

**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 3, 2011
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Kim Roberge called the board meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present:

Mont Vernon School Board: Trevor Girard, Kim Roberge, John Quinlan, and Bruce Schmidt
Administrative Team: Sue Blair, Nicole Heimarck, Betty Shankel, Renea Sparks, and Karen Taylor
Faculty: Melanie Jones, and Kim Tighe
Budget Committee: Willard Archibald
Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

ATTENDANCE

Board members received a copy of Principals Report dated February 3, 2011, in their board packets.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sue told board members the Geography Bee was held on January 19, 2011, and nine students participated. Sue said Chloe Brisson came in 1st place and she will be moving on to the state level, which is held on April. 1, 2011. Sue said Kristin Meader came in 2nd place and Jared Burnett came in 3rd place.

Sue said the Spelling Bee was held on January 26, 2011, and there were 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th graders that participated. Noah Desrosiers was the winner again this year and he will be moving on to the Regional's, which will be held on Sunday, March 6, 2011, at 1 p.m. at Bishop Guertin High. Sue said Riley Mularien was the runner up.

Sue told board members they held a Title I Math Night for Parents on January 25th, and only two parents attended.

Sue said NECAP results were released on Monday and AYP results will be available in March. Sue said Nicole

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would present on some of the data later on this evening.

Sue said the Reflections Art Program was held on January 20, 2011, and twelve students' work will represent the Mont Vernon Village School at the State Competition.

Sue told board members they had kick off events on Monday and Tuesday with regards to the Read to Feed Program. Sue said this program supports the Heiffer Foundation.

Sue said report cards would be released on Monday, February 7, 2011, not Friday due to some technical issues.

Also provided were some dates for upcoming events.

Kim asked if there were any comments from the public however, there were none.

III. PUBLIC TIME

Dr. Jennings told board members about a Coffee they were hosting for all their Legislator's on February 21, 2011.

Dr. Jennings said they had received several responses back of those who were planning on attending and some have not responded yet. Dr. Jennings asked that all boards try to attend this meeting with their Legislator's.

John Quinlan told board members he received a phone call from Lucien Soucy regarding the roof over the Kindergarten classroom. John said Lucien was concerned about how much snow was on the roof and that he thought it could fail at any moment.

Sue Blair told board members Dennis had raked the roof.

John said Lucien volunteered to come up and take a look at it.

Board members were asked to authorize \$500 to be used

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to get people up on the roof to get the snow off the roof.

Board members agreed a motion wasn't necessary, as they would authorize the transfer at the March board meeting.

Bruce Schmidt said he relies on Dennis, Jim and Sue to make the call on emergencies such as this and they shouldn't have to wait to begin work on something like this prior to the board's authorization.

The A. 1. January 11, 2011, minutes were pulled from the Consent Agenda. The C. Donation was pulled from the Consent Agenda. **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve Consent Agenda Items A. 2. Minutes January 13, 2011, and B. Treasurer's Reports 1. September 2010, 2. October 2010, and 3. November 2010. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0-0)

Bruce Schmidt questioned why the Village School got fundraising money again this year from the New England School Picture Company LLC as this was not supposed to happen again. They were to charge less for the pictures so the parents would not have to pay as much for their portraits.

Sue Blair apologized for the error as she said they didn't know this happened again until they received the check.

Bruce said he doesn't want the school to receive a kickback in the future, but wants to see the price reduced so that parents pay less for their pictures.

Bruce suggested we bid this out for next year. John Quinlan agreed; they need to find someone new for next year.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve the FINAL Minutes of February 3, 2011, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

A. Minutes 1. January 11, 2011, as amended and C. Donation. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0-0)

A. Entry Plan – Board members were given a copy of the Principals Entry Plan dated July 2010-June 2011.

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

Several of these handouts were provided to the board previously in August 2010, however Principal Blair has continued her Entry Plan work over the past six months and wanted to provide the board with an update.

Sue provided board members with the Purpose for this Entry Plan.

Sue explained the Impact of serving as Interim Principal for a Year.

Sue highlighted the Interview Timeline –

Board Members: August 2010-January 2011
 Central Office: September 2010 – January 2011
 Staff & Community: December 2010 – January 2011

Sue said as new board members come on, she would like to interview them.

