Rivendell Interstate School District – Board Meeting Minutes
Rivendell Academy – Orford, NH
January 8, 2008

Members Present: Sandra Smith-Ordway, Margaret Gladstone, Allen Avery (Fairlee); Doug Tifft (at-large); Carol Sobetzer, Mel Emerson, Juliette Bianco (Orford); Harry Black, Trevor Law (Vershire)

Administrators and Staff Present: Noelle Vitt (Head of Schools), Bob Sampson (Head of High School), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools), Bridget Fariel (RA teacher), Peter Herman (VSBA Representative), Joy Michelson (RA teacher)

Others Present: Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion), Sam Wolf (Student Government Representative)

I. Call Meeting: Carol Sobetzer called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

II. Approve Board Minutes of December 4, 2007: Action: Motion was made to approve the minutes of December 4, 2007. Approved.

III. Public Input: None

IV. Communications and Reports:
A. Report of the Chair: Noelle acknowledged Gary Collins and his efforts to get the furnace going at the Westshire Elementary School on New Year’s Day.
   1) VSBA Representative, Peter Herman
   Peter Herman provided the Board with an overview of what the VSBA offers, including primary services, membership and a resolution committee. There was discussion about issues currently faced by schools universally, VSBA as an option for strategic planning, the State School Board and opportunities with other local high schools.

B. Report of Head of Schools:
   1) Flow of History (B. Fariel)
   Bridget presented a PowerPoint presentation and spoke about the History Harvest grant - what makes it work, what it is, grade specific curriculum and what happens next. Bridget then answered questions from the Board.
   2) Social Studies and Music Curriculum Updates
   Noelle spoke about PIC’s (Planning Implementation Committee) approval for a new required Global Studies class for all sophomores. She also spoke about World Music and how it is represented through the grades, excepting band.

C. Reports of the Committee Chairs:
   1) Long Range Planning (D. Tifft)
   Next LRP committee meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.
   2) Negotiations (M. Emerson)
   Mel reported that the committee is currently waiting for salary schedules regarding teacher’s contracts in order to ratify. Tentative agreements have been met with support staff. The next meeting is scheduled for January 16.
   3) Finance (A. Avery)
   The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for January 28. The Finance Committee will present to the full Board a draft budget at the January 29 School Board meeting. Public hearings are scheduled for February 5 & 6. The Board will vote on the budget February 12. Allen noted the following areas of concern: enrollments, CLA’s, food service deficit, possible third grade FTE reduction, administrative level at Westshire Elementary and fuel oil surcharges. Action: Motion was made to change the meeting on January 29 to begin at 6:00 p.m. Approved.

V. Business Requiring Discussion & Action:
A. Strategic Planning Focus Areas:
   Doug distributed a draft of the strategic planning focus areas and explained that they were derived from feedback from the forums. Action: Motion was made to adopt the three focus groups with the following change to focus point number one to read as: Develop and sustain the intellectual
growth of Rivendell students through a rigorous curriculum and research based teaching strategies. Approved.

Action: Motion was made to take agenda out of order and go to Section E number 1) Sabbatical Request. Approved.

B. Second/Final Reading of Policies

1) Life Threatening Allergies & Chronic Illnesses in School
2) Prevention of Harassment of Students, Code F23 (Revision)
3) Admission of Homeless Students, Code F19
4) Budgeting, Code E2
5) Fiscal Management & General Financial Accountability, Code F19

Action: Motion was made to approve all policies. Approved.

C. Possible Ratification of Teachers Master Agreement – No Action

D. Approval of SIT (School Improvement Team) Members

The following names were recommended to the Board as members of the SIT Committee: Sam Fulford (Orford), Jack Kruse (Vershire), Juliette Bianco (Board representative), Kathy Young (Westshire), Deb O’Brien and Barb Griffin (Teacher representatives), Laurie Gould, Heather Rand and Tammy MacQueen (VISION Representatives). Action: Motion was made to approve members as stated above. Approved.

E. Personnel

Noelle brought forward the following names to approve as Odyssey of the Mind volunteer coaches: Kelley Williams, Georgette Ludwig, Betsy Piburn, Jeannette Regis. Action: Motion was made to approve the OM volunteers as stated above. Approved.

1) Sabbatical Request

Item taken out of order as noted above. Noelle reported to the Board her conversation with Joy Michelson. There was some discussion about what Joy would bring back to RA when she returns following the sabbatical. Joy provided input. Discussion will continue in Executive Session.

2) SME Principal Job Advertisement

Position has been posted. Action: Motion was made to approve advertisement as written, removing the words “anticipated opening.” Approved.

F. Executive Session, as needed

Action: Motion was made to move to Executive Session at 8:53 p.m. Approved. Allen noted that the meeting on the January 29 will be mostly in executive session to discuss issues concerning the budget.

VI. Business Requiring Discussion Only:

A. Future Agenda Items:

1) Topics:
   a) Policy: Vehicular Idling
   b) Allowable Tuition 2008
   c) Full Budget Review – January 29th Meeting
   d) Rural Partnership Grant

Board came out of Executive Session at 9:22 p.m.

Action: Motion made to approve sabbatical request of Joy Michelson. Motion failed.

VII. Adjourn: Action: Motion was made to adjourn. Approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Gray
District Clerk/Treasurer