

Ludlow Elementary School / Union # 39 Joint School Board

Special Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2006

Black River High School

Library

Warned 7:00 PM (emergency postponement (rewarning) for 8:00 PM)

Board Members:

LES: Wayne Hammond, Angi Benson- Ciufu, Doug Ficken, Beth Merrill

Union # 39: Diana Chimbolo, Randy Bixby, Ralph Pace, Brent Karner, Allen Seiple,

Staff: Ms. Karen Trimboli Principal, LES. Mr. Michael Ripley: Assistant Principal, BRHS; Dr. Joan Frangiose

Other Staff/ Public in Attendance:

Susan Barton, Amanda Brown, Lisa Weiss, Liz Crowley, Jane Rebhan, Lisa Hammond, Connie Wilcox, Shona Trimboli

- I. Call to Order: Mr. Hammond** called the meeting to order at 8:25 PM. Due to having to make-up events such as Vermont night and the Sports Banquet the start of the special meeting was delayed this evening. Several members and faculty were at these events, thus the meeting was moved up to begin 8:00; however, the event ran over in time. Some members of the board were present and public in attendance. **Mr. Hammond** began with an apology for the late start.

Ms. Chimbolo noted that the new board Secretary was not present yet for the matter of taking meeting minutes. **Ms. Merrill** agreed to take minutes.

II. Approval of Minutes

September 18, 2006 Special Meeting; May 8, 2006 Special Meeting. For LES, **Ms. Benson-Ciufu moved** to approve the minutes of September 18, 2006 and May 8, 2006. The **motion** carried unanimously with no changes.

For U-39, **Mr. Karner moved** to approve the minutes of September 18, 2006 and May 8, 2006.

Mr. Pace seconded the motion. It was noted that within the September 18, 2006 minutes there was an error of date stating that there "... need to be made to the July 12, 2006 meeting minutes"

should be replaced with MAY 9, 2006 which is the line just before III. within the minutes. ~~**Mr. Karner seconded**~~ the ~~**motion**~~ to approve the minutes with this change. The **motion** carried unanimously with noted change.

For LES **Ms. Benson-Ciufo** moved to reapprove the minutes with the changes noted by **Ms. Chimbolo**. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Business Items

A. Community Survey:

The Committee has met and is currently rescheduled for December 4, 2006. The reporting of this information is pending this meeting and the full attendance of the Superintendent and time on the agenda it deserves. (see other business items at end of minutes as well).

IV. Other Business:

Discuss make-up days from the recent evacuations due to threats:

Began at 8:35

Mr. Ripley and **Ms. Trimboli** were asked by **Mr. Hammond** if they had a chance to discuss with their faculty proposals for make-up days. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that they had discussed January 15, 2006 and March 15, 2006. One being Martin Luther King Day (1/15/06) and one being a building based Inservice day (3/15/06) for the teachers, which they could make up as an inservice day at the end of the year.

Mr. Ripley stated that they had briefly discussed Martin Luther King Day, which they feel might not work for the high school. They also had discussed the possibility of next week the day before Thanksgiving break but that was too short notice. They had discussed going longer days but they felt that wouldn't work for the elementary school. As long as the board is willing to let the Teachers make up the inservice day from 3/15/06 wouldn't be a problem. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated it seems there is an agreement about the 3/15/06 date. **Mr. Ripley** stated that as long as teachers were here anyway he didn't feel that this was going to make a huge impact upon staff for the 3/15/06 date. **Ms. Benson-Ciufo** stated that a few students might miss attending school on Martin Luther King Day due to the big racing day. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that she feels that tacking on Martin Luther King Day gives you a better learning day than putting them off until the end of the year. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that it is mid-school year and prime learning time to have students learning. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that it sounds like we have our two days. **Mr. Hammond** asked why we aren't looking at our vacation days. **Mr. Ripley** stated that many people already had plans. The Saturday make-ups are also difficult because of some of the students at the High School who have jobs. **Mr. Ripley** stated he has only 6 substitutes. **Mr. Bixby** asked for clarification of days decided upon. **Mr. Ripley** stated 1/15/06 and 3/15/06 with understanding that the teachers make-up the inservice day at the end of the year. **Mr. Seiple** asked

about what would be the next step if another threat occurs and another day needs to be made up. **Mr. Hammond** asked if first the board could make a motion of the make up days.

For LES, **Mr. Ficken** made a **motion** to have 1/5/06 and 3/15/06 as make-up days. The **motion** carried unanimously with LES members present.

Ms. Chimbolo asked Union #39 members if any of the members would like to make a **motion** to approve the days of 1/15/06 and 3/15/06. **Mr. Karner** made a **motion** to have make-up days as 1/15/06 and 3/15/06. **Mr. Pace seconded** this **Motion**. The **motion** carried unanimously with all of those in attendance from Union #39.

Mr. Hammond opened up the floor for discussion around **Mr. Seiple's** concern about when will the next days be made up if there is another issue with an evacuation.

Ms. Trimboli stated that she would be looking for the elementary school to apply for a waiver for the next day if this was to happen again. **Mr. Hammond** stated that he thought the days may have to be added to the end of the school year just as any snow days would be. **Mr. Ficken** stated that he disagrees with these options, that he feels that the students need to feel the impact of the issue and that they should have the days taken from their time more immediately. Some Public members expressed concerns that they make plans with their own children as staff of the school and as parents do during those vacation breaks and it is of concern to think that these times may be taken from them because of only one or perhaps a few individuals spoiling it. Some staff work on vacation weeks from school.

Mr. Karner feels that making the decision about the two make-up days now is not as painful but if we have to do the next one that will be a difficult one. Public individuals stated that they hope we think hard about making the decision of the make-up days if it does happen again. Some Public individuals were concerned that we are punishing the wrong individuals with the make-up days because most likely that individual won't even attend the make-up day. **Dr. Frangiose** expressed concern that the students are missing some crucial educational and learning time in which they are getting only 175 learning days as it is. **Lisa Hammond**, within the audience stated that this issue is not their fault that days have been taken from them. **Dr. Frangiose** stated that she realizes that but that it is a fact and we need to make sure that they get their education and it is their right. **Mr. Ficken** expressed that just adding time on the end of the year does not do any good because it is not optimal learning time. He needs to listen to the teachers. Adding Saturday's and lengthening the school day is too emotional and impacts the students too much, especially at the elementary level. **Ms. Trimboli** asked that as much as the school's can be united she agrees but she will be asking for a waiver because they are not seniors; this is an emotional issue and should be decided upon based upon developmental levels. **Ms. Merrill** stated that maybe it would be a compromise to look at the April break. The weather is a little nicer, the

worst case scenario would be they could come back early from April break and they will be told ahead of time. Some other school districts have done this if they are going to do construction. This will give the message to kids of all ages not to do these types of threats. Several members stated that all kids don't need this message. **Ms. Merrill** stated that this may assist with helping students to listen to their peers, don't judge their peers, this is a community and it should be a sense of belonging. There is a reason that this person has decided to make these choices and it can provide a lesson for others of whatever age. **Mr. Pace** stated that waiting until April break is a long time to wait if a threat and evacuation if needed happened within the next few months. The message should be more immediate. **Mr. Seiple** stated that he is confused as to why if it snows it is added to the end of the year, why is this any different. **Ms. Merrill** asked if she could propose that if this occurs again and there is a need for another make-up day that we have an emergency meeting within so many days (maybe 10) of the incident and we decide then what the day will be. It doesn't appear we can decide now without further input. **Mr. Seiple** stated that there shouldn't be anymore meetings. **Mr. Hammond** stated that he agrees that we probably won't reach agreement tonight. **Ms. Merrill** stated that the Superintendent is not here and the Principal is not here from BRHS. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that the faculty should be polled as well about what they feel should occur before a decision is made. The administration needs to go to staff to reach the decision and bring back the proposal. **Mr. Hammond** agrees that it is not the boards call. **Ms. Merrill** restated that she feels that it just needs to be a timely decision this time. **Mr. Ripley** stated he will be surprised if this will happen again. The boards discussed the staff members that they share: Mrs. Wilcox, Mr. Fairbanks, and Mrs. Plumb. If they decide different days for make-up these employees would be most impacted as staff. **Mr. Ripley** stated that he feels that the makeup days really don't impact or make a statement for the students that we really want to make a statement for. He gave an example about the vandalism in the park and how students came forward immediately to discuss who had done this. In this case the students don't appear to know or if there are student's who know it is a very small group and they aren't talking. **Mr. Hammond** stated that there needs to be some flexibility about the makeup day if it ends up needing to be done. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that she is bringing what her staff feels, which is to have a waiver if another day is needed. **Mr. Seiple** discussed his opinion in regards to punishment versus consequences versus action. **Ms. Chimbolo** reviewed that the Springfield vocational bus, the Mt. Holly bus, etc. is also a factor. **Mr. Ripley** stated that after the assembly last week he will be surprised if it happens again. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that there is the possibility of evacuating for the day and continuing with the day at another sight. There are only very specific situations that this may be appropriate and ideal. **Mr. Ripley** stated

that this could possibly occur. The High School could educationally continue with the elementary calling the rest of the day and then it could be counted as a day if it goes beyond the allotted time. The public asked if this is the forum to ask the crisis team at the high school to explore this option.

Mr. Hammond stated that this is the appropriate forum. At this time **Mr. Ripley** felt that he needs the time to discuss this with **Mr. Frail** and with the Superintendent when he returns. The next crisis team meeting is tomorrow night which is before having time to meet with the Superintendent about the reality of this plan and what would need to be the circumstances for such a scenario. A member of the public stated that perhaps if a statement is made that if another day is needed to make up then time will be made up of a vacation day it will deter a future incident. **Mr. Ripley** stated that the people you want to hurt won't show up. Vacation days won't impact them. **Mr. Hammond** asked if there was anything else that anyone wants to add because it is obvious that this evening we were not going to reach a decision.

A lot of work has been done since the first incident but a lot of time passed before an answer about when the make up time would occur so that is what she was trying to get at with needing to have a policy around or a meeting soon after the incident to come up with the make up time. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that it should be part of the crisis plan follow-up. **Ms. Merrill** discussed how she was looking at the wording on the school calendar which is unclear and implies that the makeup days are at the end of the year and not for just snow days. That she and **Mr. Ficken** had been reviewing the High School calendar wording while waiting for the meeting to begin. **Mr. Hammond** asked if **Mr. Ficken** would read it word for word as it states on the calendar. **Mr. Ficken** "June 8th 175th day of school any school day that will need to be made up due to any cancellations will be made up after June 11th." This is unusual wording because it doesn't directly state snow days. This technically includes the days we are speaking about. **Mr. Seiple** asked if it was ~~that it was~~ the high school board that approved this calendar. He is frustrated that people are looking at it as if it is punishment still rather than makeup. Individuals from the public discussed that there are many students who want to see something being done.

Ms. Merrill asked if each board (LES and High School) propose their own makeup for the next makeup days if it occurs to keep it simple. **Mr. Hammond** stated that his only concern would be that if the LES comes up with a different time than the BRHS schedule and siblings have different time off. This may pose a challenge for a family. The high school needs to keep working on items they are proposing as options including the recent pressures of the rescheduling of the sports banquet, etc.

Mr. Seiple asked if there was a crack down on passes during classes in order to keep closer track of who was in the bathroom. **Mr. Ripley** stated that this system has been completely tightened up, with a

few circumstances that are tough. Times of transition when a student is returning from the other building and they use the bathroom without the pass is one such example. Mr. Seiple stated that keeping track of students going to the restroom is important. Mr. Ripley stated that we can't assume that this is the only place there will be a bomb threat. There may be other places such as a note dropped in the hallway. **Ms. Chimbolo** discussed the two cameras that the Chittenden bank has given to the school that will be put inside. Okemo Mountain has offered through Bruce Schmidt to loan to the school for a few months for a part of the parking lot an outside camera. The students will know where this is. A member of the audience discussed how many cameras the school needs and what security updates do the schools need. The parents can assist with fundraisers to help out. **Ms. Chimbolo** discussed other security issues as well with locked down doors, detailed plans as well that are being looked at thoroughly with companies rather than just cameras. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that cameras aren't going to stop the issue necessarily but can assist with identifying the students. This may deter the students from these choices if they are angled towards the entrances into the areas. **Ms. Merrill** stated that she knows that individuals in the room knows this but she feels that she hopes that people know that these kids are the adults of the future and that curriculum, teaching morals, about being positive citizens is just as important as cameras and locked doors. This is a symptom of something bigger going on. She stated that she hopes that people are listening in other ways too. **Ms. Trimboli** stated that LES has the responsive classroom model, big buddies programs, etc. is being done. **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that **Mr. Frail** has spoken with another district that had similar issues that put into action many heavy duty security actions such as "handholding" kids to the bathrooms, backpack searching, cameras everywhere and it made the situation more tense (they would never do it this way again). **Ms. Chimbolo** stated that the mentoring program at BRHS is a positive force and people should sign up to help with those things. **Ms. Trimboli** wants to reiterate that it is only a few kids. **Ms. Merrill** stated that we need to stand true to the fact that it is only a few students. We need to be careful about adding so much reaction and power because the kids are starting to get judgmental as well. The system needs to make sure that they stand true to their curriculum and not stop believing in their students choices by putting in a hundred cameras or like we were saying at last night's meeting a few of the students are talking about beating up the responsible kid in the community. **Mr. Hammond** stated they may beat up the wrong kid. Mr. Ripley stated that we also don't know that all of the threats were made by the same person or not and whether all threats were made by a student at our school. **Mr. Ripley** stated that **Mr. Frail** asked him to share that he will be locking the front door during the day. At night the maintenance will be locking all of the doors once the students leave. The chief has been asked to park in the parking lot in the morning rather than up the street so there is a

presence. **Mr. Ripley** stated that relaying to the high school students how this is affecting the younger students is important. He has shared with them how his children felt when he entered the building on the Thursday that nobody was to be in the building. The High School has a student assistance team that is taking a closer look at some of the students with emotional challenges to see if they can assist them better. Many of the updated high school improvements will be going home in a letter to the parents. **Mr. Hammond** asked about the attendance. **Mr. Ripley** stated that all students that came to school that day attended. A discussion then occurred around a phone tree at the high school. **Ms. Chimbolo** asked for parents to sign up to volunteer for calling others when there is early release for high school students. **Ms. Shona Trimboli** asked why there wasn't a PTG at the high school. This group doesn't exist at the high school level. **Ms. Karen Trimboli** reviewed some security needs at the LES but there is a need for the funds. A system needs to be setup rather than a key lock system. The lock (keypad) in question needing to be installed runs \$2700 in order to add a more secure access between the music/ art/ gym/ etc. area. **Ms. Karen Trimboli** is willing to speak to parents, etc. if there is a group of individuals willing to develop a plan for fundraising. **Mr. Ripley** discussed the telephone tracing system which is currently being worked upon as well.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Back to Community survey:

Mr. Hammond stated Jerry from the center for research was not ready to report the results in full form so December 4th will be the committee's next review.

Teacher Negotiation:

Ms. Chimbolo stated that the negotiation committee is meeting Friday November 17th at 6:30. The board members discussed which members are part of the teacher negotiations committee. That this committee will meet with the teachers just after Thanksgiving break. The target will be a meeting before the Joint board meeting which is set for November 29, 2006.

V. Executive Session

No need

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Ficken moved to adjourn at 9:45 PM. All of those in attendance approved.

Mr. Karner moved to adjourn at 9:45 PM. **Mr. Seiple** seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Merrill, Clerk

LES

