

**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
March 17, 2011
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Dr. Jennings called the board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER –
ORGANIZATIONAL
MEETING**

Dr. Jennings welcomed Tom Driscoll to the board. Dr. Jennings also congratulated John Quinlan for his re-election to the board.

Dr. Jennings said they asked Janet Gramatges to come to the meeting so the board could present her with a thank-you gift however, she could not attend the meeting. Dr. Jennings said they would be sending the plant to her home on Friday.

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board: Tom Driscoll, Trevor Girard, Kim Roberge, John Quinlan, and Bruce Schmidt
Administrative Team: Sue Blair, Nicole Heimarck, Renea Sparks, and Karen Taylor
Faculty: Sue Alger, Melanie Jones, Meghan Libby, Jan Mattie, Linda Narducci, Scott Prescott, and Kim Tighe
Public: Sue Granfors
Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

- A. Chairman – Dr. Jennings asked for nominations for the school board chairman. Bruce Schmidt nominated Kim Roberge to serve as Board Chairman. Kim accepted the nomination. Dr. Jennings asked if there were any other nominations. John Quinlan nominated Trevor Girard to serve as Board Chairman. Trevor Girard accepted the nomination.

**II. ELECTION OF SCHOOL
BOARD OFFICERS**

The board voted on Bruce Schmidt's motion first to have Kim Roberge serve as Board Chair. The board unanimously elected Kim Roberge to serve as Board Chairman. (5-0-0)

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Dr. Jennings turned the meeting over to Kim Roberge.

- B. Vice-Chairman – Kim Roberge asked for nominations for the Vice Chairman position. John Quinlan nominated Trevor Girard to serve as Vice Chairman. Trevor accepted the nomination. Kim Roberge nominated Bruce Schmidt.

The board voted on Kim Roberge’s motion to have Bruce Schmidt serve as Vice Chairman. The board unanimously elected Bruce Schmidt to serve as Vice Chairman. (5-0-0)

- C. Secretary – Trevor Girard nominated Tom Driscoll to serve as Board Secretary. Tom accepted the nomination.

The board unanimously elected Tom Driscoll to serve as Secretary. (5-0-0)

Board members chose committee assignments. They were as follows:

Manifest – Kim Roberge, Bruce Schmidt
 Budget Committee Liaison – Town – Trevor Girard
 Budget Committee Liaison – School – Trevor Girard,
 backup Tom Driscoll
 Policy – Tom Driscoll
 Transportation – Kim Roberge
 RSEC – the meetings are at 8 a.m. and 6 times per year.
 Currently these meetings are not conducive to board
 members work schedules.
 Brick School – Bruce Schmidt
 Calendar – John Quinlan
 Negotiations – will be discussed / decided at a future
 board meeting.

Kim Roberge called the board meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

III. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board members received a copy of the Principals Report dated March 17, 2011, in their board packets.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Sue Blair thanked the many staff members present at the board meeting for coming this evening. Sue said they were here to discuss the trimester proposal as well as the Literacy / Math programs in school.

Sue said the student population increased by 2 as compared to last month. The total population is 242. First grade increased by one student and fourth grade increased by one student.

Sue Blair told board members Noah Desrosier placed fifth in the Spelling Bee Regional Competition. Sue said Noah made it the furthest of any Mont Vernon student ever, excellent job!

Sue said NECAP results were mailed home on Monday, March 14, 2011. Sue said they had the results in February but were asked by the state to hold them until an issue was resolved.

Sue said the Read To Feed Program as of the 2nd week the total number of minutes read was 41,000. The amount pledged was \$1,359. The culminating activity is an assembly with Inca Sun on March 25, 2011.

There was an SAU wide Parent Information Night held at AMS on March 9, 2011, regarding the School Response to the Bullying Law. Sue said it was well attended and there was some very good questions.

Sue said on March 11, 2011, it was Mix and Match Day as well as Math Mania. She said also held in the afternoon was the MVVS Talent Show. Sue thanked the board members because every one of them attended the Talent Show. Sue said the teachers also put on a wonderful finale performance.

Also provided in the Principal's Report were some upcoming events/key dates.

Kim asked if there were any comments from the public **III. PUBLIC TIME**

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however, there were none.

Kim introduced Tommy, a 9th grader at Bishop Guertin who was attending the board meeting. Tommy said he had to attend a public meeting for school.

The E. 2011-2012 Professional Staff Nominations were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve Consent Agenda Items A. 1. Minutes, B. Treasurer's Reports, C. Manifest, and D. Transfer. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion with one abstention, Tom Driscoll. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0-1)

The Professional Staff Nominations were approved later in the meeting.

- A. Literacy & Math Support to teachers and students
 – Sue Blair introduced Fay Dresher the Reading Specialist at the Village School as well as Scott Prescott the Mathematics Coach at the Village School.

V. PRESENTATIONS

Scott said it was his second year at the Village School and his position is funded through a Grant.

Scott said the purpose of their presentation was to provide an overview of their work in Mont Vernon and show how it is impacting teaching and learning.

Scott said the staff at the Village School is outstanding to work with and very open to get someone else's perspective.

Fay Dresher said she is impressed at how the children at the Village School respond to her, they make eye contact, etcetera, Fay, said they are wonderful.

Scott explained their role at the Village School:

- Sharing expertise with teachers
- Implementing research based best practices
- Helping teachers to use data to inform instruction.

Scott showed what this looks like:

- Working with entire staff at one time – Professional Development, Curriculum Development
- Working with individual teachers – Planning, problem solving, reviewing data, etcetera.
- Working directly with students – small groups and individually.

Scott said they tend to hover at the top two – working with the entire staff at one time and working with individual teachers.

Scott said they are working on students knowing their basic math facts and have implemented some changes at the Village School and they see noticeable improvement already. Scott said in grades K-3 they want kids to develop a real number sense, and be comfortable with numbers.

Scott said Looking Ahead in Mathematics

- More in depth articulation of scope and sequence for curriculum.
- Professional Development
- Further Development of Benchmarks

Fay Drescher spoke about the importance of independent reading at a students' independent level. Fay said studies have shown when kids read at their independent level, they become a better reader.

Fay said she is making sure independent reading is in place and it is being done effectively.

Fay said next year she will be working with small groups of teachers regarding leveled reading and writing.

Fay said she also was given the opportunity to meet with staff once a month however, due to snow days it hasn't always happened to have a lunch and learn with the staff.

Fay said if students need additional materials other than Scott Foresman, they offer them.

Fay said she is on the data team, which goes over the NECAP/Dibels results and she works directly with some children be it in small groups or individually.

Kim thanked Scott Prescott and Fay Dresher for their presentation.

- B. Trimester Proposal – Kim Tighe thanked the board for welcoming staff members to present on their Trimester Proposal.

Kim said they believe changing to a trimester schedule is in the best interest of our students.

Kim said the current quarterly system has many interruptions that prevent teachers from collecting quality data on student performance and growth. These interruptions include: Standardized testing, school vacations, holidays, and snow days.

Kim said by going to a trimester, they will give a more balanced portrayal of individual student's growth and acquisition of skills over the course of a school year. Teachers will be able to collect more data in a longer time frame. In a quarter there are 45 days and in a trimester there are 60 days.

Kim said trimesters will allow teachers time to include more than one unit of study in a grading period. This will give students a better opportunity to learn and apply skills in more than one content area.

Trimesters would allow for more detailed reporting on individual student growth.

All teachers in grades 1-6 will send home progress reports halfway between each trimester. (three per year)

All teachers in grades 1-6 will issue a progress report that has a consistent format – one for grades 1-3 and another one for grades 4-6.

Trimesters will allow students to have more time for true hands-on, free exploration learning experiences.

Kim said Trimesters are used at AMS and having trimesters at the Village school will allow exiting students a smooth transition to the middle school.

Other towns currently using a trimester grading system in their elementary schools include Bow, Hanover, Hollis, Milford, Wilton, Lyndeborough, Keene and Dover.

Trevor said he prefers students receive report cards four times a year. Trevor said when kids are young parents want to know how they are progressing early on and by going to trimesters he believes this would not be the case.

Kim Tighe said along with the students receiving a report card three times per year (trimester) the teachers would also provide an additional three progress reports throughout the year.

Kim Tighe said they would like to go even further with their reporting on children.

Sue Blair said by going to a Trimester, the emphasis will be on looking at actual student growth, they will be able to emphasize concept mastery and they will be able to determine what the students need to work on.

Bruce Schmidt said he would like to see what type of assessments the teachers will be using for grades 1-3 and 4-6.

Dr. Jennings said they need to look at report cards across

the board K-12.

Nicole Heimarck said they are talking about whether they should be reporting on achievement or student growth at the SAU.

