

NEWFOUND AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Newfound Regional High School Library Media Center

Tuesday, October 12, 2010 at 6:00 pm

MINUTES

School Board Present: Laura Simula (Bridgewater), Sue Cheney (Alexandria), Louis Lieto (Groton), Leslie Dion (Chair, Bristol), Jon Johnson (Danbury, arrived 6:10 p.m.), Bruce Davol (New Hampton arrived 6:10 p.m.)

School Board Excused: Mary Campbell (Vice Chair, Hebron)

School Budget Committee Present:

Staff Present: Marie Ross (Superintendent), Paul Hoiriis (Clerk and NMMS Teacher), Dan Rossner (Business Administrator), Monica Jackson (NRHS), Jim LeBaron (NRHS), Mike O'Malley (NRHS)

Video Operator: Bruce Wheeler (NRHS), Fred Robinson (NRHS), David Drury (NRHS student)

Public Present: Ann Johnson

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

The Chair entertained a motion to go into non-public for the purposes of discussing personnel issues per RSA 91-A:3 IIa. Sue Cheney so moved, Laura Simula seconded, and the motion was *approved on a roll call vote 4-0-0-3 (Danbury, Hebron, and New Hampton absent)*.

At 6:37 p.m., the Chair entertained a motion to come out of non-public session. Mr. Lieto so moved, Ms. Cheney seconded, and the motion was *approved 6-0-0-1 (Hebron absent)*.

The flag was saluted by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Superintendent Marie Ross indicated that the notices of postings have been placed at the town offices, the schools, the SAU, and on the website at www.sau4.org.

Recognition

The Chair commented that although there is plenty to recognize in the District, no recognitions were scheduled this evening.

Student Council Reports

No student representatives were present. The Chair read the Middle School Student Council Report into the record indicating what subjects were being studied in each of the core classes by grade level. The report also included news on successful fundraisers for the eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C., such as two dances and a Yankee Candle drive raising \$3,600 for the student trip. The next fundraiser will be the Cash Prize Calendar. The report also highlighted the seventh grade completion of Forest Watch and the sixth grade Cellar Hole study.

School Board Meeting Minutes

- **September 13, 2010** – The Chair introduced the September 13th School Board Minutes for comments and corrections. Ms. Campbell e-mailed her corrections to the Clerk last week and hers were inserted into the new copy. Mr. Rossner corrected “ARA” to read “ARRA” on line 2, page 4. He also edited his language regarding the New Hampton After-school Program on page 7, line 21 to read “to accept and expend unanticipated funds.” Ms. Cheney changed “approved” to “approve” on line 44, page 6. The Chair entertained a motion to accept the September 13th

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1 School Board minutes, as amended. Mr. Lieto so moved, Ms. Simula seconded, and it was
2 *approved 6-0-0-1.*
3

4 Dr. Ross asked the Board to remove Policy JICK Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention – Bullying from
5 the agenda tonight as it will go back to the Policy Committee for editing.
6

7 **Announcements, Correspondence and Reports**

8 Dr. Ross announced that the State Department of Education approved our District's new Professional
9 Development Plan through June 30, 2015.
10

11 The Chair invited comments on the various administrators' reports. The Chair congratulated Bridgewater
12 Hebron Village School on being selected for the New Hampshire Partners in Education Blue Ribbon
13 Award for the 09/10 school year. Ms. Cheney stated that she was pleased to see on the Business
14 Administrator's report that all of our heating systems are up and running. Mr. Rossner added that there
15 are new LED lights in the high school parking lot which are more efficient. Dr. Ross commented that the
16 State Commissioner of Education Virginia Barry chose to read to the BHVS kindergarten class on a
17 national day where schools around the country read the same book. Dr. Ross added that Ms. Barry is a
18 Bridgewater resident and that it was an honor that she chose one of our schools to visit.
19

20 The Chair announced to the Board that the deadline for proposing any resolutions to the State School
21 Board Association annual meeting is October 22nd. She added that Newfound proposed two last year that
22 were not considered. Mr. Rossner said that one was regarding placing a penalty on towns for late
23 payments. The Chair added that the other was a proposal by former Newfound Board member Vincent
24 Paul Migliore stating that New Hampshire requirements for Special Education should not exceed the
25 federal requirements. This one was not accepted either. Ms. Dion asked to Board to contact her or Dr.
26 Ross if they would like to propose something.
27

28 **Strategic Plan Reports**

29 • **Core (Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction, Professional Development)**

- 30 ○ **Focused Monitoring** – The Chair asked Ms. Simula to report on this month's
31 Focused Monitoring activities. Ms. Simula stated that the teams have moved on to
32 phase two of the process which is the observation phase. Activities included in this
33 phase were the analysis of the readiness survey and NECAP data for IEP and non-
34 IEP students by grade level and cohort groups. She added that the Achievement
35 Team evaluated the article "Schools Moving Up." She said that the teams are
36 prepared to move into phase three next month which involves inference and
37 discussion.
- 38 ○ **Spring 2010 NECAP Science Results** – Dr. Ross reviewed the results of last school
39 year's Science NECAP test which were included in the Board's packet. She stated
40 that our Grade 4 was right along with the state average in the topic areas and in
41 inquiry. She noted that both our District and the state as a whole are seeing low
42 inquiry scores. Dr. Ross noted that grades eight and eleven are a couple of points
43 below state average. She added that our content grades are okay, but we need to
44 improve on our inquiry grades which she hopes the addition of the science kits at the
45 elementary level and eventually at the middle level will help us do that. She
46 concluded by saying that although the Science NECAP does not count against us for
47 Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), but we still take these scores seriously. Mr. Lieto
48 commented that "the devil is in the details." He explained this as meaning that even
49 though we are at or close to the state average overall, we still have significantly more
50 students who are not proficient on the Science NECAP than the state average. He
51 said this is where we should look and address improvement efforts based on the

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1 individual scores. Dr. Ross responded by saying that No Child Left Behind dictates a
2 schedule that leaves only one hour per day of science or social studies at the
3 elementary level, and only 84 minutes every other day for these subjects at a middle
4 school level. Mr. Lieto replied that we need to use our creative ability to include
5 science unobtrusively into the other programs. Dr. Ross mentioned the science kits
6 again at the elementary level and hopes to bring them to the middle school level. She
7 also mentioned an upcoming partnership with Plymouth State University which will
8 provide teacher training and materials for students on-site. She concluded that the
9 reality is that the sanctions under NCLB come if you do not score proficient on
10 reading and math. Sue Cheney added that you can do a lot of reading and writing
11 while studying science.

- 12 ○ **High School Redesign** – Dr. Ross introduced Jim LeBaron, Mike O’Malley, and
13 Monica Jackson from the high school to present the work they have been doing at the
14 high school on redesign. She added that this work is part of what led to them
15 receiving the EDies award. Mr. O’Malley introduced the Elements of Redesign for
16 the high school using a PowerPoint presentation. He opened by stating that they are
17 looking at the individual student including individual interests and learning styles.
18 He added that they are helping students know in grade nine where they are and where
19 they want to go. He believes this will move towards having an informed and
20 competent citizenry that can think critically. He listed several resources he and his
21 team used in putting together their vision for redesign. He said the team looked at
22 competency based learning outcomes and are moving the high school to be a learning
23 community. He said they also looked at state standards and the accreditation
24 standards. Mr. O’Malley then introduced the six guiding principles of the redesign as
25 follows: Personalization and Relationships, Rigor and High Standards, Relevance
26 and Engagement, Results, Empowered Educators, and Follow the Child. He
27 mentioned that the team would only talk about the first two this evening since it is a
28 lot to take in and includes a lot of detail. He stated that the team will be back in the
29 future to present the other principles. Mr. O’Malley reviewed the definition of
30 principle number one: Personalization and Relationships as “the rigorous, joyful
31 process of engaging each learner in acquiring important skills and knowledge, based
32 upon the learner’s needs, interests, passions, learning styles, and timetable, and
33 utilizing all available resources. Mr. O’Malley went on to say that they are using
34 Diploma Pathways, Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs), and the Advisory Pilot
35 programs under this principle of personalization and relationships. He explained that
36 the core of the high school program is based on rigor and expectations, but that there
37 are different pathways to get there. He said at the present time, a student can earn up
38 to four credits from an ELO and would like to see more credits eligible in that area.
39 Mr. O’Malley spoke about the Advisory Pilot which encourages relationships
40 between students and adults. He stressed the need for personalized learning and
41 personalized learning environments. He is hoping this redesign will help students
42 develop habits, skills, and dispositions needed to succeed during and after high
43 school. Mr. O’Malley then ceded the floor to Monica Jackson to talk about the
44 Advisory Pilot program. Ms. Jackson explained that the program consisted of 31
45 adult volunteers from the staff including teachers, administrators, support staff, and
46 office assistants. These volunteers were assigned small groups of students to meet
47 with once per week for twenty-five minutes. Many of these students and adult
48 volunteers rarely see each other on a regular basis, so this grouping fosters new
49 meaningful relationships. She added that students returned this school year asking if
50 the advisories would be meeting again. She said that the students enjoyed them and
51 created powerful connections with each other and adults. She added that the advisory

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1 is an informal twenty-five minute structured activity. During this time, students are
2 able to express themselves frankly and informally creating personal connections. Ms.
3 Jackson said that they need the whole school involved this year for this program to
4 work. Dr. Ross asked Ms. Jackson to explain to the Board why the students cannot
5 make these same types of connections during normal classroom instruction. Ms.
6 Jackson replied that the informal nature of the advisory group outside the classroom
7 creates a deeper, less structure environment where the adult is more of a facilitator
8 rather than an authority figure. Mr. Lieto asked how students were grouped. Ms.
9 Jackson replied that they were grouped by grade level. Dr. Ross asked student David
10 Drury for his perspective. Mr. Drury said that he felt that the conversations during
11 the advisories were interesting and that he was able to freely express how he felt
12 about how teachers taught. He added that he felt that these frank conversations not
13 only benefitted him, but the other students and the teacher in the room. He said that
14 they also talked about the formative and summative assessments tied to the
15 competencies and that these conversations helped him to understand them better. He
16 said that this group also helped him understand what is expected next year for the
17 senior project. He added that they play games and that the group helped him
18 recognize other student perspectives. Mr. O'Malley added that relationship building
19 is a two way street. He then stated that he is looking for the School Board's
20 endorsement to make the advisories a school-wide program. Mr. LeBaron talked
21 about the next principle which is Rigor and High Standards. He did this while
22 introducing the New Hampshire Competency Validation Rubric. Mr. O'Malley
23 interjected by saying that a competency is a bundle of knowledge and skills that can
24 be assessed to show that students have mastered the learning. Mr. LeBaron
25 continued by saying that as of 2005, the law now requires competency-based
26 learning. He added that the guiding principles of competency-based learning are
27 relevance to content, enduring concepts (lifelong learning), high levels of cognitive
28 demand, and the ability to be assessed. Mr. LeBaron added that the competencies are
29 aligned with state standards. Mr. LeBaron stated that he worked on a committee with
30 the State in developing a Rubric to write competencies. Mr. LeBaron provided
31 examples of competency statements that worked and did not work using the Rubric.
32 The Rubric had four areas guiding the writing of competency statements. Mr.
33 O'Malley added that teachers construct performance based assessments based on the
34 competencies. He also said that he is seeking the Board's endorsement for the
35 advisories. Mr. Lieto asked if the advisories met once per week. Mr. O'Malley
36 replied "yes." Mr. Lieto asked where the time fits in. Mr. O'Malley replied that it
37 was part of the lunch block, where on other days it is a sustained reading period. Dr.
38 Ross added a brief history leading up to the advisories of trying to put together
39 advisory-like programs to reach the students who fall through the cracks. She added
40 that these advisories are important to high school redesign especially when we have
41 conversations surrounding the bullying law. Dr. Ross stated that they are hoping to
42 get the Board's sanction to take this full-scale this year involving all students and
43 staff at the high school. She suggested putting it as an action item to be voted on at
44 the next School Board meeting. Ms. Simula asked if all of the faculty would take
45 part. Mr. O'Malley and Dr. Ross both replied "yes," and stressed that they would be
46 trained, could even co-lead a group, and the activities are planned by guidance. Ms.
47 Dion added that she could see a huge benefit resulting from the advisories to
48 classroom management. Ms. Dion also talked about the difference that mentors
49 make in the lives of children. Dr. Ross reemphasized the importance of peer
50 connections made in these groups and told a story about one student from a peer
51 group defending another student in the hallway when he was being teased. She said

