

Dorset Board of School Directors
Tuesday, August 23, 2011
The Dorset School, Dorset, Vermont

In Attendance: Bob Allen, Jennifer Allen, David Chandler – Board Chair, Dan French – BRSU Superintendent, Vickie Haskins, Rosanna Moran – TDS Principal, Jim Salsgiver

Absent: None

Audience: None

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chairperson David Chandler.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion to accept the minutes of the June 20, 2011 Board meeting was made by Bob Allen. Motion seconded by Jim Salsgiver. There were two suggested corrections to the minutes. All were in favor of approving the minutes as amended, motion carried.

3. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

a) Recommendation to not approve the Brooks School for Tuition Support – Superintendent French presented a tuition request for a student to attend the Brooks School in North Andover, MA for the 2011-12 school year. Based on a review of the school's website, Mr. French characterizes the school as being pervasively sectarian, and therefore, not eligible for public tuition support. Mr. French recommended the Board not approve the Brooks School for tuition support.

A motion to disapprove the Brooks School for tuition support was made by Bob Allen. Motion seconded by Jim Salsgiver. All were in favor, motion carried.

b) Recommendation to Approve Kimball Union Academy for Tuition Support – Superintendent French presented a recommendation to approve Kimball Union Academy for receipt of public tuition payments. He has reviewed the school's program and has confirmed that it is an accredited, non-sectarian school. There was no discussion.

A motion to approve the Kimball Union Academy for tuition support was made by Jennifer Allen. Motion seconded by Vickie Haskins. All were in favor, motion carried.

c) Review of Approved Schools for Tuition Support – Superintendent French was asked by the Board to review the list of schools that are approved for tuition support to ensure that the approved schools are still qualified in accordance with state regulations. He explained that Boards throughout the BRSU maintain a collective list of approved schools, meaning that if a parent requested tuition support to a school that was ultimately approved, the other boards would accept that school as being approved as well. In order to determine a given school's qualifications, Mr. French reviewed the mission and history, curriculum and student activities. Those that are affiliated with a specific religious sect, had curriculum requirements in specific religious studies, and/or required students to participate in religious activities are deemed pervasively sectarian. Based on this criteria, several schools on the approved list have been deemed pervasively sectarian, and Mr. French recommended the Board approve their removal from the list. The following schools have been deemed pervasively sectarian after a review by Superintendent French:

Blair Academy	Blairstown, NJ
Holderness School	Holderness, NH
Salisbury School	Salisbury, CT
St. Andrew's School	Middletown, DE

St. George School	Middletown, RI
St. James School	St. James, MD
St. Mark's School	Southborough, MA
St. Paul's School	Concord, NH
The Hill School	Pottstown, PA
The Lawrenceville School	Lawrenceville, NJ
Trinity-Pawling School	Pawling, NY
Westminster School	Simsbury, CT

Four of the schools currently have BRSU students attending, so those will remain on the approved list, limiting tuition support to the Holderness School, Salisbury School, St. Andrew's School and Westminster School to students currently enrolled and then disapproving these schools once the students graduate.

The Board expressed concern that there is no official criteria to deem the schools appropriate and requested that Mr. French outline the BRSU's approval process and vet it with the SU's attorney and Vermont Board of Education.

A motion to disapprove the Blair Academy, St. George School, St. James School, St. Mark's School, St. Paul's School, The Hill School, The Lawrenceville School, and Trinity-Pawling School for tuition support was made by Bob Allen. Motion seconded by Jennifer Allen. All were in favor, motion carried.

d) Tuition Requests – Superintendent French presented a lengthy list of secondary tuition requests and recommended that the Board approve them. Mr. Salsgiver asked if the residency checks have been completed. Mr. French replied that they have been and said that he brought the files on each student on the list in case the Board had specific questions about any particular cases.

A motion to approve the 2011-12 Secondary Tuition Requests was made by Jim Salsgiver. Motion seconded by Vickie Haskins. All were in favor, motion carried.

e) Recommendation for Life Insurance for Non-Teaching Personnel – Superintendent French reported that there is an analysis that still needs to be put together, so this will be brought to the next meeting.

f) Update on Instructional Systems – Superintendent French explained that BRSU-wide, school districts are implementing a centralized student information system, in which individual students' progress can be tracked. In addition, there is a new learning management system being undertaken which will include tools to allow teachers to collaborate on curriculum and professional development, as well as a comprehensive reporting system. Mr. French will give demos of both systems in the near future.

g) Update on SPED Director Positions – Superintendent French explained that with some recent changes in job descriptions, he is recommending that SPED Directorship be taken out of individual districts and reconstituted at the SU level. Debbie Brophy-Antonez is currently an 80% FTE teacher and 20% FTE SPED Director at TDS. Mr. French is recommending that Ms. Brophy-Antonez no longer be a SPED Director (though retain her teaching role), and instead have 2 SU-level SPED Directors, with student case management being handled by teachers.

Chairperson Chandler reported that he anecdotally hears that TDS's SPED program is very good and asked that in light of that, this discussion continue until further assessment

can be made to determine the impact of the change. Mr. French offered to bring Assistant Superintendent Judy Adams into the conversation to consult on this as well. No action was taken at this time.

h) Pay for Snow Days – Superintendent French reported that the SU has been paying hourly staff for snow days, a practice which is being discontinued. The SU will notify the affected employees.

i) Ends Policies – The Board discussed the upcoming public forum events to be held in September/October. Mr. French offered to approach Mr. John Everitt, the former Superintendent of South Burlington Schools, to be a facilitator for the public forum(s), suggesting that Dorset might be able to share a broader forum with several schools. The Board expressed concern that combining the forum could prompt murmurings about consolidation of districts, and they wanted to avoid that, however, it agreed that the forum would benefit from facilitation.

Mr. French suggested that one approach to the forum would be to show video(s) about teaching and learning in the future and get the audience's reaction. Ms. Allen liked this idea and added that the video would help explain the concept of ENDS. Ms. Allen added that it would be helpful in getting participants to offer childcare and that it would be beneficial to start publicizing now. The Board decided that they would focus on the last week of October for the event. Mr. French will be putting together a script including video content with the help of Ms. Moran and will present it to the board for review.

Ms. Moran will be working closely with the teaching staff to garner their input. This process may take some time, so the public forum should proceed without waiting for the teacher input; both processes can run simultaneously.

j) Negotiations Update - (Executive Session requested– postponed until the end of the meeting)

4. Report of the Principal

Chairperson Chandler welcomed Ms. Rosanna Moran to her first meeting.

Ms. Moran shared a hard copy of her Principal's Report, as follows:

The Dorset School
Principal's Report
Rosanna Moran
August 2011

Enrollment as of 8/15 – 163

I have met several times with the Dorset Recreational Project Committee. We will have an informational booth at the Ice Cream Social on August 20th. At this point, the plan is to have the project include some renovation of existing equipment, some new equipment and a Walking Trail, which would have a fitness component and a low ropes course. This would be used by the PE classes and the entire project would be open to the community after school hours. We are in the process of trying to determine which equipment to purchase and in what order, to build a budget. If we can get a more reasonable price by buying in the winter, A Safe Place in East Dorset will donate a garage sized storage facility for our use. We have tried to incorporate the needs of the several different groups in the design of the recreational area. As part of this process, we have gotten nets donated from The Dorset Country Club to assist in keeping balls (and children) on the field rather than in the woods.

I have met with the Farm to School committee as well. We have discussed how the two could work together. At this point the collaboration is conceptual, but the idea is that they will help with

designing the landscaping around the playground to fit in with their 'edible landscape' ideas, and we will be sure to design spaces around their needs. In addition, we will keep in communication so that if we have a backhoe here for the installation of playground equipment or leveling a space, we can see what their needs for the same equipment might be.

