

## **KEENE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** October 13, 2009

**LOCATION:** Keene High School Large Group Instruction Area, 43 Arch Street, Keene, NH

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:30 p.m.

**TIME ADJOURNED:** 9:20 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell, Chair
- Mrs. Carol Brown
- Mrs. Kristin Blais
- Mr. Carter Chamberlin
- Mr. Chris Coates
- Mr. Neil Donegan
- Mr. Carl Panza
- Mr. Donald Parker
- Mrs. Amy Speas

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

- Mr. William Gurney, Co-Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. Wayne Woolridge, Co-Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. John Harper, Business Administrator
- Ms. Catherine Reeves, Director of Special Education

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

- Senator Molly Kelley
- Mrs. Dru Fox, Stenographer
- Ms. Sarah Palermo, Keene Sentinel Reporter
- Mr. Chris Weeks, Public Information Coordinator
- Members of Public (2)

**Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30**

1. Public Input

Mr. Robert Gaughan, 7 Tanner Road, expressed concern to the Board over elimination of the part of social studies curriculum being the study of world continents and US states and capitols. He spoke at length against the elimination of this basic instruction and gave numerous examples of the benefit his children and family have experienced through his children's study of this area.

Mr. William Gurney explained that the extensive revision to the social studies curriculum was necessary to bring it in line with the grade level spans brought forth by the State and told Mr. Gaughan that he will look into the matter and get back to him regarding what grade level world continents and US states and capitols will be studied.

Senator Molly Kelley, 89 Colonial Drive, was invited to attend and introduced by Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell for the purpose of addressing issues that are going on within the State, specifically school building aid. Sen. Kelley provided a brief history of the question "how can we address the capital budget and still meet the needs of school building aid" posed at the State level, the committee that was formed to study the issue and their charge to look at the past and determine how or what a better approach to building aid would be. She explained that right now this is truly a fact-finding mission and they are looking at ways to continue to fund building aid

in the future. She explained that further into the process it will be determined how to move forward with alternative means of funding. She reassured everyone that the issue of not funding building aid already committed has never been discussed. She said there are concerns over the way building aid is currently determined and whether or not it is fair and equitable. Mrs. O'Donnell clearly asked if the Keene School District should be concerned about whether or not the bond we currently have will be funded and Sen. Kelly responded that there is no question that our bond will be honored.

Sen. Kelley touched on the federal program No Child Left Behind, looking at innovative ways to educate our young people and urged everyone to contact our congressmen and senators about the issue.

Discussion ensued about the future biennium issues, proactive approaches, stimulus money, and closing residential treatment centers and mental health institutions.

## 2. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda Item #3, Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, June 16, 2009; Special Meeting, August 18, 2009; Special Meeting (Board Retreat, August 25, 2009; Regular Meeting, September 8, 2009; Special Meeting, September 22, 2009; Regular Meeting, April 14, 2009 (Revised Minutes)

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve all items appearing on the consent agenda. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Mr. Donald Parker requested that the meeting minutes of August 25, 2009 not be acted upon. Mr. Neil Donegan amended his motion to approve items on the consent agenda with the exception of the August 25, 2009 special meeting minutes. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded the motion as amended. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

## 3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Special Meeting, June 16, 2009
- b. Special Meeting, August 18, 2009
- c. Special Meeting, (Board Retreat) August 25, 2009
- d. Regular Meeting, September 8, 2009
- e. Special Meeting, September 22, 2009
- f. Regular Meeting, April 14, 2009 (Minutes Revised)

## 4. Report of Student Representatives

Miss Taylor Putnam, Keene High School junior reported on the cancellation of homecoming parade and the event being successfully held indoors, the creation of a freshman parent informational flyer, NECAP results, National Merit Scholarship honors to Benjamin Cook, Hunter Hicks and Daniel Binder Brantley, AIDS Memorial Quilt, Michael McDougall's English award, and then announced upcoming speaker events on December 15<sup>th</sup> and December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## 5. Report of Board Chair

Ms. O'Donnell distributed her Chair agenda items:

Tutors – Ms. Catherine Reeves reported on the number of tutors and the request for 2 additional tutors.

Differentiated Learning – Mr. William Gurney spoke about the recommendation of the Finance Committee to transfer \$10,000 into a new line account for instruction at KMS to hire a consultant for differentiated learning.

