

A.R.E.A. Board for Grades 7 and 8, and Grades 9 through 12
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 2, 2011 – 7:00 PM
Large Group Instruction Area
Keene High School, 43 Arch Street
Keene, NH

School Boards Present:	<u>Chesterfield</u>	Jamie Card Judy Idelkope (left 7:44 p.m.)
	<u>Harrisville</u>	Earl Horn Jack Calhoun
	<u>Keene</u>	Carl Panza John Stewart Ann Szot
	<u>Marlborough</u>	<i>No members present</i>
	<u>Marlow</u>	Stephanie Tickner
	<u>Nelson</u>	Kelly French (arrived 7:22 p.m.) Allison Aldrich
	<u>Stoddard</u>	<i>No members present</i>
	<u>Westmoreland</u>	Debra Hunter

Administration Present:

Wayne Woolridge, Co-Supt., SAU 29
William Gurney, Co-Supt., SAU 29
Alan Chmiel, Keene High School Principal
Dotty Frazier, Keene Middle School Principal

1. Introductions

Wayne Woolridge called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Introductions were made by members of the 6 boards in attendance.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Woolridge entertained a motion to approve the minutes of 6/7/10.

MOTION: Carl Panza moved to approve the minutes of 6/7/10.

Judy Idelkope seconded the motion. By a unanimous voice vote the minutes of 6/7/10 were approved.

Mr. Woolridge reminded the committee that as part of the A.R.E.A. agreement, the middle and high school principals present programming updates to inform the various towns that are part of the A.R.E.A. agreement of the educational programs taking place at KMS and KHS. Mr. Woolridge further stated that the original agreement was established in 1966 and then reauthorized in 1986. Recently the A.R.E.A. Board reauthorized the agreement until 2026.

3. Keene Middle School: *Dotty Frazier, Principal*

a. New KMS

- Distributed the architect's rendering of the new building with grade level clusters identified
- The classroom sections are progressing nicely, with the smaller touches making for a welcoming atmosphere
- Sixth graders will be on the first floor with seventh and eighth graders on the second floor
- The auditorium will seat 1,000 and will be the final section completed
- There will be a full-size gym with bleachers with fitness equipment from the current school
- There will be a media center flanked by a television studio and classrooms
- The courtyard has been designed to allow natural light and air in the building

Mr. Woolridge shared that the fall A.R.E.A. meeting will be held at the new middle school building and Mrs. Frazier offered to give a full tour to the A.R.E.A. Board at that time.

Questions –

Earl Horn (Harrisville) inquired about the future story addition listed on the floor plan.

Mrs. Frazier stated that the future story has been planned for additional classrooms – for future growth but is not planned to be completed at this time. The building is being built for 700 (current enrollment is approximately 600). The core of the building is built for 1,000 students.

b. Intervention Programs – Extending and Accelerating Learning/Supporting Learning:

- Mrs. Frazier shared that the staff is working to define what it takes for every student to be successful.
- The staff has formed PLCs (Professional Learning Communities).
- RTI (Response to Intervention) programs are also in place to identify resources needed for students.

- VLACS (Virtual Learning Academy Charter School) classes are being offered to KMS students. The classes are mainly being used to extend learning in courses that the middle school cannot offer currently. Students earn credits that will be transferred to KHS so students will not need to retake courses at the high school.
 - Renzulli Learning system is being used as a supporting resource.
- c. KMS Parent and Staff Survey:
- Developed a strategic improvement action plan for KMS based on feedback from parent/staff survey consisting of 4 goals:
 1. KMS faculty will continue to explore ways to include and report to parents regarding student progress.
 2. KMS faculty will work to maximize Parent Portal and other forms of technology as tools to keep parents informed.
 3. KMS faculty will continue to develop, augment, and articulate an appropriately challenging curriculum for students.
 4. KMS staff and students will work to keep our new KMS clean and, if appropriate, apply similar practices at the old KMS until the transition to the new KMS.

4. Keene High School: *Alan Chmiel, Principal*

a. Dropout Rate

- 4 years ago the cumulative dropout rate for KHS was 15.8% and the yearly dropout rate 4.2%. This year the cumulative dropout rate is 5.4% and the yearly rate is 1.38%.
- Several programs have been instituted that have impacted the dropout rate at KHS:
 - Work with North Campus – two NC students will be participating in graduation
 - Of the 39 students at NC, 28 take classes at KHS
 - School encourages students who consider dropping out to receive their GED diploma
 - Every student has the option to graduate
 - Dual enrollment – take night classes in addition to day classes. This used to cost the student \$200 per night class. KHS arranged with Community Education that if a student is taking at least one day class at KHS, they can take night classes for free.
 - Currently 20 dropouts whereas in the past 60 or 70 dropouts per year.

Questions –

Kelly French (Nelson) – If the state changes compulsory attendance back to age 16, what happens?

Mr. Chmiel answered that KHS will continue doing what they are doing regardless of the age of compulsory attendance. They are doing what is in the best interest of students.

Mr. Woolridge noted that the House has passed the change back to age 16 and voted to remove \$1.6 million from the budget for dropout prevention. The Senate still needs to pass.

Judy Idelkope (Chesterfield) – Will you have the same leverage with students if the age changes?

Mr. Chmiel stated that yes he feels they will. Students do not see the ability to graduate as punitive. The students like the options they have to graduate.

Jack Calhoun (Harrisville) – Noted that the dropout prevention program at KHS has received attention statewide.

Mr. Chmiel shared that Governor Lynch visited KHS as they had the most dramatic change in their dropout rate. The Governor was impressed by the students and the programs offered to help students graduate. Students have shared that now they have a choice.

Jamie Card (Chesterfield) – When do the options for alternatives to graduate become available to students?

Mr. Chmiel stated that students are classified into grade levels by credits, once a student begins falling behind in credits, alternate graduation options are explored. If a student wants to drop out they must first meet with Mr. Chmiel. Parents have been supportive of the graduation options the school has in place.

b. Study Island – web based student tutorial program

- KHS purchased the highest tier program available. Taxpayer funds were not used. A 1961 KHS graduate offered to pay for Study Island program for two years.
- A license for every student at the high school has been purchased.
- Web-based program runs off a Cloud in Kentucky.
- Students can access from school or home, anywhere with Internet
- The program is designed to help students take tests
- The program branches out to all levels of academics including advance placement tests.
- Students, parents and teachers can view progress reports.

- The program automatically prompts for remedial work and will not allow a student to move on until they are proficient in a skill area.
- Teachers are able to create their own tests.

Questions –

Ann Szot (Keene) – Will every student have access?

Mr. Chmiel stated that yes next year when program begins every student will have access. Students will receive a user name and login at the start of the school year. Mr. Chmiel confirmed for Ms. Szot's follow up question that the program purchased is specific to NH State testing (11th grade NECAP). Sophomores will begin prep using Study Island for NECAP to be taken in their junior year.

Jack Calhoun (Harrisville) – NWEA uses a different methodology for testing correct?

Mr. Chmiel stated that yes, NWEA focuses on students' abilities – adapts to the student in real-time, adjusts based on student's strengths and weaknesses.

Carl Panza (Keene) – Will the program be used throughout the year?

Mr. Chmiel stated that the program will be used throughout the year. Teachers load their tests and then the program determines how to do the tutorial. There is a lead time of approximately 3 days to upload the tutorial once the tests have been loaded.

Jack Calhoun (Harrisville) – Is there an expectation that all students will use the program?

Mr. Chmiel stated that yes, all students and all teachers will use the program. The core subjects will use all the time. World Language is the only subject not in the program at this time. The science NECAP part will be out in a year.

Earl Horn (Harrisville) – What is the format of the program?

Mr. Chmiel answered that the program incorporates both short answer and multiple choice.

Carl Panza (Keene) – When do students use the program given that students do not have individual laptops?

Mr. Chmiel answered that computer labs and COWs (computers on wheels) are scheduled for student use. Students may also access the program from home or anywhere they have Internet.

Jack Calhoun (Harrisville) – Expressed concerns about students regurgitating information instead of *thinking*.

Mr. Chmiel stated that the program requires students to *apply* knowledge.

Jamie Card (Chesterfield) – Is the expectation that scores will improve by a certain percentage?

Mr. Chmiel – yes.

c. Homework Assignment Book (HAB)

- Assistant Principal, Mark Hayward, works with students on the student planner book
- Student Cindy Jenkins designed the cover this year and last year. The company that prints uses the KHS book as a sample throughout the country.
- Alan negotiated \$1,000 reduction in publishing cost since the KHS book is being used as a sample
- Anti-bullying message and school mission statement have been incorporated into the design of the book
- Art students came up with the watermarks

d. Anti-Bullying Campaign

- School-wide one book, one read of the Jodi Picoult book *Nineteen Minutes*
- Guest speakers including Dr. Malcom Smith (authored the NH anti-bullying law), Dr. Justin Patchin (“bullying czar” for the Obama administration), and John Halligan (Connecticut father whose son committed suicide after being bullied at school) and author Jodi Picoult.
- Two students who were facing expulsion due to bullying at KHS opted to create an anti-bullying brochure and to speak to peers regarding bullying. The school printed 500 copies of the brochure – impactful for the students.
- Number of bullying incidences reported increased dramatically when the school added the SRO (school resource officer). Now students must put their complaints in writing – this has decreased the number of reports.

e. Schedule changes for 2012-2013

- In 2005 NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) recommended that a full investigation into block scheduling take place. This did not occur. In 2007, the parent advisory group working with Alan came up with survey questions. The group finished their work in 2009.
- As a result of the surveys, it was discovered that math, world language and ELA courses were the most problematic for students in the block scheduling format.

- End result of the surveys (231 responses received) and the research conducted by the team was a “hybrid” approach to scheduling including 90-minute blocks and 50-minute “skinnies”.
- The 2011-2012 schedule has been loaded into the system and for the first time students are registering online for courses, next year’s scheduling is 99% complete.

Questions –

Carl Panza (Keene) – How many schools use block scheduling?

Mr. Chmiel stated that more schools are going away from block scheduling or using a modified block than ones that are staying with block scheduling. Over time we are learning that not all students learn best using block scheduling. Alan was himself a proponent of block scheduling a number of years ago, sees things differently now. KHS has been using block scheduling for ten years.

Ann Szot (Keene) – Concern as a parent that accelerated learners won’t be able to move to the next level of classes without block scheduling.

Mr. Chmiel stated that accelerated schedules would take place over two instructional periods. The sequence needs to be in order so that when students move on to the next level they won’t lose any momentum.

Jamie Card (Chesterfield) – Will you be limiting the number of classes that a student can take?

Mr. Chmiel stated that KHS almost has too many offerings some classes are cancelled because there are too few students enrolled. In the past classes were offered with as few as 8 students enrolled – not fiscally responsible to do so and no longer a practice at the high school.

MOTION: Jack Calhoun moved to adjourn, Carl Panza seconded. A unanimous voice vote was in favor of adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Dieter
Stenographer*

APPROVED: 10/17/11