Oyster River Cooperative School District

REGULAR MEETING

July 18, 2007 Oyster River High School Room 124 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:	JoAnn Portalupi, David Taylor, Stacey Brooks, Joe Quimby, Shirley Thompson, Kimberly Clark, Kim Starbranch Not Present: Student Representative Max DiSesa
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:	Blaine Cox, Tom Zarnowski and HS Principal Laura Rogers
PRESS OTHERS:	There were five visitors present

I CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson JoAnn Portalupi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II COMMENTS BY VISITORS: Roger Spiedel, a Durham resident, spoke to the Board. He asked the School Board that if the number of students in the District is declining why is the budget so high. He emphasized to the Board that the school budget spending needs to be curtailed. He would like to see the cost per pupil at $12,000 per student in next year's budget.

Henry Brackett, a Lee resident, spoke to the Board regarding Policy AF. He would like to see the Education Improvement Committee be reinstated under Policy AF. He also spoke to the Board about benefits for the Assistant Principals at the High School. He feels that their benefits are too generous. He would also like to see all the District contracts put online for the public to be able to review.

III PRELIMINARY ACTIONS

A. Announcements: None

B. Correspondence: Shirley Thompson mentioned Debbie Nichols who is a resident of Durham and teaches in the Rollinsford School District received The Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching by President George W. Bush.

Kimberly Clark reported receiving an email on the time clock system. She also asked about the Board correspondence on the grading scale that was originally placed on the web site but is no longer there.

C. Commendations: None

D. Approval of 6/20 Minutes: Revisions: Page 3 Insert "Mission Statement" before Goals. Page 3 Delete: "JoAnn Portalupi mentioned that when the Board sets goals it is typical on education issues" and replace with "JoAnn Portalupi mentioned that she sees the spring yearly goal setting as a time to focus on educational issues. Goals and or parameters regarding budgetary issues are best addressed at the onset of building the yearly budget." Page 4 move the 2nd paragraph to the top of the page. Page 6 Replace "Randy Loring" with Randy Warren."

Shirley Thompson moved to approve the minutes of 6/20 with the above revisions, 2nd by Kim Starbranch. Motion approved 7 – 0.

E. Approval of Manifests:
VM#60=$209,829.97 – 6/21/07
VM#61=$300.00 – 6/22/07
VM#62=$77,417.88 – 6/28/07
VM#63=$625,378.71 – 6/29/07
VM#1=$471,072.45 – 7/17/07
PR#26=$2,296,597.98 - $6/29/07
PR#1=$124,527.99 – 7/13/07

IV BOARD ACTIVITY

A. Committee Reports: Kimberly Clark reported that the Ad Hoc Committee will be meeting on July 19th at the high school library for a grade scale discussion.

Kim Starbranch reported that the Policy Committee met on July 9th. They discussed Policy BG, Teacher's Guild/School Board Liaison Committee, and board/employee communication. The next meeting is set for August 9th at 7:30.

JoAnn Portalupi reported that the Negotiations Committee met and she will update the Board in the nonpublic portion of the meeting.

B. Board Goals Discussion: JoAnn Portalupi talked about the Board Goals. At the last meeting each Board member was asked to list their top two

initiatives that they would like to see as Board Goals this year. The two goals that were at the top of the Board members list are:

1. Develop a measurable plan by June 2008 to implement the Mission Statement.
2. Develop a plan for student-to student feedback for all students of all ages to be implemented in the 08/09 school year.

The Board discussed the "big laundry list" of charges that they are currently working on and agreed that possibly they could be listed along side these goals.

David Taylor moved to accept the above proposed Board Goals for 2007-08, 2nd by Joe Quimby. Motion approved unanimously.

C. Appoint Board Representative to Nutritional Standards Committee: Superintendent Colter reported that they will be meeting on July 31st. He reported that this Committee will meet once a month in the evenings. At this time, there were no volunteers to be the Board Representative to this Committee. Please let JoAnn or Superintendent Colter know if you are interested in being on this Committee.

D. Board/Towns Joint Meeting: JoAnn Portalupi discussed the three committees: School Funding Formula, Recreation and Playing Fields and the Budget with the Board. The Board agreed that they need to make sure that there are representatives attending the meeting from all three towns. JoAnn will confirm this with Colette.

Superintendent Colter mentioned that the Board had discussed the possibility of filming these meetings. Because the meeting on July 31st will be mainly an organizational meeting, he recommended and the Board agreed to film the next meeting which will be on September 11.

E. Community Survey Re: Fields: The Board considered the possible advantages of a community survey regarding future plans for recreation and athletic fields. David Taylor had asked for this to be an agenda item because if off-site fields are going to be on the March Warrant then the Board needs to decide if they want a community survey. Joe Quimby and Kimberly Clark mentioned that this was discussed at the community workshop and it was suggested to them to have a community workshop to discuss this with the public. David Taylor mentioned that there have been forums in the past to discuss the fields without success.

JoAnn Portalupi feels that some approach is needed to get a sense of what the community wants. She favors a statistical survey or focus group.

The Board will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

V ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. *My Voice* Survey Results: Laura Rogers provided a report to the Board on student responses to last year's *My Voice* Survey. While the student responses to the questions on the "My Voice" survey are more positive than those of students from across the state, the survey data still point out that there are areas where we can improve as a school. In an effort to gain more insight into student feelings about their high school experience, Laura met with Pam Raiford and students in May.

In general, students agreed that the results were an accurate representation of students' feelings about high school. Many students, especially juniors and seniors felt that there was little the administration or faculty would be able to do to increase positive responses among upperclassmen. Freshman, by contrast, thought there were a number of things that could be done to improve the overall climate of the school. They maintained that freshmen need to be respected more by both teachers and older students and that there should be more support available to ninth graders.

In addition, students in all groups had the following suggestions to offer:

- Start the college selection ~~progress~~ **process** earlier and advertise college planning nights more widely.
- Increase the amount of choices available to students within classrooms including choices for reading, project/papers and other learning based activities.
- Recognize students who are good people as opposed to those who achieve academically. Awards ceremonies shouldn't just be about a few really smart students getting a lot of recognition.
- There needs to be more applicability to the "real world" and teachers need to be willing to explain more clearly how classroom activities will help prepare students for the future.
- Improve the transition from the Middle School to the High School with activities, information and more support for ninth graders.
- More activities that blend academics and social opportunities (example: Diversity Day).

B. High School 07-08 Attendance Protocol: Laura Rogers reported that in an effort to streamline the protocols surrounding ~~attending~~, **attendance** the material in the student handbook has been revised. The most substantive change is the adjustment in the ramification for excessive absenteeism. We will be evaluating attendance on a quarterly basis and the consequence for exceeding the maximum days of unexcused absence will be receiving a grade that is one point below passing for the grading period in question. An attendance failure will appear as an "E" on student report cards. This change will allow for more timely notification to parents that there is an attendance issue, and will be easier to implement as there will be a uniform number of acceptable absences regardless of the length of the class in question. In addition, it gives students the opportunity to improve their attendance and still receive credit for the course. The previous practice of denying credit at the end of the course did not.

Attendance Policy:

1. During any given quarter, a student may accrue up to five absences from any class before he/she will earn an administrative failure for that class.
2. Administrative failure will mean the awarding of an "E" for that quarter.
3. All students who exceed five absences in any class during a given quarter and who have not been truant will be able to appeal to a committee composed of the assistant principals and the school nurse.
4. It should be noted that the following absences will not count against the student in regard to the attendance policy:
   Court appointments
   Religious Holidays
   Bereavement
   School Sponsored Activity
5. A note from a parent explaining all absences of any type must be submitted within three days of a student's return to school.

C. Freshman Orientation: Laura Rogers reported that Freshman Orientation will take place on Tuesday, August 28th from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. There are a variety of activities planned including a scavenger hunt around the building, group activities with junior/senior mentors, building tours and a lunch hosted by the Durham Police Department. Participation in Freshman Orientation is optional, but we encourage all students who are new to Oyster River to attend.

Feedback from previous participants has been very positive. It gives new students the opportunity to locate their classrooms, lockers and acclimate themselves to the building.

The Freshman Mentor Program has been expanded to include opportunities for upperclassmen mentors and their freshmen buddies to meet throughout the year. Mentors participated in training at the Brown Center last spring that provided them with experience in team building and facilitating group activities.

David Taylor asked Laura why Freshman Orientation was not required for all incoming freshman. She replied that it is optional because it is not one of the 180 required days of school and transportation is not provided. She added that they have about a 90% to 95% attendance rate of incoming freshman.

VI OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
None

VII SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
A. Summer School Fees: Superintendent Colter reported to the Board that other than students assigned to summer school as part of their IEP, families are asked to pay a fee to attend summer school. He noted that scholarships are available for families that need assistance. This is a practice that is typical of other schools in the area.

