

**NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2006 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE NCUHS LIBRARY**

Board Members Present: Arne Amalixsen (Chair), Steve Brochu, Ken Canning, Richard Cartee, Todd Durkee, Rick Geisel, Rose Mary Mayhew, Harold Morse, Peter Moskovites, James, Privee, June Rosenberg

Board Members Absent: Joe Gregersen (Newport Town), David Merrill (Holland), Muriel O’Gorman (Brighton), Morgan Rep

Administration: Bill Rivard, Bob Davis, Bob Fitts, Rod Weston

Student Council: Jennifer Johnson

Faculty Forum: none

Media: NEK-TV; Chris Roy: The Newport Daily Express; Robin Smith: The Caledonian-Record

Guests: Frank Davis

A. Amalixsen, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. **He asked for approval of the minutes of November 21, 2006. The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted (S. Brochu/K. Canning).**

Administrative Reports

Bill Rivard, Principal

AYP Update

Mr. Rivard gave the board some information on their recent AYP results; noting they made AYP in all areas with the exception of one sub-group: language arts in the free and reduced area. He distributed a graph showing the growth made over the years; noting the scores were increasing but they didn’t show enough growth to meet AYP. He noted they had about an 8% growth, but they look for a 10% growth. Mr. Rivard reported that about 47% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch this year.

Mr. Rivard reported they would have to put together an action plan that would address the ways they can target these sub-groups who were not meeting AYP. Mr. Rivard stated if parents have questions about the AYP issue they should call the school; and if there were enough parents interested they could hold a forum to discuss it. He added parents could also speak to the guidance counselors and Ms. Kennison.

Mr. Rivard also distributed a list of other schools not making AYP for the first time; adding the community relations committee could work on that issue. P. Moskovites noted they failed to reach AYP; that they had one more year at this level; that the goal was going up to 12-15% next year and going up after that. He noted there were schools identified for the first time and schools on plans; adding the question was if the goals could be met; or by definition if every school would fail; and that he didn’t think this was a true barometer of what is going on.

Mr. Rivard stated this was one measure of one area of this school; that for those that visit the school and see the dance program, the academics, the Career Center and see a lot of good things going on; adding they had to address the relationships with their students and staff members; and noting when the students get connected to the school they are successful. Mr. Rivard reviewed the corrective measures required; that to get off the list they needed to be okay for 2 years; that they had been on the list for 4 years; that they would be watching them more closely and providing more intensive support; that the state consultant assigned would have more visits with he and Dr. Weston, and would submit reports as to what is working or not working.

Dr. Weston noted that Title's money takes away from all schools, adding they did receive some money from the state this year and last year. Mr. Rivard asked board members to write down specific questions about the AYP, adding he would get answers for them. He noted this AYP report really gets them talking about education and how they can improve education in the school; that it forces them to take the time to discuss issues that are important to learning.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Rod Weston **Budget Review**

Dr. Weston reported he also looked at schools' scores and compared their budgets to NCUHS. He stated he looked at 33 Vermont high schools; that the average scores for those schools was 51% meeting the standards and that NCUHS was at 50%, or within 1% of the state average. He stated he focused on the northern tier which included Lake Region, Richford, Enosburg, Hazen, BFA, and Mississquoi. Dr. Weston stated that NCUHS outperformed every one of the 33 schools he reviewed; adding they all had similar demographics and a number of those schools were not on any list, as they didn't have enough students to make it count. He stated he then looked at how much was spent per student for regular education; noting the average was \$10,434 per student. He stated he did not include upscale places like Middlebury and Burlington. Dr. Weston noted that NCUHS spends \$7,219 per student; or more than \$3,000 less per student. Dr. Weston stated he knew that people are strapped with their taxes; but with that extra money Mr. Rivard could do some pretty fantastic things in the school.

Dr. Weston noted if this was in sports and this was our league and we were putting such a team on the field there would be a wonderful celebration. He noted the headlines should read that NCUHS kicks academic butt. Dr. Weston stated the law has a flaw in it; that it is a numbers game and not a true representation of the school as a whole.

Dr. Weston noted the state is looking at capping budget increases; and that NCUHS spends the least and does as well as the other schools. He noted even if they increase their budget by 6% they would continue to grow further behind because this and past boards have been such good stewards of the community; adding they need to compare this to what other kids are getting across the northern tier of the state. He noted that for years, in order to keep the budget under a certain percent the board said cut another \$50,000 or another \$25,000 and dutifully the administration had done that; but that to say to Mr. Rivard go and cut back more would be difficult; asking how close to the bone can they cut without getting chips.

Dr. Weston noted that scores have come up incrementally; they have improved training to the teachers; but if they were really going to address fundamental systemic change they would not do it with a little bit of this and a little bit of that; but that it comes right down to sacred cows.

