

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

**Tuesday, February 5, 2008
SAU Office
7 p.m.**

MINUTES

BOARD

Mary Allen, Beverly Bacon,
Ray Cote, Gail Cromwell,
Butch Estey, Dan Harper,
Craig Hicks, Bart Goodeve,
Bill McKinnon, Tom Welden

Beth San Martino, CVEA

ADMINISTRATION

Richard Bergeron, Supt.
Don Johnson, Asst. Supt.
Marian Alese, B.A.
Linda Potter, SpEd.
Tim Markley, H.R. Dir.
Steve Bartsch, CVHS
Sue Copley, PES
Sue Dell, CVHS
Dick Dunning, SMS
Deb Lesure, AES
Gib West, GBS
Deb Ames, CVHS

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Tom Welden called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Minutes (Board Vote Required)

a. **January 15, 22, 23, 2008 (Pgs. 1-24)**

Butch Estey moved to accept the minutes of the January 15, 22, and 23rd, 2008 meetings. Craig Hicks second. Unanimous.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Consent Agenda

a. **NHSBA Legislative Bulletin – January 18, 2008 (Pg. 25)**

Dick Bergeron thanked and publicly recognized Emily Hartnett, Mentor, who created, borrowed and gathered materials for the SAU Hallway display.

b. **NH State Board of Education Minutes – December 12, 2007 (Pgs. 26-37)**

Dick referenced materials included in tonight's packet.

c. **Homeschool Count (Pg. 38)**

Dick Bergeron referenced materials included in tonight's packet.

d. **Technology Committee Minutes (Pgs. 39-44)**

Dick Bergeron referenced materials included in tonight's packet.

5. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. ATC Review – Chet Bowles

Dick Bergeron introduced Chet Bowles who is present tonight to speak about the ATC Review. Chet Bowles said that he is exceptionally happy to be present tonight to provide his perspective on behalf of the ATC. He wanted to address accuracy and credibility in the ATC report. He also wants to address the consequences of the ATC Report. He also plans to address trust and its impact on the ATC and the region.

Chet provided history to all about the numbers of meetings he has attended to provide information to the Board about the ATC. He said that he has provided a program by program analysis among other information. He has provided data with regard to interest in ATC Programs. He shared data from the state and other areas about career data and interests. He said that he has shared information about ConVal's use of ATC space. Chet said that the only decision ever reached was one that he too was pursuing called the "Corner of the House" as a result of meetings he had attended. He cited other historical data relative to the ATC Review.

Chet acknowledged some of the safety issues mentioned in the report. It states that there was overall safety within the building. Chet added that some of the safety issues raised are already being addressed. "Safety and Right to Know" posters are being ordered for classes. Alternatives for installing spray booths are being sought. In addition, other suggestions were quite good he said. One was the OSHA ten hour course recommendation.

Chet turned to some of the negative citations in the report surrounding special education students. He said that serious charges were listed that special education students were discouraged from participating in ATC classes. He said that the consultant never asked for any data about special education students nor accepted any invitation to meet with Donna Noonan, ATC Administrative Assistant to speak about student enrollment. Nor did the consultant speak with the Special Education Coordinator or Guidance Director. The allegation of barriers entering into ATC programs was untrue. Last year, 14.8% of the ATC students that received certificates were special education students. This percentage is similar to that of the special education to overall student population ratio.

Another error was detailed in the Automotive program stating that there were no special education students enrolled. Chet said that in fact, of the ConVal students, 40% are identified. More than 60% in building trades are special education students. We certainly do not erect barriers toward these students from entering these programs. Chet questioned how such inaccuracies could make their way into a report and then presented in public.

Chet continued to cite examples of statements that indicated that data was not collected beyond 2003. Chet said that had the consultant asked for such data, accurate, valid data would have been provided. Chet said that the consultant often said that "nothing more was needed" when members of the ATC staff asked if he needed anything.

Chet referenced a picture provided of old bones in a closet. Chet said that he felt this an attempt to infer that there were things being hidden or "skeletons in the closet". Chet said that the ATC has had as much budget support as other departments in the district. Chet said that yes, there is a collection of bones in the building. To imply that they are trying to teach a high level science class with inferior equipment is ludicrous. The report failed to mention that the classroom has three complete human skeletons and has purchased plastic bones for durability.

Chet spoke about competencies. He said that he could not find the sample cited in the report in the actual competencies. He did however find many specific competencies which were not cited in the ATC Report. He said that a uniform set of competencies is being used and measured across the state. Students are being taught to the same exact set of competencies. This was never mentioned in the report. Chet said that the DOE visits at least once per year to conduct a monitoring visit. At the conclusion of each visit, a report of the findings and visit is recorded. It allows the DOE to know individual staff and verify that funds are being used properly. Satisfactory

results have been recorded from each of these visits. This too was not included in the consultants report.

Chet cited a statement about violations of the Articles of Agreement that was reported in the newspaper. No opinion was ever pursued from the DOE. He further read a portion of a letter from SAU 63, Francine Fullam, about the positive working relationship and partnership with ConVal ATC members. She said that she was grateful for the opportunities her district was provided. He said that collaboration took place between and among the schools.

Chet said that the consequences of the report caused many to question the ATC. He cited multiple concerns that one should consider as a result of this report. He read numerous concerns generated by this report.

Chet said that he believes that the collaboration with other districts is a model that should be complimented not criticized.

Chet addressed trust issues in this matter. He said that the consultant neglected to enter into an interview at the start and conclusion of the review.

Chet said that he did not see a summary of this report until one hour prior to the public report. He received nothing in writing. No opportunity was provided to review the report for accuracy. To date, Chet said he has not seen a complete copy of the report. He said that he was publicly humiliated in the display of public information.

He said that it goes beyond being nonprofessional. He said that the ATC members would look forward to working to make the ATC a better place. Many wonder, who is next.

Chet posed several questions to the Board.

Lastly, Chet thanked the Board for their time.

Tom Welden said that he is unsure where to go with this. He said that he appreciates the detail that Chet provided tonight. Tom said that he sat on the Mascenic Board at one time and has a rich history with many members of the various districts.

Ray Cote thanked Chet for coming tonight. He said that he is in a weird position because he has been a long term critic of the ATC. When he heard that there would be a review he looked at this favorably. As he listened to the monologue of the ATC Review he focused on safety issues among other recommendations. Ray said that he read the entire report last night. By the time he was done reading it, he was angry. It is in his estimation, one of the least professional reports that he has ever read. The report was repetitive and hearsay. He could not find any meat in the report. The report appeared to be thrown together. Ray said that he would like an in depth understanding of what takes place at the ATC. If any high school teacher would accept this report and grade it above a "C", he would like to know. Ray said that he is back to not knowing what is going on at the ATC. He expected a clear cut, dry review. Ray said that he cannot begin to grasp how that report was generated.

Bart Goodeve said that it is apparent that we have deeper issues. He suggested that anyone present speak on behalf of the way that the report was conducted. Bart requested that the Board to be provided with Chet's statement and that they meet back on this issue.

Tom said that the Board is not looking at cutting back in the ATC but rather to expand. He said that they are very pleased with the automotive program and the amazing building trades program. Tom said that prior reports cited positive remarks about staff at the ATC. Unfortunately, the deficits jumped out more than the positives. He added that there have been concerns in the past. Tom said that he did not have the same feeling that Ray had after reading the report. He said that we need to spend some time to have a full separate meeting on this topic.

Craig said that we have many fine parts at the ATC. He has been wanting to expand programs for years. He said that he doesn't want to split up the ATC programs because the collective collaboration is necessary. Craig said that he has had problems with the Articles of Agreement. He wants priority for the ConVal students. He added that the building and automotive program

only have nine ConVal student seats to enroll in. Many get turned away. He said that he would like to have our own programs so that more and more ConVal students may be included. He referenced the District Report citing the numbers of students going on to further their education. Approximately 40% of our students are not going on to further their education.

Virginia Irwin, State Director of the Technical Division for the Department of Education, said that the State has concern over the report. She asked for a copy of a more comprehensive report that is signed and dated. She said if ConVal became freestanding, the State would no longer fund it. She said that they are reinvesting in centers and are looking for high skill, high demand programs. She said that any data and financial reports could be provided to the ConVal district should they request it. She offered her services and assistance in the future.

Richard Bergeron asked Virginia about barriers in gender and special needs selection into programs. He said that if we found that 42% of ATC programs did not include special needs students would that be of concern. Virginia said that overall enrollments should be looked at as well as non-traditional courses and non-gender classes. She said that support services should be provided for special education students for success. Virginia said that all students can be afforded the opportunity. Dick asked a question about competencies and asked if a district can add to them. Virginia said that you can add what you like but it must be measured.

Dick said that he heard about the original ATC design and the partnership expectations and what would be offered at each of the centers. He said that Conant was to provide a collection of offerings in which they did not succeed. He asked if this changed the design of the ATC. Virginia said that there was an understanding that equity within each of the districts would be provided. It is the responsibility of the districts to review the contract. The agreement can be amended and changed at any time.

Dick said that in looking at the agreement, there are a number of violations. He asked if that escaped the state. Virginia said that the agreements are not reviewed on a regular basis unless they are being rewritten. Dick added that the DOE has language that suggests that the Articles should be reviewed. He said that annual and the three-year meetings have not occurred. Virginia said that she can look back to check meeting minutes.

Dick said that he would like to meet with Virginia.

Tom Welden said that this came about because there was concern about how the ATC was being run and the Board asked the Superintendent to conduct a review. He said that we want the most efficient use of the ATC programs. Tom said that once District Meeting and voting has concluded, he would like to meet to review the notes again.

b. District Meeting Preparation – Assignment of Articles

Tom asked that the Board go through the individual Articles and decide who will move. Tom said that he will second all of the Articles.

Article 1 – Craig Hicks

Article 2 – Butch Estey

Article 3 – Mary Allen

Article 4 – Gail Cromwell

Article 5 – Joe Byk

Article 6 – Fran Chapman

Article 7 – Bart Goodeve

Article 8 – Dan Harper

Article 9 – Beverly Bacon

Tom said that if the weather hits tomorrow night, the motion will be made, moderator will move to move the meeting to February 12th. Craig will show up. The body that is there will move to

postpone to the 12th. Tom said that we don't want to have people show up to a meeting that will not happen.

Notification to all those that conduct the checklist will have to be notified.

Tom said we will notify everybody as early as we can. We will post it on the website as well.

Marian said that she believes we will know by noon.

c. NECAP Test Results – Don Johnson

Don Johnson referenced a handout provided on the NECAP results. He cited the deltas from 06/07 to 07/08 in the district scores. If you understand No Child Left Behind, districts are to be at 100% by the year 2014. If we are staying level it is not good. In fourth grade reading a 6 point gain was seen. In 6th grade reading a 12 point gain was realized. Overall, Don said that he is not happy. In 5th grade writing we recognize a 10 point drop. There is a lot more analysis to be done. The real problem is with writing. Major drops have been seen. The scores for 11th grade will be out on February 21st. There is a lot that needs to be worked on.

Don showed the average for the schools and the breakout for each of the schools. Three years worth of NECAP data can now be reviewed.

The positive highlights are that AES is 83, FES and HES as well as PES show favorable places on the district average. In Math, HES and TES show favorable scores. TES reflects a 100% proficiency in Math. Don referenced the Reading, Math, and Writing scores for 14 districts within the state ranked. ConVal ranked 5 of 14 in Reading, 6 of 14 in Math, and 8 of 11 in Writing and 16 points below the state average.

Bart said that we are not happy with what we see at first impression. The writing scores are alarming. He said that he hoped that Don would be able to tell the Board what will be done to address this area. Don said that he will zero in on what is being tested against what is taking place in our instruction.

Bart said that if these numbers are indicative of a less than writing education for our students then the Board needs to know that. Don agreed.

Dan Harper said that with few exceptions, the problem appears to be in the middle schools. Dick Bergeron said that grade five results are the accumulated education up to the fifth grade. It is an elementary issue inherited by the middle school. Dick agreed that the scores are unacceptable. He said that the longer that we have our kids, the less well they do. Don said that it is a cumulative effect.

Beth San Martino said that she watches the kids take the test. She teaches all of the things on the test. She said that they take the test in the Fall and the concepts are tough. Don said that the NECAP test in November is testing the previous year's instruction. Beth said that the 8th grade standards is what is being tested. Don said that therefore the curriculum is not aligned.

Gail Cromwell said that this is why we brought the new administration in, to fix this.

Mary Allen applauded Don Johnson for the task he is about to take on. She urged him to look at the writing process that was in place for a number of years. She said that there was some success with the past program.

Craig said that the foundations is what we need to focus on.

d. Request to Accept a Gift or Donation (Board Vote Required) (Pg. 45)

- 1. Hancock Elementary School has received from Box Tops for Education a check in the amount of \$148.30 to be used in support of programs and activities**

Dan Harper moved to accept the donation as read. Butch Estey second. Unanimous.

e. Field Trip Proposals (Board Vote Required) (Pgs. 46-50)

1. Change in Senior Class Trip - CVHS Seniors will travel to Boston for one night, May 30, 2008, instead of Orlando FL

Dick said that this reflects a change in plans. A viable number did not sign up for the trip to Florida. This trip is an alternative to the previous approved trip.

Butch Estey moved to allow the Senior Class to travel to Boston in May. Ray Cote second.

Butch asked if the chaperone/student ratio would be the same. Sue Dell confirmed that they would be higher.

Unanimous.

f. Monthly Events Calendar (Pg. 51-52)

The calendar for two months out is desired.

Gail added that on February 28th, TES will hold the budget presentation at the Temple Town Hall at 7:30 p.m.

Mary Allen said that the community in Antrim appreciated the number of Board members present at the community outreach.

Tom said that Greenfield had their meeting last night. It was tied in with the PTO. They have been appreciated. Board and Administration have been available to get out into the towns and meet with community members. Tom thanked the Administrative Team for their participation in these meetings.

Tom said that the March calendar will be added.

Beverly Bacon said that the Education Meeting for February will take place in March.

6. Old Business

None.

7. New Business

None.

8. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Marian Alese certified that manifests 79-85 and 86 through 89 totaling \$ 1,048,547.42 as well as Sub Run 119, 119.1, 120, 121, and 122 totaling \$ 307,893.29 and Payroll 15 and 16 totaling \$2,226,560.57 have been reviewed by me and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and/or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

Craig Hicks moved to accept the approval of the manifests as read. Butch Estey second.

Unanimous.

Tom said that the document provided to

Linda Potter said that for the first time the DOE is issuing a State Performance Plan addressing preschooler identification as well as general supervision requirements. She said that data submitted must be valid. Four criterion must be met. All of the requirements were met. We received an 80% for making sure all preschoolers were identified by their third birthday.

Dick Bergeron congratulated Linda Potter.

Tom Welden said that recent weather conditions have allowed a very difficult time. The Board appreciates the call that is made about school closures. Tom said that the Board does not want to have our students sent home when no one is there. We don't want to put kids at risk. He thanked Dick for the job that he does in this area. It is not an easy call.

9. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,lic
None.

Craig Hicks moved to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. Butch Estey second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok