

**MINUTES**  
**SAU SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 27, 2008**  
**Souhegan High School Annex, Room A222**

John Schwope called the board meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

John welcomed new board members to the SAU 39 meeting. New board members were asked to introduce themselves. New board members included Pam Coughlin, Rob Graybill, Chris Janson, and Mary Lou Mullens.

Present:

**ATTENDANCE**

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Steve Coughlan, Pam Coughlin, Dan Foley, Chris Janson, Jeanne Ludt, and Mary Lou Mullens

Amherst School Board: Peg Benett, Dwight Brew, Pam Dudoff (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), and Rob Graybill

Mont Vernon School Board: Howard Brown, Jayson Darula, Bruce Schmidt, John Schwope and Leo White

Administrative Team: Porter Dodge, Dr. Mary Jennings, Nicole Heimark, Meredith Nadeau, Scott Prescott and Renee Sparks

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

- A. Superintendent Goals – Dr. Jennings provided board members with a handout detailing the SAU 39 Superintendent Goal – Setting for 2008. Dr. Jennings explained the Superintendent evaluation process begins in January and runs until the following December. Dr. Jennings said she sits down with the four board chairs to discuss her goals and the result of this meeting is what is being presented to the SAU 39 Board.

**II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Goals were as follows:

Goal 1 – To improve individual student performance in

reading at all levels in all school districts.

Goal 2 and 3 – To establish individual Year 2 Administrative Goals and to support administrators in their work towards those goals.

Goal 4 – Develop a Cross-District Board Team to Explore Similarities / Differences Between Districts, and Transitions Between Schools.

Dr. Jennings said she would like to bring Goal 4 – the Development of the Cross District Board Team back to the board next month so she can ask for volunteers to sit on the committee.

Board members had no comments or questions on the Superintendent Goals for 2008.

- B. Literacy Update – Nicole told board members she would be providing a Literacy Team Update. Nicole provided new board members with some of the history surround the SAU 39 Five Year Strategic Plan, which focused on Literacy skills and improving reading and writing across the curriculum.

Nicole told board members the Literacy Teams have had several staff development days for the Literacy Teams in each building.

Nicole said on February 19, 2008, all four building-based Literacy Leadership Teams attended a workshop at SERESC designed and facilitated by the building principals and central office leadership. Nicole provided the goals of the training:

- Status check of year 1 Goal (share across schools)
- Clarify link between literacy and achievement
- Development of year 2 Goal (building level)
- Brainstorm ideas for year 3 Goal – Nicole said they did not get to this on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

- Identification of needed resources to achieve goal.
- Clarification/Identification of organizational structure and function of Literacy Leadership Team
- Evaluation of Literacy Team composition

Nicole said during this day, the greatest outcome was the draft year 2 Goals for each of the schools. Nicole emphasized they were Draft goals and that a revision may occur over the next couple of months.

Nicole told board members the Literacy Leadership Teams are advisory in nature to the Building Principals and Central Office Administration.

Dan Foley asked if based on the re-alignment of the Literacy Leadership Teams, are they where they want to be in the process. Nicole said they are where they want to be and even a littler further ahead then where she thought she would be.

Nicole said she does not look at the re-alignment as a step backwards. Nicole said she believes they will look at the composition of the Literacy Leadership Teams on an annual basis.

Dr. Jennings recognized Nicole for keeping the effort together since some of the star players left the organization. Dr. Jennings commended Nicole for her efforts and thanked her for all her hard work.

Jeanne Ludt told board members she wanted to form a cross-district committee to research the possibility of starting the school day at Souhegan High School later. Jeanne said she would like a volunteer from each of the boards to sit on the committee. Jeanne explained the committee would also consist of students and administration. Jeanne said they hope to meet after school rather than in the evening.

Board chairs agreed to send a volunteers name next week to Jeanne.

John Schwope invited comments from the Public but none were forthcoming.

### III. PUBLIC TIME

- A. Director of Special Services – Dr. Jennings introduced her nomination for Director of Special Services, Renee Sparks. Board members were provided with a copy of her resume. Dr. Jennings highlighted her experience and told board members Renee has been working for the District since 1998.

