

**DRAFT****MINUTES – C.E.S. REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING**

November 7, 2019

**PRESENT:**

Chris Hocker - EASTON/REG. 9 (**President**)  
 Vinnie Faggella - STRATFORD  
 Mike Ward - TRUMBULL (**Secretary**)  
 Melissa Walker - WESTON  
 Karen Kleine - WESTPORT (**Vice President**)  
 Debbie Low - WILTON

**ABSENT:**

Sybil Allen - BRIDGEPORT  
 Jeff Parker - EASTON/REDDING/REG. 9 (Alt.)  
 Barbara Meyer-  
 Mitchell - NORWALK  
 Margaret Stamatis - RIDGEFIELD  
 Andy George - STAMFORD

**Current****vacancies:** Darien, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Shelton

**C.E.S.:** **Present:** Charles Dumais, Chris LaBelle, Mark Ribbens, Anna Nelmes-Stoughton, Peggy Sullivan, Mike McGrath, Stephanie Wanzer  
**Absent:** Esther Bobowick

**GUEST:** Bill Heaney, Venman & Company

I. CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM – President Chris Hocker called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm. Quorum was confirmed.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – On a motion by Mike Ward and seconded by Melissa Walker, the minutes of the October 3, 2019 meeting were approved with one abstention (V. Faggella) and one correction: Page 1, Line 7, change “Monroe” to ‘Weston.’”

III. CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Mike Ward seconded by Debbie Low, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Bill Heaney, Venman & Company: Chip Dumais introduced Bill Heaney of Venman & Co., who reviewed a draft of the Auditor’s Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. Bill advised that there were no difficulties during the audit. Bill also mentioned that the agency is in strong financial condition and has a very healthy reserve. Bill thanked Chip and Peggy Sullivan and the C.E.S. accounting staff for their assistance during the audit. Chip thanked Bill and his team for their work and cooperation with our staff.

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- 1           2. C.E.S.E.A. president Stephanie Wanzer advised the Board that once again  
2           the Special Education Division will be heading up their Thanksgiving “Pluck-  
3           A-Feather” campaign in which they collect food items for 29 C.E.S. families  
4           in need for the Thanksgiving holiday. Cash donations are welcomed as  
5           well. Food items and/or donations will be accepted through November 21<sup>st</sup>.  
6           Please see Barb with any questions or to drop off donations.

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8   V.    OLD BUSINESS:

- 9           1. **Policy Revision/Adoption:** On a motion by Karen Kleine and seconded  
10          by Vinnie Faggella, both Policy 4.008 Tuition Reimbursement Plan Non-  
11          Certified Personnel and Policy No. 6.034 Service Animals were approved and  
12          adopted as presented.

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14   VI.   NEW BUSINESS:

- 15          1. **Audit Report:** On a motion by Debbie Low and seconded by Karen Kleine,  
16          the Council unanimously accepted the Draft Audit Report for the fiscal year  
17          ending June 30, 2019 as presented. Final audit report will be filed with the  
18          State prior to 12/31/19 as required. Bound copies will be distributed to the  
19          Board at the January 9, 2020 meeting.

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21          2. **Nominating Committee:** On a motion by Karen Kleine and seconded by  
22          Melissa Walker, the Council approved the President’s recommendation of  
23          Andy George and Debbie Low to the Nominating Committee to present a  
24          slate of candidates for election at the January 9, 2020 Representative  
25          Council meeting.

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27   VII.   REPORTS:

- 28  
29          1. **Representative Council President:** Chris Hocker regretfully announced that he  
30          was not re-elected to his Board and therefore this is his last meeting at C.E.S.  
31          Chip, along with the C.E.S. administrative team and other Board members thanked  
32          Chris for his years of service as well as his tenure as Council president.  
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34          2. **Executive Director:** Chip reported that he has a few more superintendents to  
35          meet with. Chip held a meeting earlier this week for superintendents to address  
36          start and end times. There will be a follow up in a couple of weeks to hear from  
37          districts who have already made these changes. Some districts such as Wilton  
38          and Greenwich have changed their schedules; other districts have the topic on  
39          their agendas. A team from C.E.S. visited Wright Tech in Stamford to take a look  
40          at their programs and Chip plans to discuss with our district superintendents the  
41          possibilities that Wright Tech has to offer to high school students. A county-wide  
42          professional development for administrators is still in the development stage. The  
43          annual legislative breakfast for superintendents, board chairs and local legislators  
44          will be held at C.E.S. on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Chip will send out an email to all legislators  
45          in the C.E.S. catchment area and a formal letter of invitation will be sent out as  
46          well. Superintendents will be asked to invite their Board chair or their designee.  
47          The RESC Alliance has met with the house majority leader and the education

1 committee and others to see how the RESCs can be of further assistance to our  
2 districts. The Commissioner has expressed that he considers the RESCS to be  
3 the “capacity building arm of the State Department of Education.”  
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5 PEER (Partnership for Early Education Research) recently held their convention  
6 which offers a wonderful program that ties academic research through Yale to  
7 early childhood programs. Members from the Office of Early Childhood, C.E.S.,  
8 Yale and other member districts were in attendance. Regarding a lower Fairfield  
9 County facility, Chip and Peggy Sullivan visited the Briggs School in Norwalk which  
10 has been empty for two years to see if this building might be a viable location to  
11 serve our 6-8 lower Fairfield County districts with an alternative special education  
12 program as well as professional development initiatives. Chip will keep the Board  
13 posted on developments. Chip mentioned that he recently met with a group of  
14 Wilton administrative assistants and will be developing a professional development  
15 program with them. Chip hopes to do the same in other districts as well. C.E.S.  
16 will be hosting a discussion group with some superintendents as well as the deans  
17 of education from UCONN, Quinnipiac, SHU, UB and SCSU to talk about offering  
18 support to area administrators beyond the induction phase. Lastly, Chip will be  
19 attending the CABE/CAPSS conference on November 15<sup>th</sup>.  
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21 3. **Associate Executive Director:** Chris La Belle reported that Shipman & Goodwin  
22 will be here on November 22<sup>nd</sup> presenting on policy regarding service animals.  
23 Chris mentioned that Rep. Jim Himes visited our special education programs this  
24 past Monday. Rep. Himes is promoting a bill that would see IDEA fully funded at  
25 the federal level. Chris advised that the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) inspected  
26 School Readiness on October 23<sup>rd</sup> related to our Care4Kids funding. This was an  
27 unannounced inspection with no advance notification. The OEC was impressed  
28 commenting that the quality of the work by staff and the high quality experiences  
29 that children and families have in the program were evident. There were no  
30 identified areas for improvement. The evaluator for the OEC stated that she  
31 wished every child/family could have access to a program like C.E.S. School  
32 Readiness. See Chris’ written report for additional highlights.  
33

34 4. **Director of Professional Development Services:** See written report.  
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36 5. **Director, Regional Center for the Arts:** Mark Ribbens reported that RCA has  
37 begun the recruiting process for the 2020-21 school year. Staff members have  
38 begun by making presentations at area middle and high schools. On October 28<sup>th</sup>,  
39 the Theatre students presented “Generation Made of Fire”, which is the work they  
40 created with artist in residence Justin Cimino. Mr. Cimino’s work was supported by  
41 a grant from the C.E.S. Foundation.  
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43 6. **Principal, Six to Six Magnet School:** Anna Nelmes-Stoughton reported that a  
44 very successful Trick or Trunk event was held prior to Halloween. Staff will be  
45 participating in professional development on November 6<sup>th</sup> on various topics. The  
46 students in the Six to Six Running Club participated in the C.E.S. 12<sup>th</sup> annual 5K  
47 Race held at Seaside Park.

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7. **Director of Finance & Operations:** Peggy Sullivan provided the year-to-date budget summary for July 1-October 29, 2019. Peggy stated that magnet school tuition invoices have been mailed out using the October 1<sup>st</sup> enrollment numbers. Peggy also provided a revenue report and noted that transportation, workshop revenue and revenue through other RESCs are already ahead of budget. Peggy mentioned that C.E.S. will be switching electricity suppliers and she projects that we will save approximately \$25,000 annually in costs.

8. **Director, Special Education:** Mike McGrath referred the Board to his written report for October highlights in the Special Education division. Mike also mentioned that Rep. Jim Himes was very impressed with our school programs when he visited earlier this week. Rep. Himes is putting forward House Bill 18-78 in this matter. Mike reported that he is trying to have Senators Murphy and Blumenthal to visit and get their support for this bill as well.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO EXECUTIVE SESSION On a motion by Debbie Low and seconded by Vinnie Faggella, the Council unanimously agreed to adjourn to Executive Session at 4:05 p.m., FOR THE PURPOSE OF UPDATE ON LITIGATION. THE COUNCIL INVITES DR. DUMAIS AND MR. LABELLE TO REMAIN FOR THE SESSION

IX. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Debbie Low and seconded by Karen Kleine, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Barbara Pace*  
Barbara Pace  
Recording Secretary