A. Amalixsen thanked Dr. Weston for his report; noting this would not just be a challenge to the board but also for the community relations committee to get the budget information out to the community. R. Geisel stated the committee appreciated this discussion.

Career Center

Mr. Fitts reported the RAB meet today and approve the NCCC budget; that they came up with a couple of line item adjustments, which he would make and forward it to the finance committee for review. He stated he would include the budget in the next board packet for approval at the next NCUHS board meeting. Mr. Fitts stated he and members of the RAB would be present to answer any questions the finance committee might have.

Faculty & Student Council Representatives

Jennifer Johnson reported their dance concert would be held this Sunday at 2:00 and 7:00; and the winter concert held on December 14th at 7:00 p.m. She stated that Tyler couldn't attend tonight's meeting.

Comments from Guests

There were none.

Finance/Operation's Committee

Budget

R. Cartee reported they were in the process of trying to formulate the budget; that they decided again last week it was a priority that every student has a text book. He noted prices range from \$50 to \$125. A. Amalixsen noted the draft of their last minutes included data they had been looking at; adding they go through a lot of detailed information.

Bus Garage

S. Brochu reported the project was moving along; that they did a site visit and saw no problems. He noted that Tanguay hopes to start the building in March.

R. Cartee asked Ms. Rubino to mention to Mr. Hankinson that they would like a copy of this year's budget with what has been expended to date.

School Committee Report

R. Geisel moved the board accept the minutes of the November 16th meeting as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Geisel/P. Moskovites).

K. Canning moved the board approve the 2nd reading and adoption of the revised common board policy: J.3: AIDS or HIV. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/S. Brochu).

K. Canning reported the committee discussed policy G.1: Curriculum Development; noting the board was currently in the budget process and as teachers retire and the board

thinks about program and any changes to be made that they must be approved by the board before being implemented. Mr. Rivard stated he would bring this to the attention of Jennifer Kennison.

K. Canning reported they would discuss in detail at their next meeting the proposed student hearing procedure, which they gave a trial run at their last meeting.

Any Other Business

Old Business

Methadone Clinic

A. Amalixsen noted they had a member of the community attend a board meeting several weeks ago to talk about the clinic; adding he also received an email from a board member about it. J. Privee noted the Newport Zoning Committee met on November 29th and heard a conditional use permit request for a clinic across the street from the ball field; that that client does intake, record keeping and stores the mobile van; and methadone materials in the vault. He reported they heard their application; that there was no input from the community and that the zoning board granted the permit; that the clinic had been a good neighbor, and no citizen complaints had been received. He noted that dispensing was done at the mobile clinic.

Superintendent Search Update

A. Amalixsen reported the NCS/OENSU board interviewed 2 candidates. R. Geisel reported they did interview 2 candidates; and when they came out of executive session the board offered the position to candidate X and then candidate Y. He reported there was a lot of discussion and comfortability of having 2 strong candidates; adding the group did reach a decision by vote of who the priority candidate was. He reported the board met until about 10:30 p.m. before reaching a decision; adding all questions were well measured and well answered by the candidates. R. Geisel stated that both candidates noted that Dr. Weston had been doing this for 9 years; and that each candidate asked how he had managed that many schools for so many years and what a fantastic job he had done under the circumstances.

At 7:25 p.m. A. Amalixsen stated the board would take a 15 minute recess.

At 7:50 p.m. K. Canning moved the board enter executive session for a negotiation's issue. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/S. Brochu).

At 7:55 p.m. S. Brochu moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/K. Canning). No action was taken.

At 7:56 p.m. R. Cartee moved the board enter executive session for a student hearing. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/H. Morse).

At 8:40 p.m. K. Canning moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/R.M. Mayhew).

R. Cartee moved the board concurred that Student A did commit a violation of policy. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/H. Morse).

R. Cartee moved the board accept the administration's recommendation for Student A be a 10 school-day suspension retroactive to November 30th. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/H. Morse).

R.M. Mayhew moved the board let the administration assign Student A to an appropriate program. The motion was unanimously approved (R.M. Mayhew/K. Canning).

K. Canning reported the school committee would meet on Monday, December 11th at 6:00 p.m. A. Amalixsen noted the finance/operation's committee would need to hold extra meetings to get the budget ready for the first meeting in January; and asked if the board felt they needed to hold their regularly scheduled meeting on December 19th. **S. Brochu moved they suspend the December 19th full board meeting. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

R. Cartee stated the budget would be ready for their first meeting in January.

There being no further business to discuss the board unanimously agreed to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. (H. Morse/K. Canning).

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Rubino
Recording Secretary