### IV. NOMINATION

Dr. Jennings told board members she would like to recommend they hire Renee Sparks at a salary of \$83,000 for one year as Director of Special Services.

**A motion was made by Steve Coughlan to accept the recommendation by the Superintendent to hire Renee Sparks as Director of Special Services at a salary of \$83,000 for one year. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (14-0)**

The A 1. Minutes – January 24, 2008, were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

### V. CONSENT AGENDA

**A motion was made by Jayson Darula to approve Consent Agenda Items B. Budget 1. Treasurer's Report, and 2. Manifest. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention, Pam Coughlin. (14-0)**

**A motion was made by Dwight Brew to approve the minutes of January 24, 2008, as amended. Steve Coughlan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with the following abstentions, Dwight Brew, Pam Coughlin, Rob Graybill, Chris Janson, Mary Lou Mullens, and Leo White. (8-0-6)**

- A. Memorandum of Understanding between SAU39 and Police Depts. – Board members received a copy of the Letter of Understanding

### V. PRESENTATIONS

Between School Administrative Unit #39 and Amherst and Mont Vernon Police Departments dated March 18, 2008.

Dr. Jennings told board members she sat down with the Chief of Police in Amherst, Chief Peter Lyon and the Chief of Police in Mont Vernon, Chief Alexander Rick Brougham to update the Letter of Understanding between the Amherst and Mont Vernon Police Departments. Dr. Jennings said this document identifies what incidents they must report to the police.

Dr. Jennings told board members they discussed with the police each of the criminal incidents and their respective response plan.

Chief Peter Lyon highlighted the sections on Theft and Sexual Assault or Physical Abuse. Board members discussed First or Second Degree Assaults and Simple Assaults.

Jeanne Ludt said under Response Guidelines for First or Second Degree Assaults, it should include the following: Assault is a misdemeanor unless serious physical injury results. For example, The New Hampshire courts have considered an assault a felony when an individual has received a scratched eyeball that caused blurred vision.

Chief Lyon said there is a good line of communication between the school administrators and the Police Department.

Jeanne Ludt asked if an incident is reported to the SRO is action by the Police automatically taken. Chief Lyon said the Police would have a record of the occurrence however, not always does an investigation take place.

John Schwope thanked the Amherst Chief of Police for his work as well as attending the board meeting.

B. **Staff Development – MVVS** – Meredith Nadeau,

Principal Mont Vernon Village School and Ann Allwarden presented to the board on the topic of Focused Professional Development at the Village School.

Meredith provided board members with a detailed list of Opportunities for Professional Development Work the staff were given which included:

- In-Service days: September and January – 2 full days.
- Staff meetings, professional learning community, and grade-level meetings – after school, monthly, lasting 45 minutes to one hour.
- Late start days – 2 hours before students arrive, 10 times/year.
- Release days: periodic, require teachers being out of the classroom, difficult to accomplish across multiple teachers or grades.

Meredith provided details on how they implemented the Professional Development Opportunities using Case Study 1: Writing in 2004-2005.

- The Village School continued some full-day training sessions in Six Traits Writing.
- Two staff members attended “train the trainer” programs.
- Copies of Six Traits purchased for all staff members.

Meredith summarized the details of Case Study 1: Writing in 2005-2006.

- The Village School established improved writing performance as a school goal.
- Monthly professional learning community meetings focused on developing teacher understanding of each of the writing traits. Meredith told board members the teachers had an opportunity to work with sample pieces and practice using scoring

rubric in collaboration with other staff members.

Meredith told board members during 2006-2007 the Village School continued to work on their writing goal utilizing the following:

- Student writing prompts were developed and scored in fall, winter and spring.
- Professional Learning Community meetings focus on development and scoring of writing prompts and holistic scoring of writing pieces using the Six Traits rubric.
- Additional supplementary texts purchased to illustrate traits.

In 2007-2008 Meredith said they continued Case Study 1 with the implementation of the SAU Strategic Plan.

The Village School also adopted the reading goal and Meredith said they continue to work on the school writing goal.

