

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
June 19, 2006  
Merrimack High School – Cafeteria**

**PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Coburn, Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith, Board members Markwell, Thornton and Vaillancourt. Also present were Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent Woelflein, Business Administrator Shevenell and Don Botsch from the Merrimack News Connection.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Coburn led the pledge of allegiance.

**2. Approval of the May 24, 2006 Minutes, May 31, 2006 Minutes and June 5, 2006 Minutes**

Board member Markwell moved (seconded by Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith) to approve the May 24, 2006 minutes.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith requested the following revisions to the May 24, 2006 minutes:

- Page 5 of 11 paragraph 2 correct answer to answered
- Page 5 of 11 paragraph 10 correct extend to extent

Chairman Coburn requested the following revisions to the May 24, 2006 minutes:

- Page 1 of 11 remove Casey O'Neill's name, she was not present
- Page 3 of 11 paragraph 7 correct were to where
- Page 3 of 11 paragraph 9 correct and to an
- Page 7 of 11 paragraph 3 correct seizers to seizures
- Page 10 of 11 paragraph 7 correct tops to stops
- Page 10 of 11 paragraph 8 last sentence, remove the word "was"

The motion passed as amended 5-0-0.

Board member Thornton withdrew her motion to approve the May 31, 2006 minutes because Board member Markwell did not receive a copy of the minutes to review. The minutes will be approved at the July 17, 2006 meeting

Board member Thornton moved (seconded by Board member Vaillancourt) to approve the June 5, 2006 minutes.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith requested the following revisions:

- Page 4 of 9 paragraph 9 add a period after experience
- Page 5 of 9 paragraph 4 correct threw to through

The motion passed as amended 5-0-0.

### **3. Public Participation**

Debbie Holman, 50 Fairway Drive, thanked the school board for starting the breakfast program. She stated that she had encouraged students to utilize the program.

Audrey Rogers, 9 Klara Drive, stated that she supported the Gateway program. She wanted to thank Ms. DeVore and Mr. Pymm for recognizing the academic role models at the schools. She also stated that she attended the Edies Awards and was proud to see a table honoring Rick Glatz who was the recipient of the Gifted Educator of the Year Award.

Judy Mulligan, 34 Scenic Vista Way, stated that she supported the Gateway program. She stated that the Gateway program enabled her son to learn and to be creative.

### **4. Consent Agenda**

Board member Markwell moved (seconded by Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith) to approve the consent agenda.

#### **a) Teacher Resignation**

Assistant Superintendent Woelflein announced the following resignation:

Danielle Service, English Teacher at Merrimack High School

#### **b) Teacher Nominations**

Assistant Superintendent Woelflein announced the following nominations:

Amy Deese, First Grade Teacher at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Deborah Lane, Kindergarten Teacher at Thorntons Ferry School

Ann Marie McKelvey, Third Grade Teacher at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Richard McKenzie, Special Education Teacher at Merrimack Middle School

Amanda Oswald, Language Arts Teacher at Merrimack Middle School

Lynn Robinson, Videography Teacher at Merrimack High School

Bethanne Rousseau, Special Education Teacher at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Kimberly Sheadel, Special Education Teacher at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Sabrina Story, Second Grade Teacher at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Carrie Wiltse, Special Education Teacher at James Masticola Upper Elementary

#### **c) Request to Utilize Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund for Roof on Superintendent's Office**

The motion passed 5-0-0.

## **5. Legislative Process and Timeline – Merrimack’s Legislative Delegation**

Chairman Coburn welcomed members of Merrimack’s Legislative Delegation and stated that the School Board asked for their attendance. The Legislators were asked provide information regarding the legislative process, a tentative timeline for 2006-2007, and an outline of educational issues that they were working on.

In attendance were State Representative Maureen Mooney, State Representative Peyton Hinkle, State Representative Nancy Elliot, State Senator Sheila Roberge, State Representative Peter Batula, State Representative Bob L’Heureux.

Representative Mooney stated that the Legislators were available to serve the School Board.

Representative L’Heureux stated that deadlines were critical and that the filing period for incumbents was from September 18<sup>th</sup> to October 6<sup>th</sup>. He stated that only people in the House of Representatives were allowed to file legislation from September 18<sup>th</sup> to October 6<sup>th</sup>. He stated people who win the general election in November would be able to file legislation from November 15<sup>th</sup> to December 8<sup>th</sup>. He strongly suggested if the board had any ideas in mind they should be discussed with members of the Delegation promptly.

Chairman Coburn asked if it would be a wise decision to meet with several members of the Delegation so that a bill would not be lost if a Delegation member did not win the November election.

Representative L’Heureux stated that only five sponsors were allowed on a bill and that it would be wise to have a broad base representation from around the state. He stated that it was important to have people who were effective on certain subject matters supporting an individual bill.

Senator Roberge stated that she agreed with Representative L’Heureux that people should get a broad representation on a bill and suggested that the School Board network across the state.

Senator Roberge stated that she had five study committees as follows: Statewide Education Improvement and Assessment Program, Public Higher Education Study Committee, Charter School and Open Enrollment Legislative Oversight Committee, New Hampshire College Tuition Savings Plan Advisory Commission, Advisory Committee on Education of Children and Students with Disabilities.

Senator Roberge stated that people wanting to sponsor a bill should be prepared to support and help during the hearing process.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith stated that she participated in a bill process. She emphasized that there was a lot of work involved with passing bills and that it was important to support the bill process. She asked if Senator Roberge would leave information regarding the five study committees.

Representative Hinkle stated that it was important to have a Senator as a sponsor to a bill in the event the bill passed the House and moved to the Senate.

Representative Mooney stated that New Hampshire Government had a very easy website to navigate. She also stated that the National Conference of State Legislators sponsored the America's Legislators Back to School Program. She explained that each September and October the Representatives are invited to visit the fourth grade classrooms to explain how a bill becomes a law.

Representative Batula stated that he was attending a court hearing on a lawsuit and if it failed there would be a new task force to look at communities that had been devastated by the reduction in funding.

Representative Batula stated that he was also working on a drug addiction plan and was getting the New Hampshire Department of Education involved in the process. He stated that drug addictions were spiraling out of control.

Representative Batula stated that if the School Board needed any help or information to call one of the Representatives.

Representative L'Heureux stated that he was concerned with the drop out rate and that he was proposing that if a student dropped out of school before the age of 18 years old, they would lose their drivers license until their class graduated from high school.

Board member Markwell expressed concern over Representative L'Heureux's proposal because he felt some students drop out of school because of family issues and to work to help support their family. He stated that he hoped that Representative L'Heureux would reconsider his proposal.

Representative L'Heureux stated that he understood that there were some special situations that caused students to drop out of school and that each case would be looked at individually.

Board member Thornton stated that Massachusetts was looking at raising the minimum age to receive a drivers license and asked if New Hampshire was looking to raise the age.

Representative L'Heureux responded that Massachusetts had more public transportation and he did not feel the age would be raised in New Hampshire.

Chairman Coburn asked for the best method to approach the Representatives with different opinions related to educational bills.

Representative L'Heureux stated that before an education bill was signed, a copy of the bill was sent to the School Board to review, to provide input and/or provide opinions.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that it might be difficult for the Board to respond in a timely manner given the Board only meets twice a month.

Senator Roberge stated that it was important that when the School Board was sent a draft of a bill that the Board try and find any flaws so the Representatives could fine tune the bill before it went forward.

Representative Hinkle spoke regarding the Ways and Means Committee. He explained that there were twenty-three different sources of revenue that they depended on for the general fund and the education fund. He reported and that twelve sources were falling short of projections.

Representative Mooney announced that Representative Robert Brundige was retiring and wished him well.

Representative Batula stated that Avian Flu was a real possibility. He noted that Business Administrator Shevenell was a member of the Merrimack Task Force.

Chairman Coburn thanked the Representatives and Senator for their time and service to the community.

#### **6. Pay for Performance Report for 2005-2006 – Mary McConnell and Committee Members**

Chairman Coburn stated that the Board members arrived early to review a sample of the Pay for Performance portfolios submitted by the professional staff.

Mary McConnell, Chairman of the Pay for Performance Committee, introduced the members of the Pay for Performance Committee: Pam Tinker, administrative representative; Tom Levesque, administrative representative; Vera Vigneault, a teacher from Thorntons Ferry Elementary School; Karen Bonin, a teacher from James Masticola Elementary School; Pat Richards, a teacher from James Masticola Upper Elementary; Suzanne Haley, a teacher from Merrimack Middle School; Diana Plantier, a teacher from Merrimack High School; and Anne Reeves, a teacher from Reeds Ferry Elementary School.

Ms. McConnell stated that the Committee members met seventeen times during the 2005-2006 school year. In the fall of 2005, the Committee received 305 applications for the Pay for Performance incentive. She reported that 208 proposals were accepted and 97 proposals were returned to the individuals for revisions. She reported that 86 of the 97 proposals were resubmitted with revisions and 71 of the 97 proposals were accepted. She stated that in June 2006 there were 257 portfolios approved to receive the incentive.

Ms. McConnell reported the following changes for the 2006-2007 school year. She announced that Anne Reeves would be the new Pay for Performance Committee Chairman and Cathy Jerszyk would be the new representative for Reeds Ferry Elementary School. She explained that there would be changes to the application form, the narrative self assessment form, the components of a successful portfolio and the frequently asked questions sheet. Most of the changes made involved aligning the plan and the documents with the change in contract language and the School District's Logic Model.

Ms. McConnell reported a successful fourth year and thanked the Board members for their support.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith asked what percentages of the portfolios were created by groups versus individuals.

Ms. McConnell stated that she did not have the answer to that question.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith asked if there was a different criteria for portfolios submitted by a group versus a portfolio submitted by an individual.

Ms. McConnell stated that there was not a separate criteria for a group versus an individual but that each teacher in a group would need to submit their own application, narrative of self assessment and a log showing the time spent on the project.

Chairman Coburn stated that on behalf of the Board they wished Ms. McConnell a happy retirement.

## **7. Proposed Merrimack School District Athletic Philosophy**

Mr. Raycraft introduced members of the Athletic Committee: Emily Coburn, Theo-Anne Winch, Mary Smith, Amy Larkin-Perez, Davis Powell, Jim Matthews, Peter Bergeron, Steve Palm, and Rick McKenzie.

Mr. Raycraft stated that there were twenty two members on the Athletic Committee.

Mr. Raycraft stated that they were submitting the Athletic Philosophy statement and the parent, coach, and student guidelines.

Chairman Coburn read the Athletic Philosophy:

“We believe that an athletic program plays an integral role beyond athletic performance, providing an opportunity to learn commitment, personal responsibility, compassion, teamwork, respect, and leadership-attributes that prepare student athletes to become contributing members of society.

We believe that academic success and behavioral accountability is a prerequisite for athletic participation.

We believe that the development of the student athlete is progressive. It builds on commitment to practice, acquisition of skills, knowledge of the game, and the display of positive attitude. The culmination of this process drives healthy competition at all levels.

We believe student athletes, parents and coaches each have respective roles and responsibilities to achieve a successful athletic program.

We believe that athletic participation will not be hindered by gender, religion, race, or financial status.”

Chairman Coburn reviewed the trifold brochure on the parent, coach and student guidelines.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that she was concerned with the method of speaking with a coach.

Mr. Raycraft stated that not all of the coaches were teachers and that it would be best for the requests to be directed to the athletic department who would be in contact with the specific coach.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that the process would be fine as long as it was done in a timely manner.

Chairman Coburn stated that it would also allow the school to have a record of the calls.

#### **8. Recognition of NH Gifted Educator of the Year (Rick Glatz)**

Principal Levesque introduced Rick Glatz who was honored as the Gifted Educator of the Year. Principal Levesque stated that Mr. Glatz provided opportunities for his students to experience and explore a wide range of initiatives. He stated that Mr. Glatz motivated and built positive relationships with students.

Mr. Glatz thanked the Board members and parents.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith stated that it was a privilege for Merrimack to have educators like Mr. Glatz.

#### **9. Proposed Gateway Curriculum**

Mr. Pymm discussed the sequential district-wide curriculum matrix.

Mrs. Putney discussed the revised outline of the Gateway program.

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith asked if there would be guidelines for classroom teachers to upgrade lessons for gifted students.

Assistant Superintendent Woelflein stated that the Gateway teachers could offer professional development on how to modify instruction to keep students challenged.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that it important to keep gifted students challenged.

Mr. Glatz stated that it was important that every child in the district move ahead.

Board member Thornton asked for examples of the Gateway program.

Mrs. Cronin stated that she worked with elementary level students. She explained that the Gateway program enabled students to extend the knowledge they learn in the classroom.

Chairman Coburn stated that the high school drop out rate for gifted students was increasing because they were not challenged enough.

## **10. School Financing Oral Arguments**

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith stated that she was elected to the board of NHCafe. She stated that information on this subject was available on NHCafe.org. She stated that the argument was that the current funding mechanism was unconstitutional.

## **11. Other**

### **a) Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

### **b) Comments**

Board member Markwell stated that he was pleased to see public participation at the meeting and that he hoped that the Merrimack residents would continue to attend School Board meetings and talk to the Board.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that she would like to revisit the new policy on food consumption at the high school. She stated that she had received many parent concerns.

Chairman Coburn stated that it was a high school policy and not a School Board policy.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that she would take the request under advisement.

Board member Markwell stated that he had also received feedback from many parents. He stated that he thought the Board should have seen the policy before the high school distributed it.

Chairman Coburn stated that she also received comments from parents.

## **12. New Business**

There was no new business.



### **13. Committee Reports**

Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith stated that she attended a Professional Development Committee meeting. She stated that they presented a wonderful recap of the 2005-2006 year that she would like to see shared with the board members.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that she would like more time to review the Pay for Performance Portfolios.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that she would try and make them available in the fall.

Board member Vaillancourt stated that she attended a Program Evaluation and Review Committee (PERC) meeting.

Board member Thornton stated that the Technology Committee met twice. She reported that the Committee had a very detailed timeline.

Board member Thornton stated that the Planning and Building Committee met and that parking issues at the high school were being discussed.

### **14. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments on agenda items.

Chairman Coburn stated, for the record, people were in the audience.

### **15. Manifest**

The Board members signed the manifest.

At 9:14 p.m. Board member Thornton moved (seconded by Board member Vaillancourt) to go into non-public session RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c)

The motion passed 5-0-0 on a roll call vote.

At 9:31 p.m. Vice Chairman Robertson-Smith moved (seconded by Board member Thornton) to adjourn.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.