Christine Ferris-Hubbard is working on a project which will turn snowglobe drawings into note cards. The intent is to sell them as a fundraiser, and to have the proceeds benefit that specific cohort of students as they go through The Dorset School. The snowglobe artwork was displayed at the Dorset Historical Society and got a great deal of positive feedback.

At this point, I believe we are staffed in terms of teachers for the coming year, and will need to hire at least one special education paraprofessional.

On Sunday morning August 7th (2 am ish) the school was broken into. An individual pried open the door of Russ Launderville's room, exited into the hall and left the building through the outside door off the small front deck. (Information from sensors that were tripped.) Derek was notified immediately by the alarm company; he called Kevin, and the police. The police were here within five minutes and found no one. As far as we know at this point, nothing was taken or damaged. Russ has taken a close look at his classroom just to be sure and saw nothing untoward.

We will begin the year with our Pot Luck picnic at 5:30 pm on Monday, August 29th. We would certainly like to invite the Board members to join us!

The Board requested the student count be broken down by grade. Ms. Moran was asked if there are any tuition students at TDS this year, to which she replied she is not aware of any, but will check and report back.

Mr. Salsgiver is looking into a grant opportunity on behalf of the Dorset Recreational Project Committee which would provide matching funds. The deadline for application is September 2, 2011. Mr. Salsgiver asked for information on available funds and pledges so that he can create a budget for the proposal.

The Board discussed creating a 'Jay Hathaway memorial field' in order to generate more fundraising opportunities, as Mr. Hathaway was a great supporter of education at TDS.

Ms. Allen reported that the Farm to School committee is applying for an Implementation Grant from the Vermont Department of Agriculture to fund an edible landscape project and support the burgeoning FTS efforts already under way at the school. Mr. Allen asked for an update on where we stand with serving better food in the lunch program. Ms. Allen replied that the lunch program is currently self-sustaining, which doesn't speak to using fresh or local foods. The budget could be padded to the advantage of the program and it would be beneficial to coordinate an action plan. The Board moved to back the Farm to School committee's efforts during the 2010-11 school year. The Board will be interested to see how this will manifest in the ENDS policies.

5. Employment: Appointments/Resignations

a) Recommendation for Compensation for Hourly Custodians/Drivers – Superintendent French will bring this to the next meeting, as details need to be finalized.

b) Review of PE Teacher/Athletic Director Schedule – As previously discussed, Elizabeth Morgan is a 0.8 FTE Teacher and 0.2 Athletic Director, however, she is currently teaching full time (1.0 FTE) at five days per week in addition to her time spent in the Athletic Director role. Superintendent French recommends cutting her schedule to 4 days per week for teaching, which would be the equivalent of 0.8 FTE, which is what is funded in the approved budget. It would also be possible for the Board to increase her approved time to 1.0 FTE. Mr. Chandler asked Mr. French and Ms. Moran to reassess the need for her teaching time and report back to the Board, so it can make a more informed decision.

Mr. French will have Mrs. Morgan work 0.8 FTE in her teaching role until this matter is resolved. No action was taken by the Board at this time.

6. Directors' Orders and Financial Statements

Reviewed and signed by Board members and returned to Superintendent French.

7. Public Comment

The GNAT-TV videographer pointed out that the Mettowiee Community School receives a healthy snack grant and the program is very well received and successful.

8. Other Business

Mrs. Haskins asked about the outcome of the Rosetta Stone pilot program. Mr. French replied that there is not enough data yet to determine if it will be used, and Dorset has not yet found a way to apply it, so the pilot program will continue for the 2011-12 school year. John Dawson, the Director of Instructional Innovation at the BRSU, is working on a way to evaluate the success of the pilot.

Mr. French let the Board know that he will be attending a RED District community event for Flood Brook Union School. They are looking at a target date for reassignment of July 1, 2013.

Executive Session

At 8:25PM, a motion to call the meeting into Executive Session was made by Jim Salsgiver. Motion seconded by Vickie Haskins. All were in favor, motion carried.

The following item was discussed:

3. j) Negotiations Update

Chairperson David Chandler reconvened the Board in open session at 8:59PM.

No action was taken.

9. Adjournment

Chairperson David Chandler adjourned the meeting at 9:00PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Renee Bornstein

TO: DORSET SCHOOL BOARD
FROM: Daniel M. French
SUBJECT: 2011-2012 Secondary Tuition

Meeting Date: 09/27/11

Below is a list of tuition requests received. I recommend you approve these requests.

Last Name	First Name	Grade	School	Prnt/Guardian		Physical Address
Bowen	Cassandra	10	Burr & Burton Academy	Shortsleeve	Katherine	402 Benedict Rd.
Downey	Harrison	9	Burr & Burton Academy	Downey	Terry	61 Culver Ln., Apt. B
Hannum	Schuyler	12	Burr & Burton Academy	Hannum	Kraig	341 Pinnacle Ln.
Helmetag	Will	10	Burr & Burton Academy	Helmetag	Amy	3424 VT Route 30
Kelley	Taylor	12	Burr & Burton Academy	Kelley	Jan-Ellen	49 Pleasant Street Ext.
Rushing	Elias	10	Burr & Burton Academy	Rushing	John	161 Kent Hill Rd.
Shortsleeve	Amanda	11	Burr & Burton Academy	Shortsleeve	George	402 Benedict Rd.
Shortsleeve	Adam	10	Burr & Burton Academy	Shortsleeve	George	402 Benedict Rd.

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PAWLET
RUPERT
SUNDERLAND
UNION DISTRICT #23
UNION DISTRICT #47

MEMO

TO: Dorset School Board
FROM: Daniel M. French, ^{DMF} Superintendent
SUBJECT: Life Insurance for Staff
DATE: 09/22/11
✓ **CC:** Sue Wilborn, Business Manager
Rosanna Moran, Principal

The Board asked me to research the costs of providing life insurance to staff covered by the table of Personnel Benefits. Among our BRSU districts, life insurance is provided in the following manner:

- BRSU - \$25,000 for full time teachers and full time staff (Category A)
- Dorset - \$25,000 for teachers under the master agreement with no FTE limitations, no coverage to staff
- Manchester - \$10,000 for teachers under the master agreement and regularly scheduled staff with an FTE of at least 60% (Categories A, B, and E)
- Sunderland \$25,000 for full-time teachers, no coverage for staff
- Currier – \$25,000 for teachers under the master agreement with no FTE limitations, and all regularly scheduled staff (all categories)
- Mettawee – No coverage

If the District wanted to offer \$25,000 life insurance coverage to staff, it would cost approximately \$1,377 per year.

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UNION DISTRICT #47

MEMO

TO: Dorset School Board
FROM: Daniel M. French, ^{DMF} Superintendent
SUBJECT: Change in Benefit Category for Kevin Wade
DATE: 09/21/11
CC: Sue Wilborn, Business Manager
Rosanna Moran, Principal
ENC: Dorset Personnel Benefits

We converted leave provisions for staff to be based on hours rather than days effective July 1, 2011. Kevin Wade would lose approximately 2 days of paid vacation under this new system as a Category B employee. His schedule had been reduced by 30 minutes per week so that he would not fall into Category A.

I recommend increasing Kevin's weekly schedule by 30 minutes so that he qualifies for Category A benefits effective immediately. This would restore his vacation leave. This category assignment would provide him access to a greater health insurance benefit.

Dorset Personnel Benefits 2011-2012

	A FULL-TIME, FULL YEAR (40 hrs/week, 52 weeks/year)	B PART-TIME, FULL YEAR (At least 20 hrs/week, 52 weeks/year)	C FULL TIME, SCHOOL YEAR (At least 30 hrs/week)	D PART TIME, SCHOOL YEAR (At least 20 hrs/week)	E EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (40 hrs/week, at least 200 days/year)
Categories are based on regularly scheduled hours and days.					
Vacation Leave*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 hours per year After 5 yrs, an additional 8 hrs will be added each year for a max. of 90 additional hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 hours per year After 5 yrs, an additional 5 hrs will be added each year for a max. of 50 additional hrs 	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sick Leave *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120 hours per year Cumulative to 720 hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 hours per year Cumulative to 300 hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours per year Cumulative to 450 hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 hours per year Cumulative to 300 hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120 hours per year Cumulative to 720 hrs
Personal Leave*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for 16 hrs per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for 5 hrs per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for 7 hrs per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for 5 hrs per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for 16 hrs per year
Bereavement Leave *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 hours per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 hours per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 hours per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 hours per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 hours per year
Paid Holidays *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 paid holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 paid holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 paid holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 paid holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 paid holidays
Health Insurance VEHI Dual Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of single plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of single plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of single plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of single plan
Dental Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no health insurance is elected, the District pays 90% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no health insurance is elected, the District pays 90% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no health insurance is elected, the District pays 90% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 90% of single plan
In Lieu of Medical & Dental (paid bi-annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,000 stipend (if nothing elected) 	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Long-Term Disability Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 100% of premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must work at least 24 hrs/wk District pays 100% of premiums 	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pays 100% of premiums
403(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees
Flexible Benefits Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all employees
Jury Duty (proof required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 80 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 50 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 70 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 50 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 80 hours

Flexible Benefits Plan

COMBINED LIMIT OF \$5,000
Health limit \$1,500
Dependent care limit \$5,000

* Paid Leave - will be compensated based on the employee's regularly scheduled hours and days

-- requires 2 months employment (does not apply to paid holidays)

-- hours are accrued on a monthly basis

-- first year is prorated

-- requires pre-approval by Principal except for bereavement leave which requires employee to notify Principal as soon as practicable

-- vacation leave -- may be carried over into the new fiscal year but must be used by August 15th (Cat. A -- max. 80hrs; Cat. B -- max. 50hrs)

-- personal leave -- for compelling business that can not be conducted at another time

-- bereavement leave -- for death in the immediate family

-- paid holidays must occur during scheduled work period

-- paid holidays are established by the district


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PAWLET
RUPERT
SUNDERLAND
UNION DISTRICT #23
UNION DISTRICT #47

To: Dan French

From: Sue Wilborn 

Date: September 22, 2011

Re: Dorset FY'11 Year End Financials

The Dorset School District ended the fiscal year with a surplus of \$157,000. The District anticipated ending the year with a surplus of \$121,000. The increased surplus is mainly due to savings in special education programs (both elementary and secondary), foodservice equipment, and vehicle operations.

In March of 2011, the taxpayers voted to transfer the year end surplus to the Building and Grounds Reserve Fund, increasing the Building and Grounds Reserve fund balance to \$175,000.

Lateral Innovation Network Outline

"The path to transformation is decentralized, distributed, and disciplined." - D. Hargreaves

Objectives*

- Open the instructional, professional, and curriculum development processes to a peer-led network in order to provide a more effective means for sharing best practices and transferring them more rapidly
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning broadly across a group of schools
- Create a climate for teachers to innovate by promoting:
 - the *motivation* to create new professional knowledge;
 - the *opportunity* to engage actively in innovation;
 - the *skills* for testing the validity of the new knowledge;
 - the *means* for transferring the validated innovations rapidly within their school and into other schools.

*Objectives adapted from *Working Laterally: How Innovation Networks Make an Education Epidemic* by David Hargreaves.

Structure of Network

- Totally cloud-based
- Initial focus would be K-8. Elementary and middle level innovation capacity would lead high school transformation.
- Implement a common communications infrastructure. All districts would join Google Apps.
- Implement a common Learning Management System. See below. (approximate cost \$10 per student)
- Curriculum development on Curriki.
- Common tags would be established to identify work across all platforms.

LMS Functionality

- individual learning plans for every student
- ePortfolios
- units can be matched to current and future standards
- capacity to share instructional materials, units, and assessments among teachers
- other standard LMS functionality: design online and blended learning activities, implement assessment, monitor student academic progress, iterative academic feedback, teaming of staff and students around learning activities, connect to web-based learning resources, establish non-traditional support groups for students, new learning opportunities and new structures of knowledge - mash up, 365 and 24/7, parent connection, personalization around UDL principles.

Achieving Reading Proficiency for All



Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D., International Center for Leadership in Education

Achieving Reading Proficiency for All

by Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D.
International Center for Leadership in Education
2003

The importance of all students achieving reading proficiency, as well as the new federal requirements to set proficiency standards and monitor progress across subgroups of students, continues to influence policymakers, educators, and the American public. *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) requires that all students be “proficient” in reading by 2013-14 and demands that all schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward that end. Proficiency is a truly worthy goal, but the practical realities of meeting it present some major challenges.

In our work at the International Center for Leadership in Education with schools that have achieved substantial progress in the area of reading proficiency, we have learned some important lessons.

First, while some schools have made great strides, success on a broad scale has remained elusive. Many schools and districts continue to struggle.

Secondly, even where genuine successes have been realized, schools have recognized an important limitation: Bringing all students to proficiency using the same strategies is highly unlikely, no matter how many times the strategies are repeated. As Albert Einstein remarked, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting different results.”

Lastly, some of the more successful districts have improved reading proficiency by developing and implementing K-12 literacy plans. Surprisingly few school districts have such plans. At best, they have a K-6 reading program.

Most literacy plans begin with the posing of three questions:

1. What is reading proficiency?
2. How shall we set reading proficiency standards?
3. What new approaches/techniques are needed to achieve reading proficiency for all?

What Is Reading Proficiency?

The International Center has done extensive work recently with several state departments of education and many individual school districts to answer the question: What is reading proficiency? Developing a clear definition of proficiency is not easy. Most schools use grade equivalents or passing certain tests. Those numbers or scores relate only to academic benchmarks and norms that are unconnected to any observable external standards.

The International Center sought a common measurement tool to determine what students need to be able to read, what they *can* read, and what various assessment instruments measure. The Lexile Framework for Reading provides such a tool.

The Lexile Framework, developed by MetaMetrics in conjunction with several leading U.S. universities, uses a computer program called the Lexile Analyzer[®] to examine and analyze the readability of a *whole* text, not just samples from it. The Lexile Analyzer measures such characteristics as sentence length (a highly reliable proxy for syntactic complexity) and semantic difficulty (recognized vocabulary measured

against high frequency word lists) — traditional and widely accepted characteristics that are highly related to overall reading comprehension — and then reports a Lexile measure for the text.

Documents that have been analyzed using the Lexile Analyzer receive a score on a scale from 200-2000L. (Very simple documents, such as early literacy materials that would score below 200L, are deemed unsuitable for Lexile analysis because they do not contain a sufficient amount of text.) For example, Lexile measures for some well known works of literature are: *Frog and Toad Are Friends* – 400L; *War and Peace* – 1200L; and *The Scarlet Letter* – 1400L. For comparison, the middle 50 percent of students in grade 4 have Lexile measures between 445L and 810L; in grade 8, between 805L and 1100L; and in grade 11, between 940L and 1210L.

Unlike grade equivalent (GE) measures of readability, the Lexile scale is based on uniform increments from 200 to 2000L, i.e., an increment of 100L is constant in terms of increase in semantic and syntactic complexity. A one-grade difference expressed in grade equivalents, however, is not. For example, the difference in reading difficulty between 3.2 and 4.2 may be much greater than the “one-grade” difference between 9.2 and 10.2. Moreover, Lexile measures avoid the problem of labeling reading expectations for a particular grade level. Referencing Lexile measures also reinforces the notion that reading abilities differ broadly within any grade.

