

Chatham Education Association

December 12, 2019

In Attendance: Terrance Ferguson (CHS), Me'Lissa Morgan-Convery (CHS), Pete Steinmetz (CHS), Caryn Badian (Special Services), Leslie Chapman (CHS), Michael D'Aloia (SBS), Steve Bontempo (CMS), Mandy Major (CMS), Stephanie Lukasiewicz (CMS), Nicholas Cicarelli (CMS), Katrina Keeshen (CMS), William Stollery (MAS), Marty Visitacion (MAS), Amy Kerr (MAS), Nancy Volker (WAS), Christine Grobert (LAF), Jennifer Bane (LAF), Erin Kilia (LAF), Laura Noonan (SBS), Laurie DeBiasse (LAF), Sarah Gutierrez (WAS), Brian Conti (CHS), Susan Milone (WAS) and Marylynn MacLeod (CMS)

Call to Order: Laurie DeBiasse called the meeting to order at 3:35pm

Approval of Minutes: Stephanie Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve the November 14, 2019 minutes. The second was done by Terrence Ferguson.

Correspondence: Marylynn MacLeod reported.

Congratulations:

- Epsy Walters/CHS-baby girl
- Anthony Giaconia/CMS - baby girl & Kathleen Ruta - baby girl
- Christine Quintero - baby girl

Treasurer Report: Doug Chambers was not in attendance. Laurie DeBiasse read Doug's report, which was submitted electronically.

Laurie thanked Doug for his many years of service as the Treasurer for CEA. Because no action needed to take place the Treasurer report can be accepted - it does not need to be approved.

Laurie D. and Pete S. will be meeting to discuss the CEA Budget.

The question was asked, if the CEA 2019-2020 CEA Budget has not been approved how are stipends being paid? Doug answered. The budget just gives an overview of where we anticipate our monies will be spent. Most times we spend less than what is budgeted, while only a few times have we spent more in only an area or two. The budget does not dictate whether or not the stipends are paid. Having the necessary funds at the mid-year point is what determines stipend distribution. Our account is in GREAT shape. Our DUES cover the full amounts of the stipends. No one needs to be worried that they will not receive their half-year stipend! As far as the budget goes.... Pete's first duty as CEA Treasurer in January 2020 will be to present the budget, and then have it approved. We tried to have it approved back in September, but it never came up for a vote. (Council members wanted to put the time into discussing Negotiations)

- (Doug) Half-year Stipends (for only those that requested) will be distributed at the first CEA Rep Council meeting in January. I made sure to notify our payroll company early. The stipend checks have already been printed and will be delivered to me next week. I will endorse them on Dec 20th and hand them over to Pete and Laurie for distribution on the above mentioned date.
- Our LAFAP (audit Report to NJEA) for 2018-2019 was approved. Approximately \$9,000 total will be returned to our account in two payments (March/June 2020)
- Pete and I will be meeting to ensure a smooth transition into his taking over the CEA Treasurer's position going forward.

Any questions or comments please contact Doug.

Standing Committee Reports

Pride: Candy Hull was not in attendance. Candy submitted her report electronically.

