

COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL OF VERMONT
STATE EDUCATION BOARD
MINUTES

Wednesday, April 6, 2005

Members Present: Albert Pearce, Dwight Davis, Richard Fraser, Blanche Kelley, Dave Muholland, Donald Messier, and Wilma Paronto

CHSVT Administration Present: Bob Lucenti, Director
Stephan LaTulippe, Principal
Maureen McIntyre, Business Manager
Sheila Commo, Program Services Clerk

CHSVT Faculty Present:
Barbara Rintamaa, Correctional Instructor
Dan King, Correctional Instructor
Kris Degenhardt, Vocational Instructor
Tod Lessard, Special Education Instructor
John Long, Correctional Instructor

Local Advisory Members Present: Mary-Ellen Grove, Carol Arner, Rene Blanchard, Becky Blanchard

Guests Present: Caitlin Bisson-Hoyt, and students from the Community High School of Vermont: Richard Jones, Tanya and Tiffany Richard, Nicholas Hammond, Paula Waite, and Stewart McKenna

The meeting was held at the Burlington Community Correctional Services Center (CCSC).

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

1. Burlington Presentation of Education Program:

Dan King; Correctional Instructor at the Burlington CCSC, introduced his peers Barb Rintamaa, Correctional Instructor and Kris Degenhardt, Vocational Coordinator. Barb Rintamaa welcomed the board members to the facility and gave a brief overview of the CCSC and the population that it serves. They are at capacity with 65 students. The instructors try to work around the student's schedules. In the last quarter, there have been over 50 credits earned. The facility had to close enrollment for the first time ever. There are currently 15 non-correctional students involved in the program.

The instructors invited six students to attend today's meeting to talk about their experience with the Community High School of Vermont. The first to speak was Paula. She said that she feels better here than at a public high school and gets more one-on-one help. When she started with CHSVT at the Chittenden facility, she needed 15 credits toward her high school diploma. She is currently working on her last three and will be graduating in July. She is planning on continuing her education at CCV in the fall.

Tanya dropped out of school at 16. She only has two credits to earn to graduate. She works a full-time job at a local store and was recently promoted to store manager. She likes the schedule that Community High School has set for her which allows her to work and finish her education. She also plans to attend CCV in the fall.

Tiffany is Tanya's sister and is a non-corrections student. She also had trouble with the public high school setting and did not feel like she fit in or got enough one-on-one help. She wants to receive her diploma and attend college after. Tiffany is currently in an internship at Old Navy which she obtained with the help of Vocational Coordinator Kris Degenhardt.

Correctional Instructor Dan King shared information about a six week Mtn. Bike Course that will be held at the Catamount Center in Williston and ice skating that the students enjoyed this winter at the Cairns Arena in South Burlington. He then went on to explain a new program called Digital Divide provided by an Americorp grant through Vermont Associates to increase computer literacy in our youth. Student, Richard Jones, together with Dan, helped to develop the program for the Burlington CCSC site. Richard has done amazing things with this program. Vermont Associates were stunned as to how prepared Richard was. Richard will attend a Digital Divide conference next week at the Stoweflake Inn in Stowe with Dan. Richard is teaching students, 17 years old and up, computer skills to allow them to succeed. Dan went on to explain that Richard receives a stipend of \$250 every two weeks and at the completion of the Digital Divide program, he will have earned a \$2,000 educational voucher. This amount will double next year.

Richard took over the presentation at this point and went on to explain how he works part-time and takes classes. In the fall he plans on taking classes at CCV, as well as continue to teach Digital Divide at the CCSC. As part of the grant, Richard must help 25 people and recruit 10 new volunteers to the lab. Mary-Ellen Grove said that Richard has taught her a lot in the lab and is a "natural teacher." Richard said that he has always been fascinated by computers and has completed three computer courses at CHSVT.

Kris Degenhardt was teaching here a year ago as an adjunct faculty member and spending a lot of his "off time" here at the site. It became the highlight of his week, and he decided to apply for the full-time vocational coordinator position when it became vacant. Kris believes the top three priorities for his students are stability at home, stability at work and a high school diploma. Kris' position as Vocational Coordinator allows him to help the students to obtain and maintain employment. Kris has set up internships with local businesses for the students to apply. He has placed five students in the intern program at Old Navy.