Nicole said this could be the next program that enters program review. Nicole said she is sure parents, faculty and the administration will have a lot to say about it.

Kim Roberge said she is not opposed to giving this a try.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve a Pilot Year to try Trimester Reporting. Tom Driscoll seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0-0)

- C. FY12 Default Budget –Board members received a handout in their board packets entitled Mont Vernon FY12 Budget Proposed vs. Default Budget Variance Detail.

Dr. Jennings explained in a Default Budget, they are to maintain the current programs.

The board asked at the next meeting the administration provide the staff development figures year to date.

The administration is to come back to the board next month and let them know what they can't live without.

With the default budget, handwriting and the leveled readers were taken out.

Trevor said what they presented to the taxpayers as the Default Budget, they need to honor, as the taxpayers spoke. Trevor said if they reinstate some of the budgetary items lost through the default budget, voters will be angry and feel deceived.

Sue Blair agreed to check with 6th grade students/parents

to see if they were planning on going to AMS next year, however, there is no guarantee she will get a response to her request or even if parents/students will have decided what their plans are next year.

A. Calendar

1. Adjustment to 2010-2011 Calendar – Board members received a memo in their board packets regarding Calendars. The memo was dated March 15, 2011.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

To date, Dr. Jennings said they have missed six days of school due to snow that when made up would mean that the last day of school for students in Mont Vernon would be June 24, 2011.

In the memo, Dr. Jennings proposed so that students didn't have to attend school during the last week of June, that classes be held on Friday, May 27, 2011, and that the Professional Day scheduled for staff that day be rescheduled for Monday, June 27, 2011.

Also, she wanted the board to vote to grant the superintendent the authority to submit a request for a waiver of the 180 day requirement from the Commissioner of Education as authorized by RSA 189.2 should future school cancellations occur this school year, with the understanding that all SAU#39 schools still meet the state requirement for instructional hours.

A motion was made by John Quinlan that classes be held on Friday, May 27, 2011, and the Professional Development Day be rescheduled and if there any more snow days / flood days this school year, the board grants the superintendent the authority to apply for a waiver. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

2. Appointment to Calendar Committee – Dr. Jennings reminded board members the Calendar Committee recommended an

hours based calendar for the next school year with minutes added to the school day; however, the bargaining unit from the three districts could not agree on it. Dr. Jennings said at issue were hourly employees' pay rates and their daily responsibilities.

Dr. Jennings explained an idea was proposed to have a 180 day hours based calendar, where up to 4 days could be canceled and not made up by the students if state mandated instructional hours were maintained. This idea was of interest to the bargaining units and it was recommended that the Calendar Committee be reconvened to look at it for next year.

Dr. Jennings told board members side agreements again would need to be made with the associations in order to implement this proposal. The possibility of this happening looks good. Dr. Jennings said the beginning and end of the school year would remain the same; however with the hours based calendar the end date and the graduation date would not "float" for students. Faculty members would hold to their 180-day contracts by working days beyond the end-date for students – probably in staff development workshops.

Dr. Jennings told board members a new board representative needs to be appointment to this committee from Mont Vernon. John Quinlan volunteered to serve on this committee.

Bruce Schmidt said he does not agree with this latest proposal. Bruce said under this new proposal the students will have a loss of educational time, as they will not have to make up, up to 4 snow days. Bruce said this is unacceptable, where you can just drop out snow days and not have the students make up the instructional time.

John Quinlan said he agreed with Bruce Schmidt.

3. Approval 2011-2012 Calendar – Dr.

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Jennings told board members by contract, the employee bargaining units make a recommendation for a school calendar. This year the recommendation coincides with the administrative recommendation and comes to the Boards as a joint recommendation.

Dr. Jennings said with the proposed calendar which is included in board members packets, the school year for students would start before Labor Day and would end June 14th or 15th barring any snow days.

Dr. Jennings told board members they need to file a school calendar with the state by April 1st.

Dr. Jennings asked board members to also approve the hours-based calendar should it be successfully negotiated with the teacher associations.

Board members agreed they did not agree with the new proposal for an hours-based calendar, therefore they would not be including this request in their motion.

John Quinlan did not concur with having January 2nd, 2012 as a holiday. Dr. Jennings tried to explain why they included it as a holiday, as they surveyed many districts in the area to determine whether they should include it as well. January 1, 2012, falls on a Sunday in 2012.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve the 180 day calendar as presented by the administration and included in the board packet. Kim Roberge seconded the motion. Four board members voted in favor of the motion and one board member voted against the motion, John Quinlan. The motion passed. (4-1-0)

- B. Proposal to address pension funding – Board members received a Memo dated March 15, 2011, from Dr. Jennings regarding the Response to the Governor’s Proposed Budget.

In the memo Dr. Jennings spoke about the proposed FY12 State Budget by the governor, and how he is proposing that the state no longer be responsible for its 13.95% contribution to the teacher pension fund. This will result in \$64,573 of unanticipated costs being added to the FY12 budget for Mont Vernon. The house anticipates a decision on this by the end of the month; the Senate will then take it up and make a decision in May or June.

The memo stated to find that amount of money in the recently passed default budget, the administration projects they may have to reduce staff. According to law, they must notify staff of a non-renewal or layoff by April 15th, bringing the decision of how to fund a potential pension shortfall to this month's Mont Vernon meeting.

The memo outlined three possible options:

1. Do nothing, and if the pension funds are legislated to the districts, we call a special town meeting to propose a new budget with new appropriations included in it; or in 2012, if we go into deficit spending on the budget, we call a special meeting to vote in more appropriations.
2. Utilize the surplus funds we anticipate from this year - \$226,000 (includes revenues) to fund items from the FY11 budget giving us flexibility in the FY12 budget should this state budget pass.
3. Vote to reduce the FY12 budget now, and reinstate those cuts if the legislation does not pass. To accomplish this, the administration would recommend:
 - a. Reduction of .5 staff professional staff members with benefits (\$42,500)
 - b. Reduction in school services (\$20,500)

We also could do nothing and take a risk that the

following budget items might change:

- c. One less out of district special education student. (\$21,000)
- d. Two fewer students attend AMS; tuition reduction. (\$30,000)
- e. Reduction in negotiated staff development funds. (\$12,000)

Kim asked the board how they felt about spending out of the surplus. Kim said this is not something the boards have normally done. Kim said she didn't think they had much choice, she thinks they need to make the cuts.

Bruce Schmidt said he didn't like making decisions when they don't have all the information. He wanted to defer making a decision until better information is available.

Bruce said anything over the projected \$210,000 surplus, he would use to bring down the unanticipated cost of \$65,000.

Dr. Jennings said they don't know what the state is going to do and we have to make a decision by April 15th for staffing / contract purposes.

Trevor Girard said they have to preserve all options.

Dr. Jennings said they looked at the budget and it left very few options.

Trevor said the administration looked at the budget and were proposing what they thought were the best options however, he had different ideas.

Dr. Jennings said, if the board decides to cut a .5 position, they must cut a non-certified, non-tenured position first.

The board discussed the options in non-public session.

Trevor Girard said he is adamantly against spending surplus funds because it is simply going to result in a tax

increase the following year and pushes the problem off and at some point it has to be addressed.

Kim said she agreed with Trevor, if what was presented is actually what's going to happen, she would agree with Trevor.

Action was taken on this topic under VIII. Nominations.

- C. FY12 MS-22 – Board members received a copy of the MS-22 in their board packets. Dr. Jennings told board members the purpose of this document is to certify the budget that the voter's voted on.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to accept the FY12 MS-22 as presented by the administration. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

- D. Policy FF – Dedication and Naming of Facilities – 2nd Reading – This topic was postponed due to the length of the meeting.

A motion was made by John Quinlan to enter into Non-Public Session per RSA: 91 – A:3 II (a) to discuss professional staff nominations. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. By roll call vote, Schmidt-yes; Quinlan-yes; Roberge-yes; Driscoll-yes and Girard-yes, the board entered into Non-Public Session at 7:13 p.m. (5-0-0)

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

Discussion was held on the 2011-2012 professional staff nominations.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to come out of Non-Public Session. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. By roll call vote, Schmidt-yes, Roberge-yes, Driscoll-yes, and Girard-yes, the board voted unanimously to come out of Non-Public Session at 7:55 p.m. (4-0-0)

The consensus of the board was they did not want to limit their options on how to resolve the problem.

A motion was made by Trevor Girard to accept the professional nominations for 2011-2012 as presented excluding the .5 Librarian position, making this decision to meet the deadline of contract renewal on April 15, 2011. Kim Roberge seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. John Quinlan was not present for the vote. (4-0-0)

VIII. NOMINATIONS

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to adjourn the meeting. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m. (5-0-0)

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN