

MINUTES
SAU BOARD MEETING
April 18, 2006
Mont Vernon Village School Art Room

Chairperson John Schwope called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Steve Coughlan, Jeanne Ludt (arrived at 6:45 p.m.), Phyllis Thomas, and John Rizzi

Amherst School Board: Dwight Brew, Deborah Cort, Pam Dudoff, Nancy Head, and Jim O'Mara

Mont Vernon School Board: John Schwope and Leo White

Administrative Team: Howard Colter, Kathy Skoglund, Nicole Heimarck, Meredith Nadeau, and Susan Ward

Other: Sheryl Stephens-Burke, Melanson-Heath, Dr. Mary Jennings

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

John Schwope invited comments from the public, but none were forthcoming.

PUBLIC TIME

Audit Report – Melanson and Heath - Susan introduced Cheryl Stephens-Burke from Melanson and Heath.

AUDIT REPORT

Cheryl provided board members with a copy of the School Administrative Unit No. 39 Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2005.

Cheryl thanked members of the board for choosing Melanson and Heath as their auditors. Cheryl also thanked the SAU Business Office and Susan Ward for a smooth audit this year. Cheryl said there were no management letters as a result of the SAU audit this year. She said this was a very good thing, and it was highly unusual. Cheryl said everything went very well, and the audit results were very positive.

Cheryl reviewed the report with members of the board.

Howard Colter congratulated Susan on a job well done. Susan attributed the successful audit results to everyone in the SAU office as well as the schools working together.

John Schwope formally thanked Susan and said the credit clearly resides with her, not everyone else she credits.

Franceen Lupa, Food Service Director, presented a report on the Food Service program and steps she is taking to comply with new regulations pertaining to health and nutrition. Franceen said the plan needs to be approved at the state level and in place by July. Franceen provided board members with a handout entitled SAU 39

**FOOD SERVICE
REPORT**

Wellness Policy and Its Implications for the Food Service Program. Franceen highlighted the Initiatives of the SAU 39 Wellness Policy Implementation:

- Educational campaigns will promote the newly adopted Wellness Policy and its connections to new food service menu selections and will educate the community and students as to the motivation for menu choice changes.
- Food and milk choices will have reduced fat content.
- Food products will be higher in quality in general, and where possible, will tap local growers and suppliers and will include seasonally available produce.
- Only whole grain products will be offered.
- Vendors whose products reflect healthy nutritional content (for example Stonyfield Farm) will provide snack food choices for schools.

Franceen highlighted the challenges they face:

- Student acceptance of change may require time.
- Participation levels in the Food Service program may fluctuate until students are comfortable with new menu choices.
- Open campus policy at the high school may impact the Food Service participation levels.
- Monitoring the Food Service financial health will be required, and an evaluation of its ability to maintain financial independence will be required.
- Menu pricing and staffing levels will be monitored in light of changes in participation levels, particularly during the first year as changes are implemented and most readily noticed by students.

Franceen emphasized the importance of community and school board support behind the SAU Wellness Policy changes.

Franceen provided board members with two additional handouts, one entitled Obesity in Young Children: Impact and Intervention and the second entitled GAO report: Schools are full of competitive foods.

Phyllis Thomas asked if the school store at Souhegan High School would be included in the new program. Franceen said yes, it was included in the new plan.

Franceen said she would come before the board in May to share a draft of the policy. Franceen said the policy will go to each board for discussion since there will be policy differences among the local boards. She said local policy review should take place in June and July and a recommendation should be presented in the Fall.

Pam asked about the initial impact on the budget. Pam asked if the budget reflects a possible decline in food service participation once the new program is introduced.

Franceen said she made a concerted effort to show a decrease in participation for the first 2-3 months once the new program is introduced.

Dwight asked if the new policy would have an impact on what foods the students could bring to school. Franceen said no, they cannot control what students bring to school.

Howard said he sees the food service program as part of the curriculum, just like math is a part of the curriculum. He said obesity is a national problem and it is a serious matter.

Howard said we need to work with families so they understand our objectives.

Howard said he sees the food service program as an important part of the schools. Howard said in his opinion, the food and beverage offerings we provide children during the school day must be overwhelmingly fresh, nutritious, tasty and attractive. He said if this requires supplementing the food service program, then so be it.

Steve Coughlan suggested we do some outreach to parents. Steve suggested sending some of the recipes home to parents so they can make some of the food themselves, which would get the students, used to the new choices.

Franceen agreed, they have to do some marketing to promote the food service changes.

Franceen said the staff has been involved in a lot of different training and they ready to go when the new wellness policy goes in effect.

Franceen said she is confident they are ready to meet the new changes.

Franceen said she will be attending a food show on May 2, 2006.

Franceen said the meal cost may need to be increased next year. Howard asked Franceen to be ready to present the proposed meal increases to the boards by May or June.

Howard asked Franceen to put together a memo and justification for the increase. He asked that Franceen provide this information to Susan so she could make sure each board act on it separately.

John Schwope thanked Franceen and said the board appreciates and values what she is doing.

Nicole Heimarck provided board members with a handout entitled New England Comprehensive Assessment Program NECAP 2005-2006. This handout was a performance analysis of the Amherst and Mont Vernon School Districts.

NECAP REPORT

Nicole said the NECAP exam is administered in the fall and it tests the previous years work so for example in grade 5 a student is being tested on grade level 4 work.

Nicole provided board members with a detailed description of the Levels of Performance – Proficient with Distinction (Level 4), Proficient (Level 3), Partially Proficient (Level 2) and Substantially

Below Proficient (Level 1. Nicole said by the year 2014 and No Child Left Behind, all students must be performing in Proficient also known as Level 3.

Nicole provided board members with a handout entitled Achievement Level Cut Points. The handout used was a grade 5 example. Nicole said the first digit of a students score denotes the students grade level and the second digit, which is from 0-80, represents the scaled score. If a student receives a scaled score of a 40 or above, they have either met proficiency requirements or exceeded them.

Nicole provided a comparison between the NHEIAP and NECAP exams.

Nicole provided a slide, which detailed the NECAP test design. Nicole said the reading test was comprised of multiple choice and constructed response items.

The mathematics test is comprised of multiple choice, short answer, and constructed response items.

The writing test is comprised of multiple choice, short answer, constructed response, and extended response items.

Nicole presented information on the NECAP Item Analysis Report and how to use it.

Nicole presented information on how Amherst did as compared to the State NECAP Results for 2005-2006. In Amherst, for Reading, 85% were Proficient or Above as compared to a 66% Proficient or Above against the State, in Math, 83% were Proficient or Above, as compared to 62% Proficient or Above against the State and in Writing 64% were Proficient or Above as compared to 50% Proficient or Above in the State. Nicole said certainly, writing was an area of concern and we need to focus on it across the SAU as well as the state.

Nicole provided the results for Mont Vernon and also compared their results to the State NECAP Results. In Mont Vernon for Reading, 74% were Proficient or Above as compared to a 66% Proficient or Above against the State, in Math, 78% were Proficient or Above, as compared to 62% Proficient or Above against the State and in Writing 59% were Proficient or Above as compared to 50% Proficient or Above in the State. Nicole said again, writing was an area of concern and the SAU needs to focus on it.

Nicole provided charts highlighting the results of comparable school districts for Reading, Mathematics, and Writing.

Nicole made some recommendations for what should be done with this data.

Nicole told members of the board in the Fall of 2006, Grade 11 NECAP would include testing on Reading, Writing and Math.

Nicole said in the Spring of 2007, a Pilot Science NECAP would be presented.

Jeanne Ludt thanked Nicole for an excellent presentation. Jeanne questioned why students would be tested twice, once in the Spring as 10th Graders for Reading, Math and Writing and in the Fall of Grade 11, tested on the some content matter and the Spring in Science. Nicole said she didn't know the specifics of the decision to test twice, once in the Spring and then in the Fall.

Steve Coughlan asked what grade levels would be tested in Science. Nicole said she was not sure yet but it would definitely be Grade 11 but it would not be Grades 5 and 8.

Steve asked if the State had provided a data warehouse yet for the results. Nicole said no, not yet but they were looking into some different possibilities.

John Schwope thanked Nicole for putting all this information together and presenting it to the board. John said these are the type of topics he would like the board to focus on in the future.

John suggested a possible future agenda item include selecting a small set of student performance measurements from which measurements can be set and focus on their results. John said if results can be achieved and documented, this is about the best thing the district can do.

John suggested the SAU engage Bruce Chakrin in the process of creating a data warehouse. John suggested the board hear how the administration plans on getting Bruce involved with this process.

John Schwope called on Pam Dudoff to update the board on the report done by the K-12 Coop Committee.

Board members received a copy of the report entitled "Report from K-12 Cooperative Issues Committee."

Pam Dudoff said the K-12 Coop Committee consisted of herself, Dwight Brew, Peter King, and Phyllis Thomas.

Pam Dudoff highlighted some of the committees key findings:

- Discovered because we already have a cooperative school district a number of issues were addressed when the Souhegan Cooperative School District was created.
- Issue not covered by the statue, which can be difficult, is the area of labor contracts for teachers and support staff.
- The committee discussed an appropriate next step in this area and determined a labor attorney should be consulted.

The committee determined if it is decided we become a K-12 Cooperative School District, we do not have to start from scratch. We have the option of expanding the current Souhegan Cooperative to include grades K-12. Based on a conversation with Sarah Browning, Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Education, it would involve amending the original articles of agreement for the Souhegan Cooperative as needed to create a K-12 Cooperative. Sarah suggested in order to get specific advice on the pro's and con's of what we are considering and exactly what would need to go

**REPORT FROM THE
K-12 COOP
COMMITTEE**

before the voters; we consult with the attorney for the Souhegan Cooperative School District.

The committee suggested in order to get a better understanding of the pro's and con's of this option and more specifics regarding what would be involved, we need to consult with attorneys who are experienced in the areas of cooperative school districts and labor relations. The committee recommends this be the next step. Pam Dudoff said if the board wishes to take this next step, the funding would need to be allocated and a study committee authorized to consult with the attorneys and create a proposal for the SAU Board's consideration.

Pam estimated the initial cost to consult with the attorneys be about \$1,000.00. Pam said the committee checked with the SAU Office and there is \$1,000 available in the budget that could be used.

The committees report also highlighted the issues related to changing to a K-12 Cooperative School District.

Discussion followed Pam's presentation.

Deborah Cort had a general question, does it still continue to be a desirable option and to what extent does the district want to go in this direction.

Jeanne Ludt said this option was one way to go, but not the only way.

Phyllis Thomas said the committee did what they were charged to do, bring forth the issues of changing to a K-12 Cooperative School District. Phyllis said she still thinks this is a valuable alternative to pursue.

Jim O'Mara thanked the committee for the work they did on this project. He said before he authorizes the \$1,000.00 expenditure, he wants to think about what has been discussed. He said he would like to see this topic included on one of the next two agendas as a topic of discussion.

Dwight Brew suggested the committee continue discussions to determine what the goals would be for forming a K-12 Cooperative. He also suggested the committee identify the purpose for this effort and bring the information back to the SAU board for discussion at one of the next two meetings.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas and seconded by Jeanne Ludt to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b) at 8:21 p.m. By roll call vote, White –yes; O'Mara –yes; Rizzi –yes; Ludt-yes; Thomas –yes; Dudoff –yes; Schwope –yes; Coughlan –no; Head –yes; Cort-yes; Brew – yes.

Discussion amongst board members followed regarding the approval of the Superintendent's contract.

A motion was made by Dwight Brew and seconded by Deborah Cort to come out of non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b) at 8:35 p.m. By roll call vote, White –yes; O'Mara –yes; Rizzi –yes;

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION – RSA 91-
A:3, II (b)**

Ludt- yes; Thomas –yes; Dudoff –yes; Schwope –yes; Coughlan – no; Head –yes; Cort-yes; Brew – yes.

A motion was made by Dwight Brew and seconded by Phyllis Thomas that we offer Dr. Mary Athey Jennings a three year contract to be Superintendent of Schools for SAU 39, starting on July 1, 2006 and running through June 30, 2009, at an initial salary of \$120,000 per year; and I would like to authorize the chair to sign this contract. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF
SUPERINTENDENT'S
CONTRACT**

A motion was made by Dwight Brew and seconded by Nancy Head that the SAU 39 send Dr. Jennings to the New Hampshire School Administrator's Association Annual Superintendent Conference at the end of June and also recommend we compensate Dr. Jennings at her per diem rate to spend up to five days in the district prior to July 1, all being part of a transition plan. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Deborah Cort wanted to personally thank Dwight Brew for all the work he did on the search for a new Superintendent.

A motion was made by Deborah Cort and seconded by Phyllis Thomas to approve the minutes of April 11, 2006. Discussion followed amongst board members.

**APPROVAL OF
APRIL 11, 2006
MINUTES**

A motion was made by Dwight Brew and seconded by Leo White to table the minutes until the next meeting. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

John Schwope asked for a volunteer to help coordinate the SAU 39 Board members marching in the July 4, 2006 parade.

**4TH OF JULY
PARADE**

John said they did not need a volunteer at the meeting tonight, but hoped they could have a volunteer in place by the next SAU meeting.

Steve Coughlan moved to adjourn the meeting, Jim O'Mara seconded and the Board voted unanimously of the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

ADJOURN