RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Samuel Morey Elementary School, Fairlee, Vermont
December 7, 2010

Members Present: Carol Sobetzer (at-large); Marc DeBois, Cicely Richardson, Vanessa DeSimone, (Orford); Sandra Smith-Ordway, Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Dawn Stever, Jennifer Shatney (W. Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker, Kathy Hooke (Vershire)

Administrators and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Michael Galli (Dean of Students), Richard Paulson (CFO), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME Principal), and Dana Jacobson-Goodhue (RA Social Studies Teacher).

Others Present: Tori Hebb and John Milnes, Board Student Representatives; Haley Mace, Sherri Austen and Robert Montgomery, RA students.

I. Call Meeting: Meeting was opened at 6:05 p.m.; Dawn Stever welcomed as new Board member.

II. Samuel Morey Elementary Walk-Through was led by Principal, Gail Keiling; meeting resumed at 6:24 p.m.

III. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: RA students were present regarding the Raptor sculpture, but not on agenda. Action: Motion to hear from RA students first. Approved.

IV. General Public Comments: None at this time.

V. Presentation/Guests: Students reported on Raptor survey and plan to move the Raptor to the Cross Rivendell Trail Head on Academy grounds and build an area of repose with bench and plaque honoring the spirit of the Raptor sculpture as representative of union of four towns comprising RISD. Jacobson-Goodhue circulated fund raising calendar for Pakistan made by her 8th grade students.

VI. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Minutes (November 2 and 18, 2010)
   C. Head of Schools Report (written): Gelenian requested approval of annual French trip in spring of 2011 to France. Sobetzer recognized Keefler for her hard work with this program annually. Gelenian and student representative John Milnes reported on student success at Dartmouth College French and Spanish competition - RA students placed well. Discussion regarding honor roll numbers. Discussion regarding contact with families of students with failing grades and student excuses deflecting responsibility for their grades and teaching students to advocate for themselves with teachers regarding grades; Galli counsels and works with students regarding this. Report card grading system/standards based grades discussion.
   D. Principals Report (written): Keeling reported Dartmouth College students will be conducting Science Camps for grades 3-6 for 6 weeks. Needham and Keiling reported on recent power and communication outage at Westshire due to bad weather and plans to work on safety and security process at all schools. Discussed communication plan being reviewed regarding Westshire’s lack of cell service.

Action: Motion made to approve consent agenda with corrections to November 2 minutes. Approved.
VII. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)

A. **Budget 2011-2012:** Needham reported on and reviewed draft budget. Stated need for Board resolution on Challenges for Change response to state of Vermont before 12/15/10 deadline. Anticipate less state funds for next budget year. Smith-Ordway (Finance Committee) reported the current draft budget reflects no change in Educational Programs, but the Committee needs the Academy’s input regarding proposed additional classes; Gelenian reported he’s working on RA’s budget needs. Smith-Ordway reported even a flat budget will result in increase due to less money coming from the states. Paulson addressed line-item questions from Board including portion of some salaries funded by grant funds, only one additional teacher (6th grade) in budget and 3% increase in health benefits; Needham reported G. Collins has provided utility use/costs per building, which give a more accurate picture of supporting each facility. Budget reviewed tonight will be presented at upcoming Public Forums. Vermont Challenges for Change: The $189,000 cut the State wants would mean dismantling programs to get to that level and the reduction is not, at this time, a mandate from the state of Vermont and would have significant negative impact on programs. **Action:** Motion made to send a letter to the state of Vermont conveying RISD’s message and “explaining RISD cannot meet the Challenges for Change cut in budget because RISD has been running a budget that is lean and tight for years.” **Approved.** Discussion regarding Board preparation for Public Forums on draft budget.

B. **Raptor Move:** See above: **Action:** Motion made to accept students’ proposal to move Raptor as presented. **Approved.**

C. **Policies First Reading**
   1) **Class Size**
   2) **Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention**

Needham reported these are model policies and should be read by Board members with comments emailed to her. Stated policies should be kept as close as possible to model language as already vetted.

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

A. **Correspondence:** None at this time.

B. **School Choice Collaborative:** Will be second reading in future meeting.

IX. **Future Agenda Items (Discussion)**

A. **Sixth Grade at Samuel Morey Elementary**

B. **Elementary Principals**

C. **TIPS Program**

D. **SummerScapes**

E. **Voc Tech Student Numbers**

Additional future agenda items: Orford Academy Task Force presentation for January meeting; Dean Stearns, River Bend also January meeting; Bridget Fariel regarding curriculum.

X. **Anticipated Executive Session (Discussion & Possible Action), 1 VSA § 313**

A. **Contract Negotiations**

**Action:** Motion made at 8:37 p.m. to enter into executive session. **Approved.** Executive session ended at 9:38 p.m.

XI. **Adjournment (Action):** **Action:** Motion made to adjourn at 9:39 p.m. **Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sarazin, Board Recording Clerk