- All pride grants for 2019-2020 are due on Friday 11/15
- Currently written: (grants/documentation/follow up submissions)
 - Two new committee members - plan to meet and gear up for spring after the winter break.
 - PRIDE/FAST can be a lot of time because not only are you writing the grant, documenting the implementation, then submitting documentation for verification, 9 out of 10 times you are also present at the event. (For example Senior Citizen dinner next week (3p-6:30 pm)
 - PRIDE starting balance \$23K (use it or lose it)
 - FAST starting balance \$20K (use it or lose it)
- Back to school nights (PRIDE)✓ (all schools - September 2019) budgeted \$3412 - used \$3412 - follow up mailed 12/12/19
- Vaping presentation (FAST)✓ (CMS/CHS) Budgeted \$2,661.08 -\$200 used follow up mailed 12/12/19
- "In plain sight" (FAST and PRIDE) (CMS/CHS) January 2020 Budgeted \$911.08 - used ?
- Sophomore and Junior college nights (FAST) December 2019 and February 2020 Budgeted \$ 1322.16 - \$1322.16
- Elementary Field days (Milton/Washington)(PRIDE) May 2020 Budgeted \$1836.62 - \$1836.62 used
- Senior Citizen dinner play (PRIDE) (CHS)November 2019 Budgeted \$2,359.94 - used - \$1406.61 - follow up mailed 12/12/19
- Mental Health awareness month presentation (PRIDE) (CHS) May 2020 Budgeted \$1000 - used?
- Mental Health First Aid (PRIDE) (CHS) March 2020 Budgeted \$925.00 - used?
- Returned for reworking - CMS Musical Opening reception (CMS) January 2020 Budgeted \$2000 - used?

- Fishawak (PRIDE) (All schools - tent and giveaways) May 2020 Budgeted \$3528.82 - \$3528.82 used
- District Art Show (all schools K-12) - Budgeted \$800 - used \$?
- Returned for reworking - will be resubmitted today - CHS/LAF circle renovation (FAST) Date TBD Budgeted ? - used? (Will see what is left tomorrow at 12pm)

Grievance: Katrina Keeshen. Katrina reported that two months ago a grievance (level 1) was presented to Dr. LaSusa. Dr. LaSusa did not accept our rebuttal. The staff member chose next to take the grievance to the next level. The next level would have been to go in front of the Board of Education.

Question: Was the grievance something that would affect other members? Katrina stated no. The grievance was a personal personnel issue.

Grievance: K-5: Mike D'Aloia/SBS: Mike stated he would like the passing time issue at the elementary schools to be brought to the next level grievance. Katrina K. will email Dr. LaSusa to schedule a meeting to discuss the next step.

Membership: Laura Noonan reported. Laura stated that if you see new staff in your building (teachers, Para's, long term leaves, custodians) please encourage them to join CEA. Building reps often find out about new employees before Laura does. Laura reminded everyone that when a staff member comes back from any type of leave they need to make sure they are CEA active. Returning staff from leave can contact Laura N. for assistance. When staff are in-active, CEA cannot help the staff member in any type of legal issue or act as a representative.

- Current membership as of 12/12/19 = 543
 - Professional - 404
 - ESP (secretaries, paraprofessionals, maintainers, custodians) - 139
 - Potential Members - 18
- Each unit needs 51% of their members to join to be eligible
 - Ex: if custodians drop out, there needs to be 51% of custodians and maintainers to be members in order to be a part of our collective bargaining unit

Statement: A new member (started in September, 2019) received her NJEA card, however, dues are not being taken out of her paycheck. Laura stated the staff member needs to email payroll and cc herself and Laurie D.

Social: Erin Killea reported. Erin thanked everyone for attending the last happy hour at Harlee's in New Providence. Because of the timing of the happy hour, following the contract meeting, appy's were not served. Another happy hour event (food included!) will be planned for January or February.

Question: Candy Hull : Did enough people get to Harlee's to make it worth it for them? I would hate to think we did not have a presence when they were so accepting to have us.

Answer : Erin stated yes, she spoke to the owner, Don, and he encouraged us to come again!

Health: Mandy Major reported. Premium for POS went down approximately \$2000.00. There will be another open enrollment in May, 2020. There was a question regarding the PPO upcharge and Chapter 78. Mandy reiterated that the PPO upcharge has increased due to a decrease in the POS Premium. Chapter 78 and PPO upcharge are two different things. There is a High Deductible option with a low premium, however the deductible is high. Mandy stated the other items of note:

- Open enrollment has begun. If people want/need to change plan, or drop coverage they need to have their paperwork up to Human Resources by Tuesday, 12/17.
 - Looking into getting an extension on the deadline
- If anyone has questions please email Mandy Major.
- Any prescriptions you are taking now are grandfathered in (need to be taking it 130 days prior). Renew it before Feb 1. The pharmacy should know that we are on the Step-Up program. If Dr requires name brand, that it is deemed medically necessary, it can be covered. May have to go through an appeal process to get it covered.

