

MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 56

Frankfort • Searsport • Stockton Springs

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting
January 23, 2007 – 6:30 P.M.
Central Office - Searsport

Present: Bonnie-Jean Brooks Tom Calderwood James Cunningham
Robert Danks Harold Grove Michael Hamilton
Christopher Krause Veronica Magnan

Absent: Nedra Bellows (ex.), Bradley Jones, Twyler Webster (ex.)

Visitors: 17

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairperson Bob Danks called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.
2. **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA.** Two items were added to the agenda: an action item under the “Report from the Superintendent” and an executive session on the discussion of litigation pending or contemplated pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (E).
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** A motion was made by Bonnie-Jean Brooks and seconded by Mike Hamilton to approve the January 9, 2007 minutes as presented.

VOTE: 8-0-0

The superintendent welcomed the group of parents in attendance to observe how meetings are held.

4. **PRESENTATIONS.**

A. Project Success. The superintendent stated that research has shown that the most critical year for high school students is the freshman year. She then introduced Gregg Palmer, Scott Beaudry, and Dennis Pike, a student, who discussed the at-risk program. Project Success is funded through an Americorps VISTA volunteer grant and has four strands: 1) attendance as a freshman at the Waldo County Technical Center (WCTC), 2) all students enrolled in one regular class, 3) all students participate in the FAME Reading Program, and 4) all students take a virtual class (PLATO). Data was presented showing a decrease in absences/tardies and interventions. One student went from failing all his classes to being a WCTC Model Student and getting an interest in small engines. Judy Cohen, a social worker, also spoke on the program’s behalf. Discussion and questions followed. At the end, Scott Beaudry stated that he worked for the district a long time ago and was not impressed. However, being involved in this program, he has seen the principal and staff working to help students be successful and they need to be congratulated.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** The superintendent gave an overview of the district’s public participation protocols as described in the blue pamphlet.

6. **REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT.**

A. Action item. Bonnie-Jean Brooks received a letter from a concerned family that

also went to the Board of Directors, the superintendent, and other agencies. She said that we have two policies that relate to this letter. One is on the issue that was raised, and the other is about how the district deals with a complaint. A motion was made by Bonnie-Jean Brooks and seconded by Harold Grove that the Board refer this complaint to the superintendent who will deal with the situation as outlined on the complaint form.

VOTE: 8-0-0

Discussion followed. Is the policy being followed as it should be? What is the issue? Head lice infestation.

- B. Assessment Results. The superintendent shared the key components of all curricular work: 1) Essential Learnings: What do we want all students to know and be able to do? 2) How do we know we are successful? 3) How will we respond when some students do not learn it? 4) How will we know when we are successful? 5) How can we extend and enrich the learning for students who have demonstrated proficiency?

A table showing all the assessments currently done in the district and in what grades was reviewed. Then actual district results were presented for each of the reading and math assessments as well as the MEA's now done in grades 3-8. It is important to note that the MEA's were changed so we cannot compare the 2005-06 results to past results. But the 2005-06 results will serve as our base line for future comparisons.

As data was reviewed, the superintendent pointed out areas we are working on as well as asking ourselves why? What is contributing to these results? What changes can we make? etc.

The Admin Team is doing a book study on Learning by Doing and all staff is involved in a book study Whatever It Takes. We need to do whatever it takes. We need to devise our plan for how we will help students meet the standards.

The superintendent also reported back to the Board with the statistics requested on the number of graduates, the number of graduates accepted to college, and the number still in college after one semester for 2005-06.

The Board had a discussion and questions concerning the SAT's. What about test-taking strategies? What do the scores mean? Ability to take a test? Where are students failing so we can assist them? How are we challenging those students who want to go to college in math, writing, and reading? Math scores for the 7th and 8th grades are low – we are asking a lot from the high school. The superintendent suggested that the District Curriculum Steering Committee take an in-depth look at the SAT's at an upcoming meeting.

- C. Update on Governor's Proposal. The superintendent gave an overview of the Governor's proposed school reorganization plan and reviewed several handouts. She urged everyone to read the proposal; it is more than condensing superintendents. It creates a regional Board which eliminates the existing local boards, and eliminates all Central Office personnel without providing for severance packages (special ed director, business manager, secretaries, director of transportation and maintenance, etc.). She also included her script-taped notes on a conference call with the Commissioner and various MSMA newsletters, etc.

Discussion followed. Veronica Magnan said that this is being steamrolled out and we may not have the opportunity to develop another plan. We can speak as educators and/or community members. Bonnie-Jean Brooks said that we have two weeks to read as much as we can and to attend as many informational meetings as possible. A motion was made by Bonnie-Jean Brooks and seconded by Harold Grove to have the Board Chairperson appoint a committee to develop some points to consider about the Governor's proposal, and any other proposals, and to come up with a plan for the February meeting.

VOTE: 8-0-0

Discussion followed. The people most affected are the students. Our students should have a voice because their lives and futures are at stake. The subcommittee will include Veronica Magnan, Tom Calderwood, Bob Danks, and Mary Szwec. They will meet at 9 am on February 1, 2007, at the Central Office.

Someone asked if we should have a public meeting in the district to get input? Chris Krause said that even though we have the Governor's plan, we don't know all that it entails. The less information you give to people, the less they can react to. However we go about it, it is important. If we had a forum, people could ask questions. Other things have happened where someone has tried to steamroll it through and it has been stopped dead in the water. We can stop this but we need the answers to our questions. Tom Calderwood and Chris Krause attended a forum held by Senator Carol Weston. She said this is the Governor's budget. If things are changed, the legislature will have to change the budget. As of tonight, we can speak as individuals, not as a Board of Directors. Comments followed regarding the Department of Transportation with reorganization. Two years ago 2500 people were laid off. We need proof that there will be a savings with this budget.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

- A. Buildings and Grounds Committee briefly met on Monday on the roof project. We now meet two times a month – once for the roof projects and once for the Capital Asset Management Plan. The architects did not come on Monday. We will keep them to a schedule.
- B. Region Seven – no meeting.
- C. Legislative Report. None.

8. **OLD BUSINESS.** None.

9. **NEW BUSINESS.**

- A. A motion was made by Bonnie-Jean Brooks and seconded by Mike Hamilton to approve a field trip (Urban Adventure) by REACH to Portland on April 6 & 7, 2007. They will have female chaperones.

VOTE: 8-0-0

- B. A motion was made by Harold Grove and seconded by Bonnie-Jean Brooks to approve a field trip by REACH to Camp Jordan in Ellsworth on May 17 & 18, 2007. They will have female chaperones.

VOTE: 8-0-0

- C. Board discussion on special education: Tabled until the next meeting.
 - 1. Disabilities – Veronica
 - 2. New Developments – James, Veronica

3. Who is disabled? – Brad. There was a suggestion to change this topic either to who has disabilities, or how are disabilities defined?

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION.

- A. A motion was made by Harold Grove and seconded by Mike Hamilton to enter executive session for a discussion of litigation pending or contemplated pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (E).

VOTE: 8-0-0

The Board entered executive session at 8:23 pm and resumed public session at 8:35 pm.

- B. A motion was made by Bonnie-Jean Brooks and seconded by Harold Grove to enter executive session for the evaluations of official and an employee pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (A).

VOTE: 8-0-0

The Board entered executive session at 8:36 pm and resumed public session at 9:05 pm.

- 11. ADJOURNMENT.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.