RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
District Office – Orford, NH
January 8, 2013 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Cicely Richardson, David Ricker, Marc DeBois (Orford); Sandra Smith-Ordway (Chair), Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Dawn Stever (W. Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker, Jean MacDonald (Vershire), Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: None

Administration and Staff Present: Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME & WES Principal), Tammy MacQueen (WES Asst. Principal), Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students)

Others Present: Christina Moreland (Student Rep), Alex Nuti-de Biasi (Journal Opinion)

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:42 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: Needham asked to delay the calendar discussion until next month. Added letter from Mark & Kathy Blanchard.

III. General Public Comments (Listen & Defer Action to Future Mtg.): None.

IV. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Minutes (December 4 & 11, 2012)
   B. Negotiations Report

   Action: Motion made to approve the consent agenda. Approved.

V. Informational Reports (written):
   A. Principal Reports (written): Keiling spoke briefly about the team building between the fourth and fifth grades at the Hulbert Center. She said there was some parental concern around changes for these students, but other parents had positive things to say of past experience of their older children.
   B. Superintendent Report (written): Needham spoke briefly about School Choice and mentioned that funds do not follow students to other schools.
   C. Head of Schools Report (written): Gelenian discussed the charts regarding failures (sent to Board as part of Board packet previously and copies on hand). He and the RA teachers are looking at the students who are failing and focusing on why they are failing classes. He said Title I (VT) money is being used to obtain extra help to work with these students and feels they are making some headway.

   1) Student Representative (written): Moreland discussed the assembly prior to Winter break and the gifts that were handed out. The next event will be Winter Carnival. She reported that students would like to have more 7-12 dances, but there was some concern from teachers and parents around the choice of music at the last 7-12 dance. Student Government will work to create stronger guidelines around the play lists and possibly creating a Dance Policy. She mentioned that she spoke with the Thetford Dean of Students and how they operate their dances. They have teachers as chaperones, with parents also involved.

VI. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)
   A. Preparation for Special District Meeting: Board reminded of meeting and to attend on January 24, 2013, 6:30 p.m., Rivendell Academy Gym.
   B. Policy Reading/Adoption/Revision:
      1) Possible Adoption
         a. Policy Adoption, Code A2
         b. Education Records, Code F6
         c. Limited English Proficiency Students, Code F31
         d. Parental Involvement, Code H2

   Action: Motion made to adopt policies with noted changes. Approved.
C. **Academic Performance:** This was discussed during Gelenian’s report above.

D. **Budget:** Discussed the work that needs to be done to the gym space in RA West Wing due to asbestos (which has been contained). Needham reported that the asbestos in this area has been known and proper monitoring and regular inspections occur. After the last inspection, the inspector put together a list of necessary repairs in the gym. Also, the weight room and kitchen need work done. Once an estimate is received, the Board will need to consider a possible warrant article for the Annual District Meeting and will need to look into financing for the work to be completed. Gelenian wondered about hiring an architect and really looking over how the space could be redone and better utilized. Board raised questions such as whether there is an air quality and/or mold issues in the area; and is the space used enough to warrant spending funds to repair it. Needham will check if funds are available from either of the two states to help with the cost of repairs.

**VII. New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action)**

A. **Tuition Rate for 2013-2014:** **Action** - Motion made to set the tuition rate for 2013-2014 to $11,700 for grades K-6 and $14,500 for grades 7-12. **Approved.**

**Action:** Motion made to allow administrators to negotiate a more favorable tuition rate with schools wanting to send five or more students to Rivendell. **Approved.**

B. **Letter from Mark & Kathy Blanchard:** K. Blanchard presented a document about the Orford Trust funds and how they’d like to create a committee (including one Orford representative of the RISD Board) to run the scholarship that would benefit students who are Orford residents only. She questioned if the Board would be like to be involved with. Question/concern was raised regarding the “Town of Orford” scholarship that was created using these same funds. K. Blanchard believed the original scholarship funds were still in place.

C. **Safety/Security Follow Up:** Needham discussed the safety of our schools and stated that we have a good working relationship with the Orford Police Department. That said, she feels that there are some areas of concern around entry into the buildings. J. Ricker stated that at Blue Mountain staff wear ID badges. Board was in agreement that the schools should continue to be diligent that all visitors check in at the main office of each school, sign in and get a visitor’s badge.

D. **Correspondence:** Needham read a letter received from a parent of a Westshire student who is extremely happy with their child’s teacher and education and felt the school offers a wonderful learning environment and has great communication.

**VIII. Future Agenda Items:**

- Strategic Plan (Next Steps), Community Outreach, Grants, Global Language for 6th grade, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department Reports, Individualized Student Needs, Recruiting Process, Budget Overview, Gym Issue, Calendar

**IX. Anticipated Executive Session:**

A. **Negotiations – Action:** Motion made to enter Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. **Approved.**

**Board came out of Executive Session at 8:50 p.m.**

**Action:** Motion made to approve negotiated two-year agreement as proposed with REA (Teacher Unit) for 2013-2015. **Approved.**

**X. Adjournment:** **Action** – Motion made to adjourn meeting. **Approved.** Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Recorded by:

Esther Dobbins-Marsh