

**DORSET BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 15, 2009 – 6:00 P.M.
THE DORSET SCHOOL LIBRARY**

DORSET BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

Robert Allen: 768-8065; Liz Berard: 362-2949; Stephanie Breed, Clerk: 867-2531; David Chandler, Chairperson: 867-5533; James Salsgiver: 867-4115; James Merryman, Principal: 362-2602; BRSU Superintendent Daniel French: 362-2452

Regular scheduled meetings held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise noticed.

PRESENT: Board Members: Robert Allen, Liz Berard, Stephanie Breed, David Chandler, and James Salsgiver; Principal Jim Merryman, BRSU Supt. Dan French and BRSU Assistant Supt. Judith Adams

ABSENT: None

AUDIENCE: Jennifer Allen Andres, Christine Ferris-Hubbard, Phyllis Tate and Cindy Tosone

Chairperson David Chandler called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. in the library at The Dorset School.

AGENDA ITEMS:

• MEETING MINUTES:

Meeting Minutes of November 24, 2009 were approved as amended – Moved by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mrs. Breed, and so moved unanimously.

•REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS:

Mr. French reported on the following:

► SECONDARY TUITION REQUESTS:

Superintendent French informed the board members that he had received the following secondary tuition requests for Dorset students:

NAME OF STUDENT	GRADE	SCHOOL TO ATTEND	SCHOOL PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED
Buckley, H	9	BBA	DORSET SCHOOL
Chase, P.	9	BBA	SOUTHBANK (UK)
Harris, C.	9	LONG TRAIL	LONG TRAIL
Heaton, A.	9	FESSENDEN	MAPLE STREET
Heaton, J.	12	LOOMIS CHAFFEE	FESSENDEN
Iglinski, L.	9	BBA	DORSET SCHOOL
Irving, E.	12	NORTHFIELD/MT. HERMON	NORTHFIELD/MT. HERMON
Latour, C.	11	WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER
Latour, H.	12	BERKSHIRE	BERKSHIRE
Lewis, J.	10	BBA	ROCHESTER H.S.
Pitt, R. IV	9	BBA	MEMS
Salsgiver, K.	9	BBA	DORSET SCHOOL
Tucker, A.	10	BBA	BBA
Vaughan, C.	10	VT ACADEMY	BBA

A motion was made by Mrs. Berard, seconded by Mrs. Breed, to approve the tuition requests as printed, and so moved unanimously.

► **2010-2011 SCHOOL BUDGET:**

Superintendent French led the board in a detailed discussion of the proposed 2010-2011 Dorset School budget. He first informed board members that the BRSU proposed FY '11 budget had not been approved at the last BRSU Board meeting. Noted among the underlying reasons for this was the fact that the proposed BRSU realignment of special education services was not approved by the Manchester board representatives, who chose to have the Director of Special Education position remain within the province of the school and not transferred to the BRSU. Further developments will be forthcoming at the next joint BRSU board meeting.

The second part of the budget discussion centered upon the Proposed Draft #2 2010-2011 Dorset School Budget. Superintendent French provided board members with an updated copy of the proposed FY '11 budget. He also distributed a copy of his "Pros and Cons of Moving the Dorset Accounting Manager Position to the BRSU." An extended discussion ensued centered around what the superintendent stated was "redundancy of services between the BRSU and the school." Board members and the building principal expressed their opinions on retaining or changing the present Accounts Manager's position at The Dorset School. Mr. Chandler challenged Mr. Merryman to cut the current proposed school budget by \$25,000 in whatever areas he felt could be effectively lowered without a negative impact upon the educational excellence of the school prior to the next board meeting in January. Mr. Merryman stated he would begin the process the next day, working diligently with the entire school staff to find effective ways to accomplish this challenge. Mrs. Breed also suggested that the BRSU explore more ways to consolidate other areas of bulk buying for the BRSU schools, as was done with the fuel oil bids for this school year. Several areas she mentioned were paper, supplies, food, furniture, etc. The superintendent then discussed the areas of increased spending contained within the proposed budget, including an increased BRSU Early Education budget line, vehicle operations, secondary special education costs, board legal services, as well as areas where there was a decrease in the proposed budget lines. These included, but were not limited to the building's cost of fuel oil, and electricity usage costs. Burr and Burton Academy has announced its secondary tuition costs for FY '11 was up by 5.6%. Many of the higher budget items are influenced by contracts and other non-negotiable areas not controlled by the board at this time.

At 8:12 p.m., a ten-minute break was taken and the board resumed the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Superintendent French resumed the budget discussion by stating he was looking to target each school board and principal to reduce the first draft of their proposed FY '11 budgets, as well as their current expenditures prior to the end of school. Mr. Allen reminded the board members that figures available to them at this time show a decreasing elementary enrollment with an increased secondary enrollment figure, and cautioned the board to keep this in mind while working on

the proposed budget figures. Mr. Salsgiver also cautioned the board members that perhaps they should not rely on increased or current level of tuition students in the near and upcoming future. He continued further by stating the board needed to look at the risk associated with accepting tuition students, and therefore should examine the pros and cons associated with this aspect of the upcoming budget. Superintendent French, in conclusion, informed the board that he would be making a formal recommendation at the January 2010 board meeting to eliminate the Account Manager position from the proposed FY '11 Dorset budget and transfer all financial services to the BRSU with a part-time position.

- **REPORT OF PRINCIPAL:**

Mr. Merryman was not feeling well, and at 8:12 the board agreed that he should be excused at this time to go home, with wishes for his speedy recovery. In his absence, Mr. Salsgiver explained several areas of the Principal's Report where he had some information to share with the board members.

- ▶ **FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:**

Mr. Salsgiver stated that the new reconfigured report more clearly showed what were the priorities for the next five years. He said that this was also as an aide to better budgeting for building maintenance and improvements.

- ▶ **UPDATE ON EECBG GRANTS:**

Mr. Salsgiver added that there was no news yet on the filed application for this grant. Superintendent French concurred and added that if this grant was awarded to Dorset, the BRSU Central Office would be involved in the additional work necessary for fulfilling and maintaining the grant requirements.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None at this time.

- **ACCOUNT MANAGERS REPORT:**

Mr. Cepela had prepared the Warrant for the board's approval and the following report for November 24 – December 15, 2009:

REVENUE RECEIVED:

HOT LUNCH REVENUE	4,832.00
BREAKFAST REVENUE	538.00
ARRA FUNDING	9,913.00
TUITION – RUPERT	2,451.00
SANDGATE	11,000.00
SUNDERLAND	3,667.00
8 TH GRADE FUNDRAISER	144.00
ADOPT-A-CLASS	2,150.00
IN-MEMORY DONATIONS	550.00
MILK	172.00
STUDENT COUNCIL - SKATE	359.00
LUNCH - FED REIMB	1,696.00
BREAKFAST – FED REIMB	142.00
TOTAL	37,614.00

WARRANT SUMMARY:

FUND ACCT #	100	100-200	106	108	115	116	
FUND NAME	GENERAL	HOT LUNCH	SUPP FUND	ADOPT A CLASS	TECH FUND	BLDGS. & GRNDS	TOTAL WARRANT
PAYROLL WARRANT: 12/11/09	48,315.10						43,120.38
PAYROLL AP WARRANT 11/02/09	15,902.65						15,902.65
AP WARRANT 12/16/09	42,199.63	1,616.43	1,016.24			15,780.00	60,612.30
TOTAL	106,417.38	1,616.43	1,016.24	0.00	0.00	15,780.00	124,830.05

The Warrant was approved and signed.

● **NEW BUSINESS:**

- ▶ Superintendent French brought a student tuition issue to the board for their action. He reported that he had received a secondary tuition request from the parents of a Dorset secondary student to attend the Portsmouth Abbey School of Portsmouth, Rhode Island. The superintendent distributed copies of the letter from the parents requesting approval of tuition, copies of the school's graduation requirements, as well the school's description and mission statement. The superintendent stated that this school is not on the BRSU's list of approved schools for tuition, and as stated in their mission statement and graduation requirements, it is seen as being "a pervasively sectarian school." He further stated that the school's secular and sectarian aspects are closely intertwined, and students are required to take courses in Christian Doctrine. After further board discussion, a Motion was made by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mr. Salsgiver, to support the recommendation of the superintendent and not to approve The Portsmouth Abbey School for tuition support since "it is a pervasively sectarian School," and the Motion was moved unanimously (4-0)

● **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- ▶ Mrs. Breed distributed a copy of her preliminary work on an "ENDS POLICY" for The Dorset School Board. She had encompassed the school district's original "Mission Statement" as a first step towards developing a true "ENDS POLICY" by the board members, community and staff.
- ▶ Superintendent French distributed copies of VT Senator Bob Hartwell's recent article published in the Manchester Journal, "A Gathering Storm." This article addressed the ongoing dilemma of school finance, declining student enrollment figures, large number of supervisory unions within the state, and the dire need for change.

There being no further business to come before the board, Chairperson David Chandler adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty Morsch".

Betty Morsch
12/22/09

NEXT DORSET BOARD MEETINGS:

JAN. 14, 2010 (Change in date)

FEB. 23, 2010

MAR. 1, 2010 (Town Meeting)

MAR. 23, 2010 (Board Reorganization)