

**Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)**  
**School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**(Approved Minutes)**  
**December 6, 2011**  
**Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH**

**Members Present:** Ed Jacod, Bruce Barlow, Pat Bauries, Richard Thackston, Jen Labadie, Winston Wright, Mike Morrison, Lisa Steadman, James Carnie, Mike Blair, Phyllis Peterson, Scott Ellsworth, Eric Stanley and William Felton. **Absent:** Unassigned seat from Roxbury.

**Administration present:** D. Hodgdon, Superintendent, K. Craig, Assistant Superintendent, T. Kennett, Director of Special Services and J. Fortson, Business Manager,

**Also present:** J. Butterfield, B. Tatro, D. Mousette, J. Smith, D. Dahl and M. Suarez.

“The goal of the Monadnock Regional Board is to be the Best School District in the State.”

**1. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** N. Moriarty informed the School Board the Budget Committee voted to recommend to the School Board to close the Sullivan School. He commented that the Sullivan Selectmen want to close it.

J. Labadie commented that she is a Sullivan committee member and that the Sullivan Selectmen have not voted on the closing of the Sullivan School. The town has to vote and there may be a warrant on the ballot.

M. Blair president of the NHDI appreciates the support from the Board and the District. He would invite everyone to the May performance.

**2. Consent Agenda: MOTION:** P. Peterson **MOVED** to accept the November 15, 2011 Public Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** B. Barlow. **VOTE:** 11.426/0/2.339/.235. **Motion passes.**

**3. Student Government Report:** Jen the Student Government president elect reported the committee met today. The committee discussed the new intervention program at lunch time. They are asking the administration that those students that are receiving good grades do not have to attend the study hall portion. The committee has talked to J. Butterfield and things are in progress. They are doing a can food drive with all the clubs pulling together. We will host a competition among the advisories. The Holiday baskets are being worked on. The committee is giving input on the new report card rubrics.

**MOTION:** J. Labadie **MOVED** to amend the agenda and hear the presentation for the Before and After school Program. **SECOND:** E. Jacod. **VOTE:** 14.765/0/0/.235. **Motion passes.**

**Before and After school Program:** Ralph and Jean of the Before and After School Program explained to the Board that this is the last year of the 5 year grant for the program. They would like to see what the Board would like to do in June. He explained he has presented to the Finance Committee and the Education Committee. They are proposing to present a warrant article if that is how the Board would like to go. The program would be offered to the entire District. Troy and Fitzwilliam would join together, the two Swanzey schools and Gilsum and Sullivan. They are looking for support and direction from the Board. He passed out budget information to the Board. He explained the warrant would be in the amount of \$412,119.87. This program would join the community, students and parents together. They are still waiting to hear from the grant but the federal government is cutting. There are a lot of people going for the grants. They would also ask the School District for help in writing the grant. The program includes a 6 week summer program at each of the sites. Ralph listed many of the partners to the program. P. Bauries asked the number of students attending and signed up to the program at each site. Ralph provided the numbers. The program is open at 6:30 AM until school starts and then from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM. The summer program runs from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Jean explained the number of children estimated is from a family and needs survey which is a requirement for the grant. Ralph explained there is no notification on the grant until May and that would be too late to do anything for the next school year. His hope is to receive the grant and give back to the towns. Parents of children in the program spoke in support of the program and its benefits. Ralph explained this is not a babysitting service. The staff meets with the teachers to see how they can help the children. J. Carnie commented the program was well received by the Finance Committee and the Education Committee. J. Carnie is concerned about the changes the since the presentation and the amount of the warrant. He commented on the amount of salary and benefits. Ralph commented if a warrant is voted down no means no. R. Thackston commented it is an absolutely wonderful program but to put in on a warrant you are putting it out there. He would like to look at alternatives other than a warrant. R. Thackston would like to send the issue back to the Education Committee. J. Carnie commented this issue has been before both committees and most of the Education Committee members are in favor. There is no opposition it belongs in front of the Finance Committee and whether a warrant or not there should be a recommendation to the full Board. R. Thackston would direct the Before and After School Program issue back to the Finance Committee.

**4. Business Manager's Report:** J. Fortson does not have a report tonight.

**5. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:**

**1. Correspondence and Announcements:** D. Hodgdon read a letter from the NH Fish and Game thanking the students and M. Morrison for their help in the pheasant hunting project.

J. Smith informed the Board he and other staff members attended a conference in Boston. The Swanzey Neighbors Store applied for an Exxon Mobil Grant for Cutler and the school will receive \$500.00. The students had a bullying assembly. On Early Release Day the staff worked on Keys to Literacy. The Holiday Show is on Dec. 19, 2011 at 7:00 PM.

M. Suarez reported Emerson staff members attended the conference in Boston. They found it very valuable. They as well will receive the Exxon Mobil grant in the amount of \$500.00. A 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Emerson is heading a food drive at the school. They are very proud of the student. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades will have a concert on Dec. 14, 2011 at 7:00 PM.

J. Butterfield reported the Student Government continues to step up and bring ideas and concerns to the administration. They do not always get what they want. The advisory program continues. The school is collecting food items, coats and making food baskets for those that may need them. The MS and HS continue with Keys to Literacy training for the staff. The school had a bullying program which was well received. Rob O'Connor is back. There will be a lock down drill on Thursday. The Holiday Music Program is from Dec. 15, 2011 through Dec. 17, 2011. Dessert with the principal in Sullivan is scheduled for Dec. 15, 2011. Winter athletics open tonight. The boys have their opening night on Friday.

B. Tatro informed the Board a group of students are in charge of the food drive. The incentive is to gather 400 items and B. Tatro will dress as Frosty the Snowman at the Holiday Program.

D. Mousette reported on the successful Community Dinner in Gilsum. It was well attended. There were between 175 and 200 people in attendance. The Gilsum Before and After school students hosted a Senior Supper. There were 42 seniors in attendance. Friday Night is Community Movie Night. On Tuesday are the Community Sing a long and Santa will arrive.

D. Dahl reported that everything was covered.

**2. Curriculum Report:** K. Craig reported on a lot of work being done in the District. She attended the Leading and Learning Conference in Boston and spent time with the new teachers they were very enthusiastic. The training continues for the Keys to Literacy. They have emphasized that all teachers are teachers of reading and writing.

**3. Other Issues of Importance:** D. Hodgdon would like to commend the Negotiating Team on the number of hours they have put in to help move the process. There is a need for several non-public sessions.

- 6. Board Chair Report:** R. Thackston welcomed J. Carnie back and thanked him for the correction to the minutes. We did not know the correct RSA. He commented the School District has no debt which is a unique thing. The Budget Committee has asked the Board to come up with 4 % in cuts to the proposed budget. It is not easy to cut out items. We have a recommendation from the Budget Committee to close the Sullivan School. Any change should be one that least effects the education of the students. He would not want to see the Board move until the issue is reviewed. He recognizes the need for the District to cut. The cuts will damage the District. He would like to send the request from the Budget Committee to the Education Committee. He can vision a single school. Kindergarten through grade 6 in Gilsum with one principal but we need the Education Committee to review. If possible he would like a recommendation from the Education Committee in two weeks.

He commented that grants are blessings and a curse. We have had a wonderful program for 5 years. We have a wonderful program we do not know if we can run. Closing the school is less than the program. The issue with the SRO which was debated started as a grant. Is the grant sustainable and can we follow through with it. He would like to consider a committee to address the technology in the District. Are we going to deep with the cuts to get to the 4%? He has concerns when staff publically resign and abandon their position on the front page of the paper and then coach one of our teams. Personally that is no way for a coach to act.

**7. School Committee Report:**

**1. Community Relations Committee:** B. Barlow informed the Board that Dessert with the Principal in Richmond was cancelled. The Commission of Education has passed the issue of the MPR to the Governor. On Dec. 14 W. Lechlinder will be discussing the work of the Budget Committee to the Town Crier. B. Barlow will be recruiting individuals for the Board of Community Advisors. The next meeting is on Dec. 20, 2011.

**2. Education Committee Report:** P. Bauries reported the committee met on Nov. 30, 2011. They discussed the budget and there were concerns that making the number would reduce the educational benefits to the students. They discussed technology versus hard cover books. M. Blair and J. Labadie have agreed to investigate what e readers are available. K. Craig reported on the Boston conference.

**3. Facilities Committee:** E. Stanley reported Mt. Caesar alarm system is complete. Year two of the renovations is complete. The specs for the data wiring have been received. The bulb replacement in all schools is complete and there should be a \$20,000.00 savings. Year Four of the renovations will be a warrant for energy related items. The Health and Safety warrant will go to Finance and is in the amount of \$232,500.00. The warrant for the MPR at Mt. Caesar is also going to the Finance Committee. The district has switched from PSNH to Glacier which was a savings for the District but now they have found another company with even more of a savings.

There will be a motion later in the meeting. The schools are being very good about the oil usage. The next meeting is on Dec. 13, 2011 at 5:00 PM.

**4. Finance Committee:** P. Bauries reported the committee met on Dec. 3, 2011. They had a presentation on the Before and After School Program. The committee looked at the warrants. The committee discussed tech school books and the cost. J. Labadie and M. Blair will bring more information. The next meeting is on Wednesday at 8:30 AM.

**5. Policy Committee:**

**6. Budget Committee Rep.:** W. Lechliden reported the committee voted to recommend the closing of the Sullivan School. They are working through the budget. They have heard from the administration on the budget but there are no decisions.

**7. Negotiations/Human Resource Committee:** P. Bauries reported the meetings have been successful but as of yet there are no agreements. They are very close.

**8. CCC:**

## **8. OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. Warrant Articles:** J. Fortson is asking the Board if they would like the funds on Article Five to be raised and appropriated or from the surplus. **MOTION:** E. Jacod. **MOVED** that the Emergency Fuel Funds come out of surplus not to be raised and appropriated. **SECOND:** S. Ellsworth. **DISCUSSION:** N. Moriarty commented the warrant should be dated 2011-2012 for reference. **VOTE:** 13.582/0/1.183/.235. **Motion passes.**

**2. Goals (Community Integration & Parent Involvement):** B. Barlow spoke regarding the community integration and parent involvement. He said there are ways that this is being done. There are articles in the Shopper and letters to the Editor in the Sentinel. They have the Dessert with the Principal and they are ready to schedule the visits to the Select Board. The green sheets will be going out, they would like to have a talk series on the Freshman Academy and the Board of Community Advisors is in process. The Board will have a schedule of events and more volunteer involvement. On November 28, 2011 the CRC met with the selectmen of Gilsum and discussed the need to further the involvement of the parents in the education process in order to understand more of what is going on. He discussed with M. Suarez her thoughts on Fitzwilliam. He felt Emerson is one of the best places to get parent involvement in the school. He would welcome any input to take back to Gilsum. J. Carnie asked about Goal 10 average cost per pupil. He is concerned it is budget season and we need a meaningful conversation on this. He asked if it is going to happen in 4 or 5 years. It needs to be looked at and it needs to be done next month. W. Lechliden commented the Budget Committee did not look at the warrants on the per pupil cost. The \$31,777,000.00 is roughly a 4% cut. He did say the 4% mentioned in the Sentinel. J. Carnie asked if the per pupil cost was considered when they came up to the number.

W. Lechliden commented that the Budget Committee did take the per pupil cost into consideration. J. Labadie commented the goals are Community Integration and Parent Involvement the Before and After school program could be part of that. The \$31,777,000.00 was discussed. At the Gilsum Meeting the Board said the per pupil cost was an unrealistic goal. We have a civil obligation. We as a Board said we would not put budgetary before education. W. Lechliden commented if we are asking the voters for warrant articles we need to give on the budget side. R. Thackston commented he appreciates the way the Budget Committee approached this, not nice but honest. E. Jacod commented on the goal to be the Best School in the State but how can you be the best and bring the per pupil cost to average. We need to find the point to make the most we can. We will not meet goal 10. B. Barlow commented in September we reviewed the cost per pupil. We have discussed this and J. Carnie is out of order. He wants to bring it up. We have been there. He is out of order. R. Thackston he is not out of order. M. Blair would like the Board to do things and not just talk about it. E. Stanley commented we have to take a look at the cost per pupil. We need to look at how our district is set up. We have to remember we are down students and we have not done enough on the staffing cuts. We need to look at that. P. Peterson commented this is a healthy conversation. No one enjoys this but we need to look at it. There has been no stone unturned. She feels that there is now accountability for the education. We look at all dollars before we spend them. J. Carnie commented it was on the agenda under "Goals". We need to look at this number. For a long time we have not looked at the numbers. We have an obligation to the taxpayers. We need to move forward to get to the State average. This Board has not had this discussion on the budget. He does not believe the numbers in Gilsum were accurate. The warrant articles will have a major impact on the per pupil cost. W. Felton commented each year at budget time we are duplicating the situation. We have come off of probation. We should be able to maintain. Aspects of education should be considered to get the students ready for the world. What is absolutely necessary to effectively perform. We need to determine what is needed. J. Labadie commented that research shows the top ranking schools are at the highest cost. In a budget you get what you pay for. We have high special ed. rate and poverty rate what is essential has changed. The legal requirements have changed. It is our job to address and make sure these things are met. M. Blair commented when we discuss these goals they are the goals of the Board not B. Barlow's goals. R. Thackston commented on the goals. He said it troubles him to lose Surry and possibly Sullivan. They are wealthy towns. All the schools have free and reduced lunch, the beauty of the School District are the dynamics of each. They are different. We all have a vote and we have to come up with the best decision.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Motions from Facilities Committee: MOTION:** E. Stanley **MOVED** to approve to utilize Light Tec as opposed to hiring an outside architect. This would be for energy projects only and architects would bid out for Design Building and

Building changes for Year 4 and 5, by doing so we will not require outside bids.  
**SECOND:** E. Jacod. **VOTE:** 14.765/0/0/.235. **Motion passes.**

**2. Motions from the Education Committee:**

**3. Motions from the Finance Committee: MOTION:** P. Bauries **MOVED** to allow the Business Manager and Facilities Director to purchase energy at the best available price. **SECOND:** P. Peterson. **VOTE:** 14.765/0/0/.235. **Motion passes.**

**a. Action on the Manifest: MOTION:** W. Felton **MOVED** the manifest in the amount of \$1,400,437.12 **SECOND:** E. Stanley. **VOTE:** 14.765/0/0/.235. **Motion passes.**

**4. Other New Business as may come before the Board:**

**10. Setting the next agenda:**

**1. Update on negotiations**

**11. Public Comments:** Dr. Kaplan thanked the Board for the refreshments at the staff meeting on behalf of the entire staff. He also commented on the per pupil cost. He asked that the Board discuss if it is a reachable goal.

E. Stanley commented that the District has saved more than \$400,000.00 over the year. Money is not the problem solver. We are making cuts in the best interest of the students and taxpayers.

N. Moriarty commented that closing the Sullivan School was not a proposed cut and transportation is not part of the per pupil cost. T. Kennett commented that the District is spending more on the 20% of Special ed. students than the 80 % of regular ed. students. N. Moriarty commented even if the 4% cut is true what about the three contracts. He commented that we need to look at priorities in the District. We have people living in poverty in the district. Whether you pay rent or own your home you are paying taxes.

A. Garrapy thanked the School Board for their work even though she does not always agree. She said we need to change the way we fund education. The State is not funding education correctly. ( **B. Barlow leaves the meeting**)

**12. 9:55 PM Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a)Dismissal, promotion or compensation of a public employee: MOTION:** P. Peterson **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Dismissal, promotion or compensation of a public employee. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE** W. Wright, M. Morrison, S. Ellsworth, P. Bauries, P. Peterson, L. Steadman, J. Carnie,

M. Blair, J. Labadie, E. Stanley, W. Felton, E. Jacod and R. Thackston. **VOTE:** 13.708/0/0/1.293. **Motion passes.**

**13. Return to Public Session: MOTION:** J. Labadie **MOVED** to seal the Dec. 6, 2011 9:45 PM Non-Public Minutes until June 30, 2012. **SECOND:** E. Jacod. **VOTE:** 13.708/0/0/1.293. **Motion passes.**

**14. 10:45 PM Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation of a Public Employee. MOTION:** J. Carnie. **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation of a Public Employee. **SECOND:** E. Jacod. **VOTE:** W. Wright, P. Peterson, J. Carnie, L. Steadman, M. Blair, M. Morrison, S. Ellsworth, P. Bauries, J. Labadie, E. Stanley, W. Felton, E. Jacod and R. Thackston. 13.708/0/0/1.293. **Motion passes.**

**15. 11:00 PM Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation of a Public Employee. MOTION:** P. Peterson. **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation of a Public Employee. **SECOND:** E. Stanley. **VOTE:** W. Wright, P. Peterson, J. Carnie, L. Steadman, M. Blair, M. Morrison, S. Ellsworth, P. Bauries, J. Labadie, E. Stanley, W. Felton, E. Jacod and R. Thackston. 13.708/0/0/1.293. **Motion passes. ( J. Labadie left during non-public session.)**

**16. Motion to adjourn: MOTION:** P. Peterson **MOVED** to adjourn the Board Meeting at 11:20 PM. **SECOND:** M. Blair **VOTE:** 13.014/0/0/1.986. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis  
Recording secretary