

**Sheldon Elementary School
Board of Directors Meeting
April 13, 2011**

The Sheldon School Board of Directors met on Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. at Sheldon School.

Those in attendance were Board members Celeste Kane-Stebbins, Jacob Bourdeau, and Laurie Oliver, administrators Jack McCarthy and Becky Hart, principal Lenny Rosenberg, and board secretary Susan Brouillette. Guests included Staff Rusty Gregory, Sheldon Technology Integrationist, George Raynak, FNWSU Technology Coordinator, and Sheldon parents Tatum Kane, Beth Hemingway, Joanne and Dan MacDonald, Jenna Clark, Jackie Domingue, Pam Callan, Heidi Starr and Angela Lussier. A Channel 15 rep. attended the meeting taping it for public access.

Mr. Bourdeau called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Discussion with Parents: Mr. MacDonald initially addressed the Board regarding information he heard about the choral program being canceled at Sheldon after this current school year. Mr. Bourdeau confirmed that the Board did spend a lot of time in discussion and deliberation regarding budgeting for a full-time Kindergarten program starting in the 2011-2012 school year and this decision to end (hopefully on a temporary basis) the choral program was decided. He stated that Mr. Rosenberg and the School Board have received a tremendous amount of feedback and support from the community to support a full-time Kindergarten program. Mr. Bourdeau also confirmed Mr. MacDonald's statement regarding the retention of the vocal teacher on staff as a permanent substitute teacher at the current pay and schedule of two days per week. Mr. Bourdeau indicated that this change was expected to provide a cost savings to the budget that may not all be realized in the next school year. There was additional discussion regarding this. Dr. McCarthy stated that the protocol for discussion at School Board meetings was for individuals to come to the meeting and state their issue/concern, but that specific names and confidential information could not be discussed in open session. The Board will then take what was shared into their consult for further discussion as a Board. Parents also shared that there have been studies supporting the importance of exposure to music supporting the educational and vocational learning for individuals and it would be very sad to not have exposure to any music to Sheldon students until they can join the instrumental program in the 4th grade. It was asked if choral instruction could be included into the current instrumental program so that all students would be exposed to music as part of the standard curriculum. Mr. Rosenberg said that different options were previously considered but it may not be contractually an option for the 2011-2012 school year. He also stated that Sheldon was going to start offering the instrumental program to third graders next school year. The Board shared that they appreciated the comments and feedback and would take all information and suggestions under consideration. They also expressed that ideally they would like to include everything, but it is difficult to meet all the needs and the decisions are not taken lightly and are done only after much deliberation and discussion. Another question was asked about information heard about a cut in two para-educator positions. The Board stated that two para-educational positions, not actual individuals, were cut. Mr. Rosenberg stated that when classrooms and programs are reviewed at the start of each new school year, para-educators are placed where needed. He also stated that after a meeting this summer to plan the full-time Kindergarten program for the 2011-2012 school year, a letter will be going out to all parents regarding how the program will run. Another question was asked about communicating to parents about ending programs to allow them to be a part of the conversation. The School Board noted that all School Board meetings are open to the public and minutes are available after the meetings at the school and at the Town Clerk's office. Final

approved minutes are posted on the Sheldon School website as well. The Board thanked the parents again for their comments, feedback and support to Sheldon School.

Joanne and Dan MacDonald, Jackie Domingue, Pam Callan, and Heidi Starr left the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

IPAD Presentation with Mr. Gregory and Mr. Raynak – Mr. Gregory and Mr. Raynak provided a presentation on how IpadS can support the Sheldon learners and how they can be used in Sheldon in the transformation of education in the 21st Century. Connecting to the FNWSU technology plan, they supported that IpadS would assist in these three current goal areas 1) student center learning, 2) school leadership in 21st century learning, and 3) teachers and students will learn anywhere and anytime. There are currently 53 netbooks in Sheldon School and Mr. Gregory and Mr. Raynak shared a comparison of ipads vs. netbooks including cost, interface and technology maintenance, software purchase/implementation vs. application access and distribution. IpadS have more flexibility at a fraction of the cost for apps and programs compared to netbooks. They supported that the Ipad is effective technology for the classrooms and that they are becoming incorporated in many other schools and programs, specifically in Berkshire and Bakersfield They shared their goal of bringing more IpadS to Sheldon School, which included introducing them in school and expanding the number of them. Sheldon currently has 1 Ipad. Mrs. Oliver asked about the level of interest from the teachers to date and Mr. Gregory responded that quite a few are showing an interest in this and some have already bought into the idea of IpadS in the classrooms as a positive learning tool. Mr. Raynak shared that FNWSU purchased a number of IpadS through a special education grant of which 4-6 are allocated for use in Sheldon. Mr. Gregory shared that fundraising efforts and/or raffles could be used to purchase more of them for the school in the future. They would then collect feedback from users (students, teachers and parents).

Mr. Gregory and Mr. Raynak left the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Kane-Stebbins made a motion to approve the March 7, 2011 minutes as printed, which was seconded by Mrs. Oliver. Motion passed 3-0.

Correspondence: Mr. Rosenberg received a parent request for bus transportation for a pre-K student.

Old Business:

Mr. Bourdeau asked about a fire alarm update and Mr. Rosenberg stated that Hazen has tested all the lights and they all work. However, some (maybe 4) are pretty old, but they do work. Mrs. Kane-Stebbins stated that the length of time between the initial identification of the defective lights and resolution of the issue was too long.

Contracts: to be discussed in Executive Session.

Business Manager's Report

Financial Report - Ms. Hart presented the March 2011 financial report, which covers expenses for the first quarter of the calendar year. She stated many budget lines are under budget at this time due to tuition costs that were less than projected. There was Board discussion. Ms. Kane-Stebbins moved to accept the March 2011 financial report as presented; Mrs. Oliver seconded the motion.

Motion passed 3 to 0.

Other – none

Principal's Report

Calendar Update – Dr. McCarthy shared that the current school calendar has the April 2012 vacation for FC and FNW Supervisory Unions scheduled for the 3rd week of April and everyone else in Franklin and Chittenden County has it scheduled for the 4th week. After much discussion, Dr. McCarthy stated it will be changed to the 4th week of April 2012.

Parent Conferences feedback – Mr. Rosenberg shared a handout with Board members and guests of the recent parent conference schedule, which he stated went much better with scheduled times for grades 6, 7 and 8. He also expressed that there was also high attendance rates.

Summer Program – Mr. Rosenberg shared that they hope to offer a learning session in August 2011 in math and literacy to those students in grades 3 through 8 that did not score well on the NECAPS, particularly those that scored below a “3”. A letter, as well as a reminder in the Bear News, went out to parents regarding this opportunity and currently Mr. Rosenberg stated that 15 students to date have registered. He stated money to support this session is planned to come from Medicaid monies and the cost is expected to be \$3,000. This does not include transportation, which may deter some students from being able to attend. Mr. Rosenberg said that the number of participants will determine the number of teachers needed. He anticipates the sessions will be held from 9am to noon for 3 or 4 days per week. Mrs. Oliver inquired if the intent was to open this beyond the NECAP identified individuals and Mr. Rosenberg said it was not open at this time, but could be considered as participation and funds availability are determined.

Personnel – to be discussed in Executive Session.

Eighth Grade Graduation – Mr. Rosenberg stated that the 8th grade graduation ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Friday, June 10, 2011. After discussion, it was determined that this was the same date of MVU's graduation. Mr. Rosenberg will review the calendar and other possible dates.

Ordering Textbooks – Mr. Rosenberg would like to table this discussion for these 2011-2012 textbooks for the May School Board meeting.

Building and Grounds – Mr. Rosenberg and Mr. Bourdeau shared that while inspecting some school grounds in the back of the school by the pre-K outside doors, they found a hole in the sheetrock behind the heater that needs to get fixed. It was also noted that the outside doors are also loose. Mr. Rosenberg will request estimates for repairs that he will bring back to Board. This work would be targeted for completion during summer recess. Mr. Rosenberg also noted that adding several loads of stone to the lower parking lot of faculty and staff parking has greatly improved the muddy condition. Future improvements to this area should be considered now that this has become one of the designated staff parking areas. The Board noted that the playground surface material will be reviewed when school is out in response to a question from a parent in attendance.

Spending Approval – Mr. Bourdeau asked the Board if they wished to keep their current spending approval process in place or if they felt a need to discuss and change it. There was Board discussion and Dr. McCarthy shared that Policy E3 supports a spending approval policy as well. The Board agreed to keep the current policy and methods they use in place at this time.

Interview Process – to be discussed in Executive Session.

Parent Pre-K Request – to be discussed in Executive Session.

Other - None

Superintendent's Report

Legislative Report – Dr. McCarthy shared this report in the packets regarding educational issues that are being discussed and proposed in Legislation.

Negotiations – to be discussed in Executive Session.

Personnel – to be discussed in Executive Session.

Other - none.

New Business - None.

Meeting Dates - The next regular Sheldon School Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. The agenda meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2011 at 7:00 a.m. The FNWSU Board meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at Swanton School.

At 7:35 p.m. Mrs. Kane-Stebbins moved to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel, contracts, a parent transportation request, and negotiations. Mrs. Oliver seconded the motion.

Executive Session – The Board discussed personnel, contracts, a parent request for bus transportation, and negotiations. Mrs. Kane-Stebbins moved to exit Executive Session; motion seconded by Mr. Boudreau. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Kane-Stebbins to accept the parent request for a Pre-K student to take the bus home provided that there is sufficient space on the bus. Mr. Boudreau seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

The Board reviewed and signed orders.

Mrs. Kane-Stebbins moved to adjourn; Mrs. Oliver seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Laurie Oliver, Board Clerk