RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Westshire Elementary School, West Fairlee, VT
June 2, 2009

Members Present: Carol Sobetzer (at large), Marc DeBois, Cicely Richardson (Orford); Mark Avery, Sandra Smith-Ordway, Bruce Lyndes (Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker (Vershire); Beverly Ash (West Fairlee)

Administrators and Staff Present: Gail Keiling (Head of Schools/Superintendent), Donna Valentine, Ed.D. (Head of HS), Bridget Fariel (Head of MS), Shawn Gonyaw (WSE Principal), Eloise Ginty (SME Principal), Hank Plaisted (Director of IT), RA Teachers - Gail Keefe, Joe Beasley, Chris Schmidt

Others Present: Laura Bradley (Vershire). Haley Mace and Sophia Peyton (RA Students)

I. Call Meeting: Sobetzer called meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None.

III. General Public Comments: Laura Bradley asked the Board to reconsider its decision regarding children of RISD non-resident administrator attending school in RISD with waived tuition.

IV. Student/Teacher Presentation & Recognition: (taken out of order to accommodate student presenters)

A. District Technology Plan Questions/Answers (H. Plaisted/G. Martino-not present):
   Plaisted presented the Technology Plan and revised Glossary of definitions section of the District Technology Plan (the “Plan”). Smith-Ordway commented that some of the listed glossary definitions are not used in the body of the District Technology Plan. Plaisted responded that the terms were pulled from a prior plan. Smith-Ordway asked that acronyms also be defined in the Glossary. Smith-Ordway commented that “21st Century Skills” needed to be bolded. Plaisted discussed Goal 1-Infrastructure Email (Plan page 2, #6) and stated that all RISD students would have email accounts that would be monitored and managed. Richardson asked if students would receive training regarding email accounts; Plaisted said students would receive training on internet safety and appropriate use. Smith-Ordway commented that the new plan was a much better product than the previous plan; Plaisted said that the revised plan is the product of a group effort and that it was the group’s work that made the product so much better. Plaisted asked if the Board could now vote to approve the Plan. Action: Motion made to approve the Technology Plan with corrections. Approved.

B. French Trip (G. Keefer, Haley Mace and Sophia Peyton): Keefer, Mace and Peyton presented a narrated PowerPoint slide show of the French students’ 16 day French trip to France. Thirteen RISD students participated in this year’s trip (the 4th exchange program with a French High School). The first week, RISD students were hosted by French sponsor families—RISD students attended high school with their host student and visited local markets and sites. The final days were spent in Paris. The students were able to use their French to communicate with their host families. In Paris they visited museums and sites. Sobetzer thanked Keefer for making all the arrangements for this trip.

C. 10th Grade Math Books: Beasley and Schmidt discussed that the 10th grade math books are nine years old and that the new books provided better ‘hands on discovery approach’ to geometry and included lots of inductive thinking exercises with hands on construction tools (compass, straight edge, protractor) and has much more geometry, with a review of algebra.
The Teacher Resources are on CD and the web and the entire textbook is on-line with a Parent Help Page on-line. Beasley said that the text taught necessary concepts that are on the SAT. Sobetzer asked if the names of the high school math courses could be changed to reflect what the kids are actually learning. Valentine stated that the course descriptions are being updated.

D. Principals’ Reports:

1. **Elementary (S. Gonyaw & E. Ginty):** Gonyaw and Ginty discussed joint successes of the two elementary schools, specifically teacher in-service and building community between the two schools. They continue to interpret assessment data to drive instruction and increase student learning, integrate 21st Century Skills into current curriculum. At Westshire, Gonyaw noted significant improved student behavior, community building with parents and community members, the utilization of enrichment for science inquiry, use of faculty meetings to further professional learning, and an increased level of teacher peer observation. Westshire goals for next year include increasing attendance at Curriculum Night and drawing parents in, and development of Standards of Practice. Ginty discussed earning trust and building a collaborative environment with staff at Samuel Morey during her first year. Ginty had good parent participation in SM’s Parent Engagement Nights (Bully Free Night, Healthy Eating, and Technology and the Curriculum). Ginty increased community awareness of SM learning through positive news media coverage. Goals for next year include focus faculty and team meetings on teacher and student learning, more parent nights, team teaching, opportunity for teachers to visit other classrooms (in District and out), begin to develop Standards of Practice.

2. **Academy (B. Fariel and D. Valentine):** Fariel discussed the shared aspects of the Academy (both middle and high) and that there is a lot of 6-12 curriculum work being done. RA had very low science scores on the NECAP and the students need more opportunity for inquiry and working with data (lots of math, graphing, manipulating data), along with more lab work. This will be a collaborative project and they need a local assessment plan. Valentine stated that there are 8-9 middle school/high school shared staff; along with Nancy Hall, working on scheduling and the new schedule structure and credit system. The high school Mentor Program has been successful with middle school students. Fariel and Valentine work together on discipline administration which builds consistency for the students transitioning from middle to high school. The Advisory Program is changing and there is a book with ½ hour activities for teachers to use. Valentine stated that student testing data must be used to drive education. A new mentor plan will be used to pair incoming 9th graders with an 11th grade student to help with the transition. Valentine wants more student participation on committees. Valentine informed the Board that we are waiting for NEASC report. August focus will be on professional development and goals to support District initiative and Student Profile. Smith-Ordway commented that the RISD Board would welcome a student member, Sobetzer asked about class sign up, Honors Challenge. Regarding goals, Fariel discussed Community Service and service learning and the middle school students doing community service way beyond the local area, continuing traditions like the Cross Rivendell hike, building student leadership/engagement, enrichment courses, expanded electives, and increased integration of social studies and literature and more current events. The middle school won significant recognition in environmentalism during Green Week.

V. Consent Agenda:

A. **Minutes (May 5 and May 12):** Action: Motion made to approve May 5 and May 12 agendas with changes to May 5th minutes. **Approved.**

B. **Head of Schools (Superintendent’s Report (written)):** Report was reviewed. Action: Motion made to approve report. **Approved.**
VI. Ongoing Business  
A. District Technology Plan: See above.  
B. Summer Board Retreat: Time changed to 5:30 p.m. on July 14, at Lake Morey Inn.  
C. Open Board Seat—West Fairlee: Not filled yet. In addition to the open West Fairlee Board seat, Sobetzer announced that Trevor Law has resigned from the Board due to job opportunity and the Board now also needs to fill a Vershire Board seat. Question raised regarding changing the structure of the Board, as filling open seats has been a problem in the past as it is now. Ash reminded the Board that she is leaving Board in March 2010. Sobetzer commented that if the Board wants to change the Articles of Agreement, it has to be warned by September to be on-track with timeline.

VII. New Business  
A. Correspondence: None

VIII. Strategic Action Plan Update (G. Keiling): Keiling reported that the 05/12/09 Student Profile Night was well attended and received excellent feedback, and provides a groundwork for where RISD is going with an updated Student Profile and will be part of the 07/14/09 Board Retreat Agenda.

IX. Executive Session: Board entered Executive session regarding Personnel Issue (Evaluation) at 9:10 p.m. Board came out of Executive session at 9:50 p.m.

X. Adjournment: Action: Motion made to adjourn. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

 Respectfully submitted:

Mary Levin Sarazin  
Board Recording Secretary