

**COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL OF VERMONT
STATE EDUCATION BOARD
MINUTES
Wednesday, October 4, 2006
Best Western
Waterbury, VT**

Members Present: Dwight Davis, Richard Fraser, Blanche Kelley, David Luce, Albert Pearce and John Stewart.

Members Absent: Don Messier and Wilma Paronto

CHSVT Administration Present: Bob Lucenti, Director - Stephan LaTulippe, Principal - Mary Koen, Special Education Chief - Sheila Commo, Program Services Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m.

The Barre Probation & Parole campus had a graduation on Friday, September 22nd. Channel 3 reporter, Anson Tebbitts, did a newscast about the graduation. Steve LaTulippe obtained a copy of the story and showed it to the board.

Bob Lucenti received a call from Steve Zimd, from Vermont Public Radio. He is interested in doing a story about Community High School of Vermont and will be contacting the Northwest State Correctional Facility, Northern State Correctional Facility and Burlington Probation & Parole campus for interviews.

1. Review of Meeting Minutes

Before the meeting minutes were approved, Blanche Kelley had a change on page four, paragraph six. The Knights of Columbus opened its doors to CHSVT for graduation, not the VFW.

Dwight Davis made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of September 6, 2006, with the modification made. John Stewart seconded it. The motion was called and it passed unanimously.

2. Report from the NEASC Steering Committee - Steve LaTulippe

The Self-Study Report was handed out to the board and discussed. Each standard was drawn up as a draft that was brought to the faculty committees for review. Several drafts were reviewed by staff before a final was brought to the full faculty to be discussed and voted to approve. Southern State Correctional Instructor, Katherine Miller, who has a PhD in English, was chosen to edit the final drafts before going to print. The self-study was completed in nine months. Typically, a self-study takes about two years to complete. The NEASC self-study is allowing the faculty a chance to look in depth at school practices. Throughout this process,

we are finding our strengths and weaknesses. Even if accreditation doesn't happen, it has been a process in betterment for the whole school. Bob referred to page ten of the self-study, recommendations for school improvement of the mission statement and page 18, recommendation number four, for governance, to study and implement a uniform process by which new advisory board members are selected and page 48, recommendation number one, develop a comprehensive library plan. The hope is that these recommendations could be used as a reference for agenda items for future board meetings.

The Steering Committee is now being disbanded. The next step is to form a new committee to assist in implementing the action plan from the self-study. The board's input would be invited. It may be possible to include a faculty member at board meetings to give updates. All other committees will remain intact to continue with the governance of the school.

Further discussion ensued about the whole process and how unbelievably hard the staff worked in accomplishing what they did in such a short time frame. The staff of CHSVT worked together as one to complete all tasks and is to be commended.

Steve and Mary worked together to complete all 17 campus site reports, which are based on school quality standards.

There is a reference disc that accompanies the self-study report. The board members have requested a copy of the disc.

There was a request to draft a letter to the three students from the Northwest State Correctional Facility, Tim Burgess, Chancy Smith and Scott Lawson, for the outstanding job they did putting together the self-study that was then sent to Kinko's for print. David Luce volunteered to draft a letter to be sent to Steve for signature.

Dwight asked for an update on policy 389. Bob handed out the latest draft for discussion. Under **Purpose**, 2.1 was amended as a compromise between CHSVT and DOC. There was concern about the Community High School "separating" from DOC. John Perry, Director of Planning for DOC, supports the policy as written. The next step is to have the policy reviewed by Lisa Menard, who is the Planning Specialist for DOC, before it goes through the legislative process. For 4.3, Mary Koen will send Sheila an amended version of who cannot be discriminated against in conjunction with established state policy. There is a typo in 4.4. "Succession" should be "successful". In the final paragraph, Commissioner of Corrections should be capitalized and Chuck "Albert" Pearce's name should replace Kathy O'Dell's as CHSVT Board Chair. **Dwight Davis made a motion to accept policy 389 with corrections from above. Richard Fraser seconded the motion. The motion was called and it passed unanimously.**

3. Standard 10 (Administration) & Standard 2 (Governance) - Steve LaTulippe

Steve pointed out that the Commissioner of Corrections was changed to an ex-officio member of the board on the organizational chart. Bob feels that the Commissioner of

Corrections should receive the monthly meeting minutes and be invited to the state board meetings.

The board was given a moment to look over Standard 2 before Steve discussed the notable strengths and weaknesses. One weakness that was discussed regarding staff conflicts. The state practices and rules change, sometimes without CHSVT knowledge. The State Investigation Unit becomes involved because the staff is state employees, which makes it difficult at times to internally deal with conflicts.

There was a brief discussion of weakness # 2 of Standard 2, if faculty do not extend hands to each campus to allow for smooth transition of students from site to site. Or, if there is not a reciprocal outreach of support to or from outside resources, students could get lost in the shuffle of transition. It is imperative that all sources involved keep communication lines open and keep the students best interest in mind.

There was some concern that #4, the lack of uniform by-laws, was not addressed in the recommendations. It was suggested that this could be a future agenda item for implementation. There are differences for each local board due to location, population, etc. but it would be helpful to have common guidelines for all to follow.

The board had a moment to look over Standard 10. There was discussion of the reason to add another administrator. Tasks have become too daunting. Staff is almost to capacity and with the addition of new special educators, the increased observation and evaluation time is making it difficult to complete the process in a timely manner. It becomes difficult to stay on top of student issues with so many campuses. Some options would be to hire another principal or change the position of one teacher from each region to a principal position. All options need to be looked at before decisions can be made.

There is some concern that there are more students enrolled that are not under custody of DOC than the school can teach. Resources become a problem, when the number of students exceeds the budget. The Department of Education supported Act 222 which increases funding for Adult Basic Education, which in turn, may ease the crowding issues by giving students another option to obtain education.

Bob recently attended the New England Corrections Industries Conference at the Basin Harbor Club in Vergennes. The conference was put on by Bert Senning from Vermont Offender Work Program and the Work Force Development program. Research has been completed on two groups of offenders who are now out in the work force. The preliminary results show that there has been a 60 percent recidivism rate (which is the current national rate) from those who did not take the Habits of Mind course and a 28 percent recidivism rate from those who have gone through the Habits of Mind course.

4. Special Education/Title I

Currently two special education positions are being interviewed for, one at Northern State Correctional Facility to replace Chris Colwell, who has moved on to a new job, and a new

position to share at the Southeast State Correctional Facility and White River Probation & Parole campuses.

Work on the Title I grant is complete. There was \$100,000 of additional funds from the federal government for neglected youth to supplement the program. Some of these funds will supplement the Career Resource Center. Transition expectations for students with disabilities are a requirement of the grant, for example tracking employment and continuing education. There is a need for more vocational coordinators to assist with job placement when offenders are released into the workplace. There will be a request for a vocational coordinator position at the Rutland Probation & Parole campus to assist with work force development in that area. The Department of Labor will be conducting a training to certify Vocational Coordinators as Job Placement Counselors. Job placement is very important as there are graduates who are going into the workplace and not higher education. There needs to be a better link between CHSVT and the business community. Mary will be attending a conference that focuses on transitioning youth with disabilities and challenges in the workforce. There is concern that there is not enough being done for the women at the Dale State Correctional Facility to ready them for the workforce. Gene Rembisz, Vocational Coordinator at the Barre Probation & Parole campus will be working with the women at Dale to help fill their work transition needs. There are plans to build a Career Resource Center at Dale. The research piece on recidivism with the Workforce Development grant should be complete by August, 2007.

Steve announced that there were 50 graduation plans signed by the end of the first quarter this year. There were only about 18-20 by the same time last year. We are looking at a possible record number of graduates by the end of this fiscal year.

5. Old Business

Next month's meeting on November 1st will be changed from the Best Western in Waterbury, to the Brattleboro Probation & Parole campus.

6. New Business

Blanche attended the Vermont Retired Teacher's Association annual meeting in Bennington. Betty White did an outstanding job setting up the meeting. Blanche made a display of the latest Beryle Gardner award winners. The VRTA donated another \$2,000 to the Beryle Gardner award fund. This brings the total of money to \$4,787. The new president of the VRTA is Sally Kalinoski. Blanche feels that we need to send letters of appreciation to the VRTA via Sally and to the Knights of Columbus for their past assistance with graduation. Dave Luce is willing to draw up the letters and send them to Sheila at central office for Steve to sign. The National Retired Teachers Association is still working on a national award to be awarded to CHSVT. Blanche has been given approximately 150 books and there was discussion as to what to do with them. It was decided that they would be offered to Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility after the NEASC visit.

Blanche shared a story about a summer camp that was offered this summer for children of incarcerated parents. There were 27 children in attendance this year, and they are hoping to open it up for two weeks next summer.

Blanche shared several newspaper articles that she had and will hand them over to Steve for the scrapbook.

Blanche will write to Cara Berryman and let the Beryle Gardner Award Committee know that the money is on its way. The committee is planning on coming up with a plan for how to utilize the money. Bob suggested that a recommendation be sent to the board for review. The committee is already looking into new ideas for the funds.

Agenda Items for November's Meeting:

Report out on NEASC visit

Presentation from Brattleboro

Mary Koen will not be available for a special education update

Discuss options for an additional administrator

Richard Fraser moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m. Dwight Davis seconded it. The motion was called and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Sheila Commo