B. High School Diplomas: Superintendent Colter reported that in the high school diplomas that were handed out this year the "v" in River has a new twist. The printer will be printing new diplomas. Those involved can contact the high school after August 1st for more information.

C. Homework Den: Superintendent Colter reported to the Board on the Homework Den. He referred to correspondence from Estie Ott, Den Coordinator at the High School. On average eight students attended daily. By the end of the year, a core group of students came regularly. They reported that the homework DEN helped them to improve their grades.

D. Posting of Public Correspondence on the District Web Page: Superintendent Colter reported that they are now posting written correspondence to the School Board on the School District's Web Page.

E. Traffic Update: Superintendent Colter gave report regarding the traffic safety concerns raised by two community members. He has met with JoAnn Portalupi, Blaine Cox and the Durham Police Chief about what options are available to use. He noted that everyone is aware that there is a concern. They are doing their best to remind everyone what the posted speed limit is.

F. High School Foreign Language Program: Superintendent Colter and Laura Rogers reported that there are twenty-five more students requesting world language classes for 07/08 than there were in the year that just ended. In spite of a maximum effort to balance student loads through scheduling, we are unable to absorb these students into the existing sections. Because of their distribution, and the fact that our French classes were at maximum capacity already we need to add a .4 French teacher to our ranks for the fall.

The cost of the.4 position would be approximately $20,070. This is more than offset by the savings to the budget of Kay Morgan's retirement.

David Taylor moved to approve the addition of a .4 World Language Position at the high school, 2nd by Kim Starbranch. Motion approved 7 – 0.

VIII AGENDA PLANNING

8/1 The School Board will meet at the Middle School for a tour given by Marcia Ross

IX CLOSING ACTIONS
A. Future Meeting Dates: 8/1 and 8/15
B. Special Activities/Meetings: 7/31 Board town meeting, 7/19 Ad Hoc Grade Scale Discussion

X COMMENTS BY VISITORS: Chris Mueller, a resident of Durham, reported that the town of Durham has appointed 5 members to attend the tri-town meeting on July 31st.

NONPUBLIC SESSION: Upon roll call vote (RSA 91-A:3 II a,b,c,d,e)

Shirley Thompson moved to enter into nonpublic session, 2nd by Kimberly Clark. Motion approved 7 – 0.

Respectfully yours,

Laura Grasso Dobson
Recording Secretary

Motion by David Taylor, second by Shirley Thompson, to approve the request for maternity leave through September 27 for Mast Way teacher Heather Drew. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion by David Taylor, second by Kim Starbranch, to approve the following nominations for the 2007-08 school year: Jennifer Fritz, 1 year Grade 7 Mathematics; Alexandra MacPhail, 210 day Middle School Assistant Principal; and Marsha Lapierre, 1 year .50 fte Kindergarten at Moharimet. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion by David Taylor, second by Kim Starbranch, to elect the following advisor and coaching individuals:

Middle School Intramurals	
Jan O'Brien	Girls Soccer Coach
Carolyn Davis Smith	Girls Soccer Asst
Kim Marshall	Field Hockey Coach
Chris Hall	5/6 Soccer Coach
Middle School Interscholastics	
Jan O'Brien	Girls Soccer Coach
Kim Marshall	Field Hockey
John Parsons	Cross Country Coach
Todd Allen	Cross Country Coach
Stephanie Ward	Cross Country Coach
Middle School Advisors	
Bill Sullivan	Mathcounts, .50
Ruth Gehling	Mathcounts, .50
David Ervin	Jazz Band
Colette Malerba	Gr 5 Student Council, .50
David Montgomery	Gr 5 Student Council, .50
Jan O'Brien	Gr 6 Student Council, .50
Eileen Moran	Gr 6 Student Council, .50
Kip Deese-Laurent	Gr 7 Student Council, .50
Catherine Dawson	Gr 7 Student Council, .50
Alida Carter	Gr 8 Student Council
Julia Widelski	Drama Club, .50
Catherine Dawson	Drama Club, .50
Alan Stuart	Yearbook
Middle School	
Sheila Johnson	Athletic Director, .50
High School Dept Head	
Michael McCann	SpEd
High School Advisors	
Kiley Johns	Math Team
Musical	David Ervin
Stage Mgt Musical	Marc LaForce
Music Activities	Marc LaForce

Motion passed 7-0.

Blaine Cox and Thomas Zarnowski departed at 9:30 p.m. The Board and Howard Colter met to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Zarnowski
Assistant Superintendent