

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY
JUNE 27, 2016**

Present: K. Bazan, R. Horton, L. Picard, S. Thompson, T. Croteau

Administration Present: J. Lewis, E. Jackson

The meeting was called to order by Chair, R. Horton at 6:46pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Bridie Pierce thanked the Board for taking the time to do research. She feels if Keene thought they were the better school, they wouldn't have a problem with the exclusivity clause being changed. She hopes the Board makes it clear tonight that no one is being forced to leave Keene.

Chris Thompson advised there was discussion 10 years ago. Keene advised that they needed to budget for transportation, staff, do scheduling, etc. They couldn't do that without an exclusivity clause. From a business aspect he couldn't imagine doing it without an exclusivity clause.

Colleen Duquette echoed what Chris Thompson said, but if they do it for Winchester, would need to do it for all the sending towns

Amanda Norberg advised Keene is under no obligation to us. She agreed with what C. Duquette said. Thinks we are backing ourselves into a corner.

Christine Wallace agrees. If they say no, what is the plan? What will happen when they say no? She wants to know the plan.

Deba Robarge lives in Winchester and teaches at Keene High School. Exclusivity is exactly for the reason Chris Thompson said. They were told if Winchester pulled out, they could lose programs, not just people. Feels it is a great school. Keene High School has wonderful educators and opportunities; something for everyone.

Adam Parker went to KHS. Advised there are a lot of opportunities. He doesn't know where he would be without the opportunity to take Horticulture. He is concerned with the busses going up Manning Hill and thinks Keene High School is a fantastic school.

Roberta Frazier understands that the Board has the right to make the decision, but feels a decision of this magnitude needs to go before the Town. The question would be do you want to stay at Keene or go to Pioneer? It could be advisory. She feels it is not fair that the Board makes the decision. She understands the exclusivity issue that Chris Thompson said. She doesn't understand what the hurry is right now.

Sue Rice advised overall she has heard things are pro-Keene, but we have students not doing well in Keene. If choice doesn't work, maybe they could form a Task Force and discuss issues with Keene and find out what the issues are rather than dismantle the system.

Dawn Doyle doesn't want to lose the opportunities in Keene to staying in Winchester or going to Pioneer.

Gary O'Neal advised he was one of the members on the School Board and he was instrumental in looking to close Thayer High School. Advised it was the worst mistake; some kids are not the best mix for Keene. Feels if Keene has a problem with budgeting students, it is purely financial. Kids will be better with an educational approach rather than just financial.

Hannah Wallace advised it was the best experience. She just graduated from KHS. Some classmates didn't do well in Winchester, but did well in Keene. She has friends who got several college credits for taking courses at Keene. Feels there is so much opportunity.

Nicole Pelkey echo's the fact that it is the Town's choice. Her concern is if Keene says no to the exclusivity and we don't have a plan in place.

Sarah Lounder advised Deba Robarge mentioned the financial crisis Keene would have. If they would lose money and staff, why would they do that? They are in control. Hopes they look at more than just finances.

Andrew Wallace asked if the Board had done any research into additional transportation costs.

Andrew Wallace – What is it that Winchester brings to the table that others don't?

Andrew Wallace - Can Pioneer take our entire population? If Keene refuses to change the exclusivity, what are your plans then?

Asked the Board what, besides choice, do you think Pioneer has to offer students? She has heard that Keene High School is so big and kids are not prepared. Advised they will go out in the world; it is a big global world. They need to learn to exist in a big world. She feels it is foolish to keep them back. Advised she was proud of the vote of the School Board. Sad they had to leave Winchester, but it was obvious. She doesn't think Pioneer has more to offer than Winchester.

Tim Hill went to the meeting at Pioneer. They confirmed the controversy. Advised they tape the meeting from two angles. He is trying to get copies. Explained the Pioneer School Board had a long discussion regarding the Winchester School District decision. He learned more about it there than he has here. They can't take all the kids; would phase them in over three years. They don't want kids bringing scores down, either. Feels the fact that there was a meeting scheduled that no one knows about, is ridiculous.

Deba Robarge wanted to be clear in response to Sarah Louder's comment, that she never said Keene High School is in a financial crisis, but it is a business; would turn into a business.

Chris Thompson believes firmly his children and others in his co-parenting have had amazing opportunities in Keene. Ten years ago as a School Board member he heard comments about Keene High School. Everything Val Cole said was based on the fear of parents. Winchester School District can't support itself anymore. If anyone here on the Board can say that kids can't get a good education there, I'm listening. If you do it for the financial piece, that's astonishing. Feels they should do something with the third story to use it to prepare students. The idea to take kids out and start again, feels that is a bad, bad thing.

Colleen Duquette agreed with what Roberta Frazier said. We voted to send the kids to Keene and close a crumbling Thayer High School. Feels the Board should stop negotiation with Keene. People don't want to send our kids to Pioneer.

John Parker advised he has had very limited exposure to what's going on and asked for some information. He spent his Junior and Senior year in Winchester before they were able to go to Keene. He went to the Electronics Program and took part in competitions. He completely understands when people say they are concerned that kids won't have the best opportunities. Concerned they will jeopardize the contract with Keene. Advised he is a huge proponent of freedom, but they are talking about a small group of people wanting special treatment. Other districts can't get out. He concurs that the Town should vote on it. Why aren't we putting together a Task Force to help kids who need extra help? We have the facility.

Doreen Gibson advised her kids went to school here. Her Granddaughter has ADHD, has an IEP and struggled all the way through school. She loves Keene. She fought to keep up her grades. Keene takes care of students. You have to fight for your children.

Barry Montgomery went to the School Board meeting in Pioneer. His impression was different than Tim Hill's. Advised the presenter gave a number of scenarios. Winchester needs to make a decision by a certain date. Keene might invoke a one or three year clause; probability is we will be phased-in over three years if Winchester can negotiate with Keene. Juniors and seniors could stay at Keene. They want the younger kids to go to Pioneer and then can graduate from Pioneer. They would agree to take us based on actual charges. They realize they might not get the whole population at once. Pioneer School Board members said they would do it either way. They voted 100% to take Winchester students. Advised he was impressed with the cohesiveness.

Barry Montgomery feels Pioneer is compatible with what Keene is doing.

Advised he rented a house in Newport. His impression of Pioneer was that it was the #1 school of choice of parents and teachers in that neck of the woods. His impression is they are very conscience of children from other towns and the size of the town and work to integrate without prejudice. Feels it is an excellent choice.

Amy Hill also attended the meeting in Pioneer. Advised what stood out about Pioneer was the clarification and openness from the Board. Everything was out in the open at the meeting. Advised they practically raked the Superintendent over the coals and that was in public session. It got her thinking about the right-to-know. Advised she learned a lot at that meeting. Doesn't feel like she knows what's going on. Like the meeting with the lawyer; how did he know to call now? Feels, as a citizen of the town, she doesn't know what is going on. If they were more informed, would have less questions and less insecurity.

Hannah Wallace advised there is no segregation; all students are Keene High School students. Feels most likely there was when Winchester started, but feels most likely that would happen again. Massachusetts has different learning standards, more rigorous learning requirements.

Andrew Wallace asked what the School Board is doing to prepare kids for high school no matter where they go. We have a high percentage of Special Ed students; what is being done to fix the Middle School issues?

Andrew Wallace asked why we are making decisions so quickly, in secret. It doesn't seem like they are being informed. He heard about the struggles in Pioneer with the Superintendent. It was the top story in the Recorder. Are we prepared for what might happen in Pioneer?

Chris Thompson is interested in knowing what the impetus is for change. Is it strictly financial? Who, on the Board wants this? Feels, as the young woman said it takes 10 years to get in and adjusted. That is huge. Feels the action and words of the Board have terrified the 7th and 8th graders. Wanted to know who voted to leave Keene?

Andrew Wallace asked about a confidence vote.

The Board recessed the meeting to discuss negotiations with the School Board Attorney at 7:30 pm.

The meeting was called back to order at 8:23 pm.

The Board advised they would answer the questions submitted at the last Board meeting.

If Keene says no and our contract ends, where will our kids go? Is Pioneer able to take all of us?

K. Bazan advised if the contract ends with Keene there would be terms. There would be a three year window; current Keene High School students would graduate there. The eighth grade students would have no place to graduate. We have no place to send them now in 2019.

R. Horton advised the contract requires a three year notice with no phase out plan. Advised students were phased-in. If both districts agree, could be a one year notice.

We've heard 10% of students are not happy. Are they students we've educated in Winchester?

K. Bazan was not sure where that figure came from. There are plenty that went here and went to Keene and plenty of students who moved into the district.

If all students don't fit into one school box, will choice be offered to K-8 students?

K. Bazan advised no. We have K-8 school that does very well, thank you. We have no high school.

Who will pay for transportation to other schools?

K. Bazan advised we pay for all transportation to Keene High School. That would continue. Certain receiving districts help with costs.

Which School Board members negotiated with Keene about the contract up until January, 2016? Where can we get minutes about what the decisions were?

K. Bazan advised Jason Cardinale and Rick Horton from the previous Board were on the Keene High School Committee and with the present Board it is Steve Thompson and himself. Lindseigh Picard is the alternate. There are no official meetings where minutes are taken.

What will be the process of choosing who can/can't (do) choice?

K. Bazan advised he can't answer for the entire School Board. The process would begin in the 5th, 6th and 7th grades to find out what high school would be best for the students. That would be the bare bones plan.

A citizen asked would it ultimately be the student's choice.

K. Bazan choice between students/parents and the school.

R. Horton – Right now it is a conversation of classes, tracts, etc. There are lots of conversations currently to find where kids fit in. That would continue with a much larger option of choices.

Andrew Wallace – Advised there are opportunities and conversation, but no plan. Why would we jump into exiting if there is no plan and have no real answers?

R. Horton doesn't want this to turn into a debate. It is a Board meeting.

Nicole Pelkey – Advised they discussed choice and working with kids earlier. How do we help make the decision if there is 15 spots at Keene and 20 at Pioneer and 40 kids want to go to Keene?

T. Croteau has heard several comments that people have said the Board has said certain things. Advised they don't have a plan because they haven't made a decision.

Ray Montgomery's impression is Pioneer wouldn't limit the number of students.

Ray Montgomery asked if the Board has an inclination if Keene High School would be as open and affirming as Pioneer.

K. Bazan advised they have not been open.

Cindy Ryder is not clear as to where this is now? Not roped into getting out if they don't do it?

R. Horton advised the Board has not taken a motion to terminate the contract with Keene High School.

Cindy Ryder – Have you done anything to change the exclusivity and say no, if it still in there?

R. Horton – Yes.

Deba Robarge asked what the catalyst is for getting out of Keene.

L. Picard advised she was speaking for herself. In research, the original catalyst was money. Are we paying too much and getting everything for services? The second opportunity was choice. That became a potential for many. If we can't have choice what about two schools? Explained education is first; finances are second. For some, the catalyst is money; not necessarily her view of what is an opportunity and what is not.

R. Horton advised the people spoke in 2015, when they voted on the warrant article that asked if tuitioning students to Keene, was in the best interest of the students. The majority said no, so we formed a committee and that's where we are.

R. Horton – Finances are one of the major concerns. We have to balance the rising cost of tuition to the rising cost of K-8. The subject is very emotional. The subject has very little to do with money and much to do with the young people's opportunities and to be leaders wherever they go. Hear from all students here that choice is important no matter what the school.

Advised they are driven by a legal document for Special ED and an IEP. When he got on the Board, he said all students should have an IEP.

Deba Robarge advised that is differentiated instruction.

Jim Wallace asked what the percentage of Special Ed is versus Regular Ed students. The cost is three times more for Special Ed than Regular Ed. Winchester has a very high cost. Special Ed costs are ridiculous. He is concerned about costs; need to be realistic. If we can't be financially responsible, won't have any kids left. Advised the School Board many years ago made a decision to go to Keene. Feels that is still the best decision. Choice costs money. What is the financial change to taxpayers of going to Keene or offering a choice?

T. Croteau advised we have a number, but not sure if this is a conversation to give that number.

R. Horton advised they have an MOU for \$13,500 with Pioneer. Special Ed students who use the Resource Room would be the same cost. If they have OT and PT would be \$15,500. Anything above and beyond that would be billed per student.

Currently Pioneer travels down Warwick Road to bring kids to Pioneer. Explained we currently use feeder busses.

Deba Robarge – Special Ed students don't ride on the big busses, they ride on a special bus.

Jim Wallace advised if you do the choice thing, we will pay. He thinks they haven't done a realistic analysis of bussing kids two ways.

K. Bazan advised the big bonus of Keene is the Career Center. All Winchester kids can go there.

Jim Wallace advised missing the point, if kids go a half hour this way and a half hour the other way, will miss education time.

R. Horton – Why wouldn't we want to offer the option to teach kids at a higher level in Massachusetts?

A citizen advised that some kids struggle now. Those who want to succeed will. The school won't make a difference. Pioneer can't offer a third of the education Keene High School can.

Jim Wallace advised standardized testing doesn't mean a better education.

R. Horton advised they wouldn't debate the standards question. Need to look at every aspect of this.

L. Picard advised if they have a choice, students can go where they want. Clearly your choice wouldn't be Pioneer. Another person might choose Pioneer.

Chris Thompson feels kids aren't capable in 5th, 6th and 7th grade then to make that decision. Shouldn't pigeon-hole them. Nothing offers more academics than Keene High School. Don't need choice, need a great high school. Don't know who they are at that age and you are asking them to change busses, states, etc. Undermining the Town we live in and the children we raise.

K. Bazan advised an overwhelming response from the forum was that people wanted choice. Talking to Middle School kids about high school careers; there are a lot of decisions, correct?

Chris Thompson doesn't feel kids should have to make that decision at that time in their lives. They should play sports, etc; enjoy their time there.

R. Horton advised the issue is how they track kids. Can they get out of foundation classes?
Hannah Wallace said yes.

A graduate of KHS advised he was in foundation classes and got out.

R. Horton advised they do track students and foundation-level classes are not at the level that is acceptable. They were told by the previous principal of Keene High School that the DOE told them that foundation-level classes are not at the level they should be.

Chris Thompson – They don't meet the standards?

R. Horton – No.

Marie Vaine went to Keene High School. Advised she did well, but also struggled socially. Had she been given the choice with support of teachers in 7th and 8th grade, thinks she would have chosen Pioneer. Every student has different learning styles; need to listen to everybody, not just the top or the bottom kids.

R. Horton advised they are outside of the meeting norms; one person is sitting there being pointed at. The Board is giving people respect.

John Parker thanked R. Horton for being under the gun and maintaining composure. Asked do we run the risk of losing the contract and if faced with that option, what would your decision be?

R. Horton advised that is truly the discussion the Board is going to have.

Brooke Sharra advised she was terrified to go to Keene; wish she had gone to Keene and not Monadnock. She didn't flourish there. A lot of kids struggle socially. Educationally, Keene High School is the best option in the area.

John Picard asked if the Board approached other schools like Vernon, who has choice?

R. Horton advised that is also part of the table discussion.

Deba Robarge is hearing cost, cost, cost, but also hearing there is a large Special Ed cost. Why not focus on why it is happening? Let's fix it down here. What is the problem here?

R. Horton advised we now have an Out-of-District Coordinator that takes care of our students at Keene. Explained the Board added late busses, but unfortunately they were not successful. They have put in place an after-school program. Have done outreach to parents, students and Keene.

R. Horton feels that we do need to work on what happens here. Not discrediting what we do, but not where we need to be. As fixed tuition costs continue to increase, it does affect what happens in these four walls. There needs to be a better partnership and alignment from Pre-School on.

Amanda Norberg advised it sounds from K. Bazan that choice won't be an option. Are we in a position to back out of our ultimatum? Her interpretation is that we gave Keene High School until June 30th or we will pull out. If that is not the case, what did it mean?

T. Croteau – To do anything it needs to be done by June 30th. They started in September talking with Keene. There were no letters that said we will pull out of the contract. We wanted to talk with them.

Andrew Wallace read the Motion made at the Board meeting on 6/2/16. Is your intent to terminate the contract?

K. Bazan advised it was the present intent on that day.

Andrew Wallace – So it's changed?

K. Bazan – Never told them we were backing out.

Val Cole asked if all sending schools pay the same tuition rate.

R. Horton – No.

T. Croteau explained the AREA agreement is with schools in SAU29. There are two or three that are not included in it. To get into the Agreement, the other school districts need to allow the Winchester School District into that. It is less expensive, but would cost them more money. Somebody would have to make that difference up.

Jim Wallace- Why not pursue it?

Andrew Wallace feels the Board is failing to represent the taxpayers of this Town.

A citizen advised they think the Board is doing a good job.

Andrew Wallace asked with regard to the AREA, wouldn't it be better to try and fail.

T. Croteau – If we were Chesterfield and someone asked, we would say no.

Jim Wallace advised a Board member said that the overall response was choice. That was not overwhelming. Colleen Duquette and Andrew Wallace agreed.

Chris Thompson's wants the Board to understand it is not personal. He knows the Board is working in good faith and good spirit and doing the best possible.

R. Horton advised they are doing what is in the best interest of all students; not just for financial reasons. He reminded Chris Thompson that the Board meets the first and third Thursday of the month.

L. Picard feels sometimes the conversation is very focused on minority and majority. Need to focus on children as a whole. Feels like the minority is not necessarily the ones that are not thriving, but feel they do have a minority of students who both thrived and didn't. Advised that always leads her to a choice. Feels they can't give up on the needs of the majority or the minority. Need to advocate for all students. Advised she struggles with it. Ultimately has a task to listen to the community as a whole. A lot speak, but there is a percentage that don't speak.

R. Horton's concern is they hear the squeaky wheel, hear the loud voice; doing what's best for the majority. We know choice is best for the majority. How do we get there is the question? Discussed 10% or 50%; the number could change by 10% or four students. We don't know how many we will send. He struggles with the statement that they can't budget for that. We budget with a fluctuating number. They hear as a Board that there are some more things to pursue, investigate, plan and negotiate. Doesn't know if the Board is ready to make a decision tonight, but very much ready to look at choice and what we can offer students.

K. Bazan feels it is sad that the conversation turned to money. Explained at the beginning of the year they hadn't been talking money. Met with Keene and it comes back to Keene High School doesn't fit for everyone. The Board asked if just 10% or four of our students could go somewhere else. Keene refused; wants 100% of our students. He explained what makes it a bad contract is the exclusivity and the 20 year commitment. Communication with Keene is horrible.

K. Bazan asked how many kids graduated. He wants that information for the next meeting.

K. Bazan also asked how many kids started in the Fall and how many graduated in 2015? Advised they have not received any report from Keene in the last two years.

J. Lewis just received notification from Dan Black in Keene that the report is on its way.

K. Bazan wants an answer for the next Board meeting or he will file a right-to-know.

K. Bazan feels a sure way to upset everyone is to try to make everyone happy. Winchester deserves to say to students, where would you like to go to school? Keene is a great high school, but we need choice. Shouldn't look at money, but what is best for students. Advised our hands are tied until 2027. Hopes we have better communication with the Keene School District and Keene High School in the future. Feels it is the ultimate goal that kids get a choice and he will fight for it.

Steve Thompson feels at the forum it was apparent that the majority of the people were quite happy with Keene High School and a smaller group was not happy. In a perfect world, he would like to aspire to choice, but won't put tuitioning kids to Keene at risk.

T. Croteau commented on Chris Thompson's comment that exclusivity has to be there for budgeting purposes. He explained Manchester is voting tonight to continue to receive Hooksett students, without an exclusivity clause. Feels we need to work toward that communication with the other side and have them speak with us instead of sending letters and advising it is all or nothing. We have no control; no say. We send a check for \$3,300,000. Choice would be nice; Keene High School, Monadnock, Brattleboro, Pioneer. It can all be done. He doesn't think we should shut the door and say Keene is where kids are and that's that.

K. Bazan read the following statement:

Be it resolved – This Board has never voted to terminate the Keene Contract. The Winchester School Board will continue to negotiate with the Keene School Board and other school districts to lead to the best high school education for every Winchester high school student. Therefore, the current contract will continue with its current terms.

T. Croteau MOVED to approve the resolution by K. Bazan; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

T. Croteau wanted to be sure everyone understood what that means so information being shared on Main Street is correct.

Chris Thompson asked if the information is going to be announced.

T. Croteau – Yes.

J. Lewis will speak with the Board Attorney and put the language together and get it to Keene before June 29th.

R. Horton asked J. Lewis to, in a timely manner, have a discussion with Brattleboro. Need to continue to have these discussions.

Brook Sharra asked for clarification.

R. Horton advised the contract is not terminated.

Brooke Sharra – Are you still negotiating that clause?

T. Croteau – Can still have discussion.

Brooke Sharra – What is going to happen?

K. Bazan advised the KHS Committee will continue the exclusivity discussion and talk about the AREA.

Ray Montgomery asked about the Letter of Agreement with Pioneer.

R. Horton advised there is a Memo of Understanding. The Board will continue to discuss with Keene, Pioneer and other schools.

T. Croteau – The Board has not taken a position on that.

R. Horton advised the meeting at Pioneer was a breath of fresh air. It was nice to hear people speak well of the school and the students.

MINUTES:

K. Bazan MOVED TO approve the 5/19/16 Minutes as amended; on Page 1 changing D printer to 3D printer; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

FINANCIAL REPORT – E. JACKSON:

*Documents from Primex have been reviewed by the Attorney. Need a Motion by the Board.

T. Croteau MOVED to have Superintendent, J. Lewis, sign the Primex contract; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

E. Jackson advised she needs two Board members to come in and sign the Payroll Manifest next Wednesday.

*E. Jackson brought year-to-date expenditures for the Board and distributed the budget.

T. Croteau asked how much more there is in bills out there to gather up.

E. Jackson – Hard to say; lots of bills today. There are still some out there. She is thinking they will be returning \$300,000, at least.

R. Horton asked about Capital Reserve and Special Ed Fund.

E. Jackson is not sure; the Capital Reserve won't come out of that.

*Distributed a quote for 20 laptops and carts and reviewed with the Board.

The cart they have is used. E. Jackson advised they aren't able to find any other used carts.

*Discussed instrument repairs. The cost was \$740.00+. They have enough instruments to have an entire band. The person who fixed them would recommend more flutes for repair or purchase. E. Jackson asked how they want to get rid of those that are beyond repair. Advised they need a policy.

R. Horton asked if it could be a policy to give Administration the authority to dispose of instruments.

E. Jackson – Yes.

The person who fixed them said if they start band only thing we are low on is flutes. Need to see what program we will have before we purchase more instruments.

R. Horton – Do they rent them?

E. Jackson wasn't sure.

K. Bazan MOVED to approve the quote from Gove Connection for 20 laptops and two carts with timers; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to approve the 1st Payroll Manifest of 6/30/16 in the amount of \$14,425.83; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

After discussion, K. Bazan MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$14,093; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to approve the 2nd Payroll Manifest of 6/30/16 in the amount of \$11,008.80; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

*L. Picard reviewed mower quotes from Gary's Power equipment. She was told to look locally. The issue is the type of equipment.

The Board advised they would like another quote.

T. Croteau MOVED not to spend more than \$9,000 on a zero turn 60” mower deck with 21” push and grass trimmer; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

*E. Jackson brought a quote to the Board for chairs; 168 chairs and two carts. Advised she looked into renting them. The cost would be \$980 each time. They would be the same quality as the ones we have now. The chairs we would purchase are a much sturdier chair.

The Board agreed to shop the chairs. New tables are coming in August.

*The electrician came in to the Pre-school Elementary wing; would work on face plates making them safe. He is working on a quote for 75 outlets, which would be about \$900.00 for the whole thing. That would include additional face plates in the cafeteria.

*Sensor lights will be about \$2,300; doesn't have a written quote. Staircases are \$980.00 to switch to automatic lights. The staircases have to stay lit when they need too, but don't have to stay on all the time.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Roberta Frazier thanked the Board for the referendum. She understands what they are trying to do. Feels it is a good thing to negotiate choice. Now our hands are tied. Hopefully going forward it becomes easier. She thinks the Board made the right decision.

Amanda Nordberg appreciates that the Board gave people so much time to speak tonight.

Cindy Ryder thinks we need to remember an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. They put in an extra Pre-School. It is so important to put in those things to help prevent Special Needs. Can't prevent all, but some. Feels there are things we can do to make healthy kids and healthy families.

Mel Harrison appreciates that everyone had a chance to voice their opinion. She would like to hear more emphasis at meetings on K-8. She has great faith in her colleagues. Feels if more focus on K-8, then maybe there would not be negative things happening in high school.

Andrew Wallace asked about the AREA Agreement. Now that you have confirmed the commitment to Keene, is that something you would pursue?

R Horton advised the Board is not prepared to comment on that.

Sue Rice is disappointed that the letter stating we intend to withdraw was an ultimatum.

Colleen Duquette asked if the meeting with the Attorney could have been on the agenda.

R. Horton advised they found out about it at this meeting.

Ray Montgomery feels to affiliate someone with a school they don't want feels like an abridgment of equal opportunity.

Chris Thompson takes exception with K. Bazan's comment about K-8 saying it does very well, thank you. In the opinion of Chris Thompson the Middle School ranks 144 out of 190. Totally agree with foundations and an ounce of prevention. Feels they wouldn't be having this conversation if kids were ready at graduation. Need to focus on little kids; K-8 is not going all that well.

K. Bazan MOVED to go into non-public session under RSA:91-A3(c) at 10:15 pm.; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to leave non-public session at 10:24 pm; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: L. Picard – yes, S. Thompson – yes, T. Croteau, R. Horton, K. Bazan, MOTION PASSED.

T. Croteau MOVED to seal the non-public minutes indefinitely; SECONDED by: K. Bazan, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 pm; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary

