Committee Members Present: Eric Williams, Clint Cogswell (arrived 5:30 p.m.), Chris Casko, Jennifer Patterson, Jack Dunn (appointed to serve as a substitute for Mr. Cogswell, who arrived late and was unable to hear the presentation)

Other Board Member(s) Present: Kass Ardinger, Kevin Fleming, Laura Bonk

Administration: Superintendent Chris Rath (arrived 5:30 p.m.), Rob Prohl, Gene Connolly

Other CSD staff: Meeta Brown, CHS special education coordinator

Presenters: Rachel Ryan, Program Manager for Project Search, Community Bridges; Jennifer LeDuc Cusato, Program Manager for Project Search in Nashua; Suzanne McKendry, Director of HR at Concord Hospital; Ron Gerstenberger, Executive Director of Community Service/Community Bridges; Sheila Lambert, Field Services Administrator for NHVR (Vocational Rehabilitation)

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Eric Williams appointed Jack Dunn to the Instructional Committee for this meeting, as Clint Cogswell arrived late and was unable to hear the full presentation.

Committee chair Eric Williams noted that the agenda was to hear a proposal for the School District to partner with Concord Hospital, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Community Bridges in a program called Project Search. Project Search is a transitional school-to-work program for 10-12 high school students ages 19–21 who have developmental disabilities and who are clients of Community Bridges. Community Bridges is the local area agency that serves adults with developmental disabilities. The program has the option of accepting adults between 21–25 who are clients of the area agency.

Jennifer LeDuc Cusato, who manages the Nashua Project Search program, provided the committee with an overview of Project Search. Eligible special education students ages 19–21 from school districts in the Community Bridges catchment area (similar to the District’s Concord Regional Technical Center catchment area) can apply to participate in this program. The program will be located at Concord Hospital and the accepted students will complete three 10-week internships in various hospital departments. The School District will provide a special education teacher for the program; Vocational Rehabilitation will provide job coaches and vocational counseling; Concord Hospital will provide the space and job internships; and Community Bridges will manage the program. Students who complete the program will be trained for employment in the medical/hospital/ adult care facilities field. An important component of this program is the establishment of an advisory council from the Concord business community that will be the future employers of these students.
Concord School District will be responsible for a hiring special education teacher; the cost of the teacher will be funded by the tuition paid by each school district ($13,500 tuition per student) or, if the students are over 21, by the area agency. NH Vocational Rehabilitation has guaranteed that if the program did not attract sufficient students in its first year (2010–11) of the program to cover the cost of the special education teacher (which is the District’s financial responsibility), it would pay the difference to the School District.

The Committee voted 4–0 to recommend approval to the full Board for Concord School District to participate in Project Search (motioned by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Casko).

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Williams, Chair
Rob Prohl, Recorder