Legislative Action: Marty Visitacion reported. Marty urged the building reps to tell our members to send emails to the legislature for Chapter 78 relief. Perhaps a good idea would be to have members do it all together at ten minute building meeting.

MCCEA: Laurie DeBiasse reported. Laurie was not able to attend the last MCCEA meeting. Laurie will reach out to David Fowler and Jen Cifrodella to inquire if they attended.

Evaluation Committee: Me'Lissa Morgan-Convery. The Evaluation Committee met at the end of November. The committee discussed a couple of evaluations where the scores were not congruent with the lesson's presentation. Specifically, an observation where the supervisor assigned a very low score in one component due to the teacher's use of a specific word, presumably "lazy" though the word "cheater" was also in the sentence. The supervisor was misinterpreting the phrase and the context in which it was stated. More significant to the incident, the supervisor claimed the word was on a list of egregious words that automatically warrant a score of 1 in a component. Karen Chase was later consulted, who stated no list exists. Me'Lissa and Laurie D. will be meeting with Karen Chase in the near future to discuss this and other inconsistencies in evaluations. Those inconsistencies include the use of different rubrics, incorrect application of components and information entered into evaluations that are not based on the observation, pre- or post- meetings.

Health and Safety: Jen Bane reported

- Continuing to work on resolving mold issues in SBS and CHS - now have NJWEC representative
 - SBS H&S rep was asked to have staff fill out an NJEA H&S Mold Walkthrough Checklist
- Letter sent to Peter Daquila regarding multiple concerns and requests for documentation of testing and proof of resolutions of water intrusions in both buildings
 - Important to take pictures of any water intrusions and make work order request immediately.
- In process of finding opportunity for workshop regarding mold issues through NJWEC

- This committee is becoming much more serious and time consuming.
 - I plan to schedule a meeting with reps in January to discuss the level of involvement - do we need more reps in certain buildings? Or volunteers willing to help when larger issues arise?
- Go to the school nurse to go through Workers Comp/Call Qualcare
 - have to go to all follow ups

CHS Issue/Laurie D. reported. An issue arose with a Smart Board at CHS. A staff member got a shock from the Smart Board. The second time it happened the staff member went to the school nurse and called Qualcare.

Special Committees

SDOC: Laurie D. reported. No one went to the November meetings. LAF is going in January.

End of Year: Sarah G. reported. Sarah stated she will call the venue for a date in May, 2020.

New Business

LAF: Erin K. & Christine G. discussed teachers being assigned lunch duty and typically staff in K-5 do not have to do lunch duty. Laurie D. stated that in the beginning of the school year LAF was short Para-Professionals and also due to the sudden death of one of the LAF Para's teachers were asked to "step up" and help out during the month of October - the staff complied. An emergency agreement between the board and CEA was then made and it was decided that staff would be paid to cover lunch duty. As of December, staff can have their second prep pulled to cover lunch. Laurie D. stated she has spoken to Dr. LaSusa and that he wasn't aware that this was still going on and that there will be a resolution before Winter break.

CHS Rep: Pete S. made a motion to appoint Mallory Lynn as the new CHS rep (to replace Pete Steinmentz) and Caryn Badian did the second.

New Teacher Institute: NTI meetings start at 3:30p.m. and this puts secondary teachers in breach of contract because their school day ends later. Laurie D. will discuss this with Stephanie Lukasiewicz.

Chapter 78 Relief: The \$100,000 that was negotiated into the new contract for Chapter 78 Relief is not an unusual arrangement - it happens in other districts. Laurie D. stated a committee will be formed. Laurie is looking for suggestions on who should be on the committee - will the committee be comprised of reps, members or both? This will be further discussed at the January meeting.