Principal Utilization – Mr. Wayne Woolridge reports the committee is working very hard looking at 20 years worth of trends within 18 districts for the purpose of determining what information should be included and what shared/teaching principal models work. They plan to visit those models in the near future and are getting very close to determining what information will be part of the conclusion and then make recommendations.

KMS Real Estate Committee – Mr. Neil Donegan announced an upcoming meeting to review RFP's from prospective brokers and analyzing them. He announced that November 11<sup>th</sup> is the cut-off date for any possible private sale and after that there will be advertising through commercial brokers. He reported that the 4 million dollar asking price is not on any person's agenda and that the sale price will most likely be considerably less. He continued with information on sending any and all bids to the Board, trying to get as many offers as we can get and that there are a few people who want to make offers through brokers.

KMS construction – Mr. Neil Donegan talked about the importance of tomorrow's meeting and review session with general contractors, the plan to interview and select a contractor within the next few weeks, a recommendation to the Board in November and that the engineering process is going very well.

Current Middle School – Mr. William Gurney spoke about the fire alarm system installed by Amer Electric over the summer and the expectation to approach the fire department for permission to open the auditorium for concerts and other traditional events.

34 West Street – Mr. Neil Donegan said the SAU board has not yet met to discuss the lease and that it should be simple as the new lease is the same as old.

Royal Avenue – Mr. William Gurney announced that the final group of students has moved into the North Campus, waiting for computers and smart board and a collaborative effort that went very well. Mr. Gurney described the program formerly known as "TNT."

KAPS – Mr. Neil Donegan announced a 4<sup>th</sup> meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> and the process is progressing as well as you can expect a negotiating process to progress.

Tutor – Mr. Chris Coates reports waiting for a response from the group's representative and that we have done everything that we need to do at this point in order to move forward.

Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell asked about testing and Mr. Gurney responded that we are into the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of NECAP testing and results are in from other assessments completed last spring.

## 6. Report of Co-Superintendent

### a. October 1, 2009 Enrollments

Mr. Gurney reported that the official enrollment figures show that the Keene School District has 120 fewer students this year than last. There is a meeting later this fall to study enrollment trends to make more accurate projections. He also reported that Surry and Winchester enrollments are up, KHS students who were recognized for their results on aptitude testing, announced AP scholars, congratulated Ruth Abbott for the grant she received and spoke about closing on the sale of Roosevelt School being completed by the end of January.

Discussion ensued pertaining to enrollment numbers and ratio of special education students to regular education students

Mr. Chris Coates questioned H1N1 procedures and Mr. Gurney described all the work currently being done in the district not only from a health prevention standpoint but preparation

in the event of an outbreak. Some of the areas touched on were; websites, meetings with staff, lesson preparations, flu shots, and future initiatives for use in crisis situations and development of phone trees. Discussion ensued around reverse 911 and 211 opportunities.

Mr. Wayne Woolridge announced several upcoming meeting dates, talked about the SAU budget presentation, and provided a legislative update. He reported that the approximately \$1 million in federal stimulus monies received will be used for:

- Aligning English and Math curriculum to state frameworks
- Tiered intervention process to catch students likely to fall through the cracks
- Data analysis of the NWEA, NECAP and other common assessments

Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell asked for an explanation about test scores and letters being sent out which appeared to single out groups of sociologically or economically disadvantaged children. Mr. William Gurney explained that those particular letters were sent out to groups of students that failed to make adequate yearly progress. Mr. Woolridge further explained that federal law analyzed which categories were to receive notice and that this school district did not single out any groups of children. He reiterated that the procedure was mandated by the government to breakdown and identify particular categories and that we were only following that mandate.

7. Report of Secretary  
None

8. Report of Standing Committees

Mr. Chris Coates reports all items were covered earlier in the meeting.

b. Education Committee

Mrs. Carol Brown announced the next meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., committee agendas and minutes are now posted on the SAU website.

c. Finance Committee

Mr. Neil Donegan spoke about the compensation committee developed to study the salary and benefits package of SAU #29 employees. He said compensation makes up 80-90% of the SAU budget.

**2010-11 Budget Guidelines**

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget guideline for the development of the 2010-2011 Keene School District budget of \$60,210,549 - a figure intended to include the net \$720,004 Keene School District share of the bond payments (after state building aid) for the new middle school and SAU #29 facilities. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded.*

Mr. Donegan spoke in favor of the motion and gave a history of the budget process up to this point, explained the necessity to move forward with creating a budget and announced upcoming dates and action timelines. He talked about the procedure that went into the development of this number including details on the net operating budget and the bond payment, the five contracts which are mandated, the NH retirement system, transportation increases and special education issues.

Ms. Catherine Reeves outlined the increase in special education costs. Some of those items were extra tuition costs, 2 teachers moving from a grant position into general fund and additional transportation. She then provided further explanation into each of those 3 areas. Discussion ensued around closing residential programs and mental health facilities. Ms. Reeves continued her explanation by describing these budget issues as more of a realignment of dollars rather than an addition to. Further discussion ensued.

*Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

Mr. Neil Donegan then stated for the purpose of record that the Keene School Board of Education approved a target number for the purpose of developing a 2010-2011 budget to be \$60,210,549.

Brief discussion ensued around the bond payment, justification and budget book issues and a history of very significant budget cuts in the past. Mrs. Kristin Blais requested a listing of previous years budget cuts and those programs affected.

### **Budget Transfer(s)**

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$152,848 for Special Education. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$100,000 for Special Education. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$150,000 for Special Education. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$60,750 for Special Education. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$10,000 from KSD Capital Improvements Fund (design of KHS woodchip plant) for 2009-2010 and the creation of a new line account in the Keene Middle School budget of Gifted and Talented/Differentiated Instruction. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

Mr. Donegan then spoke against the motion claiming it to be a sincere, but naïve motion, given the budget constraints and talked about future costs associated with the program. Discussion ensued around the NOMS report completed back in 2005. Ms. Amy Speas wanted the record to reflect that she wants to make personal growth available for every student and that we have a window of opportunity here to make this happen.

Mr. Donald Parker spoke about it being very premature to be talking about price tags and staffing increases before we even have the advice of a consultant. He spoke in favor of hiring the consultant and believes it is very reasonable to at least investigate the issue. Discussion ensued over the original motion made back in May, maybe not being able to do this as originally defined but certainly moving forward with a plan, this being the initial stages just as the foreign language program, strings program and Chinese programs were and the necessity to move this forward.

*Vote taken, motion passes by an 8-1 vote with Mr. Donegan opposing.*

d. Personnel Committee

Mr. Carter Chamberlin spoke about the presentation of the Organizational Charts by Mr. Paul Cooper and early discussions taking place regarding certification and additional training for paraprofessional educators.

e. Communications Committee

Mr. Donald Parker thanked Chris Weeks, Public Information Coordinator, for all her hard work and commended Mr. Cooper and all building principals for their websites being night and day from where they were two years ago. He announced the next committee meeting on October 27, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

f. Policy Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Neil Donegan reported on the recently held policy meeting and those policies listed in the agenda that were approved at that meeting and will be ready for presentation to the Board at next meeting.

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School Board Policy ILBA – Assessment of Educational Programs. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School Board Policy IL – Evaluation of Curricular Programs. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion unanimously passes.*

9. Reports of Special Committees

a. NHSAU 29 School Board  
Previously addressed.

b. Cheshire Career Center Advisory

Mr. Carter Chamberlin reports enrollment numbers are up in the career center and that there are challenges next year with the reduced amount of the Perkins Grant and the Cosmetology program coming off a grant

c. NH School Boards Association

No report

d. Liaison Reports

Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell offered thanks to the Cheshire Fair Association and Scott Rogers and the Culinary Arts Program.

Mr. Donald Parker reported on the Jonathan Daniels Association meeting. Mrs. Amy Speas commented on a very informative Symonds School PTA meeting with Mr. Cate speaking on AYP and she talked about the recently held Keene Middle School Math department presentation in which she wished more parents had attended.

10. Old Business

None

11. New Business

None

12. Resignations

None

13. Nominations/Election of Staff

None

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to move into Non-Public Session according to RSA: 91-3A. Mr. Donald Parker seconded. Roll call vote taken. Mr. Chris Coates-yes, Mr. Carl Panza-yes, Mr. Donald Parker-yes, Mr. Neil Donegan-yes, Mrs. Carol Brown-yes, Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell-yes, Mr. Carter Chamberlin-yes, Mrs. Amy Speas-yes, Mrs. Kristin Blais-yes. Meeting adjourned into Non-Public Session by a unanimous roll call vote at 8:43 p.m.*

**Approved by the Keene  
Board of Education: November 10, 2009**

