1	Mont Vernon School Board
2	Wednesday, February 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2021
3	Meeting Minutes- Approved 03 11 2021
4	Attendees:
5 6 7	Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent, Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business Administrator, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Dr. Kim Sarfde- Principal of the Mont Vernon Village School.
8 9	Mont Vernon Village School Board: Chair- Sarah Lawrence, Vice Chair- Peter Eckhoff, Secretary- Scott St. Denis, Stephen O'Keefe and Jessica Hinckley.
10	Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta
11	Public: MVSD Moderator, Mr. Peter King and Mont Vernon Community Members
12	I. Call to Order
13 14	Chair of the Mont Vernon School Board, Ms. Sarah Lawrence, called the Meeting to order at 6:00PM.
15 16	Today, we will be conducting a School board meeting of the Mont Vernon School Board.
17 18	Before we get started, I'll read through a checklist to ensure that the meeting that we are holding is in compliance with the Right-to-Know Law.
19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26	As Chairperson of the Mont Vernon School Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order Number 12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 and its extensions, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.
27 28	In accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that:
29 30 31 32 33 34 35	1. We are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possible by video and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the committee and selected legislative staff have the ability to communicate contemporaneously in this meeting through this platform. And the public has access to contemporaneously watch and or listen to the meeting on Zoom and via phone by following the directions and links provided on our website: www.sau39.org.
36 37	2. We have provided public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting.
38 39 40	3. We are providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anyone has a problem, please email <a href="mailto:awallace@sau39.org">awallace@sau39.org</a> .

42 4. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will be adjourned and rescheduled.

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5. Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

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6. Finally, let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence please also state where they are and if anyone else is in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law.

- Roll Call: O'Keefe- Home and alone, Hinckley- Home and alone, Lawrence- Home and alone,
- 52 St. Denis- Home and alone, Eckhoff- Home and alone.
- 53 II. Public Comment I of II
- Ms. Lawrence asked the public to please use the "raise your hand feature" to address the Board.
- There will be a second Public Comment time later on during the meeting.
- 56 No Public Comment
- 57 III. Consent Agenda
- Ms. Lawrence proposed to pull item #4 MVVS Early Start Time and asked to pull the 4. Early
- 59 Start Item and #7 Facilities Update.
- 60 Mr. O'Keefe motioned to accept 1. Draft Minutes Jan 14th, 2021-PH, 2. Draft Minutes Jan
- 26th ,2021, 3. Feb 2021 Principal's Report and 6. MVSD Annual Financial Report. Ms.
- 62 Hinckley seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.
- 63 Mr. Lawrence called a roll call: Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, St. Denis- Yes, O'Keefe- yes,
- 64 and Hinckley- Yes.
- 65 Ms. Lawrence went back to item #4 Early Start Time.
- 66 She added that Dr. Kim Sarfde, MVVS Principal, is in attendance.
- 67 Principal Sarfde added that there would be probably be a need for early morning and afterschool
- childcare. That is something that she and CW Principal, Ms. Anna Parrill, have been looking
- 69 into. They have called, the YMCA, New Mornings etc., if they have enough participation, they
- 70 can offer different options to families.
- 71 Ms. Lawrence requested Principal Sarfde to explain the changes.
- 72 Principal Sarfde replied that the start times have not changed much, it is a 35-minute difference.
- 73 With regards to dismissal they are looking at 2:40PM. They are taking advantage of daylight
- hours and can accommodate the changes at the Middle and High School.
- 75 Ms. Lawrence asked about the bussing in the morning.
- 76 Principal Sarfde replied that they would figure that out with the bus company.

- 77 Ms. Lawrence asked Superintendent Steel.
- 78 Mr. Steel replied that he does not have one at this time but is confident that they will.
- 79 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the types of supports they can offer the families and the feedback from
- 80 faculty and staff in regard to the changes.
- Principal Sarfde explained that she worked with the President of the MVEA and it is
- 82 overwhelmingly positive. She has not heard of anything negative.
- 83 In regard to New Mornings, she has reached out to them and their program time would start at
- 7:00AM, the daily rate would be \$6.00 and that would include fun crafts and games. The after-
- school time would go from dismissal time to 6:00PM and they would include crafts, gym games.
- 86 This would be if they had enough participation.
- 87 IV. Correspondence
- Ms. Lawrence noted that she has an email to add to Correspondence.
- 89 *"2/1/21*

91 Dear Mont Vernon School Board,

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- I am writing hoping for some clarification. I come to you from my parent hat, however as an SAU employee, there will inevitably be some overlap. I have been a lifelong resident of Amherst, I have 3 children (2 at SHS, and 1 at AMS), and consider myself to be well connected in our
- 96 community. I have read the studies and have an understanding as to the reasoning for the
- 97 proposed time change. I do however, have some other questions I was hoping you could help
- 98 answer for me. I have not been able to watch all the board meetings, or pore through all the
- 99 board minutes. I am a single mom, working full time AND part time, with 3 kids and often just
- don't logistically have the time or bandwidth do so. On top of this, as we are all aware, the
- mental health needs of our schools have had a high acuity as of late, and much of my energy is
- poured into addressing those needs. I only add this to express that because I have not been able
- to watch meetings or speak out before, does not negate the fact that this is an issue I am
- 104 following, am interested in, and invested in. I rely on the elected members of the board to make
- best decisions on my behalf, and so I am coming to you directly with some hopes for
- clarification. I love this town, this community, and this school system. Because of that, I felt the
- need to speak out, something I have never done before, as I have been so pleased with the workdone thus far!

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110 I thought the best way to communicate my questions is to make a list, as I am trying to
111 understand where things stand on this issue, and what I can expect for myself as a parent and
112 employee for next year.

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• Is this a "done deal"? What exactly is the new proposed time? I am hearing different thoughts on this, and most people say they have no idea what is actually happening.

- People are saying they feel blindsided and without a voice. The only time change I see is 8:45-3:45, but I am hearing people say there may be other options.
  - When was the last time you surveyed individuals about their interest in the time change? I am under the understanding it was 2-3 years ago? I believe in the minutes I read that the last survey showed 45% in favor. Would that mean that 55% (or majority) were against it? What population was surveyed? Our world looks so different than it did even just one year ago. I'd be curious if we are using the current pulse on where people are at. We also have had many new employees in that time that didn't have an opportunity to weigh in and capture their thoughts.
  - Is there just a focus on SHS? Is this primarily driven by the SHS schedule? In all that I've been reading, it only seems to reference SHS what about the other schools in the SAU as they will also be greatly affected?
  - When was AMS staff asked about how they felt about the time change? Where does Clark/Wilkins fit into this? Mont Vernon Village School? How does this affect their daily schedule?
  - I am hearing of a schedule at SHS that would incorporate a "flex" period at 3pm to allow for students who need to work, sports, etc to be able to leave at this time, but it would allow all students to use the time as they see fit- whether that is staying for extra help or going home to work on things. Is this the case? Do we propose that most students will stay until 3:45 (aside from those that have to because of transportation issues)? Would students be allowed to leave at 3 to get to a job when it's actually considered academic time? Wouldn't that be a conflict with the DOE "rules"? If this is the case, my daughter will lose her 3-6pm job at the Boys and Girls Club which will certainly negatively affect her college resume. Yikes. So many repercussions in that alone.
  - If the SHS students can potentially leave at 3, how does this affect AMS students who may rely on siblings for rides home after school?
  - I am hearing that clubs can be held before school. Can you explain how this differs from students coming in early for school to attend clubs? If a student wants to be in a club they have to come in early, thus starting their day at the earlier time we are trying to avoid?
  - Has Community Council been told this is a "done deal" and they are only now having a voice in voting on the proposed schedules? My son is on Community Council and has this understanding. Is he wrong?
  - Are the students in favor of this? Have they been surveyed recently not about the schedule change- but about the time change specifically?

• What is the information with minutes vs days based? Is there an option that we have shorter days and extend the school year? Our SAU gets out at least one week earlier than surrounding districts. Is this a potential compromise? Certainly, there are studies about gaps that develop over long breaks in instruction.

- Do you feel 3:45 is a fair time for students to get out of school and get home? Will the Mont Vernon students who can have up to a 45-minute bus ride be home around 4:30 when during daylight savings has it dark at that point? Again, many studies on daylight and mental health. Perhaps a later release works in other parts of our country. We live in the Northeast where it is cold and dark and need to account for this.
- What about staff that may have a second job in the afternoon/evening? I have a second job a couple of nights a week where I am on call for local hospitals doing psych assessments. Having a later start/end time may impact this, and I wonder about other staff or parents who may be in a similar position? (On another note I have seen an uptick in activity there as well with increased hospital visits for mental health needs thus showing the overall acuity of needs at this time during the pandemic.)

Given my career path, my lens always has been and always will be mental health, and in this case that of our students and staff. I understand the data about sleep cycles. Certainly, sleep is a large factor in our mental health – that evidence is clear. However, I do have some concerns about later release, as it does not give the students a large opportunity for a "break" from school to evening. Some students need this time to decompress, get outside, participate in preferred activities, be with family, etc. The nature of daylight plays a large factor in our mental health. There is something to be said about the correlation of the uptick in mental health needs during the winter months - especially in the Northeast.

I would also like to emphasize my main concern in all of this: and this is for people's ability to sustain another large change. This pandemic has changed all of our lives. We are all longing for a return to "normalcy". We await it each day. There seems to be hope with talk of vaccines and changes in trends of the virus. To add in another big change at this time has me concerned. I work within the school and have a pulse on the staff. People are really struggling. Teachers are stretched thin. They have risen to a demand like no other. And they have done exceedingly well. But I am hearing that people are not in favor of the change right now, and just feel helpless and burnt out to be able to speak up about it. I have heard things from "I had no idea this was happening now", to "I hate it", to "there's nothing we can do about it now". In fact, a staff member used the word "defeated" to me recently. I have seen some in tears.

I have not yet met any staff or parent that is excited about this. In fact I have heard parents talking about looking for alternative schools for their children and staff looking for other jobs that better fit their already taxed schedules. In my professional opinion and "boots to the ground" experience, people cannot handle another big change right now. Please understand that people are at their breaking point. This is why we may be seeing different reactions from indifference to anger. People are burnt out.

Other large topics have been deferred. Can this possibly be revisited as well? We are all collectively grieving the loss of what was once familiar. It's difficult to make good decisions during times of grief. I think you would relieve the unnecessary pressure on parents and staff to plan for significant changes in the face of a current uncertain world, allow for some space for a sense of return to normalcy, and truly help assuage the rising mental health needs across our schools and community – ultimately you'd be doing what is in the best interest for our students at this time, which is what this is all about to begin with.

Your hard work on these difficult topics and decisions has not gone unnoticed. As I mentioned earlier, I rely on the board members I have elected to make best decisions for our school community. I, in turn, ask you rely on those of us who are living this daily and reporting back to you about our concerns based on what we are seeing and experiencing. Let's work together and come up with a good plan. There is time. There is no rush to make changes right now in the midst of a global crisis. In times such as this, our focus needs to be on the mental health and safety of our community. I feel right now this change will negatively affect that. I appreciate your time and consideration.

213 Sincerely,

215 Kim Wyborney"

Mr. O'Keefe noted that our four school boards began research into a change of our school start times in 2018 after a parent raised the issue at one of our board meetings. As a result of that feedback, we formed a school start time committee which subsequently presented its findings to the SAU School Board on Oct 2, 2018. (<a href="https://youtu.be/KojKRJoEuBc?t=3300">https://youtu.be/KojKRJoEuBc?t=3300</a>).

After the presentation, the board then directed our administration to move forward with next steps in the process.

(https://www.sau39.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=3823&dataid=9038&
 FileName=2018-10-02%20SAU%2039%20Approved%20Meeting%20Minutes.pdf) pages 6-8

- On January 24, 2019, the SAU Board received an update from the Superintendent and voted to request the district administration review logistical issues and report back to the full board no later than November 2019.
- (https://www.sau39.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=3823&dataid=9025
   &FileName=2019-%2001%2024%20SAU%2039%20Minutes-%20Approved.pdf
   Pages 4-5

- On October 22, 2019 our Superintendent presented his findings to the full SAU School Board where the board voted to implement the start time changes effective for the 2021-2022 school year.
- ( <a href="https://www.sau39.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=3823&dataid=9564">https://www.sau39.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=3823&dataid=9564</a>
   &FileName=10 22 19 SAU Draft Minutes- Approved- with NP 2.pdf ). Pages 4-6

On November 19, 2020 the SAU School Board voted to "set" the new school times for next year.

- 241 (https://www.sau39.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=3823&dataid=10653
- 242 <u>&FileName=11 19 2020 SAU Minutes Draft1.pdf. Page 14-17)</u>

- 244 That vote also requested the Superintendent review and research "interconnected factors" and
- report to the SAU School Board at the February 2021 meeting. That vote also stipulated an
- option to repeal the decision to change the school start times if needed. (See page 17 of the
- 247 above link)

- Ms. Lawrence added that the Amherst School Board will discuss it on the 8<sup>th</sup> and the Souhegan
- on the 15<sup>th</sup>. She expects it to be discussed at the SAU Board meeting. The wheels have been
- 251 turning for several years and there was a lot of opportunity for staff and community input.
- 252 She asked Principal Sarfde if the students were polled.
- 253 Principal Sarfde replied that she does not know if the students were polled. It is a proposal and
- 254 did not want to send the message that this was definitely happening.
- Mr. Steel added that the one thing that ties them together is the bus transportation. The process
- was well detailed by Mr. O'Keefe and it was a multi-year process. The Principals will be
- presenting their plans and each board can adopt the new schedule. They will discuss it at the
- 258 SAU Board and then begin the process.
- 259 Ms. Lawrence asked for questions from the Board.
- She added that the one piece that is the wild card is the bus transportation.
- 261 She asked for other Board Member comments.
- 262 Mr. Eckhoff added that he is not 100% sold, there are a lot of family, sporting and family
- logistics to consider. He does not want to surprise anyone. Everyone has done their job with a lot
- of research and polling, although he is not 100% in.
- Mr. O'Keefe added that he believes that this in the best interest of the students.
- Mr. St. Denis echoed Mr. O'Keefe. Their goal as a community, as a Board and an educational
- system is to do what is best for the students. It will provide them more opportunities in the
- afternoon for enrichment, and activities.
- Ms. Lawrence added that she believes that it is the right thing and the end times are aligned. Kids
- 270 need to be kids in the afternoon. She is behind it and the wild card is the bussing.
- 271 Ms. Hinckley added that she is on board with the change in time. She can see the way the timing
- impacts them, and it will be a positive change for the kids.
- 273 Mr. Steel inquired if they are on board. He is looking for objections and asked if they are in favor
- if proposed and support it if it becomes the final plan.
- 275 Mr. O'Keefe added that he wants to be able to provide resources to ease them into the school
- 276 year.

- V. Public Comment for Proposed Start Times
- 278 No Public Comment
- 279 Mr. O'Keefe motioned to accept consent agenda item #4. Early Start Times. The Board
- 280 supports the Superintendent's Proposed Start Times. Mr. St. Denis seconded the motion.
- The motion passed (4-1)
- Mr. Lawrence called a roll call: Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- No, St. Denis- Yes, O'Keefe- yes,
- 283 and Hinckley- Yes.
- Ms. Lawrence went to #5 FY' 21 Cap. Reserve Trust Funds- Dec and #7. Dec. Facilities Update.
- 285 Mr. O'Keefe asked Mr. Roger Preston, SAU #39 Facilities Director, if he could review the
- timeline and how the Capital Reserve Fund helps fund the repairs to the roof.
- Mr. Preston replied that they have reached out to a consultant. They have sent this out to three
- bidders and opened it up to the public. They wanted to make sure the bidders had a good
- reputation. They had a site walk through on Dec 8<sup>th</sup> and answered any questions that that they
- 290 had.

- They have a specific design that calls out all aspects of the roof, how they are going to take it
- apart and how they are going to put the valleys back together. They are reviewing the
- specifications as it pertains to them. They are adding gutters in certain areas. If you look at where
- 294 the additions are done, you can see where it is put together. They will correct that by removing
- 295 the plywood staggering so that is not visible anymore. The last time the roof was done, the
- venting was not removed. In the design detail of the specification, there are a bunch of pictures
- 297 that show the existing conditions. The roof is not breathing up the eaves and they will remedy
- 298 that. It is a 40-year shingle with red copper in the valleys and included unit pricing for certain
- 299 parts in the roof.
- 300 Mr. Steel added that he had a chance today to run the bid by the Mont Vernon Building
- 301 Inspector. They had six questions that they wanted answered.
- 1. Confirmation that they are removing all of the existing roofing- Answer is yes.
- 2. Are they using Ice and Water Shield al the way up- Answer is yes.
- 3. How many courses of Ice and Water Shield are they using in the bid- Answer is 2.
  - 4. What are they doing in the valleys- Answer is open valley with copper.
- 5. What is going on in the venting and is there existing ridge venting- Mr. Preston spoke about that earlier.
- 6. What shingle product shingle underlay, and they are using the proper underlay for the warranty- Answer is Yes, 40-year Certainteed Landmark Pro 2-piece laminated asphalt shingles or equivalent.
- He has forwarded the answers to the Building Inspector and they will continue to engage with
- them to ensure that the project is completed well. They wanted to make sure that they descoped
- 313 the bid and that they are holding them to a tight contract and to their specifications. The contract
- will include the specifications, the RFP and their bid so there will be no confusion.

- 315 Mr. O'Keefe inquired about the bidders and if there are any concerns with the one they are
- 316 proposing.
- 317 Mr. Steel replied that they are having a bid bond and a performance bond provided by this
- 318 bidder. They would do that with any large project.
- 319 MVSD Moderator, Mr. Peter King, provided historical context regarding the roof via the Zoom
- 320 chat feature.
- 321 Ms. Lawrence thanked Mr. King.
- 322 Mr. Lawrence inquired about the other questions.
- 323 Mr. O'Keefe inquired about the timeline.
- Mr. Preston replied July 1<sup>st</sup>-August 20<sup>th</sup>. They want it to be completed before school starts.
- 325 Mr. St. Denis asked about the materials available.
- 326 Mr. Preston replied that they have been in touch with the bidder and the consultant and the
- materials are available down to the copper.
- 328 Mr. Eckhoff inquired if they are rushing into this.
- Mr. Preston replied that this is being proposed for FY 22 and they are right on track. The roof is
- not leaking at this time. They are showing signs of shingles being removed and the laminate as
- well. It is time, or else they are asking for trouble. He feels confident with this.
- 332 Mr. Eckhoff asked if the consultant has ever completed work on other schools and if they ever
- 333 looked at metal roofing.
- 334 Mr. Preston added that the consultant has worked with many schools. He has used this consultant
- in this past district and that is why he thought of bringing them here. He does not know if metal
- would be the best option. They would be dropping the snow load near exterior doors and
- windows whereas the shingles provide a slow melt and they are not having the safety concerns.
- 338 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the CRF having \$311k and they can potentially go forward with the
- 339 second project.
- Mr. Steel added that the HVAC upgrades in classrooms. He will pull up the facilities plan.
- Mr. Preston noted that roof mounted solar was not a viable option because of the roof line was
- facing North. He has not had a chance to look into it but prefers the pedestal mount and it may be
- 343 an option.
- Mr. Eckhoff agreed that the roof line is facing the wrong direction and not provide any financial
- 345 benefit.
- Mr. Steel added that the ventilation in classrooms were targeted for FY' 25, the playground was
- added and the Fire Sprinkler System. They will not need to add a fire sprinkler system as long as

- they maintain the exterior doors to the classroom and do not complete any significant
- renovations, per code.
- 350 Mr. O'Keefe inquired if they can accelerate some of that stuff and do the ventilation systems in
- 351 gradually starting with the older wing.
- 352 Mr. Preston gave his support with the gradual phasing of the HVAC.
- 353 Mr. Steel inquired if they should engage with the HVAC consultant to design a specification.
- 354 Mr. Preston replied yes.
- 355 Mr. Steel asked about the order of magnitude.
- 356 Mr. Preston replied that it is about \$20-25k design and specification.
- 357 Mr. Steel asked the Board if they were interested in starting that process.
- 358 Mr. O'Keefe replied that he would like the savings of the roof to get applied to a meaningful
- project. He would like to get it in motion.
- 360 Ms. Lawrence agreed with Mr. O'Keefe. She is fully on board to do the job the way Mr. Preston
- knows how to do it and in a manner that makes the most sense.
- 362 Ms. Hinckley supported it.
- 363 Mr. Eckhoff questioned if they can stagger the duct work and playground work.
- Ms. Lawrence noted that the HVAC was important to the staff and she would be happy to do the
- 365 playground too.
- 366 Getting the ball rolling.
- 367 Ms. Lawrence asked about the #5 and #7
- 368 Mr. O'Keefe motioned to approve Consent Agenda Items #5 FY' 21 Cap Reserve Trust
- Funds- Dec, #7 Dec. Facilities Update, approve the request for Ridge Runner Construction
- for the amount of \$210,152.00 for Roof Replacement and start the process to research
- enhancements in FY' 21 for HVAC system (seek grants) and begin to put feelers out
- playground equipment. Mr. Eckhoff seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous,
- 373 motion passed.
- Mr. Lawrence called a roll call: Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, St. Denis- Yes, O'Keefe- yes,
- 375 and Hinckley- Yes.
- 376 Mr. Steel noted that he just wanted to remind the Board of the update with the underground
- storage tank repairs (\$16k) and the new mower.
- 378 He asked the Board for questions.
- 379 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the UFB.

- 380 Mr. Steel replied that he does not have that at this time however it is a good amount.
- 381 Mr. O'Keefe and Ms. Lawrence added that they had no questions.
- The Board thanked Mr. Steel and Mr. Preston.
- 383 VI. Public Comment
- 384 No Public Comment
- 385 VII. Meeting Adjourned
- 386 Mr. Eckhoff motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:11PM. Ms. Hinckley seconded the
- motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.
- 388 Mr. Lawrence called a roll call: Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, St. Denis- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes,
- 389 and Hinckley- Yes.