

NORWICH BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2009
7:00 P.M., MARION CROSS SCHOOL LIBRARY

AGENDA

This meeting will be convened in public session. Other topics arising after the posting of this notice may be discussed and acted upon.

1. Call to order: 7:00 p.m., Marion Cross School Library
2. Approval of minutes: The regular meeting of October 7, 2009
3. Communications and reports
 - a. Report of Chair
 - b. Communications to the Board
 - c. Reports of Administrators
4. PTO Report
5. Public input
6. Business requiring discussion
 - a. Presentation of Investigations Math
 - b. Presentation on Smartboards
7. Business requiring action
8. Executive session in accordance with Title 1, Section 313, for discussion of negotiations.
9. Future agenda topics
10. Adjournment

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Minutes of this meeting will be available for public inspection within five business days after the meeting (RSA 91-A:2). Such minutes may be reviewed in the office of the Superintendent of Schools, 41 Lebanon Street, Suite 2, Hanover, NH.

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NORWICH BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 7, 2009
7:00 PM, MARION CROSS SCHOOL

Minutes

Present: Board members Addante, Callaghan, Day, Odell, Vitt; Administrators Gersen, Roberts, Kelley; and 14 members of the public. Recorded by R. Lohr

1. Call to order – Chair Callaghan called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Neil Odell was welcomed as a new voting Board member. He has been appointed to the Negotiations Committee and the Enrichment Grant Committee.

2. Approval of minutes

Linda Addante moved and Anne Day seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 5, as submitted and amended and the Executive Session of September 5, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. The change in item 2 in the last sentence should read: “Odell is the president of the Board of Directors of an organization that pays rent to the school.”

3. Communications and Reports

a) Report of Chair

Chair Callaghan announced that the next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 4, 7:00 PM at the Marion Cross School Library.

b) Reports of Administrators

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Gersen reported that the State energy department sent a report to the Marion Cross School revealing that it is substantially more energy-efficient than the average of other Vermont schools. This is, in part, the result of recent upgrading of lighting and weatherization at the school.

The quarterly financial report was reviewed. There is an unfavorable variance in the projected end-of-year fund balance of about \$59,000. The items associated with that variance were highlighted from the report. Over the course of the year the staff anticipates that it will be able to offset the forecasted negative fund balance by watching expenses in the school district. If necessary, funds can be transferred from the Building Reserve to cover the cost of the drainage projects and other building improvements funded in the operating budget. Additionally, it was announced that the final payment for the Dresden school construction aid has been received from Vermont.

Principal’s Report

Principal Kelley reported on the Giving Bowls Exhibition, Fire Prevention Week, and parking problems at the school. She reported that H1N1 vaccinations will be given at the school on November 2 and 5, and parent approval will be required. The vaccinations will also be available at DHMC for children who need to have their parents present when they receive the shot.

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4. PTO Report

The PTO's recent activities were reviewed. The new school directory is expected within two weeks and the Inspiring Kids fundraiser hopes to raise \$6,000. The PTO hopes to send its next newsletter by e-mail. The gift-making festival is scheduled for November 14.

5. Public Input

There were questions and discussions about the receipt and use of ARRA funds at Marion Cross School, whether a parents' portal could be used to show class progress and grades to parents, and the fact that report cards will be more uniform this year — particularly within each grade.

6. Business Requiring Discussion

Six-Day Schedule

Linda Kelley presented an overview of the six-day schedule. She noted that it addressed three concerns: equalizing the time spent in specials; maximizing time spent in academics; and minimizing the impact of holidays and snow days on the course schedule. The schedule can be found on the school Web site. The schedule is being used on a trial basis, and it will be evaluated at the end of the year. The change in the schedule has caused some challenges. One challenge is communicating the day-to-day activities to parents. Another issue regarded special-education students and needing to modify IEPs to reflect the new format and assuring parents that the expectations in the IEP could be met. Dr. Kelley thought that the combination of factors, including the new schedule, might require adding a .2 FTE special-education position.

Teacher Evaluation System

Principal Kelley reviewed the teacher evaluation system, which was described as mission- and teacher-driven. Teachers write their goals and develop written plans for attaining and measuring the achievement of those goals. An example of an actual teacher evaluation worksheet was reviewed.

Enrollment

Superintendent Gersen reviewed the enrollment projections for the Marion Cross School, citing the impact of full-day kindergarten and the projection variances that may occur related to future kindergarten and first-grade enrollment. He expects that it will be challenging next year to allocate the existing staff among the various grades.

7. Business Requiring Action

Principal Kelley stated that 14 members have been selected to serve on the Long Range Planning Committee, and that subcommittees will tackle each of the 3- to 5-year goals the committee decides on. The Board expressed appreciation for all those who volunteered to serve on the committee.

Linda Addante moved and Neil Odell seconded a motion to appoint members to the Long Range Planning Committee as outlined in the memo attached to the original meeting minutes packet. The motion passed unanimously.

Principal Kelley explained the PATH grant for staff wellness.

Linda Addante moved and Anne Day seconded a motion to accept \$6,050 for the PATH grant for staff wellness. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjournment

Linda Addante moved and Anne Day seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

**Marion Cross School
Principal's Report to the Board
November 4, 2009**

Marion Cross Installs New SmartBoards

Thanks to a grant from Medicaid, Marion Cross School has installed new SmartBoards in kindergarten, fourth- and sixth-grade classrooms as well as the technology lab. Here is the reaction of one teacher who is now teaching with a SmartBoard:

“These SmartBoards are really neat. In the twenty years of teaching in this school, I have not seen a piece of technology that has made such an impact on my students. I often have children whose attention issues have a substantial impact their ability to comprehend and retain information presented by the teacher in front of the class. Now they are engaged with the SmartBoards, attending and actually invested in what is happening in the classroom! This is such a wonderful addition. I just thought you all would like to know how impressed I am.”

Long-Range Planning Begins

Marion Cross School held its first Long-Range Planning committee meeting on October 19. The fourteen members of the committee are:

Carey Callaghan, Parent and Chair of the School Board
Tom Candon, Parent
Alida Ciampa, Technology Director
Brian Cook, Parent and Alumnus
Candace Crosby-Rogers, Special Education Case Manager
Anne Day, Parent and Board Member
Betsy Draper, First Grade Teacher
Becky French, Parent and Former Board Member
Wayne Gersen, Superintendent
Linda Kelley, Principal
Betsy Kohl, Parent
Jim Mackall, Parent and Former Board Member
Lauren Rihm, Parent
Karen Woodward, Reading Specialist

This committee will meet once a month throughout the school year. It will review the mission of Marion Cross School, collect input from members of the community on where they would like to see the school during the next three to five years, develop a vision, and write goals and strategies for the plan.

NH Institute on Disability Visits MCS

Cheryl M. Jorgensen, Ph.D., is project director and assistant research professor with the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire. She directs a teacher education project that prepares special education teachers to be inclusion facilitators. She is also the director of the National Inclusive Education Initiative for Students with Autism and Related Disabilities, supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Education. Since 1985, Dr. Jorgensen has worked with public school teachers, parents, and administrators to increase their commitment to and capacity for including students with disabilities in general education classes.

We are pleased announce that, on Thursday, October 29, Cheryl Jorgensen spent the morning at Marion Cross School. She worked with teachers and their teams to answer questions, present strategies, and offer advice to help us move forward with our efforts to improve inclusion of all students in general education classrooms.

Teachers have also been invited to attend her four-session workshop entitled, "Is it REALLY Inclusion? Core Beliefs and Practices in Inclusive Education." These workshops will be held throughout the school year.

Breakfast/Pizza with the Principal

The next Breakfast with the Principal will be held on Thursday, November 19, at 8:00 AM. The next Pizza with the Principal will be held the same day at 6:30 PM. The topic of discussion for both of these events will be "Marion Cross School in the Next 3-5 Years." As you know, the school is developing a long-range plan. Dr. Kelley is seeking parent input in this effort. Your opinions count! These meetings take place in the school office where space is limited. If you are interested in attending, please call Corinne Fenton at 649-1703 or email her at Corrine.fenton@marioncross.org

If you have topics of interest, please email Dr. Kelley at Linda.kelley@marioncross.org

H1N1 Vaccinations Postponed

We were recently informed by the Vermont Department of Health that we must postpone our H1N1 flu vaccination clinic for students. There has been a delay in the vaccine supply reaching the Vermont Department of Health. The new tentative dates are:

- Tuesday, December 1
- Tuesday, January 5

(This second date is for students 9 years of age and younger. They will need two vaccinations.)

Please call Jan Hopkins, Marion Cross School nurse, if you have any questions.

New Report Cards

The faculty ad hoc committee on report cards, chaired by Allison Litten, has worked over a year on standardizing report cards. In November, at the end of the first marking period, report cards (that are standardized for grades K-2, 3-4, and 5-6) will be sent to parents or given to them at parent conferences.

Giving Bowls Exhibition

The Giving Bowls fundraising event, held on October 4 at the Village Green, was a tremendous success. Over fifty volunteers raised \$8,381. Half of these funds will be sent to Sustainable Harvest International and half will be sent to Willing Hands. We thank Tracy Smith for her hard work in organizing this event.

Upcoming events

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| October 29 | Friends of Hanover/Norwich Schools |
| November 3 | Long-Range Planning Public Forum at Tracy Hall (7PM) |
| November 4 | Long-Range Planning Public Forum at Tracy Hall (9 AM) Norwich School Board Meeting |
| November 6 | Parent/Teacher Conferences (No School) |
| November 10 | Special Parent Night for Mrs. Keogh's class (6 PM) |
| November 11 | Veterans Day (No School) |
| November 18 | Faculty Inservice Half-day (Students dismissed at noon.) Math night with Debbie Carter (7PM) |
| November 19 | Breakfast with the Principal (8 AM) Pizza with the Principal (6:30 PM) |
| November 25-27 | Thanksgiving Holiday (No School) |
| December 1 | Tentative H1N1 Vaccination Date |