

**MINUTES**  
**SAU 39 SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 23, 2009**  
**Souhegan High School Annex, Room A222**

Dr. Jennings called the Organizational Board Meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER –  
Organizational Meeting**

- A. Chairman – Dr. Jennings called for nominations to serve as Chairman of the Board. Mary Lou Mullens nominated Dan Foley as Chairman of the SAU 39 Board. Jeanne Ludt seconded the nomination. All board members voted in favor of the nomination and the nomination passed. Dan accepted the nomination as Chairman of the SAU 39 Board.

**II. ELECTION OF SCHOOL  
BOARD OFFICERS**

Chairman Dan Foley took over the Organizational Meeting.

- B. Vice Chairman - Dan called for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Board. Steve Coughlan nominated Chris Jansen as Vice Chairman of the SAU 39 Board. Jeanne Ludt seconded the nomination. All board members voted in favor of the nomination and the nomination passed, Chris Jansen will serve as Vice Chairman of the SAU 39 Board.

- C. Secretary – Dan asked for nominations for Secretary. Steve Coughlan nominated Kim Roberge to serve as Secretary of the Board. Jeanne Ludt seconded the nomination. All board members voted in favor of the nomination and the nomination passed. Kim Roberge will serve as Secretary of the SAU 39 Board.

Dr. Jennings said there are still two slots to be filled on the Policy Committee. Mont Vernon hasn't appointed anyone yet because they have not had their Election of

FINAL Minutes of April 23, 2009 SAU 39 Board Meeting

Officers since there is a vacant seat to fill. Dr. Jennings said they hope to fill the vacancy by the next board meeting on May 14, 2009.

Peg Bennett currently reviews the SAU Manifests, and Howard Brown used to do it as well however, he is no longer on the Mont Vernon School Board so they need another person to review the manifests. Peg asked if Jeanne could be the second signature and she agreed to do it.

**A motion was made by Dwight Brew to nominate Peg Bennett and Jeanne Ludt to review and approve the SAU Manifests on behalf of the board. Chris Jansen seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (11-0-0)**

**A motion was made by Steve Coughlan to adjourn the Organizational Meeting. Peg Bennett seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The Organizational Meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m. (11-0-0)**

Chairman Dan Foley called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

Present:

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Steve Coughlan, Pam Coughlin (arrived 6:52 p.m.), Dan Foley, Chris Janson, Jeanne Ludt and Mary Lou Mullens (left at 6:55 p.m.)

Amherst School Board: Peg Bennett, Dwight Brew, Peter Maresco,

Mont Vernon School Board: Trevor Girard and Kim Roberge

Administrative Team: Porter Dodge, Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, Betty Shankel, and Renea Sparks

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

**I. CALL TO ORDER –  
Regular Meeting  
ATTENDANCE**

A. Bus Contract – Betty Shankel told board members she had a meeting with First Student and they plan on reducing the number of buses by one at the beginning of next year. **II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Betty said she suggested they might be able to reduce by another bus the following year.

Dwight asked if after May 1<sup>st</sup>, First Student came back to the SAU and said they could reduce the number of buses by another one, would the district entertain this suggestion.

Betty said yes, they would certainly entertain the recommendation, however, since they did not reduce the number of buses by the deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>, they would not be obligated to pay the \$7,500.

Betty said First Student sent her an e-mail stating they would be optimizing the routes.

Betty said optimizing the routes has been in their agreements before and they have not done it, all she can do is put pressure on them to do it.

Betty told board members the Insurance Rates came in through LGC.

Betty said LGC suggested they budget for a 10% increase however they budgeted for less. Betty said they budgeted a rate of just under 8% for Amherst and Souhegan and the increase came in at 2.1%. Betty said for Mont Vernon and the SAU they budgeted a 5% increase and the rate came in at -2.1%.

Betty said she wished they knew the rates early and would express this to LGC however, she is not sure they will do anything about it.

Betty said they budgeted for a 3.1% Dental increase and that is what the increase came in at.

Dan Foley invited comments from the Public but none were forthcoming.

### **III. PUBLIC TIME**

Dwight Brew asked that the A. Minutes 1. March 26, 2009, be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

### **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

Dwight Brew asked that the D. Transfer be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

**A motion was made by Dwight Brew to approve Consent Agenda Items B. Treasurer's Report, 1. March 2009 C. Manifest, 1. March 2009, and E. Resignation. Peg Bennett seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved. (11-0-0)**

Dwight Brew asked to postpone the approval of the March 26, 2009, Minutes until the next board meeting. Dwight said the Non-Public and Action information was missing from the minutes. Board members will approve the March 26, 2009, minutes at the next board meeting.

**A motion was made by Dwight Brew to accept Consent Agenda Item D. Transfer. Chris Jansen seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (11-0)**

- A. State of Special Education – Renea Sparks told board members she would be doing a presentation on Special Instructional Programs and Services in the SAU 39 School District.

Renea reminded board members of the SAU Strategic Plan – Each student will demonstrate improved performance in all subject areas, as measured annually through multiple assessments. Renea said this would be accomplished within the next five years by the SAU 39 focusing on

reading and writing across the curriculum.

Renea explained recent evidence indicates an achievement and progress gap for the Educational Disability subgroup in the areas of reading and mathematics.

Renea said they need to examine all available information to figure out what they can do about this gap.

Renea provided an Overview of the Costs for Special Instructional Services:

- a. Percentage of Overall Budget
- b. Per pupil expenditures – Regular/Special
- c. Staffing – Teacher/Para-educator
- d. Out of District Placement Costs

Renea presented a slide, which provided Overall District Budget Comparisons for the SAU, Kearsage (a new district), ConVal and Oyster River.

In the SAU, Special Education makes up 15% of the budget, in Kearsage it's 13.40%, ConVal it's 21.80%, and in Oyster River it is 17.10%. Renea said the SAU is within the norm as far as costs are concerned.

Also shown was a Comparative District Overall Per Pupil Cost. This cost comparison included Regular Education and Special Education together.

For SAU 39 the Per Pupil Cost for 2007-2008 was \$13,371, in Kearsage it was \$12,722, in ConVal it was \$12,669 and in Oyster River it was \$14,562.

Renea presented a slide, which detailed the Staffing. Figures were provided for the Ratio of Students to Special Education Teachers for 2008-2009, Ratio of Students to Special Education Aides for 2008-2009 and the Average Number of Students Per Case Manager 2008-2009.

The SAU has a total of 2791 students as of the October 1<sup>st</sup> Enrollment. The Total # of Special Education Students is 396, and the % of Special Education Students is 14.1%. The total number of Special Education Teachers is 42 with the ratio of students to teachers at 9.43.

The ratio of Students to Special Education Aides 2008-2009 is 5.13. (396 Special Education Students, 77.14 Special Education Aides)

Renea told board members the Average Number of Students Per Case Manager for 2008-2009 in the SAU district is 10.8. The SAU has 43 Case Managers. Also provided were the Averages for Kearsage, ConVal, and Oyster River.

Renea presented a slide, which detailed the Out of District (OOD) Information. Renea told board members the figures included preschool students.

In FY06, there were 31 OOD Students as compared to 35 in FY10.

The OOD Budget in FY06 was \$979,332 as compared to \$2,127,953 in FY10.

An Out of District Placement Information slide was shown detailing Sample Program Rates. (Annual Tuition without Related Services) Program rates were shown for Preschool, Day Programs, and Residential Programs.

Comparison costs were provided for FY06-FY10. For example, for Sunrise Preschool in FY06 the Tuition Per Student was \$9,700 and in FY10 it is \$11,640. This represents a 20% increase.

The largest increase is for the Residential Program at CMRC. In FY06 the Tuition Per Student was \$164,965 as

compared to the FY10 rate of \$283,040. This is an increase of 71.6%.

Renea presented an Overview of the Results:

1. Identification Process – Is complicated, legislated and subjective. Statistics were provided with regards to referrals/identification. In 2007-2008 there were 79 referrals as compared to 63 in 2008-2009. Thirty-two (32) children were eligible for Special Education Services in 2007-2008 as compared to fifteen (15) in 2008-2009. In 2007-2008 16 children were discharged as compared to 22 in 2008-2009.
2. Adequate Yearly Progress – 2009 (testing year FY 08) – did not meet Math in all four schools did not meet Reading – SHS.

Renea presented the Solution – Internal – Special Education Programs and Services.

1. Collaboration with Curriculum/PD
2. Eligibility and Progress Monitoring.
3. Curriculum Based Measurement and Grade Level Expectations.
4. Special Instruction program review and revision.
5. Performance Pathways-Growth targets.

Renea explained they have the tools at their disposal to determine who has issues in Math and Reading – the whole class, Special Education Students, etcetera.

Renea explained the Solution involves Response to Intervention.

1. To integrate educational problem solving.
2. Is guided by student outcome data.
3. Outcome data essential for making accurate

decisions.

4. All Staff Intervention!
5. [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org);  
[www.rtinenetwork.org](http://www.rtinenetwork.org)

Renea presented a slide, which detailed the Tiered Model of RTI. RTI Tier I General Education represents 80% of the students; RTI Tier 2 General Education represents approximately 15% of students, and RTI Tier 3 General/Special Education approximately 5% of students.

A slide was shown detailing the Current Status-Inclusive Education Settings/Programs:

1. 8% of students placed in Out of District Programs (including IDEA Preschool)
2. 2% of students educated outside of regular education more than 60% of day.
3. 90% of students educated within regular education more than 79% of the day.

Disability Categories were presented. Renea pointed out 47% of the children in the SAU are categorized with Specific Learning Disabilities.

Renea provided reflection comments from the RTI Implementation Presentation on April 17, 2009. Renea said they have the tools to start to implement and make some improvements.

Board members were given the opportunity to comment on the presentation.

Trevor Girard said it would have been helpful to have seen a comparison on the schools overall on the state level.

Renea said she and Nicole could put some of that data together for the board to see.

Dan Foley said they should try to make the students realize it is about school pride to do well on these tests. Dan said if it counted towards something, then maybe it would make it more important for the students to do better.

Dr. Jennings said it is important the students know it is not just for show; they need to let the kids know they are using the data.

- B. Proposed Later Start** – Board members received a handout entitled Report to the Souhegan School Board – April 16, 2009, Alternate Start Time Study Group.

Jeanne Ludt told board members the Alternate Start Time Study Group was made up of representatives from the Souhegan, Amherst and Mont Vernon School Boards and an administrative liaison. Jeanne said the Study Group has been meeting for almost a year. Jeanne said the group includes Mary Lou Mullens, Jeanne Ludt, Pam Coughlin, Peg Bennett, Rob Graybill (he is no longer on the committee), and Howard Brown (no longer a member of the Mont Vernon Board but still on the committee). The Administrative Liaison is Colleen Meaney, Dean of Faculty. Jeanne said initially, they gathered research/articles on the subject of the impact of early start times on high school student performance and behavior. Because the evidence was so strongly in favor of a later start time for high school students, they decided to move forward.

Next, they created short surveys that were administered over a six-month period to the various stakeholders. They recently completed their analysis of the data gathered from surveys given to students (grades 7-12), parents, and faculty/staff at all of the schools in Amherst and Mont Vernon. The surveys revealed 87% of the teenage students are not getting the recommended 9-10 hours of sleep per night. Jeanne said for the most part, all of the groups surveyed were supportive of exploring the possibility of

altering the start time to help address the need for teenagers to get adequate sleep time.

Jeanne said additional focus groups were assembled to address specific obstacles that were identified. Jeanne said they met with the school administrators, Souhegan students who had done research on the subject, athletic directors, and teacher/staff representatives to get their feedback on various proposals. Lastly, Jeanne said they contacted some of the other school systems around the country that have altered their start times.

Jeanne said they are getting very close to narrowing their choices. Initially, they looked at two possible scenarios: 1) Swapping start times with the elementary schools and 2) moving all start times up 30 to 45 minutes. When they weighed all the variables, Jeanne said it came down to finding a way to mitigate the impact of adjusting athletic schedules, field availability for schools and the recreation department, gym availability, daylight hours for buses and outdoor sports, availability of mentors/teachers, club advisors, and coaches for after school help, school time missed by students in order to accommodate after school events (athletics, clubs, music lessons, etc.) and before and after school care issues.

Jeanne said the compromise they are currently leaning toward would move all school start times forward by 30 minutes. Souhegan and AMS would begin at 8:00 a.m. and the Amherst elementary schools would begin at 9:00 a.m. and Mont Vernon would begin at 9:10. Jeanne said the end time has yet to be determined but will probably be close to what we're experiencing now with the additional time added on to each day to make up for snow days. Jeanne said at the moment this represents the best compromise because it could potentially give our teenage students an additional half hour of sleep and not result in dramatic alterations to after school activities.

Jeanne said two questions have recently been raised:

1) Would a half hour of additional sleep be worth all the changes that would be required?

The school principals all felt it would be worth changing. Teacher representatives had a more mixed reaction.

2) Should we consider riding the momentum of the current 20 minute later end to the day and consider implementing the 30 minute change in September of 2009 rather than waiting until 2010 as originally planned?

Jeanne said they continue to maintain the deadline of September 2009 as their date for making a final recommendation. Between then and now, they will present their proposal to the other school boards via the SAU Board and to parents. Teacher and Staff representatives all agreed to go back to their constituents to share what they learned and to get a sense of the faculty and staff's reaction to their proposal to move the start time of every school forward 30 minutes. According to the union representatives, any change to the start time constitutes a change in working conditions and would have to be negotiated within the individual collective bargaining units. Additional surveys of stakeholders are being considered.

Trevor Girard said he was all for the later start time if it was really going to help the kids. Trevor said he views the entire issue with the teachers / union representatives as petty if they are not open to a later start time which would result in a change in working conditions.

Bruce Schmidt asked if the administration thought they would be able to save on some delayed openings due to snow with the later start time. Dr. Jennings said she didn't think the later start times would make a difference in the delayed openings due to snow.

Dwight Brew suggested the administration approach the union representatives to let them know this is what the district would like to do, move everyone's start time up thirty minutes. Dwight suggested they put this topic on the next agenda for the Amherst School Board.

Dr. Jennings asked if each board recommended moving forward with the suggested start time of thirty minutes later. Dr. Jennings said they are not asking for a decision tonight, however, they would like to know if the board supports further work by the Study Group.

Board members agreed the Study Group should continue its work.

Dwight suggested they approach the union associations now to see if they would agree to moving everyone's schedule back by thirty minutes. Dwight thought it was a good idea to let the unions know this was a possibility and do they support it.

Porter Dodge said he agreed with Dr. Jennings, the thirty minute later start time benefits both the teachers and the students.

Dan asked Jeanne if she understood what the Study Groups next steps would be and she summarized the next steps as follows:

At the May Amherst and Mont Vernon board meetings, board members would vote to authorize a board member and Dr. Jennings to impact bargain the potential of a thirty minute late start for all schools.

Get in front of the unions before September 2009.

Once this is done, the SAU Board would decide what would come next, Public Hearings, etcetera.

Dr. Jennings congratulated the work done by this Study Group. She said it has been a model committee. They have done a lot of work and gotten a tremendous amount of input from different sources, had lots of meetings, etcetera.

- C. FY09 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report – Board members received a copy of the School Administrative Unit 39 Quarterly Financial Report for Fiscal year 2009 dated 7/1/2008-3/31/2009 in their board packets.

Betty Shankel told board members they are anticipating a surplus of approximately \$47,719 at the year-end.

Betty told board members they are under budget in Special Education by \$22,000 due to personnel replaced at a lower rate. In the Superintendent's Office, personnel were replaced at a lower rate thus they are under budget by 6,000. In the Business Office they are under budget by \$7,000 due to Personnel being replaced at a lower rate as well as Equipment and Software savings. In Employee Benefits, they are anticipating being under budget by \$13,700 because they have a savings due to new hire rates plus coverage changes.

There were a couple of numbers that were incorrect in the handout provided to the board members. It was agreed this document would be presented again at the next board meeting.

- A. SAU Lease – Board members received a copy of the Lease Agreement in their board packets. **VI. ACTION**

Betty Shankel told board members this Lease is supposed to be brought before the SAU Board annually for their approval. Betty said she was unaware this Lease should have come before the board each year.

Jeanne Ludt said this Lease was originally created so they would have a Building Maintenance Fund set up for the

SAU Office. Jeanne said it has turned into something much more complicated.

**A motion was made by Steve Coughlan to authorize the Chair to sign the Lease on behalf of all the board members and to authorize the Chair to set up a committee to review the Lease and report back to the board. Dwight Brew seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (10-0-0)**

**A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to adjourn the meeting. Pam Coughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (10-0-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.**

## **VII. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN**