

UNION #39 SCHOOL BOARD
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, August 16, 2006
Superintendent's Office Conference Room - Ludlow
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER- ROLL CALL and WELCOME

Board: Diana Chimbolo, Ralph Pace, Allen Seiple, Randy Bixby
Staff: Frank Perotti, James Frail
Public: Duncan Love, Colin McKaig

Ms. Chimbolo called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. CONSENT AGENDA: None

III. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Oral: None

B. Written: Mr. Frail passed around a letter from Wendy Neal, of the Okemo Mountain School (OMS), about students at OMS that would like to participate in Black River High School athletic programs. Mr. Frail stated that OMS communicated with the Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) and OMS would have to become a due paying member of the VPA. Additionally, the VPA stated that the OMS and Union #39 school boards would have to both agree to let OMS students participate in Black River High School athletic programs.

Mr. Frail spoke with the athletic director and he was willing to let the OMS students participate if there is space on teams and with the understanding that BRHS students would be first priority in case of cuts from teams. Ms. Chimbolo explained that OMS received approval from the State Department of Education to become a full time school so they now have a few full time students that would like to participate in athletics. Ms. Chimbolo stated that this may open doors to future cooperation with OMS.

Mr. Pace **moved** to authorize Mr. Frail to draft a letter allowing OMS students to participate in Black River High School's athletic programs for the 2006-2007 school year, permitting available space on teams and with the understanding that Black River High School students would have first priority to participate on teams. Mr. Seiple seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. BUSINESS ITEMS:

A. Minutes: July 12, 2006, Special Meeting; July 19, 2006, Regular Meeting:

Ms. Chimbolo stated that the Ludlow School Board's minutes are included with the Union #39 board packets for information.

Mr. Pace **moved** to accept the minutes of the July 12, 2006 special meeting and the July 19, 2006 regular meeting. Mr. Bixby seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

B. **Approval of Orders:** A/P # 4, 5; P/R #'s 3, 4: Mr. Perotti reported that the annual financial stat reports were completed and submitted on time by Ms. Cole to the Vermont Department of Education. Ms. Chimbolo noted that when there is an asterisk with an invoice's description it indicates that expense is being reimbursed or paid for with grant money.

Mr. Pace **moved** to approve the following orders: A/P #4 and 5 and P/R# 3 and 4. Mr. Bixby seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Seiple asked if the PA system was installed. Mr. Frail reported that it has been partially installed and he hopes to have it completely installed before school. Mr. Frail stated that he has had trouble communicating with the company that is installing it.

There was discussion about an indoor camera being installed to view the front doors from the office. The school has the equipment, three cameras and a recording VCR. Mr. Perotti suggested that Mr. Frail check with Liz Darling about where the equipment is.

V. **HDEC/RVTC REPORT:** Ms. Chimbolo reported that Mr. Karner was at a RVTC meeting that evening. He will update the board next month.

VI. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:**

Mr. Frail reported that the first day for teachers is August 28th for a district in-service day and then August 29th is school based in-service. August 30th is the first day of school for students. Mr. Frail will meet with the staff to establish an open house date to allow for maximum teacher attendance.

Mr. Frail reported that Pat Pullinen received a grant of \$3,000 from the Black River Area Community Coalition for the ropes course for maintenance. He is the only certified instructor for the ropes course but Mr. Frail would like to have a second staff member achieve certification. Mr. Perotti stated that the Ludlow School District board discussed staff certification at their last regular meeting and discussed that their Physical Education teacher would be a good candidate for certification.

Mr. Frail reported that he is still actively recruiting and interviewing for a math teacher for basic math up to geometry.

- A. Teaching contracts – Life Skills: Mr. Perotti recommended Carol Cassidy, who holds a Master’s degree with a CAGS and 13 years of experience, at \$55,829.00 for the 2006-2007 school year. Mr. Perotti explained that this is a replacement position for the life skills program that keeps students in the district rather than placing them in expensive residential programs.

Mr. Bixby **moved** to approve a contract for Carol Cassidy, Master’s degree with a CAGS and 13 years of experience, for the 2006-2007 school year at \$55,829.00 for the position of Life Skills teacher. Mr. Pace seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Math – Update: See above

Mr. Seiple **moved** to approve, pending subsequent approval of this contract by the Ludlow School Board, a contract for Eric Groce to work with Steve DeLisle, a joint contract from the Union #39 and Ludlow School Boards, to assist with technology work, at \$14.00 per hour, not to exceed \$225.00 from August 21, 2006 to June 30, 2006. Mr. Bixby seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Frail stated that he would like students’ schedules to be mailed out in April. Mr. Frail will suggest that the SASSI scheduling program be discontinued as it is not really being utilized.

Mr. Pace stated that there will be a major political debate at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland, Vermont on October 12, 2006 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Mr. Pace would like to take some Black River High School students to that. Mr. Pace asked the board to underwrite the cost of transportation at an estimated cost of \$200 for the bus. Mr. Pace would like to get 300 students to the debate from area schools. Mr. Pace will encourage students to ask questions of the candidates. Mr. Pace is working to televise the debate on PBS across the state. The board supported the students attending the debate. Mr. Frail stated that the students would have to be prepared about what to expect, the political process, and added that there should be some discussion after the debate. Mr. Frail and Mr. Pace will discuss the details of the trip.

Mr. Frail stated that the Antique Show will be the weekend of September 29, 2006.

VII. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

- A. **VT Education Dept. Leadership Conference:** Mr. Perotti reported that he attended a workshop on functional assessment, sponsored by the Vermont Department of Education. He explained that this particular model focuses on teachers learning assessment techniques so that they can quickly change their teaching techniques on a daily basis.

Mr. Perotti reported that he and other RWSU administration attended a three day leadership conference. The keynote speaker has written extensively on closing the achievement gap between students living in poverty and more mainstream students. The institute looked at factors that contribute to the achievement gaps, and how to prevent and overcome these factors. These factors include: issues around parenting, family structure, quality of early educational programs, and quality of daycare. Research provided at the institute supports early education programs, especially for poor families. At the institute there was discussion about how schools could work with other agencies to help mitigate those issues, such as pre-school, after school programs, strong educational programs, and offering health, dental and mental health counseling. At the conference, the administration and Mr. Perotti assessed what the Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union currently offers and found that they are already doing a lot to work towards closing this achievement gap. They also

examined what more could be done such as strengthening the after school program and providing access for health and dental services.

Mr. Seiple asked if anyone has looked at the fact that some families may not value the educational process as much as other families. He asked if these families are being educated about the importance of education. Mr. Perotti stated that there is some educating of families at the early education stage.

B. Community Education Survey: Mr. Perotti reported that the community education survey committee met with Mr. Lindsley and his firm is developing questions to be sent to Mr. Perotti by next Monday. Mr. Seiple asked about the results of the survey by the action planning committee about school climate. Mr. Frail will look for that survey and results.

C. AYP: Mr. Perotti reported that Black River High School achieved AYP scores in all areas. Mr. Frail suggested that it is important for staff to attend network meetings. Mr. Perotti stated that AYP scores are confidential at this point as they have not yet been verified for accuracy.

Mr. Seiple asked about the target scores. Mr. Perotti stated that the expected scores are in steps. Mr. Perotti stated that the problem is that not all students may achieve target scores as the expected scores increase.

The board discussed news releases. Mr. Perotti stated that Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union has not been very proactive about news releases but has contacted newspapers about the new principal and new staff. Mr. Pace suggested that a school camera be given out to staff or students and pictures of events be sent to newspapers. The board discussed that the *Message* would be a great tool to get information out about the schools. Mr. Seiple will talk with some students to see if they would be willing to work to publicize school information. Mr. Pace stated that if we are seeking public support for the school then school information needs to be publicized to let the community know what is going on at the school and what a great school it is. Mr. Frail suggested that there could be a nominal stipend for a staff member to handle public releases and oversee any students that wanted to help with that. Mr. Pace suggested that a bulletin board be put together. Mr. Frail stated that a one page newsletter could also be placed around town.

Ms. Chimbolo moved to policy.

Policy: Student Representative to the Board: Mr. Bixby **moved** to approve the student representative to the board procedure with the change that allowed for one or two student representatives to be appointed in case one cannot attend meetings and to stress that more student input is being requested by the board. Mr. Seiple seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Seiple stated that the Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union (WSWSU) is searching for a new superintendent and he stated that it might be the right time to approach that supervisory union about merging with them. He has asked that the Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union (RWSU) approach the Vermont Department of Education about a merger but that has not been done. Ms. Chimbolo stated that the RWSU board has not met since Mr. Seiple's request to discuss the issue. Mr. Pace concurred with Mr. Seiple and agreed that it should be discussed before the WSWSU hires a superintendent. Mr. Pace suggested that the RWSU may need to seek the Vermont Department of Education's intervention to work towards a merger with the WSWSU.

Ms. Chimbolo explained that the WSWSU has been clear in the open session of their meetings that they are not interested in merging or consolidating. Mr. Seiple noted that both the Commissioner of Education and the Vermont Department of Education are encouraging the merging and consolidating of supervisory unions. Mr. Bixby stated that the Union #39 school board can ask that the discussion begin but the RWSU board must take any action. Mr. Pace suggested that there was nothing that prohibited the Union #39 school board from writing a letter to the Vermont Department of Education about working to consolidate with the WSWSU. Mr. Bixby stated that the Union #39 school board may write a letter to the Vermont Department of Education if the Union #39 school board agrees to write that letter. Ms. Chimbolo stated that WSWSU's superintendent will be leaving June 30, 2007.

Ms. Chimbolo asked if it was the consensus of the board to approach Kelly Tarbell about a special RWSU meeting to further discuss this issue. Mr. Seiple and Mr. Pace requested that Mr. Perotti ask Kelly Tarbell for a special meeting. Mr. Bixby stated that he would like to discuss the issue with David Slivka before agreeing or disagreeing to a special meeting. There was discussion about potential meeting dates for a special RWSU meeting and Mr. Perotti will talk with Ms. Tarbell about a special meeting.

Mr. Pace **moved** to enter executive session at 8:31 p.m. to discuss a legal matter, inviting Mr. Perotti. Mr. Seiple seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The board returned from executive session at 8:41 p.m.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A. **Board vision:** Mr. Seiple thought that the community education survey was going to be a key component in the determination of a board vision, so the board vision should be discussed after the survey results are compiled. The board discussed having a board retreat in November to discuss and brainstorm a vision for the school. Ms. Chimbolo stated that she would like the board to focus on setting goals.

Ms. Chimbolo explained that she when she provided information for the Plymouth Fact Finding Committee she worked on a brochure about the Black River Middle and High School. She will give that to Mr. Frail as she would like to see the brochure developed further. Mr. Frail suggested that they could be placed at realtor offices and given to potential staff candidates. Mr. Perotti stated that Pam Crushank at Okemo Mountain was willing at one time to help develop a brochure to market the school. Mr. Seiple stated that any marketing material should include strengths as well as areas that need improvement and how the school is working to make improvements.

IX. POLICY:

- A. Student Representative to the Board: See above

X. TO-DO LIST:

- A. School Action Plan for possible adoption in September: Mr. Frail will meet with the action plan committee to determine if the plan is complete and if it is ready to be submitted for adoption.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: See above

XII. ADJOURNMENT:

NEXT MEETING: September 20, 2006, Mt. Holly School – 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Chimbolo asked about meeting minutes and whose responsibility it was to ensure that minutes are kept on file. She wanted to ensure that there was a system to ensure that all minutes are on record. Mr. Perotti stated that he is confident that all regular meeting minutes are on file but the committees do not always submit minutes for their meetings. Ms. Chimbolo would like to be sure that all minutes are on file at the central office. There was discussion about how long minutes should be retained. Mr. Perotti will check on how long they should be retained and where they should reside.

Ms. Chimbolo asked if Dr. Anne Margaret McKillop, Curriculum Coordinator, could provide a report about curriculum to the Union #39 school board.

Mr. Seiple **moved** to adjourn at 9:02 p.m. Mr. Bixby seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Balch
Board Recording Secretary