

MINUTES
MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, March 13, 2008
Mont Vernon Village School Library

Leo White is absent. Jayson Darula, acting as Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board –Howard Brown, Jayson Darula, Bruce Schmidt, and John Schwope

Administrative Team- Ann Allwarden, Lisa Ambrosio, Mary Jennings, Nicole Heimarck, Meredith Nadeau, Kathy Skoglund, and Betty Shankel

Budget Committee – Peter King

Minute Taker – Susan M. Frenette

A. Principal's Report

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jayson Darula asked if Meredith Nadeau needed to add anything to the Principal's report and invited her to speak.

Meredith Nadeau reported the first item to add is MVVS received a donation of (24) desktop computers and (5) laptops from MITRE Corp. (employer of an MVVS parent) just before February vacation. A donation was sought after the flood damage last year. In past years, MITRE has donated equipment, but not as many desktops and laptops as this year.

Mary Jennings asked for the value of the donated equipment, or if it had been determined by the technology department.

Meredith Nadeau replied that we do not have it tonight but that she will provide it later. She will also write a letter of thanks to MITRE for the equipment.

Jayson Darula asked if some of the equipment is of superior quality to what is currently at MVVS. Meredith Nadeau replied that some is newer and in better condition than some current machines at MVVS, currently 5 or more years old. The equipment is currently being installed throughout the building. Bruce Schmidt asked where the donated equipment is being used and Meredith Nadeau replied that she would find out by the next meeting.

Jayson Darula asked if there is any further discussion;

hearing none, asked for a motion to accept the donation.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to accept the generous donation of computer equipment, and seconded by John Schwope. No further discussion and all members in attendance voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0, 1 absent)

Next, Meredith Nadeau adds that five students won awards in the state PTA Reflection Competition. It is an excellent showing for the MVVS and she congratulates recognized the winners.

Mary Jennings informed the board that she has accepted the resignation of Meredith Nadeau as Principal of MVVS. Meredith Nadeau has accepted a position as the Director of Special Education at the Oyster River School District beginning July 1, 2008. Mary Jennings reads Meredith's letter of resignation to the board.

Jayson Darula, on behalf of the board, extended congratulations and best wishes to Meredith Nadeau and her family

Jayson Darula asked if any items are to be pulled from the Consent Agenda. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to accept the (A) Minutes – February 14, 2008, (B) Treasurer's Report – January 2008, and (C) Donation to Student Activity Fund and seconded by Howard Brown. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passes unanimously. (4-0, 1 absent)

A. Literacy Initiative

V. PRESENTATIONS

Ann Allwarden, Literacy Coordinator, began a PowerPoint presentation describing the Literacy Initiative; using "Quickwrites", (a copy of PowerPoint is attached). She explained that this program is used monthly, and presented the norms for Fall and Winter this evening.

- The assessment is efficient and does not take too much time away from regular classroom instruction.
- The value of data presented – helps teachers to teach and students to learn.
- 'Quickwrite' is a nationally normed test, scored qualitatively rather than quantitatively. Testing is

given to students in Grades 1 through 6.

- Student progress is monitored and tracked individually and teachers are able to modify lessons to reinforce skills if needed. Data provides teachers with information that targeted growth projections are met throughout the year, for grade level, and individual students.
- Fall data for 6th grade is a reflection of incorrect test giving technique and does not represent normed data.

Meredith Nadeau began a PowerPoint presentation describing the scores for NWEA [North West Evaluation Association] and scores for DIBELS [Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills] on Reading. (a copy of the PowerPoint is attached) She reviewed statistics of NWEA scores for Grades 2 through 5 and DIBELS scores for Kindergarten and Grade 1.

Meredith Nadeau concluded that student performance is meeting benchmarks at mid-year and expects to meet end of year goals. The MVVS literacy team met with the SAU39 literacy team and discussed setting a 2nd year goal to increase 10% over 1st year student reading performance. She stated that this is first year baseline data and end of year goals may be revised based on this year's student performance.

Ann Allwarden concluded that the current focus is in collecting, using, and reporting data to the teachers and SAU39. She offers that the NWEA and DIBELS data may be used to assist in predicting NECAP success. She also offers the in-service presentation by the MVVS Grades 4 through 6 teachers (a copy is attached). She asked if the board has any questions.

John Schwope asked if the teachers were appreciative of the Literacy Initiative. Ann Allwarden stated teachers enthusiastically agree that collaboration, sharing of strengths, enhancing instruction and student-learning experiences at MVVS are improved and benefit all students.

Meredith Nadeau shared that this data is welcomed by the teachers because it demonstrates their efforts and teachers can see student success. Staff has shared with her that the data is being analyzed to improve instruction in the classrooms.

Ann Allwarden commented that having the data in midyear allows teachers the opportunity to refocus and adjust strategies to help students who may be struggling.

John Schwope noted that sometimes data tracking may be seen as a ‘threat’ to teachers and is pleased to learn that teachers are using the NWEA and DIBELS data as tool to assist them in the classroom.

Jayson Darula asked Ann Allwarden to describe her position and how her time is allocated as ¼ Literacy Coordinator and a ¾ Teacher as it has been reviewed recently in budget sessions.

Ann Allwarden responded that 75% of her time is spent with larger classrooms Grades 2, 4, and 5. Working with Grade 2 everyday, and working with 2 of the 3 classrooms in Grades 4 and 5 everyday. 25% of her time is spent co-planning with Teachers. To date, the focus has been primarily on Writing and for a block of time on Literature Circles with Grades 4 and 5.

B. Results of Kindergarten Survey

Meredith Nadeau reported that 50 surveys were sent out and 27 were returned. She reviews the data with the board. (a copy of the report is attached). The respondents were parents of current Kindergarten students. Meredith recommended waiting for input on the proposed schedule from the incoming Kindergarten parents at the April 4th registration and resurvey this group. She would like to make final recommendations at the April 10th MVVS school board meeting.

Jayson Darula asked the board if there are any questions. None were forthcoming and he thanked everyone for their time and efforts on this survey.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

Jayson Darula asked the board if there are any objections to addressing the Policies prior to the FY09 Budget Presentation – District Meeting; no objections were raised.

Jayson Darula asked John Schwope to review the process. He stated it is a second reading of the policies and the board will need to share comments, discuss any questions and propose any changes, then vote to accept or modify accordingly.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

B. POLICIES – 2ND READING

Jayson Darula read policies and asked for questions or comments from MVVS board members. None were forthcoming.

Discrimination Policies

AC – Non Discrimination;

Discrimination Policies

ACA – Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence; no discussion or questions.

Discipline Policy

JICFA – Hazing; no discussion or question.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to adopt policies AC – Non Discrimination; ACA – Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence; and JICFA – Hazing and seconded by John Schwope. All members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0, 1 absent)

A. FY09 BUDGET PRESENTATION—DISTRICT MEETING

Mary Jennings announced that Peter Hayden would be the moderator (noting that it is a different individual from last year).

Jayson Darula discussed an email that was sent indicating that there may be some negativity from the Town. Leo White asked the board members if there were any other considerations to reduce the budget.

Jayson Darula stated that the school board has done a thorough job of reviewing. Bruce Schmidt stated that there is always going to be opposition and if so, let the opposition speak at Town Meeting. Howard Brown replied that it is the school board's role to educate the public and voters on what the school needs. John Schwope offered that the school board has taken a long-term approach to the education process and its funding in our discussions; in the long-term, it is a more cost effective approach.

Discussion ensued.

Jayson Darula asked John Schwope if he will be presenting an overview, and explain the increase in taxes due to the return of surplus funds from the unreserved fund balance and related impact on taxes.

John Schwope replied that Leo White will be making that slide presentation, but if Leo is unavailable, he will present.

Meredith Nadeau shared that she asked Lisa Ambrosio to calculate what the tax rate would be with a 0% increase, and that it would be a \$1.33 increase over last year's rate, and \$11.56/\$1,000.

John Schwope reviewed that there is a slide showing the dollar value per thousand, showing the \$10.23 drop due to the return of funds to the taxpayers. "The concern of the public is that an 'X' % increase in the tax rate cannot be measured against last year, because it was atypical, and not to be expected going forward."

Howard Brown suggests adding this information to the slide presentation.

Discussion ensued

Peter King stated that the amount of increase over a 2-year period of FY07 to FY09 is 5% and to include it in the slide presentation.

Mary Jennings asked if the .75 teaching position is cut at the meeting how will the board respond. John Schwope replied that appropriate staffing for the school is the responsibility of the administration and school board.

Jayson Darula stated that the public is always invited to the MVVS board meetings.

Peter King informed the board that the point of the .75 staffing position is not just about the money -- the .75 floating teacher is not an approved position by the voters. Mary Jennings commented that the voters approve the budget and the administration approves staffing. It is not district policy for the voters to approve staffing.

Peter King questions if perhaps it had been done this way in the past. He cannot cite a specific policy. Bruce Schmidt stated the vote at the District Meeting is solely for the dollar amount on the warrant article."

Discussion ensued.

Meredith Nadeau concluded that the '.75 teaching position' was not a new position but a result due to a retiring teacher and adding the '.25 Literacy Coordinator' to the position.

Bruce Schmidt asked who would be responsible for replying to any questions posed by the voters at the District meeting, "What is the protocol?" Mary Jennings stated

that often Meredith Nadeau or Leo White may addresses first, and then defer to the most appropriate individual (administrator or board member).

Peter King asked if the school board needed to make amendments to the budget based on the last board meeting. Lisa Ambrosio commented that the budget was modified as per the February board meeting discussion and included an adjustment the dollar amount in the warrant article accordingly.

Peter King thanked everyone for their comments.

Mary Jennings informed the board that she will be establishing a search committee for a new MVVS Principal and would like Kathy Skoglund to chair. The committee would be composed of Parents, Teachers, and Staff. She hopes to have the search done in the next two months and to have a recommendation to the board by May. She asked the board if they would like to have one or two representatives to serve on the search committee.

Jayson Darula asked who makes the final decision to select the candidate. Mary Jennings commented that it is based on the recommendations of the committee, but her final decision. Jayson Darula suggested that one board member serve on the search committee. Mary Jennings thanked all board members for their support.

Jayson Darula asked if there is any further discussion. None was forthcoming and he asked for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Schwope. No further discussion and all voted in favor. The motion passes unanimously. (4-0, 1 absent)

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

VIII. OTHER

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ ADJOURN