

Superintendent – Thomas W. Abraham  
Elementary Principal – Bethellen Mannix  
High School Principal – Andrew Cook

*HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*  
**Hartford, New York**

Minutes of Regular Board of Education Meeting October 15, 2012

**Board Members Present** – Mr. Brian Getty, President Mrs. Janine Thomas, Vice-President, Mr. Philip Jessen and Mr. Adam Fish

**Board Members Absent** – Mrs. Beth Steves

**Guests** – Ron Smith, Mr. Keeley, Russell Wade, Dana Haff, Candy Combs, Sean Farley, Beth Cook, Gwynne Cosh, M. Hemsing, T. Stewart, J. Lourie and Jamie Thomas reporter from the Sentinel.

**1.0 Call to Order and Pledge** – Mr. Getty, Board of Education President

**2.0 Prayer** – Mrs. Thomas

**3.0 Welcome** – Mr. Getty

**3.1 Public to be Heard**

**4.0 Review and Approval of Minutes**

**\*4.1 Minutes from the September 17, 2012 Regular Board of Education Meeting** – The Board of Education approved the minutes from the September 17, 2012 meeting. Motion made by Mrs. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Jessen. Approved 4-0

**4.2 Revision to August Board of Education Meeting Minutes** – There was an error in the Item 6.2 Minutes of the meeting. The original report and the minutes indicate the ELA Results for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade were reported as 88% of students at proficiency and Math at 69% proficiency. The actual results for Grade 5 were 92% proficiency at ELA and 88% for math. – The Board of Education authorized the changes to the August meeting to reflect the accurate ELA and Math proficiency levels. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

**5.0 Review and Approval of Financial Reports**

**\*5.1 Treasurer's Report**

**\*5.2 Warrants**

**\*5.3 Cafeteria Report** – The Board of Education approved the financial reports. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

Mr. Dana Haff asked if some of the Building Project monies could be used for the fields. When the land was purchased, with the Building Project in mind, for possible playing fields for the school, maybe some of the monies could be directed to the Field Project. Mr. Abraham said that he would look into it and also contact someone to see if something like that could be done.

**6.0 Superintendent's Report**

**\*6.1 Memo from New York State Public High Schools Athletic Association** – The NYSPHSAA memo is a summary of the Fact Finder's Report on the contract for officials. I believe the increases in annual stipends and increased mileage being recommended by the fact finder to be out of touch with the reality facing schools as they reduce sports offerings and the number of games for teams. I directed the AD to vote no on the report.

**6.2 Discussion on Supervisors' Reports** – There has been some thought given to having Department Supervisors giving brief reports to the board at our regular board meetings. The supervisors would rotate on a regularly scheduled schedule (e.g. transportation one month, cafeteria the next, custodians the next and then rotating back to transportation). I believe such reports would allow the board to ask questions of each of the supervisors and eliminate the need for the superintendent, business official, etc with having to get back to the board with answers for questions asked at the board meeting. All were in agreement with this reporting starting next month.

**6.3 Follow-up on Minnowbrook Conference and Meetings** – From September 30<sup>th</sup> through October 2<sup>nd</sup> I was involved in regional, state and local meetings on current educational issues. Based on the discussions at the meetings, I can report there are a lot of changes coming; questions that can't be answered and issues that either can't or won't be addressed. Some of the more relevant issues for the classroom revolve around a change in Global Studies and a replacement of IEP Diplomas.

Regarding Global Studies, Regent Dawson indicated the Board of Regents now realizes the two-year course culminating in a regent exam is the chief reason for students not graduating with a Regent Diploma. The data has been around for approximately thirty years, but the BOR is just now coming to the conclusion the two year course of study was a mistake. In place of the current course, there will be two courses. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade course is intended to be a foundations course (exactly what that means could not be explained). The 10<sup>th</sup> year course will concentrate on an analytical examination of current global issues. The 10<sup>th</sup> year course will culminate with a state regent exam. The BOR is not sure what kind of culminating event will occur with the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade course, though they believe it will be an exam, but maybe not a regent exam or it could be a regent exam, but the BOR does not want to mandate a sixth test.

They are also not clear on how to deal with students who have failed the Global Regent Exam for one or two years. Even with the uncertainty of what to do with these students and the lack of a curriculum or guide for either course (still to be developed), the BOR are targeting September 2013 for the rollout of the new courses.

Regarding the new diploma for Students With Disabilities, the diploma will require more rigor in coursework and include a CTE component to insure students will be career ready when leaving school. When asked whether the new diploma will eliminate students in the program from being counted as dropouts as the current IEP Diplomas does, the response was no, students will still be counted against the graduation rate – ***MAKES NO SENSE!*** Oh and while the department has not drawn up the requirements yet regarding this diploma it is expected to impact students entering 9<sup>th</sup> Grade this coming September.

State Aid was also discussed. The Regent that was present for the meetings acknowledged that the majority of the BOR members do not understand the concept behind Foundation Aid, but are beginning to understand the way in which Foundation Aid is calculated benefits wealthy schools and is hurting small rural schools. Whether there will be any attempt to push for reform remains a question.

State aid is supposed to increase by \$712 million this year, however, it has not been determined how much of that will go to competitive grants and how the amount will be divided up among schools. There is also the looming problem of a revenue shortfall in the state which now sits at approximately \$230 million and the deficit for the state is approaching \$4 billion. When those two factors are reviewed it is questionable whether the state can come up with the additional aid.

The last item discussed was 2014 Regent Exams going on-line for on-demand use. Regent Dawson acknowledges there will be issues with Districts having the hardware capacity required for students taking the exams, no answer on how the capacity issue will be addressed; security concerns were raised, the regent acknowledged there are concerns, but not sure how they will be addressed and finally the state education departments infrastructure has been unable to deal with 640 schools sending information to the data warehouse, how will the infrastructure hold up when thousands of students go on-line to take the tests? Again the answer was there is that concern, and it is being reviewed.

**\*6.4 Informational Packet** – As always there are several items in your packet for review.

**Item #1 – Memo on Section II becoming Section 2** – The section is undergoing a name change to limit potential damages from an on-going investigation. The big issue appears to be the Section has not paid taxes to the IRS or State of New York since 1978. Mr. Abraham said that after talking to the school lawyer, he was not sure if the District should pay our dues to Section 2. Section 2 said that if we did not then our athletes could not play in Section 2. After a discussion as to whether the District should or should not pay the dues to Section 2. Mrs. Thomas voiced that she did not want the athletes to suffer because of the investigation.

**Item #2 – Letter Regarding Game Forfeits**

**Item #3 – Response to Draft Audit Report** – On Tuesday September 18<sup>th</sup>, auditors from the State Comptroller's Office met with Mrs. Searles, the Superintendent and Mr. Fish (representing the board). The auditors reviewed the draft audit report on the district, which found NO wrong doing, but did suggest one change in one particular procedure. A copy of the response is included in your packet for your review. **Neither the Draft Report nor the response can be made public until the final report is issued.**

**Item #4 – Commissioner's Decisions** – Of the thirteen decisions handed down, only one was sustained.

**Item #5 – Estimates on Well Work**

**Item #6 – Comptroller's Newsletter (2)**

**Item #7 - Law Bulletin**

**Item #8 - Legal Notes for Education**

**Item #9 – Memos from the State Education Department Regarding BOR Actions** – There are a number of initiatives being taken by the Board of Regents that are covered in the memos I have included in your packet. The most important may be the departments attempt to re-implement safety nets for SWD.

**Item #10 – Announcement on Voting Machines** – As the board is aware, Senator Little worked diligently on extending the current exemption for school district regarding the use of electronic voting machines. As you can see from the enclosed announcement, the Governor has signed an extension of the exemption. The extension exempts school districts until December 31, 2014 or two district voting cycles.

**Item #11 – Graduation Rate Data** – The State Education Department has released comparison data for the Classes of 2011 and 2012. As you can see from the enclosed data sheet, our graduation rate increased significantly and exceeds the state average. I want to caution about the graduation rates because they are based on computations from the state. The state calculates students with IEP Diplomas or GED's as non-graduates or dropouts. Therefore, the graduation rate of 87.9% excludes those students that received an IEP Diploma or GED certificate.

**Item #12 – A Push For Mandate Relief** – This news article clearly lays out what is facing most rural schools in the next two to three years if the Governor fails to institute mandate relief.

**Item #13 Adirondack Area School Boards Meeting** – The next meeting of the AASBA is November 7<sup>th</sup>. Dinner selections and the featured speaker are indicated on the announcement.

## **6.5 Board of Education Questions, Comments, and/or Concerns**

### **7.0 Principals' Reports**

**7.1 Elementary Report** – Mrs. Mannix – School Supplies Thank You to Retired Teachers, Community Action Angels, Verizon, Community Members. Open House - 83% overall attendance grades Pre-K-5, Grade 4 format and folder handout. Mike MacDougall also handed out a packet on Common Core Standards and the shift for students. Hartford Fire Department - October 12<sup>th</sup> volunteers for fire prevention presentation: Sean Goodell, Harrison Cornell, Michelle Morrow, and Chuck Abbott. Elementary will be making a donation to the fire department. Student Recognition Chronicle Entries: Nicholas Mattison (Grade 5); Alexis Sesselman (Grade 4). Crandall Public Library summer reading program participants: Isha Rane, Grace and Nicholas Barber, Abby and Alex Holcomb, Thomas MacDuff, William Bartos. Classroom News: Janet Rock – free fluoride rinse program in grades 1-5; 110 out of 165 students are enrolled in program. Jenn Lawrence – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade science kit- hands on experiences learning about the properties of clay, humus and sand. Erin Curran, graduate student at St. Rose, visited a grade Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 4 and 5 classroom on October 11<sup>th</sup> as part of her course requirement (Janine Thomas pointed her in our direction!) Upcoming

Events: Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>: PTA Halloween Party 2:30-4:00; October 23-31: Red Ribbon Week; Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>: K-1 Bus Safety; Tuesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>: 4-5 Bus Safety; Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>: Grade 1 Pumpkin Decorating after school with Tricia Stewart; Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>: 2-3 Bus Safety; Wednesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>: Citizens' Assembly and Sing-a-long starting at 8:45; Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>: Tanager Pride Party grades 3-5; Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>: Tanager Pride Party grades K-2; Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>: Emergency Release Day (dismissal 15 minutes early); Monday, November 12<sup>th</sup>: No School; November 12-16: National Young Readers Week; Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>: PTA Meeting at 5:00; Turkey Trot - date TBD; Half Days: 11/15, 11/19 (evening conference), 11/20; Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>: Harvest Fest

**7.2 Secondary Report** – Mr. Cook - I seem to say this every month, but this month has been an extremely busy month for the Middle/High School: 5-week progress grades were mailed home last week. Our Open House was on October 4<sup>th</sup>. For the past couple of years we have not been following the traditional period-by-period schedule and have received positive feedback from our parents/guardians and faculty. The Senior Class held their annual car-show on October 7<sup>th</sup>. My son's favorite car was the blue mini-van we parked next to. SchoolTool Parent Portal: Mrs. Shaw and I (more her than I) have been working extremely hard in setting up our parent portal which will allow parents to log-in to SchoolTool with their own user name and password to monitor their students' grades, attendance, behavior, schedule, etc. I am very excited for this opportunity. From Mrs. Giblin: Beth Gilles from the Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board wrote a grant on our behalf and we were able to get \$1,200 from International Paper to buy the equipment to do Salmon in the Classroom (SIC) here at Hartford starting this winter with the general science kids. Bill Wellman from the Lake Champlain Chapter of Trout Unlimited will come in to speak to the kids and to help with setup this winter. We will raise the salmon from eggs until release in the spring while studying the chemistry of the water, life cycle of the fish, physical and biological habitat requirements, effects of pollution and more. I want to publically thank our faculty for all their hard work on developing SLO(s). This is a new state mandate that can be extremely confusing, but our faculty is doing an outstanding job. In fact, Courtney Jablonski, the WSWHE BOCES Network Team Leader, was in Hartford on October 5<sup>th</sup> to work with our faculty and commented that we are "light-years" ahead of the other schools. The fall sports seasons are starting to wrap-up regular season play. This past Friday was the volleyball senior night and this afternoon was the soccer team's senior night. Congratulations to all our senior fall athletes. The fall sports dessert reception is scheduled for Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>. The Volleyball team participated in the "Power of Pink" tournament at Queensbury this past weekend and, as a team, raised over \$400 to donate to the cause by selling pink volleyballs for \$1 in honor of someone affected by cancer or in memory. A couple of up-coming events: This Saturday is the SPUD Run. I am looking forward to running away from the "one-eyed dog"! November 7<sup>th</sup> is the annual WSWHE BOCES Student Leadership Conference. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade pig-roast is Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>. The FFA Chicken BBQ is Nov, 20<sup>th</sup>

## **8.0 Old Business** – No Old Business to Conduct

## **9.0 New Business**

**\*9.1 CPSE/CSE Recommendations** – There are a number of recommendations for your review this month. As always, should there be a need to discuss any of the recommendations, the item or items in question should be tabled for discussion in Executive Session. – The Board of Education accepted the recommendations from the CPSE/CSE Committee. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

**\*9.2 Appointment of Superintendent** – The Board of Education appointed Mr. Andrew Cook as Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2013. The initial appointment will be for three years under the terms and conditions of the finalized Contract of Agreement between the Board of Education and Mr. Cook. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

**\*9.3 Appointment of Substitute Math Teacher** – As the board is aware; Mrs. Capone will be going on leave under the terms of FMLA. The leave is scheduled to begin on or about October 18, 2012. – The Board of Education appointed Mrs. Allison Levin as a substitute math teacher beginning on or about 10/18/12. Mrs. Levin will be paid on a per diem basis until such time the leave extends beyond forty days. Should her substitute time with the district extend beyond forty days, Mrs. Levin will be placed on step 1 with 43 graduate hours retroactive to 10/18. The substitute appointment will terminate with the return of Mrs. Capone. (*Mrs. Capone delivered on 10/11/12*) Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

- \*9.4 Appointment of Modified Girl's Basketball Coach** – The Board of Education appointed Mr. Mike MacDougall to the position of Modified Girl's Basketball Coach for the 2012-13 Season. Stipend is per Contract of Agreement with the Hartford Faculty Association. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0
- \*9.5 Appointment of Unpaid Assistant Boys' Basketball Coach** – The Board of Education appointed Mr. Rob Leise as an unpaid Assistant for the Varsity Basketball Program. Mr. Leise has all of the appropriate coaching certification and has worked in this capacity for several years. Motion made by Mrs. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Jessen. Approved 4-0
- \*9.6 Appointment of Substitute Bus Driver** – The Board of Education appointed Mrs. Charlotte Gauthier-Berry as a substitute bus driver. Mrs. Gauthier Berry was a full time driver with the district until her retirement in 2005. Her appointment is contingent upon a clean driver abstract and all appropriate 19-A documentation being filed with DOT. Mr. Fish asked why we needed to hire Mrs. Berry. The answer was that she would be an "as-needed" sub because there were not many subs available. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0
- \*9.7 Excess Surplus Property** – Over the past few months, the District has replaced computer hardware in several locations throughout the buildings. The items being replaced are no longer useable nor up to appropriate specifications. All of the equipment listed will be e-cycled through our BOCES. – The Board of Education declared the items on the included list as excess surplus property and allow for appropriate disposal. Motion made by Mrs. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Jessen. Approved 4-0
- \*9.8 Appointment of Bus Monitor** – Due to the behavior of a Special Needs student (board approved IEP modifications earlier), it is necessary to appoint a bus monitor to accompany the student when being transported to and from home. – The Board of Education appointed Mrs. Kris Gibson as a bus monitor retroactive to October 3, 2012. Mrs. Gibson has previously served in this capacity for the district. The appointment will be for two hours per day at the contractual amount of \$12 per hour. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0
- \*9.9 Extra-Curricular Appointment – JV Girls' Basketball Coach** – The Board of Education appointed Mrs. Wendy Harrington to the position of JV Girls' Basketball Coach for the 2012-13 School Year. Stipend will be per Contract of Agreement. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 3-0-1
- \*9.10 Extra-Curricular Appointment – Assistant Volunteer Coach Girls' Varsity Basketball** – The Board of Education appointed Mr. Rock Chadwick as an Unpaid Assistant Coach for the Girls' Varsity Basketball Program for the 2012-13 School Year. Motion made by Mrs. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Jessen. Approved 4-0
- \*9.11 External Audit Report** – The 2011-12 Audit on the District has been finalized. A copy of the audit report is attached to this addendum. The Management Letter begins on page 65. The recommendations are listed on page 67. As you can see there are no significant findings. – The Board of Education accepted the External Audit Report. Once accepted by the board, I am responsible for filing a copy of the report as well as a response to the management letter with the Comptroller's Office. Motion made by Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0

**11.0 Adjournment** – Board adjourned at 8:27 pm on a motion from Mr. Jessen and seconded by Mrs. Thomas. Approved 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marjorie M. Durling  
District Clerk