

MINUTES
MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
September 10, 2009
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Present:

Mont Vernon School Board: Jayson Darula, Trevor Girard, Kim Roberge, Bruce Schmidt, and Leo White
Administrative Team: Sue Blair, Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, and Renea Sparks
Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

ATTENDANCE

Leo White called the board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Principal's Report – Board members received a copy of the Principal's Report in their board packets. The report was dated September 10, 2009.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sue Blair told board members they have eliminated the staggered lunchroom process and changed it to two consistent times. The new schedule seems to be working very well.

Sue said they had a fire evacuation on Friday and it was due to a dirty smoke detector. She said she was told the rest of the detectors had been checked. Sue said she is not sure if something is wrong with the system because all the detectors were checked but the alarm continues to go off every day at 1:30 p.m. even though the faulty alarm has been disengaged.

Trevor Girard suggested they call back the alarm company since they were just at the school during the summer cleaning and testing the alarms.

Sue said the current student population at the Village School as of September 8, 2009, was 247. Sue said they just added another girl to the Kindergarten class this week.

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Bruce Schmidt asked if Sue could provide the 7th and 8th grade numbers in the future. Dr. Jennings said she had these numbers in her report.

Sue thanked Bruce Schmidt for his donation of three chairs that were created by local artists for the Daland Public Library Silent Auction. Sue said one chair will be for the Library, one for Guidance and one for the Principal's office.

Sue told board members they currently have 83 students signed up for before school care on Late Start Mornings. Sue said on their first late start day on Tuesday they had 43 children in the morning.

Sue invited board members to the Open House on Wednesday night, September 16, 2009, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

NECAP testing is October 1st – October 22nd this year.

- B. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jennings told board members they had a nice representation at the Opening Day by board members. Dr. Jennings thanked Kim for a great job done on Opening Day and for attending.

Dr. Jennings spoke about the projected budget and actual enrollment.

Leo White asked if there were any comments from the public.

III. PUBLIC TIME

Leslie McCann provided board members with a handout regarding the significant discrepancy in the employee share of health insurance rates between the Mont Vernon paraprofessionals and all other SAU 39 employees.

She said she was presenting this issue to the board for their consideration. All the Mont Vernon Paraprofessionals signed the cover memo.

The memo states while the paraprofessionals are aware of the current climate regarding any spending increases, it is their request that we be given the opportunity to bring this issue before the voters as part of the budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011. Their proposal is that they be given the parity with the Mont Vernon Support Staff and MVEA.

Additional supporting documentation was provided to the board including what the Paraprofessional Staff, Mont Vernon Support Staff, MVEA, Amherst Support Staff, Amherst Education Association and Souhegan Cooperative School District currently receive as it relates to Health and Dental Insurance along with their rates.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to approve Consent Agenda Item A. Minutes 1. June 11, 2009, 2. August 27, 2009. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Trevor Girard to approve Consent Agenda Items B. Donation – Chairs (3)– Value \$50.00 each, to be allocated to the General Fund and C. Target Donation - \$87.78 – to be allocated to the Activity Fund. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. Four board members voted in favor of the motion, with one abstention, Bruce Schmidt. The motion passed. (4-0-1)

- A. School in Need of Improvement Plan – Board members received a handout at the board meeting detailing the Mont Vernon Village School, School Improvement Plan, School in Need of Improvement Year 1 dated September 10, 2009.

V. PRESENTATIONS

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Nicole Heimareck told board members all faculty are involved in the School Improvement Plan.

Nicole said the SINI (School in Need of Improvement) process involving the full faculty began on June 18, 2009.

The faculty thought about Whole School Data, Grade Level Data, Sub-group Data, Comparative Data, and the most important piece, Individual School Data.

Nicole emphasized the plan was written for ALL students, not just some students.

Slides were shown highlighting 2008 NECAP data in Grade 3 Mathematics, Grade 4 Mathematics, Grade 5 Mathematics, and Grade 6 Mathematics. The graphs provided the performance data for Identified Students (Special Ed) and Non-Identified Students.

Nicole provided board members with specific information as to what the faculty was asked to do with the information (data) as presented.

- Step 1 – Describing the Data (5 minutes) No judgments should be made.
- Step 2 – Interpreting the Data (10 minutes)
- Step 3 – Implications for Classroom Practice (10 minutes)
- Step 4 – Whole-Group Reflection – What did you learn from listening to your colleagues that was interesting or surprising? What new perspectives did your colleagues provide?

Nicole explained through the School Improvement Continuum, they then collected teacher perceptual data.

Once the above-mentioned work was complete, Nicole said the information gathered was moved to the School Improvement Team.

A slide was shown which provided the names of the School Improvement Team. (SIT)

Nicole told board members the SIT team took data from June 18, 2009, and analyzed it further.

- Atlas Data Walk
- School Improvement Continuum

The SIT team also used the Performance Tracker Standards Analysis, which is a state based data warehouse for further analysis.

The SIT team developed a SINI Plan, which is included in board member packets.

Nicole highlighted the Process/Timeline for SIT as follows:

July 14, 2009 – SINI team reported and discussed Root Cause Continuum results. Target areas were identified.

July 28, 2009 – Dig deeper in the priority areas – examined the “root causes” of the problems in the priority areas. Developed Strategies and Action Plans for each target area. Began plan development.

August 24, 2009 – Standards analysis utilizing Performance Tracker. Completed draft plan.

September 9, 2009 – SINI Plan roll-out to full staff.

Nicole presented some results from the Standards Analysis:

- Why is Geometry high? What are we doing with Geometry that works?
- Why is Numbers and Operations low?
- What is the impact of the low numbers and operations scores on other areas of math?

Nicole said in Grade 2, they saw that numbers and

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operations scores were low however; this wasn't a big surprise. Nicole said this is relatively easy to fix, they need to spend a greater amount of time going over basic Math facts.

Nicole explained the reason she wasn't surprised was because for the past 13-14 months, the staff in the higher grades, 7 and above began to voice their concern with students not understanding basic math facts.

Jayson Darula asked if we have been remiss in not addressing this issue sooner.

Nicole Heimareck said they have put things in place to address this issue.

Bruce Schmidt said he didn't see this issue as a sudden one, but rather an inherent issue since staff have noticed the problem with students at the high school level.

Nicole told board members part of the problem is that the Math Curriculum was revised back in 2001 however; it was never implemented as written.

Trevor Girard said when he reviews Everyday Math homework with his children, he sees that it jumps around a lot, and skips over a lot of the basics.

Kim Tighe said Everyday Math spirals itself, and goes around and around quite a bit.

Kim said it definitely doesn't have a drill, drill, drill component to it; it doesn't focus on basic Math concepts for weeks at a time.

Leo White asked since Everyday Math doesn't meet all grade level expectations, would we utilize other supplemental materials.

Nicole said yes, on classroom-by-classroom basis or student-by-student basis.

Nicole discussed what information is included in the Plan.

Nicole said there is one goal in the SINI Plan and that is for All Students to be Proficient in Math by 2011.

Nicole presented a slide, which detailed the Priority Area of Standards Based Curriculum.

- To align the Everyday Mathematics Program with the GLE's. (Grade Level Expectations)
- To identify gaps in Everyday Math Program.
- To identify supplemental materials to support the Everyday Math Program.

The next Priority Area, which was highlighted, was Standards Based Instruction.

- To implement 60 minutes of math instruction.
- To implement 30 minutes of math camp. Sue Blair said math camp will be an enhancement to the current method of instruction, and will offer all students practice and support. Sue said it will occur 5 days per week and each grade level will have there own specific time.

Nicole presented the next Priority Area as the Standards Based Assessment.

- To develop and implement a systematic approach to assessment.
- To use assessment results to inform instructional practice.

The next Priority Area presented was Professional Development.

- To continue to provide professional development for all staff in support of the improvement strategies.

Nicole presented the last Priority Area, which was Parent and Community Involvement.

- To create a stronger collaborative partnership between school, parents, and the community.
- To assist parents in accessing resources to help them build confidence in supporting their children's learning.

Sue Blair said on September 9, 2009, they had their first official staff meeting and the SINI Plan was rolled out to the staff.

Sue said in order for the SINI/DINI Team / Plan to be a success, the follow is essential:

- Consistency
- Parent/Guardian involvement
- Expansion of programming (ie. Math Camp)

Sue said the staff all agreed, they can't help but take the SINI/DINI status personally. Sue said the staff recognizes the work they have in front of them, however, the staff left the meeting with enthusiasm.

Sue asked for feedback from the staff with regards to the plan rollout. Sue read two of the e-mails she received to the board.

Trevor Girard asked if they are already working on implementing the Math Camp. Sue Blair said yes, they are already working on implementation.

Bruce Schmidt asked about the amount of time they receive Math instruction for as well as Literacy instruction.

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Currently, they receive 60 minutes of Math instruction per day and 90 minutes of Literacy. They have just added an additional 30 minutes of concentrated math to the day.

Science and Social Studies are now integrated to the curriculum.

Spanish is a Special so they are receiving 5 minutes less of Spanish.

The students no longer have a staggered lunch and they no longer have a morning recess. They only have a lunch recess.

Library is integrated into the Science and Social Studies curriculum. Amy White said each class has Library once a week for twenty minutes.

Kim Roberge asked if the current schedule is working and Sue Blair said yes it is, it is flowing smoothly.

Sue said she is looking into splitting the half hour recess.

Bruce Schmidt asked about the Math Camp. He questioned what a teacher would do if a student was in the 2nd grade but operating at a 4th grade level in Math, what would be done.

Sue said they don't want the top level to be compromised and they will address the issues of students performing substantially above or below their grade level.

Leo White asked where the district was getting the funds to implement the SINI Plan. Nicole said due to the SINI status, they will receive an additional \$20,000 in Title II funding and they will also use Title IIA funds. Nicole said the curriculum work funding will come right from the regular operating budget.

Dr. Jennings said she credits Sue and the faculty for figuring out the schedule before school started so that the staff knew in advance what the schedule would be.

Leo White applauded the effort of the Administration with regards to the SINI Plan.

Nicole said it is a tribute to the SINI Team and the faculty for all the time they put in this summer.

- B. Budget Balance/Salaries-Benefits – Board members received a handout in their board packets entitled 2009-2010 Mont Vernon Salary Hiring Savings.

Dr. Jennings told board members they had an overall savings of \$32,096.21 based on the hiring done over the summer. This savings included salary savings, health and dental savings, FICA/MC savings as well as NH Retirement savings.

Dr. Jennings told board members they would receive a Quarterly Report at the October board meeting.

- C. Proposal – Library Automation – Amy White, Librarian at the Mont Vernon Village School presented to members of the board the importance of automating the library.

Amy White told board members an investment of \$5,000 from this year's salary account would result in a \$17,043 return in library automation.

Amy explained Library Automation.

- Library Automation is a system by which all books in a library's collection are cataloged. This allows collection information to be available to all users with a few keystrokes.

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- A user can find out what books the library has about a certain subject, where to find them, and if they are currently in the library.
- Collection information can be accessed from within the classrooms, as well as from within the library and at home.

Amy explained why Library Automation is Important.

- Helps teachers locate resources that support the curriculum.
- Helps student's access materials and resources more efficiently.
- Encourages reading by exposing students to many reading genres.
- Protects the resources of the district by providing an accurate inventory of materials.
- Replaces defunct technology.
- Supports students as they work to reach their literacy goals.

Amy told board members Library Automation is now expected technology in all schools and libraries.

Amy said when students leave the Mont Vernon Village School they will *never again* work with a card catalog, all library research will be done with automation technology.

Amy told board members with Library Automation the MVVS will improve its ability to support and enhance literacy for all students.

- Automation software improves efficiency.
- Locating resources with the current MVVS card catalog can take anywhere from 15 – 20 minutes.
- With library automation, in 1-2 minutes a teacher or student knows what resources are in the library, and whether they are currently available.

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- If searching for fiction, students can create their search not just based on an author, but on a subject they like reading about. With a few key-strokes they are exposed to many types of books.

Amy White highlighted the Current State of the MVVS Library.

- There are books on shelves that are not listed in the card catalog.
- There are books in the card catalog that are no longer in the library collection.
- Even if a book is in the card catalog, its subject matter may not be categorized – therefore you only can search for a book by title and author, not by subject.

Amy White provided slides, which detailed comments from Teachers and Students at the Village School.

Amy told board members the estimated cost to implement Library Automation Technology at the Village School is \$17,043.

Amy provided what the school would get for the \$17,043 cost.

- New equipment – 2 desktop systems, a bar code scanner, and a portable bar code scanner. \$4,058
- Library automation software - \$3,300
- Materials – bard codes and digital records of our collection – \$4,685
- Salary/Labor - \$5,000
- Total \$17,043

Amy told board members there will be a yearly maintenance cost once the library is fully automated. It will be approximately \$1,000/year.

Amy provided the other funding sources:

- Anonymous donor has pledged \$5,000 for this specific project.
- The MVVS PTA has pledged \$750.
- The Milford Rotary Club is considering a \$5,000 donation.
- The Walker Fund, a part of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- The Mont Vernon School District

Amy said with the generosity of donors and grants the cost to the Mont Vernon School District will be approximately 29% of the cost of implementing the library automation.

Amy said because this software was purchased for Clark/Wilkins in the past three years, if the district acts this Fall they will save 25% off the customary cost.

Amy emphasized District money is contingent upon securing alternative funding. If we do not receive sufficient grant money, the district money will not be spent.

Amy said the district is in a unique position this Fall with an approximate \$32,000 surplus in the salary portion of the budget.

The money spent from the district for the purchase of the library automation equals the estimated cost of labor (ie. salary) to complete the installation.

Therefore, money for this purchase is in actuality additional salary.

At the October board meeting the administration hopes to come before the board with a request to approve the use of \$5,000 from the salary line item for implementing library automation contingent upon securing alternative funding from grants and donors.

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Jayson Darula told Amy she gave a very compelling presentation. He said had anyone explained library automation this way before, it would have passed a long time ago.

Board members thanked Amy for her presentation.

- A. Policy JLCF – 1st Reading – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon District JLCF – Wellness Policy in their board packets.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Jennings told board members this policy was adopted by the Souhegan Board at the end of last year.

Bruce Schmidt said he does not like the fact that the policy recommends they provide breakfast and don't. (page 58 Bullet C.)

Leo White asked if there was any reason for it being needed in the policy and Dr. Jennings said it is something they aspire to provide.

Leo White said he agreed with Bruce, he thinks they should change the policy and remove the reference to breakfast on page 58 under Nutrition Guidelines Bullet C.

Bruce also questioned the reference to providing sufficient time to eat breakfast in accordance with the federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. (page 59 Section D.)

Kim Roberge said she would like this reference to remain in the policy.

Discussion followed, it was agreed the reference to Schools whenever possible shall ensure students have sufficient time to eat breakfast would remain in the policy.

Bruce also suggested changing the reference on page 59 where it states Foods shall contain no trans fats to Foods shall contain no *USDA* trans fats.

Leo White questioned why the sections on page 59 where they reference Food Sales for the Middle/Junior High and High Schools needs to be in the policy for Mont Vernon.

Bruce Schmidt said the policy is in conflict with what is being done by the administration and teachers. Bruce showed members of the school board as well as the administration a coupon for Pizza Hut that one of his children received for reading so many books in a month.

Kim Tighe said as a faculty member, she has never read the policy.

It was agreed Sue Blair would receive input from the staff to see what their past practices have been.

Leo White said at next board meeting the board will look for input from Sue Blair on this policy.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to adjourn the meeting. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0) The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

VIII. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN