

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**JACKSON SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Jackson Grammar School**  
November 21, 2011

1. **Call to Order:** The Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Jackson School Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Andrew Kearns, Keith Bradley, Genn Anzaldi, Fred Nemeth, Lauren Synnott, Dr. Carl Nelson and Principal, Gayle Dembowski. There were three members of the general public present.
  
2. **Approve Minutes – (10-17-11 & 11-3-11)** – There was discussion as regards Pg. 2, Sec. 9, A, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.: Ms. Dembowski noted the reference to the \$8,000 listed for the summer program is for *all* students. The reference to Mr. Bradley’s questioning the funding for ESY was meant to address ESOL. It was agreed that the sentence: “*Ms. Dembowski stated it has been the same since she has been here – it is under the Special Education budget.*” should be stricken. **Motion was made by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Ms. Synnott, that the Minutes of the 10-17-11 meeting be approved as amended, and those of the 11-3-11 special meeting be approved as submitted. Motion carried with 4 votes in the affirmative and Mr. Nemeth abstaining.**
  
3. **Citizen Comments:** None.
  
4. **Presentation of School Programs/FYI Items:**
  - A. **SAU – Other School Board Reports** - Dr. Nelson announced the regular SAU meeting will be held on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of a budget hearing and to approve a budget for the SAU.

There will be a meeting of the SAU 9 Board and the Madison Withdrawal Study Committee on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. There was some discussion as to the ramifications of other districts joining SAU 9, and Dr. Nelson said under each of the scenarios the individual contributions would go down. Mr. Bradley questioned whether we need to be concerned when the SAU is getting too large. Dr. Nelson said this one (Madison) could get by with an additional administrative assistant and maybe increasing some of Special Services Director’s time, plus a preschool coordinator - nothing else will change, just that SAU 9 will be the overseer of all those districts.
  
5. **Old Business:**
  - A. **Wetlands Project Finalization** – Ms. Dembowski stated we are completely done and have filed the papers.
  
6. **Instructional Issues:** None.

**7. Consider Personnel Actions:**

**A. Election of Gail Yalenezian as Mentor for Ashley Borthwick-Mosson – Motion was made by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Mr. Bradley, to elect Gail Yalenezian as Mentor for Ashley Borthwick-Mosson for the 2011-12 school year.** Ms. Dembowski noted that Mr. Yalenezian works in the SAU office as a part time preschool coordinator and is very knowledgeable with the process.

Mr. Kearns questioned who does the assessment of making sure that our new Special Ed teacher is meeting all the protocols. Ms. Dembowski said as Principal she will fill that role, will do an in-house assessment; however, Ms. Stimson will come in if she feels she needs some additional assistance. She noted there are at least two formal observations written up during the year. **The motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**8. Business Affairs:**

**A. FYI -2011-12 Budget Status Report –** Dr. Nelson stated they are still in good shape on the budget. He will schedule a budget meeting after Thanksgiving. Mr. Bradley said a Selectman had mentioned to him an expected revenue of \$70,000 which the town has not seen yet. Dr. Nelson stated he will have to go back and look at that. Mr. Bradley will advise the Selectman questioning this to contact Finance Director, Becky Jefferson.

**B. Consider Approval of Bartlett/Jackson Tuition Contract for 2013-16 –** Peter Benson questioned whether they would be signing the contract at tonight's meeting for 2013-16. Dr. Nelson explained they have to do it now because it will go before the voters in March 2012 – they need a year's notice according to the contract. Ms. Synnott questioned whether it has to be a 3-year period. Dr. Nelson stated that is pretty much standard.

Mr. Benson questioned whether there is a transportation piece mentioned in the contract. Mr. Bradley said it states we will transport our own students. Mr. Benson said he would encourage the Board to look at the transportation situation between Bartlett and Jackson, commenting that the tuition rate is set and we pay, but we never talk about transportation. He stated some buses are filled with students, with 20 Bartlett students and 3 from Jackson - transportation is a big driver and we are transporting Bartlett students to and from school at every level - it is not equitable. He said he believes our relationship with Bartlett is excellent and he is not here to "rock the boat," but there should be some formula that could be arrived at between the two districts. Ms. Anzaldi suggested it could be a distribution of the fuel costs, if there is an opportunity to save our district some money and be open about it. Mr. Bradley stated it is not only fuel, but brakes, etc., with all the stopping and starting. He described the way the bus route works with the route they follow, and all the stopping and starting. Mr. Benson said he

is seeking fairness. Mr. Kearns questioned how many Jackson kids Bartlett buses are transporting. Mr. Bradley stated there are none.

Mr. Bradley's suggestion was to add a sentence to Section III – **Jackson Student Attendance at Bartlett** – that Bartlett provide the late bus, and Jackson would realize a little compensation. Mr. Benson stated people notice when a bus comes from Bartlett filled with kids and gets to Jackson with only five Jackson kids on it. It was noted that it is not presently part of the contract. Ms. Anzaldi suggested opening the dialogue in an amicable way, explaining our concerns with transportation. Mr. Kearns felt, because transportation is not included in the contract, we need to keep it that way and then come up with a transportation contract. Ms. Dembowski noted the Special Ed bus comes here in the morning to pick up 2 to 3 kids to get to the Bartlett school in the morning.

Dr. Nelson offered to do an analysis of the number of Bartlett students and the number of Jackson students who ride, and determine whether it is fair, noting there may be somewhat of a difference depending on the seasons. As regards a meeting to discuss this, Mr. Bradley said he does not believe we should have the bus drivers involved. Dr. Nelson pointed out the drivers do work things out. It was Mr. Benson's opinion that it could be figured out to make it a little more fair for this District.

Mr. Bradley suggested striking the sentence [*Jackson shall send all of its students, grades seven and eight to Bartlett for schooling and shall be responsible for the transportation methods and expenses in connection with such attendance, and Bartlett shall accept said students and be responsible for their education.*] and say "transportation will be negotiated separately." Mr. Nemeth said no matter how we come out on this end, there should be less money – it does not change the fact that Jackson sends its kids to Bartlett.

Mr. Kearns questioned if we approve this contract as is and later come up with a transportation contract, if anything in that contract is contrary to that can we come back and amend this? Dr. Nelson said this is only talking about getting kids to and from Bartlett. Mr. Bradley said if we leave it as is, we would have to come back and amend this. He said he would like to know the average life span of brakes on a bus and their cost – the key is how many times that bus stops. Steve Piotrow said he would like to know Jackson bus hours and come up with a figure for present student bus hours, number of hours the Jackson kids are on the bus.

Mr. Kearns noted transportation cost budgeted is about \$132,000 - Mr. Bradley commented that we split the music teacher position with Bartlett and they have agreed to pay all benefits. Mr. Benson said we need to establish what is equitable. There was question of: number of Jackson kids riding the Bartlett bus to and from Bartlett, number of Bartlett kids riding Jackson buses (same back and forth from the high school), and what transportation arrangements are made with late buses. Mr. Bradley said he would like also to know how many bus stops there are. Ms.

Dembowski noted also Bartlett provides the bus for transition trips. Mr. Kearns pointed out it also adds to the number of hours we are paying the bus drivers for. Mr. Bradley stated part of it is also the added time for the kids riding the bus. Mr. Kearns suggested they need to get the information, and then meet with Bartlett as soon as they can.

**Motion was made by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Mr. Bradley, to approve the tuition contract between Bartlett and Jackson.** Ms. Anzaldi noted Bartlett already approved this contract on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Kearns questioned the 2% rental fee, questioning what we pay tuition for then – 2% of what, and what is it going toward?. Dr. Nelson explained it is a rental fee to help offset the cost of their building. He added that most contracts are written with a rental fee; however, with Kennett it is based on equalized valuation. Dr. Nelson stated that clause was put into many of these contracts way back to help defray the building costs – that is the way it was set up. Mr. Bradley questioned why we are paying double. Dr. Nelson said the 2% rental fee is part of their revenue from the tuition contract. He offered to get the actual calculation so the Board can see it.

Mr. Bradley made reference to the last sentence of Section III [*Jackson will pay direct costs for special education or other specialized programs not included, or unable to be provided in the regular operation of the school.*] and wished to know an example of that. Dr. Nelson said it is out-of-district placement, or one-to-one aide. Mr. Kearns noted transportation and Special Ed are specifically out of the calculation.

Mr. Bradley questioned whether there is any Jackson participation with Bartlett Board activities. Dr. Nelson stated Jackson has someone assigned to them; the SAU advises of when those meeting are held. Mr. Bradley wished to know whether we could get a voting representative on the Bartlett Board. Dr. Nelson stated they would have to approve that. Mr. Kearns said as Chair he gets their agendas and looks them over to see if there is anything impacting Jackson.

**Motion was made by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Mr. Bradley and carried by unanimous vote, that the Motion to approve the tuition contract be tabled. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

## **9. Administrator's Reports:**

**A. Superintendent** – Dr. Nelson called attention to the SAU newsletter.

**B. Principal** – Ms. Dembowski reported many of the staff has been to Smart Board and iPad training; some will be going to the Christa McAuliffe Tech Conference in Dec.

She stated, in-house, they have been working on Brain Based Learning; teachers are using the strategies in their classrooms. They are doing some work with visualizing/verbalizing to develop student comprehension.

Response to Intervention: No new instruction time – all is going well.

She reported the parent forum was fairly well attended. The next meeting of the Excellence Committee is scheduled for Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m. The next PTO meeting will be Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas Concert is December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Dembowski said she has sent home a message about slowing down, both with regard to driving and life in general.

**10. Citizen Comments:** None.

**11. Board Member Issues:**

**A. Set Date for Next Meeting – December 19, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.**

**B. Set Date/Time for School District Meeting – March 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

**C. Set Date/Time for Budget Hearing – February 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

Ms. Dembowski stated they are looking at the policy regarding toy weapons on school property. This is mentioned in the student handbook. There was discussion regarding a letter sent home to the families of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The Chair requested that the Board look over both the Policy Manual and the handbook and see if there are any glaring discrepancies. Dr. Nelson suggested Ms. Dembowski go back through the handbook and make sure it is the same as the policy manual. Ms. Anzaldi suggested that under old business for the next meeting, review of the Policy Manual and handbook be included. Ms. Dembowski suggested the Policy Committee might want to review them as well.

Regarding committees, Mr. Kearns asked Mr. Nemeth to take over those positions which Mr. Kopitski served on, except for the Personnel Committee which Mr. Kearns will take over.

Ms. Synnott questioned survey about homework club and the reasoning. Ms. Dembowski said from time to time teachers had volunteered and were willing to have a homework club if there was enough interest – they have not seen any results of the survey as yet.

Ms. Synnott questioned input from staff about the Calendar Committee. Ms. Dembowski said the Calendar Committee is scheduled to meet on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Synnott said she would like for there to be a way for children who go through this school, who perform very highly, to be recognized – some recognition for those students who are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade who are leaving. Ms. Anzaldi felt it is a great

idea, noting we do it for sports. Ms. Dembowski agreed, as long as the criteria is clear. She noted we presently have the DAR Good Citizenship award. Dr. Nelson noted Conway has an academic awards night at the end of the school year at all levels, and offered to provide a copy of the criteria that Conway uses. It was the consensus that Ms. Synnott's suggestion is worth looking at.

12. **Signing of Manifest:** Manifests were duly signed.
13. **Nonpublic Session:** None.
14. **Adjourn:** At 7:16 p.m. **Motion was made by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Ms. Synnott, that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary

Old Business – next meeting:

Review of Policy Manual and Handbook