

**MINUTES**  
**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 12, 2009**  
**SOUHEGAN HIGH SCHOOL ANNEX ROOM 222**

Jayson Darula called the board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Present:

**ATTENDANCE**

Mont Vernon School Board: Howard Brown, Jayson Darula, Bruce Schmidt, and Leo White

Administrative Team: Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, Jim Miner, Renea Sparks, Gail Westergren

Public: Jack Esposito, Nancy Foster, Trevor Girard, Pody Hamsbrough, Angela Hazen, Sue Granfors, Sue Leger,

Tom McKenney, Patrick Steenhoek, and Joel Wilson,

Faculty/Administration: Sheila Asselin, Alma Garcia

Budget Committee: Joe Fluette, John Quinlan, Jeanette Vinton

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

- A. Principal's Report – Board members received a copy of the Principal's Report dated February 12, 2009.

**II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Gail told board members they have 20 students registered for Kindergarten this Fall and they have identified four other potential students.

Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the Principals Report but there were none.

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

**III. PUBLIC TIME**

Bruce Schmidt pulled the A. Minutes 1. January 15, 2009, and A. 2. Minutes January 22, 2009, from the Consent

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Agenda.

Bruce Schmidt pulled the D. Transfer from the Consent Agenda.

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve Consent Agenda Items A. Minutes 3. January 29, 2009, B. Treasurer's Report 1. December 2008, C. Manifest, D. Transfer and E. Resignation Letter. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve the A. Minutes 1. January 15, 2009, and A. Minutes 2. January 22, 2009, as amended as well as D. Transfer. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

- A. NECAP – Nicole Heimarck presented the New England Comprehensive Assessment Program results for 2005-2008.

## V. PRESENTATIONS

Nicole said the NECAP is the New Hampshire state assessment. It is a multi-district test. Currently NH, VT, and RI use the test and Maine just signed on.

Nicole told board members the performance analysis included the Mont Vernon School District and the Amherst Middle School.

Nicole highlighted the NECAP Test Design.

- Reading Test – multiple choice and constructed response, grades 3-8, 11.
- Math Test – multiple choice, short answer and constructed response, grades 3-8, 11
- Writing Test – multiple choice, short answer,

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

constructed response and extended response items.  
Grades 5, 8, and 11.

Nicole explained the Four Levels of Performance.

- Proficient with Distinction, Proficient, Partially Proficient, and Substantially Below Proficient.

Nicole said the goal is for all students to achieve Proficient.

Nicole presented the Mont Vernon School District Data.

Nicole explained they have had only had two and a half weeks to look at the data this year as compared to past years where they have had four weeks. Nicole said the analysis they have done to date is not at the level of detail as in the past.

Nicole presented slides, which detailed the four-year comparison (2005-2008) for Reading, Math, and Writing.

Also presented was Amherst Middle School Data for 2005 – 2008 for Reading, Writing, and Math. This information is provided to Mont Vernon because Mont Vernon 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders go to the Amherst Middle School.

Nicole Identified the Areas of Challenge & Success:

- Class/Cohort size
- Student mobility
- Margin of testing error
- “Adoption Dip”
- Multi-year trends

Nicole said they are now able to get multi-year results.

Nicole presented a graph, which Tracked Grade Level Cohorts in Reading for 2005-2008. (Grades 3-5)

Nicole presented a graph, which Tracked Grade Level Cohorts in Math for 2005-2008. (Grades 3-5)

Nicole presented the Area District Comparisons for 2008 in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. Some of the districts Mont Vernon was compared to included Hollis, Amherst, Bedford, Hanover, Hopkinton, Oyster River and Merrimack.

Nicole presented the Next Steps.

- Data Triangulation by district, school and individual school
- Cross reference % proficient with mean scaled scores.
- Released Item Analysis
- Disaggregation by cohort (educational disability, educationally disadvantaged, etc.)
- Examination of student level data – which students are not progressing and why.
- Examination of test operations K-12 (district-wide, small group accommodations)
- Further staff development on making data instructionally meaningful.

**B. FY09 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Financial Report – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District Quarterly Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 dated 7/1/09 – 12/31/08.**

Betty told board members they are still anticipating a surplus of approximately \$45,000.

Betty told board members they are projecting lower than anticipated interest income.

Betty said CAT Aid is projected higher than anticipated and all Federal Accounts are as expected.

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Betty explained under Expenditures they are anticipating a savings from donated materials under Instructional Material & Workbooks. (Scott Foresman)

In Special Education the outgoing employees were replaced with lower compensated employees.

Betty said there is an anticipated Library book savings pending a PTA donation.

Betty said actual Legal Services are higher than anticipated. Also, Tuition Reimbursement is not required this year.

Special Education Transportation actual expense is lower than anticipated.

Also, there are benefit savings due to carrier changes.

Jayson Darula called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

## **VI. PUBLIC HEARING**

Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District FY10 Budget Public Hearing dated February 12, 2009.

Meeting attendees were able to review the information members of the board received via the projector.

Jayson highlighted the Budget Process.

- October & November
  - Administration meeting to develop budget assumptions.
  - Administration presentation to Board.
  - Board input to budget process.
- December & January

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- Administration development of first budget draft.
  - Administration presentation of first budget draft to the board.
  - Board & Budget Committee examination of and input to budget.
  - Administration presentation of amended budget drafts.
- February
    - Further Budget Review by Board, Budget Committee & Administration
    - Adoption of Warrant Articles for Presentation at the Public Hearing.

Warrant Article 2 was placed before meeting attendees for their review.

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,592,061 for the support of schools, for the salaries of school district officials, and agents, and for the payment of statutory obligations of said district. This article does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles. Majority vote required to pass. The school board recommends the passage of this article.

Jayson presented the Budget Overview:

- Represents a .19% increase over last year's budget.
- There is a small decrease in the State Adequacy Aid Grant.
- Represents an increase of \$500 on a home valued at \$400,000.

A chart detailing the FY09 Budget as compared to the FY10 Budget Proposal was presented. The chart showed the proposed .19% increase. The General Fund – 10 – has a proposed increase of .36%, Food Services – 21 – a

decrease of -2.15%, and Grants - 22 a decrease of -5.25%.

The Budget Drivers were presented:

- Technology Plan – year three of a five-year district plan.
- Enrollments – Decrease in AMS enrollment projections, increase in rate per student.
- Increase in benefit costs – NH Retirement, Health Insurance.
- Continued Commitment to Literacy Initiative – Pilot Reading Program.

A slide was provided which detailed the enrollments as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, for FY03 through FY09 and projected for FY10. Grades K-6 projection is for 263 students and for Grades 7-8 it is 68 students for a total of 331 students. In FY09 Grades K-6 were 260 students and for Grades 7-8 it was 71 students for a total of 331 students.

A chart was presented which detailed the Proposed Certified Staffing for FY10 as compared to FY09. The only change proposed was for an additional teacher in K-6, which would change the number of teachers from 12 to 13.

A chart was presented which detailed the Proposed Non-certified Staffing for FY10 as compared to FY09. Currently, there are 9 Special Education Aides and they are proposing to add an additional Special Education Aide, which would make the total number of Special Education Aides 10.

A pie chart was presented detailing the FY10 Projected Expenditures. The chart showed Regular Education makes up 41% of the total budget; Special Education makes up 19% of the budget, Benefits, 12%, Building & Grounds 5%, etcetera.

Slides were shown detailing the FY10 Budget by Function.

Slides were shown presenting the Function Analysis of the FY10 Budget.

A chart was presented detailing the Revenue Analysis of the FY10 Budget. In FY09 the Unreserved Fund Balance as certified by the DRA was \$314,203 as compared to a proposed FY10 Unreserved Fund Balance of \$45,209. This represents a decrease of \$268,994.

State Aid is expected to decrease by \$16,323.

Federal Grants in Aid are also expected to decrease by \$5,741.

Local Revenue – Food Service, Interest, Other is expected to decrease by \$6,260.

State Property Tax is expected to decrease by \$7,698.

Adequate Education Aid is expected to decrease by \$15,105.

The FY10 Proposed Tax Rate/\$1000 valuation is \$12.46 as compared to the FY09 Rate/\$1000 of \$11.21. This represents an increase of \$1.25.

Warrant Article 3 was presented to meeting attendees.

To see if the Mont Vernon School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Mont Vernon School Board and the Mont Vernon Education Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2009-2010	\$26,325
2010-2011	\$45,830
2011-2012	\$46,908

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,325 for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

Pursuant to RSA 273-A:12, VII once approved, the terms of this agreement, including but not limited to, any pay plan included in the agreement, but excluding cost of living increases, shall continue to force and effect, until such time as a new agreement is executed or RSA 273-A:12, VII is amended or repealed, whichever occurs first.

Majority vote required to pass.

The school board recommends the passage of this article.

Bruce Schmidt highlighted the results from the MVEA Collective Bargaining Agreement:

- Three Year Agreement
- Cola Increase
  - Year 1 – 1%
  - Year 2 – 1.5%
  - Year 3 – 1.5%
- New Health Care Prescription Coverage
  - Reduced Premium Costs
  - Potential for Higher Co-Pay Costs

A slide was presented which showed the MVEA Collective Bargaining Agreement New Cost Items.

Year	FY10	FY11	FY12
Compensation	\$38,616	\$39,988	\$40,928
Health Insurance	(\$17,000)	-	-
FICA	\$2,394	\$2,479	\$2,538
Medicare	\$560	\$580	\$593
NH Retirement	\$2,688	\$2,783	\$2,849
Totals	\$26,325	\$45,830	\$46,908

Bruce emphasized there is still a savings each year in health insurance however, the savings will be seen in the operating budget in FY11 and FY12.

Jayson explained if the contract is not approved under Article 3 then they must try for another contract.

Warrant Article 4 was presented.

To see if the Mont Vernon School District, if Article 3 is defeated, will authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option to address Article 3 cost items only?

Majority vote required to pass.

The school board recommends the passage of this article.

Warrant Article 5 was presented as follows:

To see if the Mont Vernon School district will ratify and approve the Tuition Agreement that has been tentatively agreed to by the Mont Vernon School Board and the Amherst School Board for the purpose of educating students from Mont Vernon at the Amherst Middle School for a ten (10) year period from July 1, 2011 to June 30 2021?

Majority vote required to pass.

The school board recommends the passage of this article.

Jayson provided meeting attendees with the details regarding the Mont Vernon – Amherst Tuition Agreement.

- Current agreement expires on June 30, 2011.
- New agreement term – July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011.
- Based on current operating costs.
- Mont Vernon will pay a proportionate share of future bonds for Middle School Renovations.

Betty Shankel introduced Warrant Article 6. She said this article is being put before the voters as a legal requirement.

Currently, the Mont Vernon School District has past practice of recording School Board and Budget Committee.

The current law requires that the District authorize this practice.

To see if the Mont Vernon School District will require all votes of the Mont Vernon School Board and the Mont Vernon School District Budget Committee relative to warrant articles to be recorded votes and that the numeric tally of any such vote be printed in the School district warrant next to the affected warrant article?

Majority vote required to pass.

The school board recommends the passage of this article.

A slide was presented which detailed the Tax Rate Impact of all Warrant Articles.

FY10 Proposed - Warrant Article Operating Budget - \$12.46

Warrant Article 3, MVEA CBA - .10

Total Tax Rate \$12.56/thousand

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Meeting attendees were shown a slide, which detailed the Tax Rate Impact Comparison.

Total Tax Impact FY10 Proposed 12.56 as compared to \$11.21. The impact on a \$400,000 home would be \$540.

A slide was shown detailing the Tax Rate Projection History for FY07 – FY10.

A Summary of the Proposed Budget was shown.

FY10 Budget Proposal – Fund 10 - \$4,431,240 - .36% increase over FY09

FY10 Budget Proposal – All Funds - \$4,592,061 - .19% increase over FY09.

Tax Increase for all Warrants is \$1.35/\$1000 Assessed Valuation (\$540 for a \$400,000 home)

Nicole Heimarck wanted to highlight the importance of a reading specialist she said they are seen as a critical role in K-6 grades.

Tom McKenney asked why is the district hiring an additional teacher if the enrollment has remained steady for the past three years?

Gail said they are hiring an additional teacher to keep the teacher/pupil ratio in the lower grades lower. Gail said some grade levels have 25-26 students per class. An additional teacher is needed for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class because there are 52 students in total. With an additional teacher, each 6<sup>th</sup> grade class would have 26 students.

Jack Esposito said two years ago, the present sixth grade class was considered small and they were debating what to do then. He doesn't feel they need to hire a new teacher at

this point, he doesn't think it's necessary.

Jack said he thinks the current manpower can be adjusted to make it work.

Dr. Jennings said Jack is right about two years ago, however; they have embarked on a five year Strategic Plan on Literacy since they have found the key to success for students is their ability to read.

Currently, 70% of the students are reading at Proficient or Better. It is critical to keep going.

Nancy Foster said you should let the people decide at the School District Meeting how important it is to them to have a Literacy Instructor by putting it on a Warrant Article. Nancy said she thinks having an additional 6th grade teacher is important and it has been qualified.

Patrick Steenhoek said he realizes some people believe having a Literacy Coach is something extra however, as a teacher he believes a Literacy Coach is an invaluable asset. Patrick says as a teacher he may evaluate his own children thinking they are doing well but; what he doesn't know is the kids next door are doing better.

Patrick said when a Literacy Coach is present, they are seeing every teacher, and all their knowledge comes to you, which you are not able to get on your own.

Kim Roberge asked how much it would cost to have a .25 Literacy Coach.

Dr. Jennings said the District never intended to have the Literacy Coach position as a temporary position.

Currently the District is proposing to have a .5 Literacy Coach and a .5 Language Arts person.

The administration agreed it is much more difficult to find a person to fill a .25 position.

Dr. Jennings provided meeting attendees with a list of the Literacy Coaches responsibilities. They included provide support in the classroom, assist in running In-Service Days, and run the Literacy Team with the Principal.

Sue Granfors introduced herself as a Paraeducator at the Mont Vernon Village School. Sue told meeting attendees she came before the board previously to discuss the Insurance Benefits they are offered as Paraeducators.

Sue said she wrote a letter to the school board and presented it to them at a previous meeting. The letter spoke about the disparity of benefits/rates at other schools in the district as compared to the benefits/rates offered in Mont Vernon.

Sue asked the board to please include in the new budget the funds needed to pay 75% of the benefit for a two-person health insurance plan. Sue said the Paraeducators work the same amount of hours each day as the teachers do.

Jay Wilson asked what did the Teacher's Contract say. Bruce Schmidt provided additional information to meeting attendees.

Dr. Jennings said she would put a copy of the Teachers Contract on the SAU website so people could read it.

Tom McKenney said he knows how hard the school board worked on the proposed FY10 Budget however he is very disappointed. Tom said last year his taxes increased by \$700 and this year they are proposing a \$500 increase. Tom said we ought to cut costs and some how raise our revenues.

Jayson Darula said he thinks we deliver an adequate

education.

Jayson said the Proposed FY09-FY10 Budget has a higher tax impact for the taxpayers because we are receiving less State Aid, Federal Aid, and Revenue.

Jayson said the board and administration spent a lot of time reviewing this budget, often times having spirited discussion. Jayson said he believes the budget they are presenting is a very lean budget.

Kim Roberge questioned the \$23,000 increase in textbooks. Nicole said the increase is due to the textbooks they will be purchasing for the Reading program they have been piloting. The \$23,000 represents partial implementation for grades K-2 and the remainder of the implementation will be next year and will cost about \$23,000-\$24,000.

Kim asked about the Math Coach and how they were paid. Nicole said the Math Coach is a .25 position and is funded by the Title IIA Grant.

Jayson thanked the public for their comments.

The Public Hearing was closed at 8:45 p.m.

Dr. Jennings asked board members if they wanted to make any modifications to the budget prior to posting the Warrant Articles.

## **VII. ACTION ITEM**

All board members agreed they wanted to go forward with the budget as presented at the Public Hearing.

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 2 on the Warrant and recommend passage of the Article. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 3 on the Warrant and recommend passage of the Article. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 4 on the Warrant and recommend passage of the Article. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 5 on the Warrant and recommend passage of the Article. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 6 on the Warrant and recommend passage of the Article. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 7 on the Warrant. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to place Article 8 on the Warrant. Howard Brown seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

Betty Shankel recommended a board member at the School District Meeting handle each warrant article on March 13, 2009.

The board and administration discussed the flow of the

presentation for the meeting on March 13, 2009.

The following was decided:

Article 2 – John Schwope  
 Article 3 – Bruce Schmidt  
 Article 4 – Bruce Schmidt  
 Article 5 – Jayson Darula  
 Article 6 – Howard Brown

Board members discussed whether they wanted to have their March board meeting on March 12, 2009, prior to the School District Meeting on March 13, 2009.

Board members agreed, they wanted to hold their board meeting on March 12, 2009.

**C. Literacy** – Nancy McGuire introduced some of the teachers at the Mont Vernon Village School. The teachers included Amy St. Hilaire – Literacy Coach, Charline Brown – Grade 5, Kim Tighe – Grade 4, Amy Lavoie – Grade 3 and Melanie Jones – Title I.

## **VIII. PRESENTATIONS**

Nancy told board members the presentation was on Literacy at the Mont Vernon Village School - How They Are Meeting Our School Goals 2008-2009.

Year 2 Goals were Presented –

- 56% of students in grades 3-6 will meet NWEA target goals in reading by June 2009.
- 82.5% of students in K-2 will meet benchmark goals for DIBELS by June 2009.
- 75% of students in grades 3-6 will demonstrate improved performance in writing.

Opportunities for Learning were presented as follows:

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- Guided Reading – small group instruction
- Shared Reading – whole group
- Independent Reading – throughout Literacy block
- Comprehension Skill Development
- Novel studies
- Grammar/Spelling
- Writing
- Learning Centers
- Literature Circles

Melanie Jones told board members in Title I the focus is on students who are most at risk and working below grade level. The goal is to get them to grade level.

Melanie said supplemental instruction is given to attain grade level proficiency. Melanie said the earlier they get into help the kids the better it is for the children.

Melanie said they do not go into Kindergarten until January, that way the kids become settled in the classroom first.

Melanie said they utilize Learning Centers, which are small groups of independent learning tasks that students complete during the literacy block. Melanie said they are very hands on and make it fun for the young ones.

Jayson Darula asked when they determine if a child is at Grade Level. Melanie said they retest them and release students when appropriate.

Kim Tighe explained to board members about Literature Circles. Kim said last year they did this with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders and this year they added in the 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

- A special learning opportunity in grades 4, 5, and 6.
- Provides large amount of time for text reading related to students' interests.

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- Provides teacher-directed instruction in reading comprehension and writing.
- Provides opportunities for peer and collaborative reading.

Charline Brown presented information on the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Co-Teaching Model. Charline said the teacher's work with each other's strengths and areas of expertise and plan for and deliver instruction. Charline said they utilize collaborative planning, delivery and reflection (assessment)

Charline explained how they plan out their week with the kids and present the topic of the week on Monday's.

Howard Brown asked if they would be re-evaluating the co-teaching model at the end of the year, and if they planned on doing it again next year. Charline said she hopes they will do it again next year and they do plan on evaluating the program.

Leo White asked if they are co-teaching at any other grade levels. Kim Tighe said yes, they are co-teaching in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and would be doing it more if they weren't piloting a new curriculum.

Jayson thanked everyone for there presentation.

**D. Building Maintenance** – Jim Miner came before the board due to concerns with regards to building maintenance.

Several e-mails had been going back and forth with regards to snow/ice removal at the Village School so the administration thought it would be best to put the issue on the School Board's Agenda for discussion.

Howard Brown said he defends his position about the memo he put out with regards to snow removal/ice.

FINAL Minutes of February 12, 2009 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Jim Miner said he understood Howard's concerns and he had no problem addressing them.

Jim said unfortunately this year the weather conditions have remained at a constant level, constant cold with no thaw periods, thus snow, then ice build up.

**A motion was made by Howard Brown to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0) The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.**

**IX. REVIEW OF  
MEETING/ADJOURN**