

MOUNT GREYLOCK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
LANESBOROUGH - WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

Mount Greylock Regional School Committee
Tuesday, January 17, 2006
7:00 P.M.

The One Thousand Twenty-First meeting of the Mount Greylock Regional School Committee was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2006, in the Bruce R. Carlson Library of Mount Greylock Regional High School, 1781 Cold Spring Road, Williamstown, MA.

Those in attendance were:

Mr. Archibald	Dr. Travis	Ms. Cole-Duffy
Mr. Kapiloff	Mr. Amuso	Mr. Pannesco
Mr. Langston	Ms. Kaiser	Mr. Livernois
Mr. O'Brien	Ms. Conroy	Ms. Livernois
Mr. Petricca		Rachel Hogan
Mr. Tinkham		Joshua Pearlman
Ms. White		Parents
		Press

- I. The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Chairman Petricca.
- II. Approval of Warrants
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Minutes of December 6, 2005
 - Ms. White indicated that she would like the following wording added to item II, B, 3 of the Minutes of December 6, 2005:

That all members of the School Committee try their hardest to adjust their trips, vacations, and other meetings around regularly scheduled School Committee meetings so there will be as full a Committee as possible at each meeting.
 - Mr. Langston commented that the By-Laws of the School Committee state that the election of officers is to be held by ballot and that one cannot vote in the negative on a ballot measure.
 - Ms. White stated that the election was set up this way and negative votes were asked for. If there had been the possibility of a contested election, she would have nominated somebody. Ms. White further stated that she knew that there was no hope that there could be any reason to nominate anybody else because a decision had already been made who was going to win. She suggested either leaving the minutes as is or having a new election because the outcome of the election had been determined by five members of the Committee before the meeting began.
 - Chairman Petricca said "Sally, that's such nonsense."
 - Ms. White indicated she wanted the above comment on record.

It was moved by Mr. Langston and seconded by Mr. O'Brien to have section II, A, 1, paragraph 4, of the minutes of December 6, 2005, read:

Mr. Archibald, Mr. Kapiloff, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Tinkham voted in the affirmative. Strike the next two paragraphs; and in lieu of MOTION CARRIED 5-1-1, substitute Mr. Petricca was elected.

Mr. Langston, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Tinkham voted in the affirmative.

Mr. Archibald, Mr. Kapiloff, and Ms. White voted in the negative.

Chairman Petricca abstained.

MOTION DEFEATED 3-3-1

- There was a lengthy discussion about the election itself and what was discussed among Committee members prior to the election.

It was moved by Mr. Langston that his name be moved to the abstention category because he didn't vote for the chairman or the vice-chairman of the Committee. There was no second.

- Ms. White stated that she would like the minutes of the January 17, 2006, School Committee Meeting to reflect that in the last election of November 2004, in a contested election with five candidates, she came out No. 1 in the town of Williamstown and that Chairman Petricca has now said that Ms. White is unqualified to serve as an officer of the School Committee.

It was moved by Mr. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Tinkham to accept the Minutes of December 6, 2005, with amendments.

MOTION CARRIED 7-1-0

B. Minutes and Executive Session Minutes of December 22, 2005

- Mr. Langston would like the following recorded in the Minutes of December 22, 2005, section III, A:

Mr. O'Brien was also opposed to the teachers' contract because it could potentially continue the same cost-sharing into a fifth or sixth year if the contract did not settle.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Mr. Archibald to approve the Minutes and Executive Session Minutes of December 22, 2005, with amendments.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

IV. Agenda Requests from Attendees

A. Parking Lot List

1. Finding a Potable Water Source for the School
 - Chairman Petricca to meet with Design Engineer of SEA on Thursday, January 19, 2006, in the morning.
 - Contract with SEA has been signed.

2. K-12 Consolidation
 - Putting together financial information to make determination if it is feasible for Hancock and New Ashford to enter into an agreement.
 - Recognize a savings in transportation and also some potential savings in administration. A savings in the vicinity of \$500,000-\$600,000.
 - Try to put together all data and come up with calculations on how to split it as a total region, then it would be feasible for Hancock and New Ashford to enter into this compared to their current costs.
 - Next meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2006, at 7:30 p.m. at Lanesborough Elementary School.

3. School Building Committee
 - There was a public hearing held on January 10, 2006
 - All School Committee members were encouraged to attend
 - Next public meeting January 24, 2006, at 7 p.m. at Mount Greylock in the library
 - Another meeting will be taking place on January 31, 2006, at 7 p.m. at Lanesborough Elementary School in the cafeteria. The content of the meeting of January 24 and January 31 will be the same.

4. Hancock Tuition Payments/Policy on Late Tuition Payments/When Tuition Should be Paid
 - Chairman Petricca to meet with Mr. Amuso on Thursday, January 19, 2006.
 - Bill Ballen will be calling Mr. Amuso to go over numbers.
 - Mr. Tinkham feels the whole picture regarding tuition needs to be looked at.
 - Chairman Petricca feels this should be looked at down the road and it should be set for this year. It took two years to resolve the formula.
 - Mr. O'Brien feels the formula was fairer now to all parties involved than it was before.
 - The goal was to have a formula that everybody felt was fair.

5. School Committee Role in Budget
 - Ms. White and Mr. Archibald did not get together with Mr. Amuso.
 - Mr. Amuso brought Ms. White and Mr. Archibald up-to-date prior to this meeting with the process he is using.
 - Mr. Amuso is working with the Curriculum Leaders to build the budget from the bottom up.

- Mr. Archibald feels the School Committee role should be limited to letting Superintendent Travis and Mr. Amuso put together the budget and then bringing it to the School Committee.
- Mr. Amuso stated that the budget is being done differently than it has been done historically. Curriculum Leaders have been asked to spearhead the budget process for their departments. It is hoped to glean a very clear set of priorities for each of the disciplines the Curriculum Leaders are responsible for. They have been asked to work with faculty members to compile a list of needs and also, in priority order, the wants they have. The focus will be on academic goals within each discipline.
- Initial budget package from the Curriculum Leaders is expected at the end of this week.
- The process of accumulating all the data and coming out with an initial report will take place.
- A meeting will be held with the Administrative Team and Curriculum Leaders to eliminate lowest priority wants until the budget is close to what the administration believes is realistic.
- Ms. White and Mr. Archibald are invited to be part of the process once all the initial numbers are in.
- Chairman Petricca inquired as to what the write-up page would look like. Mr. Amuso indicated he already had the initial write-up, but some goals may change as a result of the NEASC report; i.e., MCAS scores and other high priority issues.
- A lengthy conversation took place on the budget process. Mr. Langston feels community members, parents, and students should have input regarding the budget. Chairman Petricca indicated there is not enough time to do that this year. By going through this process this year, it can be something that can be done for the next budget process.
- Mr. Amuso indicated the first draft of budget should be available by the end of January or early February. It will not resemble a completed budget, and it will be more than Mount Greylock can afford.
- The budget will have to be voted on in March, 45 days before the town election.

6. Policy Manual

- To be discussed later in the meeting.

7. District Agreement between Lanesborough and Williamstown

- Mr. Tinkham requested that this item be added to the Parking Lot.
- Chairman Petricca indicated that the Committee will deal with this issue in May, after the budget process has been completed.

V. Agenda Requests from Student Advisory Council - None

VI. Public Comments

Anne Hogeland, co-president of the PTO, spoke to apprise the School Committee as well as the public of the following:

- At its last meeting the PTO had a very interesting discussion about promoting tolerance and respect at Mount Greylock. Superintendent Travis gave a very thorough discussion of what the administration has been implementing on many fronts.
- Next Meeting - Monday, February 13, 2006, at 7 p.m. in the library - Ed Cedarbaum of Northern Berkshire Safe Homes Initiative will be presenting what he has been doing at a number of schools in terms of encouraging parents to take measures to make sure that underage drinking and substance abuse does not happen in their homes.
- There is a quilt made by Beth Nesbitt that will be raffled off at the Food of Love event to be held on Friday, February 10, 2006.
- At Your Service fundraiser, which is a major fundraiser, will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2006, from 3-5 p.m. at Goodrich Hall, Route 2, Williamstown. (Next to Williams College Museum of Art eye sculpture.) The event is free, and refreshments and musical entertainment will be provided. The hope is to raise \$5,000-\$6,000. The money raised will be used to enhance the website as well as other technological changes.

VII. Questions & Suggestions - None

VIII. Financial Report

- Mr. Amuso passed out a copy of his financial report to the School Committee. There is nothing unusual or outstanding on it. Mr. Amuso indicated that in regard to revenues, a Chapter 70 payment was received but was not reflected on this report.

IX. Reports

A. Accolades

- Thank you to Joseph Sicotte and his senior project mentor Ralph Patillo for bringing many talented Mount Greylock students together for his "Disney Songs from the Heart" production. The proceeds from these performances went to the American Heart Association in memory of Joseph's grandfather.
- Thank you to advisor Shawn Burdick and the rest of the members of the National Honor Society for hosting the annual senior and graduate reception on Friday, December 23. Many of last year's graduates attended and shared their experiences transitioning from high school to college.
- Thank you to the sophomore class advisor, Ms. Cece, and sophomores for conducting a "Make Your Teacher Sing" class fundraiser. Students made contributions in the name of a teacher. Teachers receiving the most in contributions were obliged to sing a seasonal song to students during lunch. In hopes they keep their day jobs, thanks go to Mr. Dils, Mr. Floyd, and Ms. Keeley.
- Many students in the SMILE group helped our communities in many ways during December. Volunteers helped with the Holiday Walk activities, gathered gifts for two needy families, and sang carols and dispensed stained glass gifts to seniors.

- Thank you to the high school chorus for entertaining different groups on December 23.
- Thank you to Susan Engel, Director of the Program in Teaching at Williams College, for hosting a December reception celebrating teaching for elementary and secondary teachers.
- Progress is being made to get the first middle school after-school enrichment program up and running. A grant from Williams College and a group of college student volunteer instructors will be offering programs matched to our students' interests. Barbara Robertson and Kaatje White have been working with our middle school teachers to bring all the final details together.
- The entire Language Department planned and conducted a wonderful middle school student World Culture Round Robin. Students in Spanish, French, and Latin classes put on a series of skits, sang native songs, made cultural displays, and prepared foods representative of language-group countries. In round-robin fashion students "toured" different countries and were engaged by others in these planned activities.
- Thank you to English teacher Christina Morrissey for making a faculty presentation about the web program "Turnitin.com" which checks student essays for proper citation strategies and possible plagiarism.
- Thank you to Pat Blackman and the 8th grade team for preparing students to hold a well-prepared series of student debates on current Constitutional issues.
- Juvenile Court Justice Locke gave a powerful presentation about consequences for inappropriate behaviors to our 7th and 8th graders on January 9. This follows on an earlier meeting with team teachers, administrators, and counselors just prior to vacation. I am so grateful for this generous contribution of time and talent.
- Thank you to John Elder for taping the first in a series of public meeting sponsored by the Building Committee concerning Mount Greylock's facility conditions and the facility's ability to satisfy future educational needs.
- The Building Committee members have been so generous with their time to reach out many ways to many community forums. Outreach meetings have been held with town boards, elementary PTOs, and the general public.
- Thank you to Superintendent Rose Ellis and Superintendent William Ballen for arranging meetings with principals to open a discussion about how to build better transitions for students between elementary grades and the middle school. They have arranged meetings to look at the Attorney General's Safe Schools Initiative and consider some mutual programming around teaching of tolerance and respect.
- Thank you to Mrs. Slocik and the student officers for meeting with me to discuss ideas about ways high school students can to get involved to more clearly foster the concepts of tolerance and respect throughout the school. Several excellent suggestions were made to get actively involved and the hope is that future meetings will more clearly define and prioritize activities.
- Congratulations to 33 students from the Class of 2006 who qualified for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. They are Katelin Bailey, Samantha Baldwin, Lucas Beverly, Rorry Brenner, Emma Brooke, Gregory Burton, Alison Collins, Kyle Flynn-Kasuba, Jadeene Gabay, Kathryn Galusha, Rachel Glover, Joshua Grauman, Rachael Hogan, Lucas Jandl, Benjamin Just, Alexander Karampatsos, Seth Kelley, Jessie Kirkwood, Alexander Kohut, Spencer Kowitz, Carl Kubler, Flora Lim, Jesse MacDonald, Dustin Nalven, Simon Reinhardt, Amelia Richardson, Jennifer Rosenthal, Jason Silberstein, Christopher Spencer, Kejia Tang, Elizabeth Weimer,

Katherine White, and Kael Woodyard.

Mr. Langston complimented Mr. Blackman and the eighth grade team for holding the debates. He felt it was the kind of public educational process Mount Greylock needs more of.

X. Discussion Items

A. Annual Student Health Survey

- Mount Greylock has participated in this health survey since 2001 that is put out by the Northern Berkshire Coalition.
- They are now using a nationally-approved survey. The information about this survey will be attached to a letter that will go home to all parents of students. The letter will give them an option to opt out, information, and also a website where they can go and see the questionnaire the students will be asked to complete. The survey is anonymous.
- The District receives valuable information when the survey is aggregated beyond Mount Greylock's student population and they see all of Berkshire County attitudes toward a number of health and risk factors that students expose themselves to. It helps the District be better informed and allows them to prepare programs (or community programs) to respond to the results.

It was moved by Ms. White and seconded by Mr. Tinkham that Mount Greylock Regional School District participates in the annual student health survey.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

XI. Action Items

A. Approval of Home Schooling Plans

- The state requires anyone interested in home schooling present a curriculum assessment piece to be reviewed by the Director of Student Services. This has been reviewed by Ms. Araoz, and she recommends approval of the four home-schooling plans that are in place.
- Mr. Tinkham inquired as to how the pupils get counted in data reported to the state. Superintendent Travis responded that the state gets a report on an annual basis of students who are residents of communities and if they attend a private school in- or out-of-state or if they are home-schooled.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Mr. O'Brien to approve the four home-schooling plans that are in place at Mount Greylock Regional School District.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. Graduation Date

- Rachel Hogan and Joshua Pearlman, senior class officers, indicated a letter was sent home to parents asking for their input regarding changing graduation exercises from Sunday, June 11, 2006, to Saturday, June 10, 2006. They received 25 responses to the letter with only three negative responses.

It was moved by Mr. Archibald and seconded by Mr. Tinkham to allow the senior class to change the date of graduation exercises from Sunday, June 11, 2006, to Saturday, June 10, 2006.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. Line Item Transfers

- Superintendent Travis is asking for two line item transfers to come out of general supplies. However, one of the transfers may not be necessary.
1. Line Item Transfer of \$500 for the Middle School Enrichment Program.
 - There will be a grant from Williams College which will start the process going. Materials and supplies need to be provided for some of the activities. The proposal was brought to the PTO for their endorsement, and they thought very highly of moving this program into Mount Greylock and piloting it with the middle school.
 - Mr. Archibald inquired if there will be further significant expenditures in line item transfers to keep this program going. Superintendent Travis responded that this line item transfer and the Williams grant will be sufficient for the pilot project for this year.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Mr. O'Brien to approve the line item transfer of \$500 out of general supplies.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Line Item Transfer of \$600 for Emergency Response Team Refresher Training
 - This transfer is related to a team in the school that responds to a variety of situations, not necessarily school-wide. In the event there is some tragedy involving an individual student, the school needs to get the support of staff and deal with other students who may be friends.
 - This type of emergency response also ties very directly into how the school responds to students who may find themselves in some of the bullying situations that were discussed.
 - Mount Greylock has partnered with North Adams in the past in a training that took place a year ago.
 - Superintendent Travis would like to go ahead with a motion to transfer this money. However, the Department of Education indicated that this training matched the other initiatives for which they are providing some grant money. Superintendent Travis believes this amount of money will be approved; but in the event it is not, he would like to be able to start with a purchase order. If Mount Greylock gets reimbursed, then the money will be transferred back into general supplies.
 - Mr. Archibald inquired if there was a regulatory requirement for this type of training or if it is something that Mount Greylock feels is a good thing to do. Ms. Cole-Duffy responded that there is a regulation for schools to have a working plan, and that directive comes from the Attorney General's office. So

our school is now participating and bringing our plan up to a standard. This particular training, per say, is not required, but training in general is. This is what we have access to, and it is the most cost-efficient training.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Ms. White to approve the line item transfer of \$600 out of general supplies.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- D. Selection of School Committee Member for Wellness Policy Committee
- There is a new requirement from the Department of Education that we take a look at a range of things, including food provided for students in the cafeteria, vending machines, activities for students, health programs, providing nutrition and other wellness information. We will take a look at policies and practices in place and either affirm that they are sufficient, can be improved, or be brought up to a different set of standards as a result of the information that this grant we have now will bring to the school. It is a review of what is in place and what more could be done.
 - Mr. Archibald indicated that he would be happy to serve on this committee.
- E. Approval to Conduct a One Semester Course
- When Superintendent Travis provided the presentation over the Program of Studies and classes in the fall, he asked that the Committee approve a fraction of a teaching position to reduce the size of a geometry class which was very large. The full complement of budgeted positions was not used up at the time; and in his going over all of the assignments, he overlooked the fact that on the Program of Studies in the second semester there was a film course.
 - There are now 27 students enrolled in the film course.
 - It would be awkward to withdraw this course and find alternatives for 27 students.
 - There are funds available to cover this .1 FTE position due to the fact that new hires came in at lower steps than projected in the 2005-2006 budget. The cost would be approximately \$6,700.
 - Ms. White inquired as to when the film course was offered. Superintendent Travis responded that when the decision was made to go with a four-person team for seventh grade and a six-person team for eighth grade, there was the ability to shift a position to the high school. A list of possible electives was drawn up and put into the computer. The film course was off of this list of possible electives and was assigned a period in the schedule. As the guidance counselors came in sporadically throughout the summer and looked at the schedule and where they could help out by plugging in students, they were filling students into the course. When the Program came out, it came out as a course where a final decision, as far as the administrators were concerned, had not been made. In fact, the instructor was given a contract that showed a .6 FTE even though the course was there.
 - Ms. White inquired who the instructor is. Superintendent Travis responded Trudy Ames.
 - Mr. Archibald inquired if the money is in the overall budget. Superintendent Travis explained that this exceeds the FTE budget by .1 of a position and that there is money in the overall budget because a budget was built based on “x” number of staff members being here. However, salaries of individuals who were here were used.

Some of those staff members took leaves of absence, and some took other positions. As a result of the new hires, there is money to cover this FTE that exceeds what the budget was built upon.

- Mr. Archibald inquired if the E&D be above the amount that we had budgeted at the end of our approving this amount of money. Mr. Amuso responded that he does not anticipate having to ask for funds. There is significant pressure on our utility budget. Mr. Amuso expects to come very close to the figure budgeted and be in the black.
- Ms. White would like to discuss electives on a larger scale at another time.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Mr. Kapiloff to approve conducting the one-semester course at a cost of approximately \$6,700.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

F. Policy Manual Development

- Glenn Koocher, the executive director of MASC, in his work with the regional district also played the role at the meeting last week to bring a copy of the MASC's Policy Manual and a proposal that would involve them very directly in helping us create our Policy Manual.
- It is divided into 26 separate chapters. It has an excellent reference table. It uses a new alpha searching system which is now standard in federal education legislation, and the state is moving in that direction with their state regulations. Instead of Chapter 72, they will be moving to a numeric system in the near future.
- The MASC works by initially taking your existing policy manual, going through it, taking what they think is commentary about things that are outdated, that are just fine, other things that they would recommend tweaking, and those things that are missing entirely and work back with a sub-committee to make recommendations.
- A chapter or two will be brought back to a committee at a time and adopt an entire section rather than one policy at a time, although people may want to put one aside because it raises issues and so on.
- Superintendent Travis has had a discussion with Williams College to see if they would help with an initial grant that would help us get this process under way this year. He is waiting for a response.
- There are two costs associated with this. One is approximately \$6,000 for the hard copy and the consultation. They also, for an additional fee, have a procedure where they put the policy manual on line so it is not only accessible to everybody on line but it is also then revised as the state regulations are changed so the policy statement that really comes from state law automatically then gets put on all of those that have a web based policy manual.
- MASC is very flexible in how many years payment would be sequenced over. They would take it over three years. They would not count this as the first fiscal year if that fit into our budget needs or we were not to get a grant to get this underway. Assuming we did get a grant, Superintendent Travis would like endorsement that we would begin the process this year.
- Ms. White inquired as to whether the \$9,000 was for perpetual care. Superintendent Travis responded that there were some revisions that were not quite clear to him on how it was done. During the course of the development for the District, because it could take up to two or three years if this were on-line, all of those revisions would come along with that cost estimate.

- Mr. Tinkham volunteered to be part of the sub-committee to work on the Policy Manual.

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Ms. White to begin the process of updating the policy manual with Massachusetts Association of School Committees at a cost of \$6,000.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

XII. Other Business - None

XIII. Administrative Reports

A. Report on Response to Bullying

- Superintendent Travis gave an update on what has transpired since his last update on bullying which was given on December 22, 2005:
 - Increased supervision in classrooms and during student transition times
 - More adult supervision outside the middle school area
 - Mrs. Kaiser's office is now in the middle school area
 - Judge Locke met with teachers and administration. On December 9, 2005, she also made a presentation to the entire seventh and eighth grade. This was a most effective presentation. The presentation was taped, and the tape has been made available to Willinet and was also given to the Lanesborough PTO.
 - Administrative meetings have been held with the Superintendents and principals from Lanesborough and Williamstown. Discussion included initiatives on several levels. The principals will be talking about multiple activities to transition students to the middle school.
 - Anti-Violence program called Second Step
 - Nationally endorsed program
 - Individual from DOE met with the administration, team leaders, guidance, and Ms. Cole-Duffy
 - The DOE extended to us a grant to acquire materials. They will assume all costs of training all of the seventh and eighth grade teachers, substitute teacher costs, and the emergency training program.
 - Training for teachers will be held on February 7 and 8.
 - Williamstown Elementary School is using the elementary version of this program. Lanesborough has agreed to purchase it for use in Lanesborough. A program that has a teacher and parent component to it and builds a vocabulary and common expectation on how to intervene and discuss appropriate behaviors with students would be something that we would all have in common and there would be a continuum.
 - Superintendent Travis talked to the PTOs about what happened and tried to assure parents that we have a safe school and we are taking additional steps. The PTO is going to help sponsor some parent meetings. There is a concern about cyber bullying and the exposure of some of our students on the Internet.
 - A letter from Ms. Cole-Duffy was published in "The Forum" and "The Beacon."

- Superintendent Travis will be contributing a piece to “The Forum” regarding an experience that he had when he was in school.

- There was a faculty meeting where the issue of bullying was raised, and Superintendent Travis asked specifically for thoughts on how we could get students involved. This resulted in Superintendent Travis's meeting with the Student Council and getting some of the thoughts they, particularly the upperclassmen, had in playing a role in addressing these issues. Not that they saw themselves from being free from this, but it was a very good discussion about how when they were in middle school they felt intimidated and thought that maybe they could do a better job of being the big guys and contributing something.
- On a weekly basis there is a team who meets to review any students who are in need of watch, in need of follow-up, or situations that have the potential to develop. The team consists of team leaders, Ms. Cole-Duffy, Mr. Pannesco, Ms. Kaiser and Superintendent Travis.
- Over the last year the school has had contact through one of our middle school teachers with Professor Sandstrom at Williams College who has a particular background in youth behavior. She has agreed to come in and meet with our middle school teachers and give us her perspective. She may have some students who might find a capacity and work with us.
- Judge Locke teaches a course and offered some of her students to come in and look at our handbook and make some suggestions and sit in on classes and give us their point of view.
- A combined presentation from the Attorney General's office and the District Attorney's office has been scheduled for January 26. It will involve the administrators and the superintendents from all of the feeder schools and Mount Greylock. It will be an opportunity to learn more about the Attorney General's Safe School Initiative. It is around this policy that Superintendent Travis invited the PTOs or the School Councils of the other schools to get involved with a broader discussion with us regarding if there are elements of those policies that all of the schools might want to put together. There are procedures for intervention, reporting, and education. Superintendent Travis left copies of the Safe School Initiative in Lanesborough and the Williamstown Superintendent has that. The purpose of the training is to give us more information about how that initiative will take place.
- Superintendent Travis hopes there is an opportunity to engage parents very directly in a conversation, not just parent forums that the PTO might sponsor, but to come in and see how our Second Step program works and respond to the materials that come home and also around the Safe School Initiative because it will involve parents of students who will eventually be coming our way.
- Superintendent Travis has given all members of the faculty a copy of a publication, Responding to Hate at School: A Guide for Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators, which will be used in the peer mediation program. There are a number of excellent activities to do with students and suggestions for faculty on follow-up. There is also a free magazine which they put out called Teaching Tolerance. All a teacher has to do is sign up. They put out excellent material on Civil Rights educational materials at no cost as long as teachers are on their mailing list.

- Mr. Archibald commented that he was very impressed with what was taken on and the sense of urgency with which it was done. He also inquired if any results have been seen yet. Superintendent Travis responded most definitely. Students have been provided with services. Incidents are being looked into further; i.e., is there something more behind the immediate incident? We are checking for patterns. Ms. Kaiser responded that things have settled down and the school is focusing on educating students right now. The school is taking a more proactive route. Ms. White reiterated Mr. Archibald's praise for the administration's and faculty's roles in dealing with this issue. Superintendent Travis indicated that it was a team effort and everyone has contributed in a meaningful way.
- Mr. Archibald also inquired if the more up-front offenders have been dealt with to a resolution? Superintendent Travis replied that some of the cases are still making their way through the Juvenile Court system; other situations have been referred to appropriate services--Department of Youth Services and the Department of Social Services. Now there is intervention with an entire family as opposed to just the individual student.
- Mr. Archibald inquired if it is less disruptive in school. Superintendent Travis answered that now that there have been more parent/teacher team meetings, parents are in on whatever behavior contract we may have developed for expectations of the student. Every contract may not be successful, so it gets revisited and revised.
- Mr. Langston inquired if the Second Step program was going to be a long-term effort. Ms. Kaiser responded that it absolutely would.
- Mr. Kapiloff inquired if policy changes are anticipated. Superintendent Travis indicated that it would be submitted to the School Council for tweaking and modifications.

XIV. School Committee Comments & Observations

- A. Chairman Petricca announced that the Williamstown Financial Committee would like the School Committee to meet with them on Thursday, March 23, 2006.
- B. Mr. Langston commented that he attended a regional caucus in Blandford, Massachusetts. There were representatives of regional schools in Western Massachusetts. There is a sense that regional schools are under enormous strain, and there is a readiness on the part of the legislature to address difficulties. The next caucus is going to be held on Cape Cod. He feels the Committee needs to appoint a liaison and be more involved in the discussions. Mr. Langston, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Tinkham will work together in regard to this.
- C. Mr. Langston brought up that the Committee should be doing some broader range thinking in regard to secondary education in the future.
- D. Mr. Tinkham commented on the length of the minutes that the Committee has been receiving. Other Committee members like the detailed minutes. It was decided to keep the minutes detailed.

- E. Mr. Tinkham also commented on the distribution of the School Committee package. Mr. Tinkham and other Committee members like receiving the information electronically and as a packet on the table at the meeting. Ms. White will continue to receive her packet as a hard copy.
- F. Mr. Tinkham inquired if the accreditation report had been received. It has not been received.
- G. Mr. Tinkham also commented on getting VHS tapes of School Committee meetings and other functions to Lanesborough for airing to Lanesborough residents.
- H. Mr. Langston suggested changing the policy on canceling School Committee meetings when there is a snow day. Superintendent Travis indicated there was a much broader picture to take into consideration than arbitrarily changing the policy.

XV. Time, Place and Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, February 7, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Bruce R. Carlson Library, Mount Greylock Regional High School, 1781 Cold Spring Road, Williamstown, MA.

XVI. Executive Session - None

XVII. Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Tinkham and seconded by Mr. Archibald to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted:

William D. Travis
District Secretary

Michele L. Conroy
District Recorder