Sue said she is not finished with interviews; there is still work to be done.

Sue said 100% of the Mont Vernon School Board members were interviewed.

75% of the SAU Administration were interviewed.

20% of the Professional Teaching staff were interviewed.

5% of the parents/community members had input. Sue said she would like to do a parent and student survey to reach more of the parents/community members.

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Sue provided some of the quotes she received from people she interviewed including the School Board, Central Office, Staff, and the Parents and Community.

Sue highlighted some of the Strengths she heard about through the input received by the stakeholder groups.

- Size – small K-6
- Dedicated people
- Present School Board – their focus on education while being fiscally responsible to the community.
- Professional Development

Sue highlighted some of the Weaknesses she heard about through the input she received from the stakeholder groups.

- Size – small K-6 – can be seen as limited resources, everyone talking and sticking their noses in each other's business.
- Professional Development
- Communication – information not getting home to parents, website better than it has been, but could be better, PTA relationship.
- Enrichment – top tier learners not always challenged, after school programs, want 100% commitment to foreign language program, parents expressed the desire to have the Spanish program return to a full time program rather than a part time one.

Sue spoke about what the stakeholder's wanted to Treasure/Preserve:

- Grandparents Day
- Small class sizes
- Support – concern about the loss of additional support staff, believe it will significantly impact what staff is able to do with the kids.
- Genuine caring atmosphere.

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- Well rounded education.
- Dedicated and engaged parents.

Sue said the work continues as she believes the work is just beginning. Sue said additional input will be sought from District Principals, Student Survey, “Coffee Chat” format conversations and a Parent/Community Survey. Sue said a parent/community survey is a great opportunity to get information from parents as to what is working and what is not working.

Sue thanked all the community members, staff and central office personnel who took the time, from their busy schedules, to share their thoughts, experiences and hopes for the Mont Vernon Village School.

Kim said she agrees, this is a continued work in progress, not really just an Entry Plan.

Sue agreed, she said as she met with Dr. Jennings today, she said it is work that shouldn’t stop.

Dr. Jennings agreed, it is not really an Entry Plan, and in Mont Vernon they have had 5 administrators enter the district in 5 years. Dr. Jennings said what an entry plan does is give the administration 6 months (July-December) to get to know the lay of the land without making any decisions, however, Sue really didn’t have this opportunity.

REPORTS –

- A. Calendar – Dr. Jennings told board members the Calendar Committee had a meeting on Monday. Mary Lou Mullens of the Souhegan School Board is the Chair of the Calendar Committee and Dr. Jennings reminded board members they had given authorization to take the hourly calendar out to the different bargaining units in January to see what they thought of an hourly calendar.

Dr. Jennings told board members Gretchen Dunn of the Mont Vernon bargaining unit said the faculty was in support of a 2-year pilot for the hourly calendar. Dr. Jennings said it would be agreed during this 2-year pilot period no faculty member would receive less or more money by going to the hourly calendar.

Dr. Jennings said the other two bargaining units in Amherst will be going back in a couple of weeks so they should have more information in a couple of weeks.

Dr. Jennings said there is a Public Forum on February 15, 2011, with a half hour presentation to show what the hourly calendar would look like.

Dr. Jennings said they would be bringing the topic before the SAU Board again on February 19, 2011.

Dr. Jennings said they would be asking each of the boards to vote on either the Hourly based Calendar or another calendar for next year at their March board meeting.

- B. RSEC – Dr. Jennings told board members they don't have a representative from the Mont Vernon Board for RSEC.

The meetings start at 8 a.m. and are held six times per year.

Dr. Jennings said if someone is interested in volunteering to fill this opening, contact Kim Roberge.

- C. Preliminary NECAP Results – Nicole Heimarck provided board members with a handout regarding the Fall 2010 NECAP Test Results. The handout was entitled Fall 2010 NECAP Tests School Summary for 2009-2010 Students. Also provided was a handout with Nicole's slides for her presentation.

Nicole told board members the data was released
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privately on Thursday and publicly this past Monday.

Nicole said this is the 6th year for this assessment.

Nicole told board members after a preliminary review of the data, it appears the students are plateauing. In most cases, when compared to the previous year, they only saw an increase or decrease by 1 or 2 percentage points.

Nicole reminded board members Mont Vernon receives the most unstable data set due to their population size. Nicole said one student could impact the overall scores in proficient or proficient with distinction.

Slides were shown detailing the results for the MVVS 6-year comparison for Reading and Math. Also shown were the results for AMS 6-year comparison for Reading and Math.

Nicole presented a slide which provided the Area District Comparison for Grades 3-8 for 2010 in Reading. Also presented was a slide for the Area District Comparison for Grades 3-8 for 2010 in Math.

Nicole presented a slide, which provided the Area District Comparison for Grade 5 for Writing in 2010. Nicole told board members this assessment was on hiatus for two years, it returned this year, and it was a brand new assessment. Nicole told board members she doesn't know what to make of the results because they don't have the multi year trends to assess the data.

Nicole told board members Sue Blair had plans to distribute grade level data to the faculty.

Nicole told board members they would get a full performance report in March.

The board thanked Nicole for her presentation.

- D. Quarterly Report FY11 – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School FINAL Minutes of February 3, 2011, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

District Quarterly Financial Report dated 7/1/10
– 12/31/10 in their board packets.

Betty Shankel told board members the Revenue is basically on track.

Betty said they are looking at expenses coming in under budget in Regular Education, Special Education, Student Support Services, School Board/SAU Services, Principals Office, Operations and Maintenance and Student Transportation. Betty told board members the savings in Regular education was due to less than anticipated costs in AMS Tuition, in salaries and benefits it is due to changes in personnel; also, health insurance costs came in at 20% rather than 21.5%.

Betty told board members at this time, she is anticipating approximately \$210,000 savings in Fund 10 Expenditures this year.

- A. Legislative Initiatives: Guest Speaker of the House – Bill O’Brien – Kim welcomed Bill O’Brien to the board meeting. Kim told Bill the board has been discussing the lack of State Aid, which is one of the big driver’s causing the Mont Vernon budget to increase in 2011-2012.

VI. DISCUSSION

Bill O’Brien told board members and meeting attendees, it is the Legislatures goal in terms of the contribution to the town that the amount of Aid Mont Vernon receives remains stable, that it will not go down.

Bill told board members the amount of aid the town receives does depend on whether the formula is reconfigured or if they put the collar back on.

Bill spoke about the Claremont Decision, which originated through a lawsuit by the Claremont School Board claiming that the state's primary reliance upon local property taxes for funding education resulted in inequitable educational opportunities among children around the state and a violation of their constitutional

rights. "The Claremont Decision", suit continues to drive the statewide debate on equitable funding for education; and Claremont continues to play a primary role in this legal challenge.

Bill said this is not a duty we can delegate, we are not a home rule state.

Bill said they will present a Constitutional Amendment to do away with all the series of Claremont cases.

Bill said the state can't delegate its duty to define an adequate education.

Bill said \$3,450 per student doesn't provide any student an adequate education.

Bill said if we were to provide a more limited or more robust definition for adequate education, it would cost a lot more and would cause the state to have to come up with a lot more revenue.

The state must come up with 1.2 billion biennial for education, which is funded through the state wide property tax.

Bill told board members they are in the process of coming up with a Constitutional Amendment, he said they meet weekly with the Senate President and Governor and their goal is to come up with a Constitutional Amendment, however, there are different ideas as to what the amendment should be.

Bill said there is a belief the statewide property tax will go away.

Bill said the end result is that any future aid many towns, cities, and school districts currently receive, they may need to fund the obligation on their own.

Kim asked Bill if you take a look at the formula do you believe we will receive as much aid as we did last year?

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Bill said the legislature agrees, they don't believe the districts / communities can sustain any more increases, so their goal/commitment is they are not going to have any new taxes/fees.

Trevor asked Bill if the projected decrease in Adequate Education Aid is correct or if he thinks we will see more than projected?

Bill said he believes the Adequate Education Aid Mont Vernon is projecting they loose will not be taken from them, he said they should see the same level as last year.

Bill said he expects the collar (cap) to be put back on.

Board members asked about school districts that had money added to them and Bill said they will receive what they received last year. (if the amendment goes through)

Kim Roberge asked about Bill's thoughts on HB39.

Bill said it was a well intentioned attempt to bring some realism to what the state is delivering. Bill said the creator of the bill thought education should best be determined at the local level through a conversation between parents, teachers and school board members.

Board members thanked Bill for speaking with them.

Board members discussed the information Bill presented however, agreed they could not change anything in their revenue projections or budget presentation.

- B. MV Tuition Payments – Charter Schools- Kim Roberge told board members this issue was brought up at the last board meeting so they decided to put it on as a topic for discussion tonight.

Kim told board members as she understands it, students wishing to go to the Charter School in Merrimack go into

a lottery to attend the school. If chosen, they may decide to go to the Charter school rather than AMS. Kim said she was told, it looks like the Charter school is going to go in the negative and they are looking for donations.

John Quinlan told board members it is the states responsibility to fund the charter schools. Currently, they receive \$5,500 per student from the state to fund their education. The charter school is not fully funded through public sources, so they need to make up the difference, thus, they seek out private donations.

Trevor said he believes if we donate money, it will open up all sorts of issues, we would almost need to have a tuition agreement.

John Quinlan said he thinks we need to explore the idea a little bit.

John said sometimes the public school system fails our higher end students; the ones at the top get ignored.

John said he is not saying the district is obligated in any way, but he thinks they should think about the issue, over the long term.

Kim asked if the board was looking to take any action on this issue, and they agreed, they were not willing to take any action at this time.

Kim said the community should have input on this topic, not just the board.

Dr. Jennings told board members before they would ever decide to invest any money in a charter school, they would need a significant amount of information.

Trevor said he would love to see vouchers be offered should a student not go to AMS.

Kim said she didn't see why we would want to do that, since the board/district has worked so hard on achieving

continuity/consistency between districts.

Renea told board members she heard, the state just got money for charter schools, about 1 million, so if the Merrimack Charter School is hurting for money, she thinks the state might have some.

C. Policy FF – Dedication and Naming of Facilities – 1st Reading – John Quinlan told board members the policy gives a time to the decision of naming a facility.

Bruce Schmidt said he does not like Section IV Facilities Dedication Plaques, the second paragraph, how it lists the superintendent, board members, etcetera, at the time a building is officially complete on the plaque. Bruce said he doesn't think this is necessary including all these people on a plaque.

Dr. Jennings told board members you would be surprised how it can be a big issue, if buildings are being built and people have put years into helping, often times they want their name included on a plaque.

Dr. Jennings said this was a good time to bring forth this policy, as Mont Vernon is not building anything.

Board members will have their second reading at their March board meeting.

D. Preparation for Deliberative Session – Kim told board members the Moderator contacted her to see if they were having a formal presentation at the Deliberative Session. Kim asked if board members liked the format she followed at the Public Hearing, and board members said they did therefore, they are doing it the same way for the Deliberative Session.

Bill Archibault thanked everyone for their cooperation during the Budget Committee's review of the budget.

Renea Sparks told board members about a Parent Presentation on Bullying being held on March 9, 2011. Renea said they would like as many parents as possible to attend.

VII. OTHER

A motion was made by John Quinlan to enter into Non-Public Session per RSA: 91 – A:3 II (a) (i) to discuss a personnel issue. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. By roll call vote, Schmidt-yes; Quinlan-yes; Roberge-yes; and Girard-yes, the board entered into Non-Public Session. (4-0-0)

VIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91 – A:3 II (a) (i)

Attending Board members Bruce Schmidt, Kim Roberge, John Quinlan, Tevor Girard, and Superintendent Jennings.

Discussion was held on renewing the contract for the MVVS principal.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to renew the principal's contract at the current salary for one year. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0-0)

A discussion on security at board meetings was held with no motions or actions proposed.

A motion was made by John Quinlan to come out of Non-Public session. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. By roll call vote, Schmidt-yes, Quinlan-yes, Roberge-yes, and Girard-yes, the board voted unanimously to come out of non-public session at 9:00 p.m. (4-0-0)

A motion was made by John Quinlan to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m. (4-0-0)

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN