

1 **Bellows Free Academy, Union District #48, and Northwest Technical Center**  
2 **Board of School Directors**

3  
4 Board Meeting  
5 October 7, 2008

6  
7 **Present for a quorum:** Jim Mercier, Nilda Gonnella-French, Sally Lindberg, Bruce Scott, and Al Corey  
8 **Administrators:** Dennis Hill, Assistant Principal; Sally Tarr, Director of NWTC; Laurence Carnahan,  
9 Director of Support Services; Wendy Meunier, Associate Principal; Robert Rosane, Superintendent, FCSU;  
10 Ned Caron, Principal; Geoff Lyons, Assistant Principal; and David Kimel, Collins Perley Sports Center  
11 **Visitors:** Rina Perrault, Student Representative; Amanda Bolgioni, Student and Yearbook Senior Co-  
12 Editor; Larry Trombly, Teacher; Celina Welbers, Student and Yearbook Senior Co-Editor; and Sara  
13 Howard, Teacher and Yearbook Advisor

- 14  
15 1. Call to Order: Jim Mercier called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.  
16 2. Pledge of Allegiance  
17 3. Visitors

18 3.1 Yearbook Update and Funding Request: Sara Howard distributed and highlighted  
19 information from a handout summarizing past, present, and future expenditures. This is her fourth  
20 year as yearbook advisor, and she is pleased to report that they met the deadline by six weeks.  
21 This entitled them to a discount, thus lowering the cost per book for this year's yearbook. They  
22 are very pleased and proud of the design and graphics of the 2008 yearbook. This is the second  
23 year on the yearbook staff for Amanda Bolgioni and Celina Welbers. They explained some of the  
24 new ideas being considered for the next yearbook. Ms. Howard explained the changes in student  
25 interest in working on the yearbook staff, which has a better mix of classes that opens the way to  
26 greater training opportunities for freshmen and sophomores. The Yearbook Committee is  
27 requesting support from the Board of Directors in the amount of \$5,000 as a safety cushion.

28  
29 **Al Corey made the motion to authorize no more than \$5,000 in support of the 2009**  
30 **Yearbook; Bruce Scott seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

31  
32 4. Consent Agenda

33 4.1 Approval of Minutes of September 2, 2008: Nilda Gonnella-French recommended amending  
34 the Minutes (in the event of a conflict of interest) to reflect the name of the board members  
35 abstaining on votes regarding staff contracts. The board and superintendent informally approved  
36 it.

37  
38 **Al Corey made the motion to approve the Minutes of September with amendments; Sally**  
39 **Lindberg seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

40  
41 Amendments: On Page 4, Line 5, amend to read, "Motion carried 3-0-1 (Jim Mercier  
42 abstaining)." Line 9, amend to read, "Motion carried 3-0-1 (Jim Mercier abstaining)." Line 23,  
43 amend to read, "Motion carried 3-0-1 (Jim Mercier abstaining)."

44  
45 4.2 Superintendent's Report: The Superintendent's Report was included in the Board packets.

46 4.3 Student Representative Report: Rina Perrault briefed the board on upcoming events. They  
47 are working on the blood drive, and plan to do it in between seasons this year, with the hope of a  
48 more successful outcome. They are exploring a Community Service program that would involve  
49 50 hours as a complete unit. Homecoming went very well, and was spectacular this year. Thanks  
50 went out to the Booster Club and David Kimel for their support.

51  
52 5. Old Business: None.

53  
54 6. New Business:

55 6.1 Committee Reports

56 a. Curriculum (Bruce Scott, Chair): The committee had a really good first meeting on

1 NECAP and NRSE test results, with input from Sally Tarr and Wendy Meunier. Sally Tarr  
2 presented changes to the Northwest Technical Center Action Plan 2008, 2009, 2010. New  
3 information was highlighted in red on the distributed plan, which includes accomplishments, new  
4 data and needs. The plan lists Performance Goals, Action Steps/Strategies, Success Indicators,  
5 Persons Responsible, Timelines, and Links. She discussed Academic Attainment data in  
6 English/Literacy and Math focus areas; Skill Attainment, with a focus on Industry-Recognized  
7 Credentials and Dual Enrollment; and Portfolio Creation with a focus on tailoring the program  
8 portfolios to meet the unique nature of each discipline. There are professional development  
9 activity, new strategies in instruction being formulated, data analysis used to drive instruction,  
10 workplace readiness in all program areas, new goals set each fall, new technology purchases to  
11 support instruction in meaningful ways, and utilization of software for parents to access for K-12  
12 students. She reviewed and explained Success Indicators, and comparisons of target data between  
13 FY07 and FY08, and state target percentages. They are meeting NWTC targets, but need to do  
14 more work to meet state targets.

15  
16 The board members asked questions and expressed concerns regarding student dependency on  
17 calculators and the negative effect it has on testing. Sally Tarr says use of calculators is  
18 discouraged for the most part in building trades programs; it depends on the program, but they do  
19 not encourage use of calculators, and know they need to prepare students to test without their use.  
20 Sharing of information with sending schools was discussed. Wendy Meunier says BFA has never  
21 had access to this information before, but it is now available to them. Are all tech centers  
22 reporting? For the first time, they have access to NECAP scores, and NWTC is second in the  
23 reading category, and in the middle of the pack in math. The students need a lot of work in  
24 writing skills. Planning time is a balancing act that students have to learn, also. Nilda Gonnella-  
25 French asked if they are surprised with the scores. They are not surprised, but they are  
26 disappointed in the computational math scores. The BFA staff is also working with students to  
27 avoid depending on calculators, and to learn more test skills, with a focus on testing well.

28  
29 Wendy Meunier reviewed BFA's Action Plan and showed indicators for NSRE, NECAP and the  
30 state. They exceeded the target of 50% of students meeting the standard in reading; they have  
31 raised the target to 75% for FY08-09. She is confident the target would be met. Now that they  
32 have access to 8th-grade NECAP results, they can assign enrichment tutorials to those students  
33 who need it. Since NECAP results are not available until the spring, this gives juniors very little  
34 time for remedial work. The enrichment department has administered diagnostic tests to all tenth  
35 grade students, so that they may address remedial needs. The English department is participating  
36 in professional development. The percentage of students who met the standard in writing is not  
37 good; the percentage was well below the goal of 75%, and they have established a more realistic  
38 goal of 40% for FY08-09. Wendy says the NSRE results are accompanied by useful, specific data  
39 that BFA can work with in a meaningful way. NECAP gives no such useful information or data  
40 to work with, and involves researching 280 students for individual analysis, which she finds very  
41 frustrating. It is possible to download software to measure progress through VCAT. The English  
42 department is working on creating language expectations.

43  
44 In math only 30% of state students met the standard, and only 21% of BFA students met the  
45 standard in the NECAP's. BFA's target was 43%, and has been lowered to 30%. They are trying  
46 to align math with grade expectations. Also, only 36 questions are administered in the test for a  
47 very broad field of knowledge. In science, only 17% of students met the standard, and only 25%  
48 of the state met the standard for the NECAP's. BFA's new target is 25%. There is an earth  
49 science component in the NECAP's that is lacking in our curriculum. They are working hard at  
50 closing the gaps in math and science. They are hoping that new testing strategies will keep us  
51 from being check marked this year. Such strategies include analysis of test results, reorganization  
52 of curriculum standards for courses, examination of local assessment strategies, and standardizing  
53 calibration. Jim Mercier pointed out that it is hard to avoid being check marked in a school the  
54 size of BFA. We need to increase student performance, and that is what should drive us. Bob  
55 Rosane pointed out that every state has a different standard, and Vermont's standard is very high,  
56 along with New Hampshire and Rhode Island. There is a lot of work that needs to be done, but we

1 should not lose sight of the fact that Vermont out-performs all the other states. BFA performs  
2 slightly below the state level, so we know we have work to do.  
3

4 School Climate was discussed with physical fighting down, but known substance abuse is up.  
5 There are likely to be more cases of abuse for students that have not been caught. We are aware  
6 that substance abuse is a problem in our community and in our school, which needs to be  
7 addressed through professional development among the faculty. Angela Baker is giving a  
8 presentation in the community in the very near future. There will also be a presentation at the  
9 Abbey in early November. Attendance is unchanged at 95%, which is an improvement over  
10 previous years. Another factor to consider in testing is that some students do not test well. Why  
11 do some kids do well in class and not in test situations needs to be understood. Nilda pointed out  
12 that in the past we have known the number of students that go to college, but have had little  
13 information on how many actually complete college. Wendy says we have access to that  
14 information today, which she will compile for the benefit of the board..

15 b. Finance (Nilda Gonnella-French, Chair): The committee met in mid-September.  
16 They discussed previous, current, and future budgets; construction projects; and use of capital  
17 funds.

18 c. Personnel (Nilda Gonnella-French, Chair): They met September 16th and talked  
19 about para-educators, an alumni coordinator position, and contract negotiations for administrators.

20 d. Policy (Sally Lindberg, Chair): The committee met September 22nd, with  
21 representation from all the schools. Bob Rosane will be working with the committee on policy  
22 governance reports, and will be meeting with the Executive Committee on this next week. The  
23 committee will be meeting again November 10th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00.

24 6.2 Collins Perley Report (Al Corey, Chair): Al reports that the storm water permit has been  
25 completed and turned in. There will be further discussion regarding contractors in Executive  
26 Session.

27 6.3 CPSC Bond Project/Track and Stadium Lights: David Kimel reported on a decision to add  
28 two running lanes to the 1000-meter dash area. A lack of sufficient running lanes has been  
29 problematic in past competitions. They are also recommending a urethane, rather than a latex  
30 surface, which is more cost effective in the long run. The cost is within the cost estimates.  
31

32 **Al Corey made the motion to approve authorization for Gail Associates to develop final**  
33 **plans for renovating and improving the outdoor Track and Stadium Lighting, including**  
34 **Option 3 to add two running lanes to the 1000-meter dash area, and the installation of a**  
35 **Urethane surface, as presented; Nilda Gonnella-French seconded the motion, with all in**  
36 **favor. Motion carried 5-0.**  
37

38 6.4 Policies:

- 39 a. 1st Reading on the Policy on Prevention of Harassment of Students (F23)
- 40 b. 3rd Reading on the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy (F9/F9-A)
- 41 c. 2nd Reading on the policy on Visits by Parents, Community Members or Media  
42 Interviewing, Filming, Videotaping or Recording (H5)  
43

44 **Al Corey made the motion to approve 1st , 3rd and 2nd readings of policies F23, F9/F9A**  
45 **and H5, respectively; Sally Lindberg seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion carried**  
46 **5-0.**  
47

## 48 7. Other Business

- 49 7.1 Northwest Technical Center Director's Report: Included in mailed packet.
- 50 7.2 Collins Perley Sports Center Manager's Report: Included in mailed packet.
- 51 7.3 Department Reports: Included in mailed packet.
- 52 7.4 Policy Committee Meeting Notes: Included in mailed packet.
- 53 7.5 NEASC Evaluation: Letter included in mailed packet.
- 54 7.6 Yearbook Committee letter to businesses: Included in mailed packet.
- 55 7.7 Testing Schedule and Letter to Parents regarding NECAP: Distributed by Ned Caron.  
56

- 1 8. Agenda Items for Future Meetings
- 2 8.1 Job Description: Associate Nurse
- 3 8.2 Amended Non-Union/Non-Certified Job Classification Structure
- 4 8.3 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Policy (F8)
- 5 8.4 Policy on Substitute Teachers (D6)
- 6 8.5 Transportation Policy (F12)
- 7 8.6 School-to-Work presentation (November)
- 8 8.7. Board Secretary Proposal (November)
- 9 8.8 School Facilities
- 10 8.9 Policy Governance Update
- 11 8.10 School Climate presentation

12

13 9. Approve Warrants: Sally Lindberg would like more information regarding the \$686.96 charge for a  
14 Back Lumbar Support on page 10 of the September warrants.

15

16 **Al Corey made the motion to approve the September warrants with the exception of the**  
17 **questioned charge of \$686.96; Bruce Scott seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion**  
18 **carried 5-0.**

- 19
- 20 10. Executive Session
  - 21 10.1 Personnel
  - 22 10.2 Other Business

23

24 **Al Corey made the motion to enter Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. for Personnel and Other**  
25 **Business; Sally Lindberg seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

26

27 **Al Corey made the motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:10 p.m.; Sally Lindberg**  
28 **seconded the motion, with all in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

29

30 **Sally Lindberg made the motion to approve hiring the Summit Para Educator and two CIP**  
31 **Para Educators discussed in Executive Session; Nilda Gonnella-French seconded the motion,**  
32 **with all in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

33

34 **Al Corey made the motion to approve hiring the Alumni Coordinator and the Students**  
35 **Against Destructive Behaviors Advisor; Bruce Scott seconded the motion, with all in favor.**  
36 **Motion carried 5-0.**

37

38 11. Adjourn

39

40 **Al Corey made the motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.; Bruce Scott seconded the motion, with all in**  
41 **favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

42

43 Respectfully submitted,

44

45 Charlotte Ryan, Board Secretary