Tiffany, a student at the CCSC, described her position with Old Navy and how it is helping her gain the experience that she needs to have future opportunities. Kris has also helped to place a student at the restaurant at the Clarion Inn, in South Burlington and two students at a local cleaning company.

Kris assisted Stuart with home stability by helping him find an apartment. Stuart told the board about his studio apartment and how Kris, Dan, and Barb advocated for him when the landlord found out about his rap sheet and tried to evict him. Stuart works for the Burlington Public School District as a bus aide and is going to be working as a Para-

educator in the fall. Stuart meets weekly with Kris to go over budgeting and responsibilities. He is one credit away from graduating, and his goal is to attend CCV in the fall. Kris takes approximately six students to CCV for orientation on a monthly basis. They also attend VSAC meetings every other Wednesday night.

Nick Hammond graduated from the CHSVT last July. Shortly after graduation, Nick ended up back in jail. Barb, Dan, and Kris monitored Nick's release date and once Nick was released, they put word out on the street that they wanted Nick back. Nick showed up one half hour later. Nick told the board that he would never have received his diploma without the help of CHSVT. He really likes this school. He has been accepted at CCV and will be studying small business management and business law in the fall. He went through the financial aid process and shared he could have never gotten this far with CHSVT. He is very excited to have this opportunity!

Steve LaTulippe complimented the teachers on an awesome job with the students and complimented the students on their efforts and success.

Barb introduced David Jaques who sent a handout around about his position as Youth Corrections Services Specialist (YCSS). His job is to address the needs of youth 16-22 in the areas of housing, education, substance abuse, employment, and leisure/training in order to achieve independent, educated, healthy, sober, and pro social individuals. About 10-15 of the 65 youths at the Burlington CCSC work with the YCSS. State Senator, Dick Sears has hired an analyst to review how the YCSS positions are doing. There are only seven of these positions statewide. They were created during the '01 legislative session and the positions were filled during fiscal year '02. Hopefully, the analyst will recommend that more of these positions are needed.

John Long, Correctional Instructor at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CCCC) in Burlington introduced himself and Tod Lessard, Title I Instructor at the facility. He noted that the facility has a teaching team of three, but Mary Poulos was not able to attend this meeting. John handed out a fact sheet on the School Intake Procedure and explained how a student goes through the system from school orientation to a graduation plan. He commended the correctional officers for their help with getting the students out of their rooms and down to the education wing. Tod explained his procedures with assessing each student and setting up an educational plan to assure that they do not get "lost" as they move through the system and end up being transferred between CHSVT sites. John then went on to explain about a typical classroom schedule and commented that the correctional officers feel that the students are more "passive" by the end of the day because they have had a good day of classes and have not spent their day idle.

A discussion took place about the difficulties of running out of room at the street sites for students and not having enough money for programming.

2. Review and Acceptance of Meeting Minutes and Agenda:

Dwight Davis made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of February 2, 2005. Dave Muholland seconded. Discussion followed: Blanche Kelley suggested a change to number five, Stephan LaTulippe - Retired Teachers Association. She wanted to change

"...of the Retired Teachers Association." to "...of the Chittenden County Retired Teacher's Association." Discussion concluded. The change was made in the February 2, 2005 minutes. **The motion was called, and it passed unanimously, as amended.**

Maureen McIntyre handed out a revised version of the March minutes, as she noticed a few typos and misspellings of some names.

Richard Fraser made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of March 2, 2005. Dwight Davis seconded. Discussion followed. Richard Fraser needed to have attendee, Betty White moved from the "Local Advisory Board Members present to Guests Present," as Betty does not serve on any of our local advisory boards. Discussion concluded. The change was made in the March minutes. **The motion was called and passed unanimously, as amended.**

3. Election of Officers:

The Board Governing By-laws state that, "officers are elected annually at the March Board meeting." However, this was not done due to the Annual Meeting. Dwight would like to delay elections until we have a full board. Everyone agreed. Blanche wants the Board to write a letter to the Governor recommending Betty White to fill the "member at large" vacancy. There was a recommendation to the Governor to appoint Jane Willard, from the Dale Advisory Board, to the O'Dell vacancy. Jane had to decline as the meeting dates conflicted with her work schedule. However, Jane thought that we should ask Dave Luce, from the Dale Advisory Board, and we did. He accepted a recommendation, to the Governor, that he be appointed to the O'Dell vacancy. A letter has been sent to the Governor, but we have not heard back as of today. Dave Muholland asked for clarification - will the election for next year still be in March if this one happens in May? The answer was, yes.

4. By-Laws Review:

Richard Fraser made a motion to do the second reading of the By-laws. Dave Muholland seconded. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

5. Liaison and Advocacy Local Boards:

Dwight Davis reported on the need to schedule a meeting for organization of the Newport Local Advisory Board. He has five people very interested in serving on this local board. He gave the list of these interested volunteers to Chris Barton, Volunteer Services Coordinator for the Newport facility. Mr. Barton was supposed to have a meeting scheduled. This has not happened. The State Board would like to see some movement on this by the May meeting. Bob Lucenti will look into this.

6. Stephan LaTulippe -Presentation of Student Learning Hours:

Stephan presented a PowerPoint presentation on Student Learning Hours in each facility and how we can improve the numbers. The handout is attached to the minutes.

7. Bob Lucenti - Updates & News:

Bob went and called Chris Barton about the Newport Local Advisory Board. He has been on sick leave. Sharon Smith, Assistant Superintendent, of the Newport site will make sure a meeting is scheduled within the next few weeks.

Discussion took place regarding school approval. Bob and Dwight met in Woodstock recently with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. It was determined that it maybe easier to comply with the NEA opposed to the cumbersome process that we have been involved with over the past 18 months with the Vermont Department of Education. Dwight compared CSHVT to Parish schools in the Diocese where each individual parish school must be accredited. Incorporating our standards with the NEA should not be a problem. A New England accreditation would override the Independent School accreditation. Dwight said that of 74 high schools in Vermont, 17 are independent schools. Discussion took place on how approval could happen. Bob reminded folks that he would need to have a lot of discussion with the CHSVT faculty regarding this issue. The process would involve a self-evaluation from the school. A team from the New England Association would do site visits and evaluate our programs. There would be a five year update and a two year check on Special Education. If we did receive NEA approval, we could still file a Special Education application for our correctional facilities only. It would take approximately eight months to a year to complete this process. Two issues would be cost and public policy. This Board is frustrated with the DOE school approval process and feels that it would be better to go with NEA. Dave Muholland drafted a resolution. It is attached to the minutes. **Dave Muholland made a motion to present the resolution to Bob Lucenti for his use. Richard Fraser seconded the motion. The motion was called and passed unanimously.**

Bob said that he had to leave the meeting early today because he had a meeting with Commissioners Rob Hofmann and Richard Cate regarding the Special Education transfer (or lack of) for this present fiscal year. Hopefully, this issue will get resolved during this afternoon meeting. The Legislature is adding funding for Special Education from the General Fund for fiscal year '06. This will allow for a Special Educator at each facility, plus an additional Special Educator at each site with more than 40 youth. The DOE has recently decided to monitor our Special Education program. They will begin this process in Springfield on April 19th.

Dwight asked for clarification on what a case plan means in corrections. It was explained that case workers set a plan for education and rehabilitation that meets an inmates needs. Will the new Gain Time legislation be amended to add education?

8. Maureen McIntyre - Beryle Gardner Award - Final Criteria:

Mo passed out a handout the CHSVT faculty completed. This handout shows the final criteria for the Beryle Gardner Award. Discussion took place about the criteria. Dwight proposed putting money into an endowment for an on-going fund. A decision was suggested as to adding a line on the budget in the general fund to keep the award on-going. Blanche commented on the way local schools use donations from the community to keep an award going. Dwight feels that it is the board's responsibility to obtain more

money for the award and put it into a 501C3` fund so that it can be continued through the years. Mo will meet with Andy Pallito about funding. **Dave Muholland moved to support the award as created by the faculty and encourages the faculty to move forward and the board will look for ways to sustain the award further. Richard Fraser seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.**

9. New Business:

Blanche shared an article in the Eagle Times regarding Adapting to Change for Women.

The next State Advisory Board Meeting will be held in Waterbury on May 4th at the Best Western.

Chuck Pearce asked that we all have a moment of silence for the passing of Pete Kelley.

Richard Fraser moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m. It was seconded by Dwight Davis. The motion was called, passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Commo