Meredith told board members Case Study 2 involved Reading and CSG's Impact. Meredith said they would utilize Dibels data, which is a monthly curriculum-based measurement tool, which offers percentile norms and provides immediate information for teaching practice.

Meredith provided the board members with results of the Writing Impact for Case Study 1.

Meredith said student-writing performance on NECAP grew from 57% proficient in grade 5 to 80% proficient over 3 years.

Meredith said the Quickwrite performance data as of mid-year indicates that 66% of students in grades 2-6 have met end of year target goals for writing influence.

Meredith highlighted the Literacy goals for 2007-2008:

- 50% of students in grades 3-6 will meet NWEA target goals in reading by June 2008.
- 75% of students in grades K-2 will meet benchmark goals for DIBELS by June 2008.

Ann highlighted Case Study 2 – Reading and CSG’s for 2007-2008. Ann provided an overview for the year. Also presented was a timeline for the year for Reading in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Board members were presented with the Reading Strategies for 2007-2008.

Meredith presented the Reading and CSG’s Impact utilizing the NWEA Data.

Meredith said as of the mid-year assessment (grades 3-5):

- Grade 3 – 58% have already met or exceeded their target growth for the year.
- Grade 4 – 49% have met or exceeded their target growth for the year.
- Grade 5 – 28% have met or exceeded their target growth for the year.

Overall, Meredith said 45% of the students have met their annual target growth.

Meredith presented the Reading and CSG’s Impact utilizing DIBELS Data.

Meredith said as of the mid year assessment (Grades K-2):

- 100% of K students meet winter benchmarks in Initial Sound Fluency.
- 85% of K students meet benchmarks in Letter Naming Fluency.
- 70% of K students and 100% of students in gr. 1 meet benchmarks in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency.
- 78% of K students and 7% of gr. 1 students meet benchmarks in Nonsense Word Fluency.

- 100% of students in gr. 1 and 93% of students in gr. 2 meet benchmarks in Oral Reading Fluency.
- 72% of students in gr. 1 and 51% of students in gr. 2 meet benchmarks in Retell Fluency.

Meredith said overall, 85% meet DIBELS benchmarks.

Meredith summarized her presentation:

- We would not have been able to make the progress we have made to date in either writing or reading without the focused staff development plans and timelines.
- CSG time was particularly critical for Implementation of the SAU strategic plan as it involves all instructional staff and allows for regular, ongoing conversation with a direct focus on student work.

Meredith said she was happy with the progress the Village School has made. Meredith said Late Start have helped particularly with Reading.

Pam Dudoff asked if the late start days in Mont Vernon and Souhegan was sufficient time for staff to accomplish what they wanted to since they lasted two hours. Pam asked if larger blocks of time would be better.

Ann said larger blocks of time wouldn't be realistic, but the once a month late starts work really well for them.

Scott agreed the two-hour, once a month late starts work well and make it manageable to plan their work.

Jeanne Ludt asked if the Amherst Board would consider late start days.

Dwight Brew said when the Amherst Board looks at altering the start schedule for schools; they would look at late starts too.

Dwight said he would want to get input from the parents, since they tried to implement late start days previously and were not successful.

John Schwope thanked Meredith and Ann for an excellent job. John said he was proud that Meredith and Ann were at the helm leading the charge.

- A. **2008-2009 School Year Calendar** – Dr. Jennings said a Calendar Committee was formed to discuss School Year Calendar options. Dr. Jennings told board members at the last SAU Board meeting members made suggestions regarding the 2008-2009 School Year Calendar and those suggestions were incorporated into Option 1 of the Calendars being presented this evening to the board. Dr. Jennings said this option had school starting on August 27, 2008, which would have students attending three days of school prior to Labor Day. Also, students would have one and a half weeks for vacation in December to celebrate the holidays. Based on 180 days if students missed no school due to snow days, their last day of school would be June 12, 2009, for Amherst and Mont Vernon and June 15, 2009 for Souhegan. If all the snow days are used, the last day of school for Amherst and Mont Vernon is June 19, 2009, and June 22, 2009, Souhegan.

## VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Jeanne commented on Option 1 ending on a Monday. Option 1 would only end on a Monday if there were no snow days.

Scott Prescott said his concern with Option 2 would be when graduation happens. Scott said Option 1 would be better for graduation.

Peg Bennett commented since the teachers favored Option 2, would they be willing to give up the April vacation so school can end earlier.

Pam Dudoff questioned why teachers favored Option 2 when previously Amherst teachers have said that it is difficult to make classes productive later in June when the weather gets hot.

Dr. Jennings said she dissuaded them from giving up one of their vacations and it wasn't presented as an option.

Porter Dodge said breaks are almost necessary due to the cycle of illness in the schools.

Board members were asked which option they favored and Option 1 was favored.

The School Calendar would be presented and voted on at the district board meetings.

Peg Bennett told the Administration as well as board members several members of the community requested they not hold testing on Jewish holidays.

- B. **Policies for Discussion** – John Schwope explained the process to the newly elected board members. John explained the SAU Board's goal is to achieve a set of policies that are harmonized. John said they expect the process will be complete by the end of May. John thanked Pam Dudoff for leading this process.

Pam provided board members with a Status Report on the Base Policies and Required Policies as of March.

Pam said the total number of policies to complete is 59 for Amherst and Mont Vernon and for Souhegan it is 61. To date, 39 Policies have been reviewed through the Angel Site, 6 Policies need additional development, 47 have been presented for review at the SAU Meeting, and 33 Policies have been approved at the District level.

Pam said 9 more Policies will need to be posted on the Angel site, and 15 Policies will need to be presented for

review at the SAU Meeting and 26/28 will need to be approved at the District level.

Pam told board members they were in good shape to complete this task by the end of May.

Discrimination & Discipline Policies –

ACE – Rights of Disabled/Handicapped Persons – Board members had no comments on this policy.

KED- Grievance Procedure for Section 504 Complaints (Facilities or Services) – Board members had no comments on this policy.

JICD – Student Conduct, Discipline and Due Process – Pam said board members may have questions on this policy so she will be posting this policy again on the Angel site.

JICK – Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention Policy – Howard Brown suggested they might want to look at cyber bullying as well. Pam said she would check with the attorney.

Jeanne Ludt questioned the length of time a bully incident had to be reported to the Superintendent by the Principal, 24 hours versus the report to the parents of 48 hours. Pam said she would look into this.

Admission of Students –

IKE – Promotion and Retention of Students – Board members had no comments on this policy.

JCA – Change of School or Assignment – Board members had no comments on this policy.

JEC – Manifest Educational Hardship – Board members had no comments on this policy.

JFAA – Admission of Resident Students – Board members

had a lengthy discussion regarding this policy and the admission and attendance of Non-Resident Students.

Pam told board members they had two options regarding this policy.

- 1) The policy could be to accept no non-resident tuition students including faculty within the district, which would provide the district with 100% protection against bearing the cost of Special Education students.
- 2) Okay to accept students of faculty and administration on a tuition basis as long as before they are accepted the sending district accepts responsibility for any incurred Special Education costs.

Board members requested they have a grandfather clause in the policy to make sure existing students of the administration and faculty are okay to continue their education within the district.

Mary Lou said she would like to know what the current exposure is to the district – how many students are current taking advantage of an education within the district. Dr. Jennings agreed to get this information for the board.

Board members were asked which option they favored and they favored Option 2.

JFABD – Admission of Homeless Students – Board members had no comments on this policy.

Peg Bennett said she had received a few e-mails regarding an article which was posted on the website regarding Special Education.

## **VIII. OTHER**

Dr. Jennings said she had received an e-mail concerning the article and she addressed the issues with the parent and believes the article is a valid article. Dr. Jennings said she

doesn't feel the article is prejudiced.

Dr. Jennings said she will address the concerns with Kathy Skoglund once she returns to the office but doesn't believe they will take the article off the website.

**A motion was made by Pam Dudoff to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (14-0) The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**

**IX. REVIEW OF  
MEETING/ADJOURN**