they are working toward having something to present to parents later this spring.

Owen told parents they don’t want any of their children to leave. The Administration and Board will be looking into all of the concerns because this is a big deal.

The public left at 5:50 PM and the Board continued to discuss their concerns.

MOTION BY OWEN CLARK, SECONDED BY ROB BRUCE TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2016 MEETING AS WRITTEN. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

FINANCIAL:

Bills were circulated for approval.

Tina distributed school lunch reports and deficit/surplus statements and said the food program is going in the right direction.

Adequacy aid has been adjusted on the statement to the amount we received in December. This reduced the surplus but we are still in good shape. Expenditures were also adjusted and Scott said a majority of savings came from regular education, special education, and guidance salaries. He thinks the estimated year-end balance is accurate.

In the past, the town has been billed from July – December on the previous year’s budget. Going forward Tina will make adjustments in December.

The Bank of NH is no longer doing ACH credit transfers for payroll. Woodsville Guaranty Bank has agreed to take this on and will not charge the district a fee for the service. The change will begin in mid-April. Tina said we are paying a lot of fees on our WGSB accounts. WGSB will be looking at our accounts to see what they can do to help reduce the fees.

The auditors would like us to adopt three policies: Investment, Fund Balances, and Student Activities Fund Management. Tina gave the Committee samples of these policies written by the NHSBA. The Committee will review and present policies to the Board at their next meeting.

Board members received their stipends.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:

Chris requested a new vacuum cleaner, leaf blower, and floor scrubber. The Committee gave him the approval to purchase.

Eleven batteries were replaced in the emergency lights ($125.00).

The asbestos inspection was performed on March 4. There were no issues.

The boilers were cleaned on February 25th.

Fire suppression testing was performed in the kitchen on February 24.

Chris noted that they found ants in the kitchen. He contacted a pest control service to take care of the problem. The cost is $395.00 which includes a follow up visit.

The grease trap in the kitchen was cleaned over February break and the floor drain was also flushed.

Trim boards around the new entry doors were painted and the carpets were fixed in that area.

There was a roof leak above the mechanical room. Chris found a crack in the membrane. He caulked the crack and it seems to be fixed.

BUDGET:

No report

POLICY HANDBOOK:

No report

EXECUTIVE BOARD:  
No report

NEGOTIATIONS (PROFESSIONAL STAFF):

No report

NEGOTIATIONS (SUPPORT STAFF):

No report

STEERING COMMITTEE:  
No report

TRANSPORTATION:  
No report

TECHNOLOGY:

Ben is in the process of negotiating a connectivity agreement for next year. He is talking to several vendors.

BROWN FUND:

No report

LISBON EDUCATION FOUNDATION:

The next meeting is scheduled on March 23 at 5:15 PM.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT:

Jackie distributed results of the Café Services survey. There were 49 responses and overall they were very positive.

The Grading Committee has met and will continue to meet to look at the new grading system.

Ben reported on discipline and said that overall things are going well. A report was distributed showing the types of infractions, teacher actions, and grade levels. Ben said the report has more information than the previous time they discussed discipline.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Pierre said the Clerk will open the Annual Meeting since the district doesn’t have a Moderator. The Clerk will read the first two articles and then close the meeting to count the votes for Moderator only. After the vote count, the new Moderator will take over the meeting.

Pierre nominated the following people for spring coaching positions:

Middle School Baseball Zach Hawkins

Middle School Softball Leslie Poore

Varsity Baseball Jeremy Aldrich

Varsity Softball Arthur Boutin

JV Softball (if needed) Gregory Superchi

MOTION BY OWEN CLARK, SECONDED BY STEVE SHERRY TO APPROVE THE SPRING COACHING NOMINATIONS SUPERINTENDENT COUTURE PRESENTED. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

Pierre asked the Board if they wanted to continue their membership with North Country Educational Services. NCES provides professional development and educational services. They also offer contracted services such as OT and PT at a reduced cost to their full time members. At this time, Lisbon doesn’t use their contracted services and purchases an associate membership. NCES allows schools to change their status at any time. The 2016-2017 associate membership rate is $9.17/ student for a total of $3087.12.

MOTION BY OWEN CLARK, SECONDED BY SCOTT CHAMPAGNE TO PURCHASE A 2016-2017 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP TO NCES FOR A COST OF $3087.12. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

Pierre discussed the Secretary’s holiday pay with the Board. He feels she should get paid for the same holidays as the paras receive while school is in session.

MOTION BY OWEN CLARK, SECONDED BY ROB BRUCE TO GIVE OUR SECRETARY THE SAME HOLIDAYS AS THE PARAPROFESSIONALS WHEN SCHOOL IS IN SESSION. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

Pierre said they are holding a Professional Development day on March 18 for the five schools in our Supervisory Union. The topic is performance assessment and speaker Karin Hess will work with teachers on how to assess competencies. There will be two, half day sessions and the groups will be divided by elementary teachers (morning) and middle school/high school teachers (afternoon).

There being no further business to come before the Board, MOTION BY SCOTT CHAMPAGNE, SECONDED BY STEVE SHERRY TO ADJOURN AT 6:45 PM. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Derosia

Clerk