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1 that the connection made inside the group carried outside the group. Mr. Drury
2 echoed this sentiment about connections being made in groups. Ms. Simula said she
3 could see barriers between teachers and students diminish when the students see the
4 instructor on a non-academic level, “the human element.” Mr. Lieto added that a lot
5 of successful people attribute their success to a light being lit in high school, inspired
6 by a teacher. Ms. Cheney added that this is why extracurricular activities are
7 important, too, so that students get to know teachers outside of the classroom. Mr.
8 Lieto and the rest of the Board agreed that the advisories should be on next month’s
9 agenda as a discussion item so that there can be more discussion and more
10 information could be gathered by then.

11
12 Dr. Ross also mentioned that a new title is being explored for Mr. LeBaron to lead
13 the charge for high school design as he continues to teach French.

14
15 Dr. Ross also added that Mr. O’Malley has been nominated by his staff for “Principal
16 of the Year.” She said that his staff feels that he listens to them. Mr. LeBaron
17 agreed.
18

19 • **Infrastructure (Facilities, Finance, Policy, Technology)**

- 20 ○ **Press Release** -- The Chair asked if there has been any feedback regarding the press
21 release highlighting the General Fund balance being returned to taxpayers by
22 lowering town payments to the District. Dr. Ross said she received a positive letter
23 from the New Hampton Town Administrator commending the decision. Dr. Ross
24 credited Mr. Rossner for authoring much of the press release. She also explained that
25 there have been some community misperceptions about the process where some
26 people are asking why the money was raised in the first place if only to be returned.
27 She explained that when the budget was set, they did not know about the stimulus
28 money or the energy savings that would come their way. She concluded by saying
29 that they will put together a piece for Channel 24 further explaining the situation.
30
- 31 ○ **Budget Committee Minutes – September 2, 2010** -- The Chair noted the inclusion
32 of minutes from the Budget Committee for September. She added that the next
33 meeting will be on October 25th and will be a joint meeting with the School Board.
34 Mr. Lieto asked Mr. Rossner to use a larger font when providing the documentation
35 for the meeting. Mr. Rossner said he could hide unnecessary columns when printing
36 out the spreadsheets so that the important columns could be larger.
37

38 • **Communications (Parents, Personnel, Public, Pupils)**

- 39 ○ **CRC (Community Relations Council) Minutes – September 30, 2010** – Dr. Ross said
40 that the Community Relations and Communications Council has renamed itself the
41 Community Relations Council. She asked Paul Hoiriis, Chair of the Internal Public
42 Relations Committee to explain the new structure. Mr. Hoiriis said that the Community
43 Relations Council will continue to receive feedback from the public while the Internal
44 Public Relations Committee will release information back to the District and the
45 community. He added that one will be an intake body while the other will act as the hub
46 churning out information. Mr. Hoiriis added that Ruth Whittier who is a member of both
47 the Council and the Committee will coordinate print public relations efforts with the local
48 newspapers with a column entitled “School Matters.” Mr. Hoiriis said that he hopes to
49 coordinate similar public relations efforts with Channel 24 and with our District website
50 under the same name.
51

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Public Comments on Agenda Items, limited to 15 minutes

Not to exceed five minutes per individual (School Board Policy BDDH)

The Chair invited comments from the public on tonight's agenda items. None were offered.

Discussion Items The Chair invited discussion on the following policies for second reading.

a. **Policies for Second Reading**

- DJB Petty Cash Accounts
 - EBBC Indoor Air Quality
 - GBCE School District Internet Access For Staff
 - GCDA Criminal Investigation Checks -- All Employees
 - GDB Employment of Non-certified Personnel
 - IGBAB Procedural Safeguards for Children with Disabilities
 - IGDG Student Activities Fund Management
 - JFCO School District Internet Access for Students
 - JICK Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention -- Bullying – Dr. Ross explained that she wished to remove this policy from second reading this evening after the Committee discovered that the New Hampshire School Board Association suggested language was not mandatory and that the Policy Committee would like to re-write the policy using more efficient language. She added that the Policy Committee will present the new version at the November Board Meeting for first reading, and in December for second reading, thus meeting the January deadline.
- b. **Field Trips:** The Chair mentioned that there are four field trip requests. Dr. Ross asked if the Board needed to re-approve a field trip if the date had been changed. The Board replied that they did not.
- c. **Personnel:** The Chair mentioned that there are two maternity leave requests.

Public comments on Discussion Items, limited to 15 minutes

Not to exceed five minutes per individual (School Board Policy BDDH)

The Chair invited comments from the public regarding tonight's discussion items. Ann Johnson of Danbury said that the competencies give the kids the feeling that they are in charge of their education and predicts that grades will only soar because of this. She cited some examples from *School Board Magazine* about similar examples in Alaska and Colorado. Dr. Ross said that there are conversations with the Middle School to start work on the competencies to prepare kids for high school. She also added that after next year, the District will no longer be able to fund the Bridge Program between middle and high school by a grant and must budget for this program.

Action Items

- a. **Policies for Second Reading:** Sue Cheney moved to approve the following policies for second reading, thus making them policy. Laura Simula seconded the motion and it was *approved 6-0-0-1 (Hebron absent)*.
- DJB Petty Cash Accounts
 - EBBC Indoor Air Quality
 - GBCE School District Internet Access For Staff
 - GCDA Criminal Investigation Checks -- All Employees
 - GDB Employment of Non-certified Personnel
 - IGBAB Procedural Safeguards for Children with Disabilities
 - IGDG Student Activities Fund Management
 - JFCO School District Internet Access for Students

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- 1 b. **Field Trips:** Sue Cheney moved to approve the four field trips presented to the Board noting that
2 the date of the Monshire Museum trip may change. Mr. Davol seconded the motion, and it was
3 *approved 6-0-0-1.*
4
- 5 c. **Personnel:** Lou Lieto moved to approve the requests for maternity leave from a New Hampton
6 Community School teacher and a Newfound Regional High School teacher. Mr. Davol seconded
7 the motion, and it was *approved 6-0-0-1.*
8
- 9 d. **Manifests:** Sue Cheney moved to approve manifests for July and August. Ms. Simula seconded
10 the motion, and it was *approved 6-0-0-1.*
11

12 Dr. Ross reminded the Board of an upcoming non-public session on October 18th at 6:30 for the purpose
13 of a student hearing and of the October 25th Planning & Dialogue meeting which will be a joint meeting
14 with the Budget Committee.
15

16 At 8:41 p.m., the Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lieto so moved, Mr. Davol seconded, and it
17 was *approved 6-0-0-1 (Hebron absent).*
18

19 Respectfully submitted,
20

21 Paul Hoiriis
22 Clerk
23

24 Minutes approved at November 8, 2010, School Board meeting.