

UNION #39 SCHOOL BOARD
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 25, 2006
Black River High School Library
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER- ROLL CALL and WELCOME

Board: Diana Chimbolo, Chair, Ralph Pace, David Slivka, Brent Karner, Randy Bixby, Allen Seiple

Student Representatives: Melissa Goraj, Chantel Marechaux

Staff: Frank Perotti, Superintendent; James Frail, Principal; Michael Ripley, Assist. Principal; Dr. Joan Frangiose, Dir. of Special Services,

Public: Doug Ficken

Ms. Chimbolo called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Ms. Chimbolo introduced Amber Wilson as the new recording secretary. The board members and staff introduced themselves to her.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Oral: None

B. Written:

- i. Department Reports: Included in the packet were reports from Maintenance and the School Nurse for review. Ms. Chimbolo noted that at the end of the Maintenance Report it states that Mike Tuomisto rented a power washer and cleaned up the graffiti on the school. She suggested publicly acknowledging Mr. Paul's efforts with a letter from the board thanking him and the board agreed.
- ii. Letter of Resignation: On page 12 in the packet is a resignation letter from Kari Williams. Mr. Bixby **moved** to accept the resignation. Mr. Pace seconded the motion and the motion passed with 5 approvals. Mr. Seiple questioned why the board needed to approve the resignation letter and Ms. Chimbolo replied that the board is ultimately responsible (based on the law) for hiring, firing, accepting resignations and approving contracts.
- iii. Wade Group: Included in the packet was a letter from the Wade Group thanking Ms. Chimbolo and other members of the board for meeting with them to discuss their proposal for establishing a 25-megawatt biomass power plant in Ludlow. Mr. Seiple questioned why they sent the letter. Ms. Chimbolo advised that the Wade Group is reaching out to the community to help their permitting process.
- iv. Teacher Negotiations: On page 17 in the packet is a letter from Janis Helberg indicating the Ludlow Education Association's intent to open contract negotiations. Ms. Chimbolo will be contacting her to schedule the first negotiations meeting.

III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

Student representatives, Melissa Goraj and Chantel Marechaux, reported their plans to have Winter carnival possibly in February. The Student Council is still in the planning stages. They reported that their recent yard sale was very successful. They also reported an upcoming event called Locks of Love where high school and elementary students, both male and female, with hair at least 10 inches long have their hair cut off and donated to cancer patients. They plan to do this in December and again in the spring. Mr. Seiple stated that the students should advertise the event to increase participation. Mr. Karner suggested inviting Mt. Holly students to participate.

IV. BUSINESS ITEMS:

A. Minutes: September 19, 2006, Special Meeting; September 20, 2006, Regular Meeting; October 3, 2006, Board Retreat. Mr. Pace **moved** to accept the minutes as written. Mr.

Bixby seconded and the motion passed with five members in favor.

B. Approval of Orders: A/P #'s 11, 12; P/R #'s 8/9. Mr. Slivka questioned the legality of sending a \$4700 payment that was approved in an unwarned meeting, namely a phone call between Ms. Chimbolo and Mr. Karner, Mr. Seiple, Mr. Pace & Mr. Bixby. Ms. Chimbolo advised Mr. Slivka that he couldn't be reached by telephone when she was trying to gain approval. He suggested more notice from the Superintendent's office. Ms. Chimbolo advised that when the board changes meeting dates, that creates a problem with possible late fees and finance charges. This issue prompted a lengthy discussion on possible solutions (e.g. possible committee to warrant bills, internal auditor, emergency meetings, pre-approval of certain bills (such as electric, telephone, payroll, etc.) versus the current procedure (i.e. approval by a consensus to make payment, then official approval at the meeting after payment has been made). Mr. Pace suggested that Mr. Perotti propose a logistical procedure that meets legal requirements and still solves this problem. Mr. Perotti questioned how would the board limit the authority of a group or individual once appointed to that position.

Mr. Karner **moved** to approve A/P #'s 11 and 12 and P/R #'s 8 and 9 pending verification of funds availability. Mr. Pace seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Financial Reports: Ms. Chimbolo reported that the financial reports were not complete since Edie did not feel comfortable making projections this early except in regards to salaries and benefits. Supplies, materials, equipment, and fuel, etc. are variable. She projects using the budget amount for each down to a zero balance. According to Mr. Seiple the forecast should be the budget amount until she knows different. Edie is already aware of a deficit in the benefits budget since the previous principal did not elect to have insurance coverage through the school. She will work on projecting where to meet that deficit. There is a variance report online so she may be able to identify areas where the school can save money. There was discussion on possibly having a deficit year, and how to meet the budget expectations the next year. There was also discussion about the board approving contracts that lead to deficit spending.

D. Special Education Presentation: Dr. Joan Frangiose advised the board that on October 15, 2006 she had to file a report to the state special education board with her projections on U39's special education services for next year, including projected number of students for school year 2009/2010. The special education department currently has three special educators at Black River High School (2 at the middle school; 1 at the high school). There are a number of options for meeting the special education needs of the students. Ms. Frangiose reported that there are resource rooms for both high school and middle school students. There is also the Occupational Development Program in Springfield, the Life Skills class (which is basically an internal ODP), and the Gateway Program in Springfield.

Ms. Frangiose reported that the Life Skills class had 2 students last year and has 8 students this year. Students learn math and business skills in the class and since it is in house, students can go back to mainstream to participate in specials such as music, art, etc.

Ms. Frangiose reported that the FY'08 is projected to decrease by 3.49% next year since there are currently 2 seniors with 1:1 paraeducators who will be graduating. In addition it costs the school \$20,000 per student to send students to the ODP and as more students migrate to the Life Skills class, that is less tuition the school has to pay.

Ms. Frangiose reported that the state's focus in special education is transition services such as school to work plans in the student's IEP. Mr. Perotti, Mr. Frail, and Ms. Frangiose met with Micah Ferguson from the state education board to discuss the goals

for students with disabilities with regard to transition services. There are four phases: career exploration, career assessment, career training and cooperative experience. She is looking into options to meet these goals, such as voc. rehab., HCRS and onsite personnel (at a level between para-educator and teacher). Currently there is one student in the Life Skills class who needs a job. Ms. Frangiose has applied for a grant for the position's stipend. Mr. Perotti advised that there are a few mainstream students who could benefit from these transition services.

V. HDEC/RVTC REPORT:

Mr. Karner reported that HDEC has a new director, Shane O'Keefe, who will begin work on October 30. He will be replacing Julie Ladieu-Walton as director.

Mr. Karner reported that the number of students at HDEC/RVTC has increased from 310 last year to 344 this year. He is currently working with the HDEC board on the budget. The HDEC board meets on November 1, and he will report on the budget at the next U39 meeting. Mr. Seiple asked where the areas of growth are at HDEC. Mr. Karner reported that Emergency Services is one area of growth and the center had to separate Fire Sciences from Police Services to accommodate that growth. Another area of growth is the Electronic Engineering program which now includes students from all over the state (with the help of tele-educating).

Mr. Karner also reported that Fall Mountain will now be sending their students to HDEC After having worked out some state issues.

VI. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

A. Crisis Plan Update: The Crisis Team has added 3 more members to the team (school nurse, office secretary, assistant principal). The team will meet with Public Safety to discuss several issues such as bussing all students K-12. Mr. Pace asked where the evacuation locations are. Mr. Frail discussed several tentative locations and is trying to finalize that list. Mr. Seiple advised that once the evacuation locations are finalized that the Team shouldn't make them public knowledge in the case of someone trying to target students.

Mr. Slivka asked that a one-page summary of the evacuation plan be posted in all classrooms and that the substitutes receive the summary in their packets. Mr. Frail reported that this morning the students participated in a discussion with three main topics: Do you feel safe at school? What are your safety concerns? What could the school do differently to make you feel more safe?. After briefly reviewing discussions Mr. Frail reported that most students feel safe, but wouldn't want to return to school after a crisis. In the event of a crisis efforts will be made to contact parents of 7th, 8th, and 9th graders. The Elementary School teachers have a kit with emergency contact information for each student. The High School is working on such a kit (It becomes difficult with passing periods and lunch periods). Mr. Slivka suggested that the Crisis Team have someone to direct parents to where kids are and more importantly, away from the scene.

There was discussion about Tuesday's bomb scare message left on an office voice mail. After speaking with the police chief the administration advised faculty and student of the situation and also sent a letter to parents explaining the situation. There was discussion about security options such as phones in all the classrooms with the ability to call the office and interrupt any other phone call there; motion activated security cameras. The school's infrastructure would need to be updated to be able to integrate the technology with the security. The original bond and building renovation plan were put on hold until the board could determine in which direction they wanted the school to go.

B. School Action Plan: Mr. Frail distributed his report to board members for review. There was discussion on some of the items.

- i. Item #7 regarding the Act 176 Meeting: Mr. Frail advised that all schools have to have a program in place for students age 16 to 21 who have dropped out of school to return to get a diploma.
- ii. Item #8 regarding Rediker training: It is a database with strong security with all student information (directory information, parent information, scheduling, nursing) stored in it. Access is granted on a “need-to-know” basis.
- iii. Item #9 regarding VT Lead It: Mr. Frail is looking for interest in involvement from other board members (in addition to Ms. Chimbolo). The program introduces new ways for technology involvement in sharing learning.
- iv. Item #11 regarding the Community Dialogue Night: Mr. Frail would like a board member present (in addition to himself and Mr. Perotti) to answer any questions. The dialogue is a BRAC sponsored event, but there are likely to be questions involving the two recent crises at the school. Mr. Seiple advised he would attend as the board rep.
- v. Item #18 regarding Winter Coaches: There was discussion on possibilities for a snowboarding coach. Mr. Seiple **moved** to accept the Athletic Director’s recommendations for winter coaches as follows: JV Girls Basketball: Luigi Valente; Varsity Girls Basketball: Lou Seier; Varsity boys Basketball: Donald Phelps; MS Girls Basketball: Pete Pollender; Varsity Alpine Ski: Colin McKaig; JV Boys Basketball: Michael Sorrentino. Mr. Pace seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- A. RWSU update-Board Policies, Insurance, Staff Development:
 - i. Policies: Board approved updated policies with the other schools.
 - ii. Insurance: Suzanne from IPG is educating the board on options with insurance and how the insurance will work.
 - iii. Staff Development: Mr. Perotti received an update on the Danielson Model and will use Danielson as framework for staff development. Susan Valente is establishing peer coaching and mentor training. Mr. Perotti is working on changes in policy to reflect in contract and should have a presentation within a month
- B. Budget Schedule: Mr. Perotti passed out the budget schedule and advised the board that the schedule listed suggested dates and that there could be more dates listed than necessary should the budget get approved early.

Mr. Seiple asked if the board would move the budget vote to Town Meeting. Ms. Chimbolo advised that the board needs to place a warning for that proposal for the annual school district board meeting in April and then ask for a vote at that meeting to get the budget voted on during Town Meeting beginning in March, 2008, meeting

- C. Commissioner Cates’ Visit: Commissioner Cate’s report was positive for High Schools on the Move. The commissioner met with students and teachers, and attended a faculty meeting. He stated that he was pleased that the school’s parents, teachers, and students are involved with moving forward. Mr. Perotti stated that he felt the commissioner is supportive of small schools and that this school needs to be proactive in moving forward.
- D. NECAP: The NECAP results for 10th grade testing in reading and math have been reported. Mr. Perotti reminded the board that these results are from the October 2005 testing to measure what 10th grade students at that time had learned in 9th grade. Mr. Perotti distributed the results to the board along with a comparison to the state results for their review. Mr. Perotti stated that all schools in the district made AYP and he will check on the report.

Mr. Seiple asked if the school’s curriculum development is linked to state and federal standards. Mr. Perotti said that it is graduated based on grade equivalents in specific subjects, and that teachers have input on grade equivalents. Mr. Perotti also reminded the board that student success is not just based on NECAP results.

- E. Southeast Superintendents Meeting: Mr. Perotti met with the Southeast Superintendents and discussed regional transportation. The new Superintendent of the Hartford School District advised that at his previous district in Maine, they had unified transportation. Mr. Perotti suggested that transportation unification could be more efficient for this district. The unification could incorporate the River Valley bus service, the Ludlow municipal bus service, and the school bus service. He would also have to look at the transportation needs of the area, as well as drivers, standards, regulations, and maintenance requirements to meet that goal.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Old Business: None

B. New Business:

- i: Jamaica Resolution: Included in packets was a proposed resolution that was suggested at RWSU to call for the Repeal of the Vermont Statewide Property Tax. Mr. Seiple advised that there are a group of towns trying to gain support for this action so that a new procedure can be proposed to replace Act 60/68. Several Vermont towns and organizations within the towns are adopting such resolutions to let their representatives know how their constituents are feeling

Mr. Pace **moved** to accept resolution as written. Mr. Bixby seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Bixby advised that copies should be sent to the Office of the Speaker of the House, and the President Pro-Tem. In addition copies should be sent to the state representatives for Ludlow and Mount Holly and to the Rutland Herald and Burlington Free Press.

- ii: Meeting Cancellations: Mr. Bixby asked how cancellation notices are sent out. Ms. Chimbolo advised that Maggie Mayfield in Mr. Perotti's office sends cancellation notice to all parties that received notice of meeting in the first place. Mr. Bixby suggested that Maggie make sure that LPCTV is also aware of the cancellations as they tried to attend and record the last meeting that had been cancelled. Ms. Chimbolo advised that that particular meeting was cancelled during the previous meeting and therefore LPCTV should have been made aware at that time. Also Ms. Chimbolo suggested that board members contact Maggie with their daytime phone numbers so that she can contact them immediately in the case of an emergency cancellation.

IX. POLICY:

- A. Review: Included in packets were proposed VTSBA policies and current U39 policies on Weapons, Student Records, Grade Advancement: Retention, Promotion & Acceleration of Students for review. Ms. Chimbolo distributed a proposed U39 policy on Weapons which combined the proposed VTSBA and current U39 policies for review by the Board. She asked that each member review the proposed U39 policy and note questions, and possible changes for the next meeting. She anticipates taking three meetings of review and discussion before adopting the policies. Ms. Chimbolo suggested working with the RWSU policies to adopt the same policies so there is consistency between LES, MHES, and BRHS for students/parents when they advance from elementary school to high school.

Mr. Karner suggested that Mr. Frail remind students that, since hunting season is approaching, they should not bring firearms to school in their vehicles.

X. **TO-DO LIST:** See above

XI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

XII. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Seiple **moved** to adjourn at 9:40. Mr. Karner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: Special Meeting, Nov 15, 2006, Mount Holly Elementary School Library,
6:00p.m. Regular Meeting, Nov 15, 2006, Mount Holly Elementary School Library, 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Reporting Secretary