Transcripts/Guide Movement: Me'Lissa Morgan-Convery/CHS: Me'Lissa stated that in order to get course reimbursements the BOE is now requiring "official" transcripts. Official transcripts used to only be required when staff received their Masters. Laurie D. will discuss this with Dr. LaSusa.

Ratification: Candy Hull/CHS: Candy stated (submitted electronically) that because the ratification barely passed what can the CEA do differently and/or better to serve members? How do we publicize “what we are doing or intending to do?”

Statement/Laurie D. : Laurie stated the contract negotiations was a total team effort and nothing was ever agreed upon or discussed without the whole team in agreement. The team made every effort to settle on a contract before the start of the 2019/2020 school year. Laurie thanked the team for all of their time and hard work. Laurie stated she is aware that there is a fair amount of unrest and disagreement from the membership. Laurie stated that the new contract has a few major points of victory:

- raises across the board for all teachers, secretaries & custodians
- Para-Professionals received a pay increase
- Lowered premium cost and premium share of health insurance - the team had to give some concessions in this area such as the co-pay cost rising
- all staff move on the guide every year of the four year contract

Five vs. Six classes: Katrina Keeshen reported. Katrina stated she did extensive research of other districts in the state. The contract made the high school whole in this area and that is a huge step in the right direction. Katrina stated that during negotiations the team needed to look at all the district staff as a whole. Laurie D. stated that in previous contract negotiations the five vs. six classes area was always discussed, however, CEA, before this contract, was never able to make any head-way.

CEA By-Law Question: Mike D’Aloia/SBS: “Was it a violation of the By-Laws when Laurie D. met with Dr. LaSusa without other members of the negotiation team present?” Laura Noonan stated that when Laurie D. and Dr. LaSusa met on several occasions, without other members of the team present, the new By-Laws had not yet been passed. And, since negotiations had begun the assumption was that the new By-Law restrictions on negotiations would begin with the next contract negotiations. Laurie D. stated that nothing was ever decided upon or agreed to with between just herself and Dr. LaSusa.

- Negotiation Team & Ratification: Laurie DeBiasse stated:
- the process has been the same for the last three contracts
- the type of negotiation team and committee that was used requires a great amount of trust - CEA does not have to keep using the same process at the next contract negotiations
- the CEA president should not be the lead negotiator

Community Statement: Nicholas Cicarelli stated that when Dr. LaSusa and the Board of Education put out a statement to the TAP it put CEA in a very bad light. Some of the statement put forth was mis-information/mis-leading and the membership thinks it made CEA look weak.

Laurie D. stated she did not want to put forth a statement to the public because she did not want the community to think we are divided.

There was discussion among all building reps in attendance regarding the public perception of CEA. The reps stated the members in their buildings think the public is not fully informed.

Michael D'Aloia made a motion for CEA to issue a press release and Christine Grobert did the second. Laura Noonan and Laurie DeBiase will work on a draft press release.

PRIDE/Laurie DeBiase reported. Laurie stated that Candy Hull has done a great job of getting the word out who and what CEA are.

Statement: Christine Grobert/LAF: Christine stated that members of CEA have signed a Vote of No Confidence petition.

Comment: Simone Gaunt/CMS: Simone stated that she is not a building rep, however, she was recently made aware that any CEA member can attend the monthly CEA meeting. Simone stated that going forward the negotiation process needs to be shared with the membership and the public at large. She stated that CEA needs to create a framework.

Statement: Amy Kerr/MAS: The ratification vote being very close can be used as a positive. Members should use this as an opportunity to get more involved in CEA all school-year long, every school-year - not just at contract negotiation time.

Motion to Adjourn: Nicholas Cicarelli made a motion to adjourn at 5:20p.m. and the second was done by Stephanie Lukasiewicz.