

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

**CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD**

**Tuesday, October 15, 2013**

**School Board Meeting**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Dublin Consolidated School**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD**

Rich Cahoon, Matthew Craig,  
Butch Estey, Joel Green,  
Jon Ingram, David Martz,  
Linda Quintanilha, Pierce Rigrod,  
Crista Salamy, Myron Steere,  
Erik Thibault, Fiona Tibbetts

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Brendan Minnihan, Supt.  
Marian Alese, B.A.  
Tim Markley, H.R.  
Dr. Rick Matte, Student Services  
Dr. Cathy Higgins, Tech.  
May Clark, DCS  
Ben Loi, PES  
Jim Elder, GBS  
Anne O'Bryant, SMS  
Ann Allwarden, AES/Pierce  
Noreen McAloon, FES/GES/HES

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Butch Estey called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**2. May Clark – Dublin Consolidated School Principal Welcome**

May Clark welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to tonight's Board meeting. Mrs. Clark introduced Dublin Consolidated School (DCS) Staff Emily Brnger, Susan Ellingwood, Deb Bennett, Robin Gregg, and Lisa Leblanc. Mrs. Clark reported that DCS is multiage every year. Literacy and math blocks are scheduled so that grades K,1,2 and 3,4,5 have math and literacy at the same time. Mrs. Clark said that there are one hour rotations. DCS also has three paras and Jo-Ann Hopkins, Administrative Assistant on staff. May Clark shared a presentation that she previously shared with parents about assessment. It explained how, when, and why assessment is done. AIMS web, NECAP, and NWEA tests are used in the elementary schools.

AIMS web is a test done one on one. The average test time is one to four minutes with eight minutes being the longest test. Children are measured against normed data. If they are at benchmark (expected for the age level) they are good to go. If they are not at benchmark, interventions come into place. Progress monitoring takes place as well.

NECAP tests measure the student's progress on the NH State Standards. This is the last time this test will be administered except for the Science NECAP. It is a paper and pencil test and is lengthy and taxing for children.

NWEA is administered three times a year and is adaptive. It measures individual student achievement.

Testing helps report accurate progress to parents and helps monitor progress on grade level expectations.

Results are used to enrich kids who need it, assist struggling learners, and monitor student progress over longer periods of time.

**3. Minutes (Board Vote Required)**

**a. October 1, 2013**

**Myron Steere moved to accept the minutes of October 1, 2013. Matthew Craig second. Unanimous.**

*MISSION STATEMENT*

*The ConVal Regional School District, in partnership with its member communities, will inspire all learners to achieve academically, contribute to the global community, and thrive as independent and productive citizens.*

#### **4. Points of Pride**

Dr. Brendan Minnihan reported that this past Saturday the ConVal Marching Band went to support the football team at Monadnock Regional High School. We arrived early to the game to meet the MRHS band. We had a rehearsal with them to perform the Star Spangled Banner during pregame and Green Day's Holiday at halftime. Both schools performed their halftime show. During the second half, the band students from both schools had the opportunity to meet and socialize. The overall experience from the evening was very positive. Band students from two separate schools were able to meet, perform together, make friends and hopefully begin a relationship to last a long time between the two schools!

Another point of pride worth mentioning could be ConVal's representation at the Monadnock Valley Music Festival. 15 choral students and 11 band students were selected to participate in the honors ensemble!

The ConVal girls a cappella group travelled to the Voices of the 603 festival this past Friday, Oct 11th. The day began with workshops at UNH Manchester and then performance and competition in the evening at Concord Capitol Center for the Arts.

Our girls performed among 6 other area high school and middle school groups and took home three awards: Best School Spirit, Most Confident Soloist (Ailzyn Alfonso, Junior), and Best Song Pairing. An excellent turnout for their first time participating in the festival, and their spirit award was well deserved!

At the October 1<sup>st</sup> School Board meeting, Dr. Minnihan shared that Mary Goldwaite Gagne and her husband Eric had been nominated for the NHPR Work Stay Play Civic Leader of the Year Award. He was pleased to share that they were recently selected as the winner of that Award!

#### **5. Public Comment**

None.

#### **6. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business**

##### **a. Monthly Events Calendar**

Dr. Minnihan provided a Blizzard Bag update by reporting that they will not be implemented this year. In the past, one advantage was that it was a way to create a date certain for when school will end. In addition, Dr. Minnihan reported that staff would like to hear more about what takes place at subcommittee meetings; Dr. Minnihan will report out. Lastly, the SAU placed first in the National Honor Society Food Drive. Temple came in first for schools, GBS placed third overall. Dr. Minnihan reported that the real winner is that over 3,000 food items were collected and distributed to all of the food pantries in the district.

Calendar additions included a District Study Committee meeting on Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the SAU as well as a School Board Budget Work Session on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Changes included the movement of the Wellness Committee from November 6<sup>th</sup> to November 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the SAU.

#### **7. SERESC Student Services Study Presentation**

Rick Matte introduced Jane Bergeron, SERESC, who was present to speak about the SERESC Student Services Study which grew out of the SAU Efficiency Study. (See report attached)

Jane Bergeron reported that SERESC was commissioned to work with the school district to evaluate Student Services. Ms. Bergeron looked at the effectiveness and efficiency of student services. The report outlines the purpose of the study. The study reflects interviews of staff, the review of documents, and visits to each of the schools to collect data. The report provides background information on the SERESC organization. The report lays out the objectives to be accomplished. An analysis of the current structure of student support services was conducted. Roles and responsibilities and job descriptions were reviewed. Work flow was evaluated in conjunction with timeliness of reporting. Time was spent looking at budgets. The agreement was to summarize the information and provide a final report which Ms. Bergeron shared tonight. Site visits took place to gain an understanding of the climate and culture in each of the schools. ConVal has a well established set of policies related to student services that are well administered and supervised. Ms. Bergeron found that people took this study very seriously and were candid in conversation. A commitment to kids was evident. Another theme was that central office administrators were described as positive and skilled. They are knowledgeable. People look to and feel comfortable going to student service administrators. Staff relies on the Director of Student Services and Assistant Special Education Director. The role of the K-8 Coordinator is less visible as a result of their being spread so thin.

Job descriptions at all levels were reviewed from the position of Director of Student Services to Preschool Consultant. As a result, the descriptions varied in format and content. They need refinement and are being interpreted differently.

Compliance information was reviewed as well as comparisons to similar school districts. Ms. Bergeron reported that ConVal has done a nice job ensuring that kids are being kept in the district and developing programs to meet student needs. Strengths include the intensity of compliance in the area of policy and procedure. A strong sense of professionalism exists at ConVal in this area. Another strength is the variety of programming resulting in a low number of out of district placement.

Recommendations included a need to create a critical balance between time management of policy and procedure at the central office and increased engagement at the building level. Ensuring more visibility and accessibility of central office administrators at the building level is suggested.

Restructuring of the job descriptions resulted in the suggestion that the Assistant Special Education Director might take on additional duties. Looking at job descriptions for consistency is a recommendation. Also, looking at the preschool program and giving the preschool program coordinator additional responsibilities was suggested.

The K-8 Coordinator might be a K-4 position and looking at the middle school within for oversight to allow for more support for the K-8 population.

Student Support Services was suggested to consider long term goals in line with those of the SAU.

Ms. Bergeron shared that it was a pleasure to conduct this study. It was a professional environment to conduct a study in. It was evident that it was all about the kids.

Butch Estey thanked Ms. Bergeron for her work on this study. He said that it is good to have an outside eye come in and look.

Myron Steere asked if the implementation of full-time kindergarten was helpful to this study. Ms. Bergeron said that the full time program will allow students to grow.

Joel Green asked if outcome measures were reviewed. Ms. Bergeron reported that the State Reports were amazing for our district.

## **8. Reports**

### **a. Student Representative**

Zachary Letourneau, CVHS Student Representative, thanked Mrs. Clark for hosting tonight's meeting. He reported that last Thursday, the Student Council participated in a retreat and discussed redefining their goals. This Friday is Alma Mater day where staff wear their school colors. Drama will perform at the start of November.

### **b. Teacher Representative**

None

### **c. Budget & Property Committee – Matthew Craig**

Matthew Craig reported that a B&P Vice-Chair, Pierce Rigrod was voted. A plan to communicate the proposed 14/15 budget was mapped out. This is B&P's approach to get the word out. The committee assigned people and actions. In addition, the AD position was discussed. Data on comparative districts was reviewed outlining the AD position in other schools and their responsibilities. No motions were made; it was informational only. The budget assumptions were discussed. Discussion that the B&P is not a formal budget committee that develops the budget took place. Traditionally, it manages the current year's budget.

### **d. Education Committee – Crista Salamy**

Crista Salamy reported that a brief update on the writing program in the elementary schools was shared. The Tech Presentation was reviewed at the last meeting as well. Ms. Salamy introduced Anne O'Bryant and Jim Elder to share a presentation on technology tonight.

### **e. Selectmen's Advisory Committee – Erik Thibault**

Erik Thibault reported that one Selectmen noted the positive tone present at the last meeting. Discussion about the LGC Refund took place. General consensus from every town was they would like the money returned to them. Time was spent discussing attendance at Deliberative Session; holding the meeting on Saturday was discussed. Better communicating budgetary items at Deliberative Session was discussed.

Myron Steere asked if his motion should be taken off the table. Butch reported that there is a public hearing on November 5<sup>th</sup>.



Marian Alese said that John Kieley had asked if the Board agreed the funds would be returned to the towns if a check could be written; the money would be returned but the money needed would still be raised. Marian reported that she believed that was possible so that it did not create an artificial dip in the tax rate. Marian said that it is not on the MS25 as a revenue; it does not mean that it is not able to go back.

Myron Steere asked if the money could be returned by check after the public hearing. Confirmed.

Marian Alese reported receiving an email from LGC and it does not appear that there will be consequences as a result of the law suit.

Wellness Committee – Linda Quintanilha reported that at the last meeting, the fire alarm went off and the meeting was conducted outside. The Wellness Walk was fabulous with almost 100 people participating. Ms. Quintanilha gave thanks to Mr. Matte for his work on this committee. \$1000 will be asked for rather than \$500.00 next year.

## **9. Old Business**

### **a. Technology Presentation**

Ms. O'Bryant said that money was set aside for labs initially within this year's budget. Better use in mobile devices was seen. More mobile devices are desired. Ms. O'Bryant said that an evolution of the proposed plan will allow for two different platforms for students to access both iPads and Chromebooks. Initially, Ms. O'Bryant reported that her staff had trained on iPads and GBS with Chromebooks. Sharing and learning both is the request proposed tonight.

Jim Elder shared the history of computers in education through labs, mobile carts, and now iPads and Chromebooks. Integrating the technology into learning will take place. Mr. Elder said that the current status is that GBS and SMS have ½ grade level of Chromebooks and iPads respectively. No new money is being requested. The proposal is for GBS and SMS to have one full set of Chromebooks and iPads respectively. Each school will experience both devices. The plan is to look at how the devices perform for our students.

Mr. Elder said that this is the right time to do this. Recent infrastructure upgrades to both schools allows for this to be a positive experience. Teachers are ready and comfortable. Teachers find these devices to be powerful tools. Student participation increased with the use of these devices.

Ms. O'Bryant said that this will allow multiple tools to conduct work. Each type of device has capabilities that the other does not have. Myron Steere thought that the iPads had more educational strengths than a Chromebook. Mr. Elder reported that each device has separate strengths. Offering the opportunity for students to gain strengths on both devices will be possible.

Dr. Cathy Higgins said that purpose is always discussed first. iPads are ideal because of the touch features and apps that are unique. Chromebooks have a keyboard which will allow for different applications. The money is already in this year's budget.

Myron Steere said that technology changes quickly; how do we rationalize this with new technology coming. Dr. Higgins said that as devices age, we will be watching. This is part of the landscape for education. Labs are critical for testing; device renewal and replacement will be monitored. Total cost is \$18,000 to \$20,000.

David Martz asked what would not be purchased in order to purchase iPads and Chromebooks. Dr. Higgins said that fewer laptops and desktops would be purchased. Twenty computers at GBS will not be purchased in order to purchase these devices.

Anne O'Bryant reported that the labs are in very good shape. Labs are not used for the same purpose as iPads and Chromebooks. These devices will replace other devices available to students and will now be mobile.

Dr. Higgins said that the goal was to inform the Board the direction they are going tonight.

Rich Cahoon shared that from a technology perspective, it would be easier to stick with the devices currently in the schools. This proposal allows the promotion of a unified perspective and viewpoint for students in the district.

Fiona Tibbetts asked if training for staff had been factored in. Ms. O'Bryant reported that each of the two schools will help train each other with these platforms. Mr. Elder reported that the two schools meet monthly and this is an opportunity to guarantee curriculum.

Erik Thibault said that it is important to remember that this is a pilot; it is not the iPad initiative where every student gets a device that goes home. These devices will stay in the schools.

Jon Ingram asked if this leads way to the bring your own device movement. It is a question of access and this is along the path of that direction.

### **b. Expenditure Report – M. Alese**

Marian Alese reported that this report includes all transfers to date. Lines 3 and 5 reflect vacant positions and related benefits. Line 31 reflects transfers in repairs and maintenance. Line 41 reflects transportation changes for additional special education. This may result in over expenditures to this line.

Ms. Alese reported that she has parking lot figures.



**c. Grants Report – M. Alese**

Ms. Alese said that the report reflects expenses and encumbrances to date. IDEA and Title I had balances at the end of the previous fiscal year.

**d. Budget +/- Report – M. Alese**

Ms. Alese reported staffing changes are additions and changes in funding sources. Ms. Alese reported that one extra teaching and para position are budgeted for the district yearly. Several positions are changes in funding sources; i.e. positions from grant to general fund or opposite. \$79,728.00 is unanticipated expense bulk of which is transportation.

**e. CVHS Building Project Report- M. Alese**

Ms. Alese shared a grants management report on the building project. When the project was started, the budget was decided. The Hutter budget detail did not consider architectural services. \$160,000 in general fund for electrical work was in the budget. Hutter's budget, architectural estimates, and work done with our staff, project came in at \$4.1 million including dollars from general fund. We just made it.

Discussion briefly took place about the parking lot figures embedded in the budget.

Rich Cahoon asked that Tim Grossi report out on the Mathewson bill.

Myron Steere asked if the Daniel's Fund totals could be shared as well to arrive at total cost. Confirmed.

**f. 2nd Read/Adoption Policies (School Board Vote Required)**

ECE: Traffic and Parking; (will rescind ECD)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

**Myron Steere moved to rescind policy ECD. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

IC: School Year

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

ICA: School Calendar (will rescind IC/ICA)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

**Myron Steere moved to rescind IC/ICA. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

IF: Instructional Approach (will rescind IA)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

**Myron Steere moved to rescind IA. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

IGA: Curriculum Development

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Crista Salmay opposed. All else in favor. Motion carried.**

IHAK: Character and Citizenship Education (will rescind IGAK)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

**Myron Steere moved to rescind IGAK. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

IHAL: Teaching About Religion (will rescind IGAC)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Crista Salmay opposed. All else in favor. Motion carried.**

**Myron Steere moved to rescind IGAC. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

IHAMA: Teaching About Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco (will rescind IGAG)

**Myron Steere moved to accept this policy. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

**g. Rescind Policies (School Board Vote Required)**

IGAN: Swimming Policy

IGDH: Contests for Students

IKH: Contests for Students

IICB: Community Resource Persons

IKAB: Student Progress Reports to Parents

INA: Teaching Methods

**Myron Steere moved to rescind all of the above policies. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

## **10. New Business**

### **a. 1<sup>st</sup> Read Policies**

IGE: Parental Objections to Specific Course Material  
IHBA: Student Evaluations: Specific Learning Disability  
IHMC: HIV/AIDS  
IHBB: Programs for Gifted Pupils  
IHBCA: Pregnant Students

Myron Steere referenced the above policies as a first read. Email any questions or concerns to Myron Steere.

### **b. PELRB Update – Tim Markley**

Tim Markley read information that provided an update on PELRB (see attached).

Tim Markley reported a change in legislature HB142 which has to do with teacher evaluations in the form of an amendment. NHSBA has developed a recommendation to change our policy. Mr. Markley will attend a future Policy Committee meeting to discuss.

## **11. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)**

Marian Alese certified that manifests 26 through 29 totaling \$464,586.82 and Payroll 7 and 1020903 totaling \$792,327.13 have been reviewed by her and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and/or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

**Myron Steere moved to accept the manifests as read. Matthew Craig second. Unanimous.**

## **12. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II**

### **a. Personnel**

**Erik Thibault moved to enter into non-public session for matters of personnel at 9:11 p.m. Unanimous on a roll call vote.**

**Myron Steere moved to exit non-public session at 9:24 p.m. Matthew Craig second. Unanimous.**

**Myron Steere moved to seal the minutes of non-public session for 5 years. David Martz second. Unanimous.**

**Linda Quintanilha moved to adjourn at 9:25 p.m. Second. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok

**CONTOOCOOK VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**SAU # 1**

**Serving the Communities of Antrim, Bennington, Dublin, Frankestown,  
Greenfield, Hancock, Peterborough, Temple and Sharon**

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS STUDY  
OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Date of Report: September 16, 2013**

**Assessment Conducted Under the Auspices of**

**SERESC**

**29 Commerce Dr.  
Bedford, NH 03110**

**Prepared by:**

**Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu, M. Ed  
Education Consultant, SERESC**



**Southeastern Regional Education Service, Inc.**



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### **VI. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS STUDY OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES  
OF THE  
CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT (SAU) #1**

**I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF STUDY**

*Purpose of Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness Study:*

In May of 2013 the Contoocook Valley (Conval) Regional School District commissioned the Southeastern Regional Education Service Center (SERESC) with an independent program evaluation for the purpose of reviewing the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative structure of Student Services within SAU #1. This report constitutes the final summary of an organizational efficiency and effectiveness study. The proposed work scope was designed in collaboration with SAU #1 administration and intended to reveal the extent to which the school district has developed and implemented a sound, valid and operational system in the oversight and administration of all aspects of student services. The purpose of evaluating these issues originates with recommendations brought forward in an independent assessment issued by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association (NHSAA), dated September 2012, at which time one suggestion presented was the review of the operational system of student support services to ensure that there was maximum use of human and financial resources. While the recommendation for an efficiency and effectiveness study originated from the September 2012 NHSAA Report, the recommendation was fully supported by the Superintendent of Schools, Director of Student Services and the School Board.

The purpose of the independent evaluation was to carefully review the administrative structure of student support services and assess the level of efficiency and effectiveness in the oversight of such programming. In addition, recommendations will be made to assist the SAU in making maximum use of human and financial resources as it pertains to the administrative structure for student support services.

The scope of the efficiency and effectiveness study of the administrative structure for student services was centered on a careful review of three data sources: interviews, documents, and school visits. These data sources were triangulated and carefully reviewed to assess the level of effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative structure of student services in SAU #1.

## **II. PROJECT MANAGEMENT/VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### **About SERESC:**

As a nonprofit education consortium, SERESC has a solid 30 year history of working in collaboration with school districts in a variety of key areas, including but not limited to: curriculum, instruction and assessment, special education, early learning, technology, school improvement and teacher and leader effectiveness. SERESC is proud to be known for promoting collaboration, the growth and development of educators, providing quality services to school systems and encouraging innovative and collaborative practices that inspire the real work of school reform in New Hampshire (NH). SERESC has been responsible for the oversight and implementation of numerous operational and efficiency studies in school districts throughout the state and has been able to suggest refinements that further the interest of advancing the educational stature of districts.

### **Lead Consultant:**

Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu, M.Ed.

#### **Education and Professional Experience:**

Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu holds a M.Ed. in School Administration from Notre Dame College, and has over 30 years of experience in public education. As a native of NH, Jane has served as a special education teacher and consultant to the American School of Kuwait, as well as serving as a special education administrator, assistant principal and principal. As an independent consultant at SERESC, Jane's work centers around special education, school improvement, systems change, teacher and leader effectiveness and research based strategies for improving student performance. Jane has had extensive training in coaching and mentoring, serves as a facilitator for several statewide initiatives and is currently an adjunct faculty member for Plymouth State University and Southern New Hampshire University. Jane currently resides in Litchfield, NH.

## **III. SCOPE OF WORK AND DESCRIPTION OF STUDY ACTIVITIES**

The organizational efficiency and effectiveness study was conducted in accordance with a contract between the Conval Regional School District and the Southeastern Regional Education Service Center; the district is looking to the results of this independent assessment as a source of direction and a resource in developing long term planning and continuous improvement of program service delivery and design in all aspects of student services.



In conducting the efficiency and effectiveness study, the lead consultant from SERESC, in consultation with district administration, was attentive to the following objectives:

- Assess and analyze current special education administrative positions and staffing patterns including job descriptions, organizational chart, administrative structure of student services, along with roles, responsibilities and qualifications of all personnel for the supervision and oversight of student services.
- Observe and review the work flow process/procedures for the oversight and supervision of all aspects of special education and student services with specific attention to timeliness, completeness, accuracy, efficiency and support to administrators, staff and parents.
- Conduct structured interviews/focus groups with special education administrators, principals and a cross section of other key district personnel regarding the perceived effectiveness and efficiency of the oversight of special education and student support services.
- Examine cost effectiveness of student support services as related to the oversight, coordination and overall administrative structure.
- Propose recommendations for consideration that may include changes in the oversight and supervision of student support services, changes in staffing patterns or configuration of the administrative structure, consolidation or reallocation of operations or resources.
- Provide a final report that will include a summary of data collection activities, findings, recommendations and action necessary for implementation of recommendations.

#### **IV. METHODOLOGY**

The study/assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative structure of student support services in SAU #1 was guided by review of a variety of data sources which are listed as follows:

##### **Interviews:**

Interviews and small group conversations were conducted by the lead consultant to explain to varied individuals the purpose of the study and to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those who are currently in positions that call for the oversight and administration of student support services. Each individual interviewed participated in confidential discussions designed to develop an understanding of job responsibilities as well as the perceived strengths and challenges in the administrative structure of student services. Such information was valuable in collecting and capturing perceptions of staff and administrators and to identify emerging patterns and trends.

**Documents:**

Review of documents included job descriptions, organizational charts, listing of administrators who fall under student support services, New Hampshire Department of Education District Reports Issued for Special Education, data provided by districts of similar size and arrangement, budget information and other sources of information that were helpful in reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency in the administrative structure of SAU #1 student support services.

**Site Visits:**

Visits were conducted at all schools in the SAU in order to briefly observe the facility, culture and climate, and to grasp a better understanding of the unique settings, conditions, geographic locations and operational context within each of the schools in the SAU.

The data collection methodologies utilized in this study are presented as a guide in the identification and outline of findings and to formulate recommendations for consideration by the SAU.

**V. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS****Selected Interviews:**

The lead consultant conducted approximately 20 interviews with staff and administration within SAU #1. A set of guiding questions was developed for use with the interviews; the purpose of these discussions was to gather perceptual data regarding the oversight and administrative structure of student support services within the SAU. The questions utilized were both structured and open ended and provided a consistent format for each discussion. The SAU Director of Student Services was interviewed along with the Assistant Special Education Director and the building level special education coordinators for the elementary/middle schools and the high school. In addition, each of the building principals was interviewed, along with preschool coordinators and administrative assistants responsible for special education.

As a result of the discussions and interviews the following patterns and themes emerged:

- The Conval Regional School District has a well-developed and uniform set of policy and procedures as related to special education and student support services. These policies and procedures are consistently administered and monitored regularly.
- Collaboration between all service providers, as well as general and special educators is strong.

- All staff and administration who took part in the interviews were thoughtful, candid and demonstrated a deep commitment to the SAU and to all aspects of student services.
- The central office administrators involved in the oversight of special education and student support services are respected and described as positive, proactive, good listeners, problem solvers and a good fit for the SAU.
- Those individuals involved in the administrative structure for special education and student support services were described as knowledgeable, able to oversee and coordinate all aspects of policies and procedures, as well as state and federal rules and regulations.
- The administrative positions for special education and student support services are viewed as essential to the existing programming and for the most part staff relies on the administrators for support, guidance and supervision.
- Staff consistently relies upon the Director of Student Services, the Assistant Director of Special Education and the High School Special Education Coordinator. These individuals are seen as coaches and a resource in a variety of areas, as well as working in partnership with building level administrators with regard to supervision and evaluation of staff.
- Generally speaking, those interviewed reported the need for further clarification regarding the job description of the k-8 Special Education Coordinator position. While there is a written job description in draft form, the roles and responsibilities appear to vary from school to school, with limited availability and visibility due to the geographic size and spread of the k-8 schools. The schools most significantly impacted appear to be the two middle schools.
- Consistently, all interviewed valued the expertise and skills of the Director of Student Services, however all realized that the role encompasses oversight of so many different areas that involvement at the building level is minimal. This is perceived to be a loss when considering the critical issues of teaching and improved student learning.

Those interviewed suggested that there be more availability and access at the building level from the Director of Student Services.

### **Review of Documents:**

#### **Administrative Job Descriptions:**

Part of the SAU #1 efficiency and effectiveness study was the review of job descriptions, specifically those related to the oversight and administration of student support services. Job descriptions and district expectations for administrators set the ground rules for all involved. The role and job expectations for administrators in the oversight and coordination of student services are critical. As part of this study, the following job descriptions were reviewed:



- Director of Student Services
- Assistant Director of Special Education
- K-8 Special Education Coordinator
- Conval High School Special Education Coordinator
- School Psychologist
- Administrative Assistant, Special Education
- Administrative Assistant, Student Services, Finance
- Preschool Coordinator
- Preschool Consultant

Upon review of the current SAU #1 job descriptions for the positions related to the administrative structure for students services it was determined the documents varied in format, content, and were in differing stages of development. Based on the documentation provided, it appears that the job description for the Director of Student Services was the most recently developed, and had evolved from the former position called Director of Special Education. In general, many of the other job descriptions are not current, not clearly reflective of existing expectations and not always explicitly communicated to everyone in the educational community. As a result of the review of job descriptions the following themes emerged:

- Expectations and role description for the Director of Student Services is presenting a degree of conflict, particularly if compared to the position of Assistant Director of Special Education.
- There is a noticeable inconsistency in roles and responsibilities in regard to the Director of Student Services and the Assistant Director of Special Education.
- As outlined, the role and job expectations for the k-8 Coordinator are not able to be effectively carried out. The expanse of the SAU and the geographic nature of the school district have presented challenges in regard to the ability to connect with the working environment of each school.
- There is uncertainty of the varied roles of individuals who are responsible for the oversight of preschool programming. This includes but is not limited to clear performance expectations for the administrative oversight and further clarification of the role of building principals in regard to the integrated preschool programs.
- Each of the administrative roles is described in various formats for which there is no deliberate alignment or consistency in expectations.

- **Organizational Chart:**

The existing "Special Education Organizational Chart" was reviewed and does not accurately reflect the organizational structure of student support services. While there is a high degree of value and support to the current structure for student support services, there was also general agreement that there is quite a bit of ambiguity and a need for a better understanding of the SAU's role in the oversight of student services to include special education, section 504, homeless students, court involved students, students placed out of district, home schooling, guidance, nurses, and others.

**New Hampshire Department of Education Special Education District Report:**

As part of the study of effectiveness and efficiency of student support services in SAU #1, statistical data was reviewed in regard to compliance with state and federal special education requirements. The information below was gathered from the NHDOE Special Education District Profile.

376 Children and Youth with Disabilities in SAU# 1 (including preschool)

Graduation Rate:

- % of Youth with Disabilities graduating with a regular high school diploma:  
Conval: 86.5%, State Average: 71.56%

Drop Out Rate:

- % of students with disabilities dropping out of high school:  
Conval: 0.00%, State Average: .67%

Timeliness of Evaluations:

- % of students evaluated within 45 days of receiving parental consent:  
Conval 100%, State Average: 96%

Secondary Transition Planning:

- % of students aged 16 years and older with an IEP that have transition plans in compliance:  
Conval 100%, State Average: 50%

**Comparison to Similar School Districts:**

SAU #1 is a medium sized single cooperative school district and during the 2012-13 school year had approximately 2400 students enrolled of which the following subgroups were identified as part of students support services:

- Preschool Students with IEPs
- Students with IEPs k-12
- Students With IEPs Placed Out of District
- Court Involved Students

The geographic size and spread of SAU #1 is significant and one of the largest in the state, which presents unique challenges in regard to comparisons to other NH districts. The SAUs selected for comparison with SAU #1 were two-similar sized school districts that have common characteristics including a large geographic area: SAU 60 Fall Mt. Regional School District and SAU 65 Kearsarge Regional School District. The data reviewed included student enrollment, and types and numbers of positions to cover student support services including administrative assistants.

#### Summary of Comparison Data:

Comparison of District Profiles: Students with Disabilities						
Name of SAU	Total Enrollment	# of Students w/Disabilities Ages 3-21	# Young Children w/Disabilities Ages 3-5	# of Students w/Disabilities placed out of district	# of Students w/Disabilities court involved	
Conval SAU 01	2400	344	40	12	5	
Fall Mt SAU 60	1600	274	30	10	7	
Kearsarge SAU 65	1900	284	24	11	10	

#### SAU #1 Conval Regional

- Total Student Enrollment: 2400
- 9 towns, governed by one regional school board
- 11 schools including 4 integrated preschools located in the elementary schools

#### Positions Responsible for Oversight of Student Services/Special Education

- 1 FT Director of Student Services: responsible for special education, guidance, section 504, nurses, related service personnel (OT, Speech, School Psychologists etc.), English Language Learners (ELL), liaison to transportation company for special education students, development and oversight of budgets for such programming.
- 1 FT Assistant Special Education Director: administrative oversight of 4 integrated preschools (including coordination of transportation), out of district placements, court

involved students, homeless liaison, administrative oversight of specialized district programs in the SAU, serving as LEA at meetings, general technical assistance to the staff and administration, assisting with budget development. This person also serves as a resource to parents, facilitation of special education meetings, acts as the LEA for special education meetings, coordinates IEP meetings, works with staff and parents in the transition of preschool students to the elementary, middle and high school settings, serves as a resource to staff and administrators, and works in collaboration with building principals in evaluating staff performance district wide.

- 1 FT Elementary Special Education Coordinator (k-8): responsible for assisting with budget development, serves as a resource to parents, facilitation of special education meetings, acts as the LEA for initial referral meetings, coordinates IEP meetings, works with staff and parents in the transition of preschool students to the elementary school setting, serves as a resource to staff and administrators, and works in collaboration with building principals in evaluating staff performance k-8 special educators.
- 1 FT High School Special Education Coordinator: responsible for oversight of all aspects of special education programming at the HS level, serves as a resource to staff and administration, acts as the LEA at special education meetings and is available to facilitate, coordinates and oversees transitions for students entering and leaving the high school setting, works in collaboration with building principal in evaluating staff performance for special educators.
- 1 FT Preschool Coordinator: responsible for working in collaboration with the assistant director of special education in oversight of in-district preschool programming, assists in transitions from Early Supports and Services and to the Elementary School Setting, provides professional development and support to staff and coordinates and facilitates special education meetings, acts as a liaison to parents and families and assists with transitions for preschool students entering the elementary schools.
- 1 FT Preschool Consultant: responsible for oversight and monitoring of IEP's for preschool students placed in the community setting, works in partnership with Preschool Coordinator in oversight and coordination of meetings, referrals to special education, acts as a liaison to parents and families and assists with transitions for preschool students entering the elementary schools.
- 2 FT Administrative Assistants: one responsible for daily clerical work, coordination of kindergarten screening, assignment of projects, management of calendar, e-mail, correspondence, coordinating meetings and follow up minutes, child check, child find, extended school year programming etc.

The other position responsible for: oversight of finances in collaboration with business office, routine responsibilities related to planning, organizing and monitoring of finances to include state reports, financial spreadsheets for invoicing, NHSEIS data, costs from

vendors for court placed students, catastrophic aid, assisting with budget development, oversight of grants, administrator of Medicaid to School Program

#### **SAU # 60, Fall Mt Regional**

- a) Total Student Enrollment: 1600
- b) 5 towns, governed by 1 regional school board
- c) 12 schools including one early learning center

##### **Positions Responsible for Oversight of Student Services:**

- 1 FT Director of Special Education: responsible for all aspects of special education programming throughout the SAU. Responsible for supervision of student services coordinators, administrative assistants
- 2 FT Student Services Coordinators: responsible for coordinating and facilitating IEP meetings, serve as the LEA at meetings as necessary, ensure that special education policy and procedures are adhered to.
- 1 FT Administrative Assistant
- 1 PT Special Education Secretary
- 1 FT Assistant Superintendent of Schools responsible for Curriculum, Section 504, home schooling, nurses, guidance, Title I and home schooling

#### **SAU # 65, Kearsarge Regional**

- a) Total Student Enrollment: 1900
- b) 7 towns, governed by 1 regional school board
- c) 7 schools including one early learning center

##### **Positions Responsible for the Oversight of Student Services:**

- 1 FT Director of Student Support Services, responsible for special education, guidance, section 504, nurses, homeless education, preschool, out of district, court, and liaison to transportation company
- 1 PT Preschool Coordinator 80% preschool coordination with teaching responsibilities, 20% teacher of visually impaired
- 1 Elementary Special Education Coordinator covers 4 elementary schools, k-5, on Teacher Contract with stipend
- 1 Middle Special Education Coordinator on teacher contract with stipend
- 1 High School Special Education Coordinator on teacher contract with stipend
- 1 FT Administrative Assistant
- 3 FT Secretaries for Special Education: Elementary/Preschool, Middle and High School (\*Special Education Coordinators have no administrative responsibilities and do not supervise or evaluate, and have teaching responsibilities.)



**Analysis of Comparison Data:**

After careful review of comparison data provided by the three SAUs it is the consultant's judgment that the SAU is adequately staffed in order to meet the varied aspects of the administrative structure of student services within SAU #1. Currently SAU #1 is proficient, if not exemplary, in meeting and reporting the required compliance requirements for all aspects of student services, financial reporting, and fully implementing and monitoring a wide array of student services with existing administrative staffing patterns. Upon further review of comparative staffing patterns, there is evidence that SAU #1 has been attentive to maintaining the same administrative staffing patterns over the past several years with clear priority given to ensuring that all students, regardless of learning challenges, are fully supported and that all aspects of student services are organized with strong administrative oversight and conscious efforts dedicated to ensuring that all regulatory requirements have been met.

**VI. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONVAL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The following summary represents both the areas noted as strengths and proactive practices, as well as areas to which greater attention should be demonstrated in order to further the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative structure of student services in SAU #1.

This report offers a partial list of recommendations with the intention that the administration reviews the report findings and uses them for the purpose of developing and implementing systemic changes in the administrative structure of student services and creating a plan to implement such changes. These recommendations will require further consideration and long term planning but are viewed as critical elements to consider as the SAU moves toward review of the administrative structure of student services

**Strengths:**

- The intensity given to compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations has resulted in very high compliance rates.
- There is near universal understanding of policy and procedure as related to student services.
- The SAU has a low number of students placed out of district due to the expanse of program offerings to students with disabilities.
- There is strong financial integrity of student services operations and accounting.
- Despite the variance in geographic locations and size of schools, all of the administrators feel supported by the SAU office.

- There is a high degree of staff/administrator efficacy, professionalism and dedicated individuals within the structure of student services.
- Throughout the SAU there is a wide range of programming and services offered through student support services and the focus appears to be upon high learning results for all students.
- The culture within the SAU supports creativity, collaboration, and an atmosphere of respect and optimism.
- Professional development opportunities are valued by staff and supported by the administrators within the structure of student services.
- The SAU provides the necessary supplies, materials, equipment and technology necessary for the oversight and administration of student support services.

Recommendations in the following broad categories are included for the Conval School District's consideration:

- Create a critical balance between time management of policy and procedure at the central office level and increased engagement at the building level. Specifically, ensuring more visibility and accessibility of central office administrators at the building level to address issues related to teaching and learning. In order to accomplish this, serious consideration will need to be given to possible restructuring of job descriptions of existing central office positions, specifically the Assistant Director of Special Education.
- Consider continuous and in-depth review and revision of job descriptions to ensure clarity in work environment, relationship to performance guidelines and measures of accountability in overall job expectations.
- Provide focused attention to the current oversight of preschool programming; specifically, consideration could be given to the following:
  - ✓ Expanding the role of the preschool coordinator to cover the 4 integrated district preschools and combining responsibilities of outreach to community preschools. This would mean removing preschool responsibilities from the Assistant Director of Special Education and reconsideration of the current preschool consultant position.
  - ✓ Consideration might be given to having more oversight and supervision of preschool staff from building level principals who have programs located in their schools. This could be a collaborative model, working with the preschool coordinator.
- Clearly establish an effective role for the k-8 Special Education Coordinator. This might include considering a k-4 coordinator position and exploring options for using existing

resources in the development of a middle school coordinator position(s) through reallocation of existing resources.

- Focused attention should be given to the role of Assistant Director of Special Education, specifically consideration of becoming the Assistant Director of Student Services, and sharing the responsibilities of the Director of Student Services. Further expansion and development of this position would address many of the concerns brought forward in this study.
- Improve internal communication between the SAU office and building level by engaging with staff and administration, being visible and developing regular and frequent schedules to meet with building level staff/administration.
- Ensure that current staffing patterns are upheld in order to maintain compliance requirements and continue to offer a full continuum of services to all students. Despite declining enrollments in the SAU the intensity of the learning needs of all students are increasing as evidenced through program development and numbers of referrals.
- Consider the development of long term planning and a goal setting process for student support services that focus on a feasible number of objectives and strategies linked to the district's mission and goals.

## **SUMMARY**

It is hoped that the study of the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative structure of student services provides SAU #1 with an overview of strengths and challenges and an opportunity to move forward. Undertaking this independent evaluation is evidence of the commitment of SAU #1 to continuous improvement and the willingness to engage in systemic change. Through this study it became clear that the Conval School District is well versed in the research conducted by Robert Marzano, (Waters and Marzano 2007) specifically the significance and importance of centralized district leadership and the correlation to student achievement. The core elements of this study reflect the need for strong centralized leadership, yet also acknowledge and honor that the Conval School District is comprised of 9 different towns and 11 very unique and different schools. The oversight and administrative structure for student services in SAU #1 is well run and it is hoped that this study will provide guidance to the administration as they look toward improved coordination in district operations. This report contains a summary of the findings which are based upon patterns drawn from quantitative and qualitative study data. The recommendations provided are not intended as a plan for systems change, but are offered instead as information and guidance to be used by SAU #1 to develop a long term plan. The report remains for those who work in the organization on a daily basis to take the information, weigh its value, and apply what is useful to the improvement of their work with all students.

UPDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD REGARDING PELRB PROCEEDINGS

1. **PELRB Case 0048:05** – In January of 2013 the Board filed a Petition for Declaratory Judgment, asking the PELRB to determine and rule that the paraprofessional positions were not part of the bargaining unit certified by the PELRB in 1976. Although the District has treated the paraprofessionals as though they were in the bargaining unit and they have been listed in the recognition clause of the collective bargaining agreement for many years, we asserted that because neither the original Certification order nor the union's Request for Certification specifically mentioned paraprofessionals (or instructional assistants as they were previously called), they could not have been included in the bargaining unit without a Modification Petition. A hearing was held on April 9, 2013 and the PELRB just issued its order on Tuesday, October 8, 2013. The PELRB found that because the paraprofessionals were listed in the 1976 collective bargaining agreement, and according to testimony of the union witnesses had been part of the unit since 1973, they were part of the grandfathered unit certified by the PELRB in 1976.
2. **PELRB Case 0048:06** – In June of 2013, the CVEA filed an unfair labor practice charge alleging that the District had violated the CBA by refusing to process the grievance of a speech pathologist. A few months earlier, the Administration had informed the CVEA that it did not believe that any of the non-teacher "professional" employees (PT, OT, speech pathologists, etc) were part of the bargaining unit. These positions did not exist in 1976 and no Modification Petition was ever filed to add them to the bargaining unit. In responding to the grievance, the Administration asserted that the position was not in the bargaining unit and therefore CVEA could not pursue a grievance. At the same time, the Administration offered to recognize the professional employees as a separate bargaining unit or to modify the unit to include them provided the parties negotiate over salary and other items. The parties met to discuss these options and the union stated that it was putting its grievance on hold while these discussions occurred. The union never refiled its grievance and instead filed the unfair labor practice charge. We attempted to broaden the scope of the issue before the PELRB, to address all of the professional employees, but the union objected. A hearing was held on the ULP on September 19, 2013. At the conclusion of the hearing, CVEA attempted to modify its charges to include claims that the District retaliated against the professional employees because of the pending case regarding the paraprofessionals and that the District unilaterally bargained with professional employees by paying new hires salaries that were inconsistent with the CVEA salary schedule. We objected to the addition of these new charges and the PELRB issued an Order on October 9, 2013 denying CVEA's motion. Briefs on the ULP regarding the speech pathologist grievance are due in 30 days (November 8, 2013). If CVEA wishes to pursue the additional charges which they attempted to add, they will have to file a new ULP.
3. **PELRB Case 0048:07** – When the CVEA objected to the broadening of the issue in Case 0048:06, the PELRB Hearing Officer suggested that the District could file its own petition (seeking a ruling that professional employees were not in the bargaining unit) and could seek to consolidate the

two cases. The District did so, the CVEA objected and the PELRB then refused to consolidate the cases. A hearing has now been scheduled on this case for November 7, 2013. While Case 0048:06 will only decide whether the speech pathologist position is in the bargaining unit, this third case will determine the bargaining unit status and rights of the remaining professional employees. The District has once again expressed to CVEA its willingness to recognize the professional employees in their own unit or by adding them to the existing unit, subject to bargaining over wages and other items. If a resolution along these lines could be reached, both cases 0048:06 and 0048:07 could be withdrawn.