Publishers of educational tests, such as CTB/McGraw-Hill and Northwest Evaluation Association, use Lexile measures for their readability measures and testing reports. By equating Lexile measures with test scores, Lexile equivalent measures have been determined for more than one million students and continue to be reported on widely administered achievement tests used across the nation. As a result, MetaMetrics has established Lexile measures for students in each K-12 grade level. For example, the following table shows the Lexile measures for the middle 50 percent of students in grade 10 and grades 11/12. For example, students in grades 11-12 at the 25th percentile read with mastery (defined as 75 percent comprehension) at approximately 940L; the 75th percentile reads with mastery at approximately 1210L.

Working with a wide variety of educational publishers, MetaMetrics has also analyzed the readability levels of textbooks and numerous other instructional materials. The table indicates the Lexile levels of these materials.

The table shows a gap between students’ reading levels and the readability level of the texts they must read in school. Note, too, that 25 percent of 11/12 graders read below 940L, and 25 percent read above 1210L. Yet, typical instructional materials range from a low of 1100L to a high of 1300L.

This Lexile research points out what teachers already know. Students in the same classroom have different levels of reading proficiency, yet all of them are typically reading the same materials. The result is a mismatch for many students, who cannot learn enough from textbooks they cannot read. For them, this means lower comprehension, lower test scores, and less progress on attaining proficiency, not just in reading, but across the curriculum in math, science, social studies, and all other subjects.

Ask any teacher. Students need textbooks they can read – especially in middle school and high school where there is a heavy reliance on textbooks as the primary instructional resource and source for learning.

Lexile Measure	High School Students middle 50% at midyear	Classroom Materials middle 50%	Personal Use Reading	Newspapers	Career Clusters Entry-level 75 th percentile
1700L					Law & Public Safety (1740)
1600L					
1500L					Ag./Natural Resources (1510)
1400L			Safety Manual for Spa (1390) Aetna Health Discount Form (1360)	Renters (1440) New York Times (1380) Washington Post (1350) Wall Street Journal (1320) Chicago Tribune (1310) Associated Press (1310)	Education & Training (1370) Transp./Distr./Log. (1350) Arch./Construction (1340) Manufacturing (1310) Business and Admin. (1310) Health Science (1300) Retail/Wholesale (1270) Hospitality & Tourism (1260) Scientific Res./Engr. (1250)
1300L			Medical Ins. Benefit Pkg (1280) Application-Student Loan (1270) Federal Tax Form W-4 (1260)		
1200L	Grade 10 - 995-1195	Grade 10 1100-1200	G.M. Protection Plan (1150)	USA Today (1200)	Human Services (1200) Arts/AV Tech/Comm. (1190)
1100L	Grades 11/12 - 940-1210	Grades 11/12 1100-1300			
1000L					
900L					

For the past several decades and almost certainly to accelerate with NCLB, schools have placed a great deal of importance on preK-6 reading initiatives. Little attention and few resources have been focused on students in grades 7-12. Yet, these upper grades are exactly where, according to recent international studies, emphasis is needed. The studies show that reading achievement of U.S. 4th graders ranks among the best in the world. By 8th grade, U.S. student performance declines to around the international average, and by 12th grade, our students rank even lower. (Allington, 2001; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001)

The basic question to ask is why? Reading demands increase dramatically for students around 4th grade, when learning relies more on the textbooks. (Chall, 1983) The vocabulary encountered is less familiar because it contains more specialized or technical terms. Syntax becomes more complex. Greater reliance must be placed on inferential thinking and prior knowledge. More independent learning is expected than in lower grades.

When reading becomes the primary vehicle for learning, the demands on readers and the strategies they need to use in reading change. Unfortunately, just when the reading load increases and students shift from learning to read to reading to learn, no corresponding instruction in reading is provided to students. The scaffold of systematic and focused reading instruction diminishes or disappears altogether. Student performances in reading begin to widen, and increasingly, schools begin to use more single-source instructional materials (textbooks, teacher handouts, etc.) for all students. (Baumann & Duffy, 1997)

Thus, a gap emerges between the overall reading ability levels of students and the readability levels of the materials they are expected to read. We must match students to instructional materials for more learning to occur. The table shows we are *not* doing that!

Standards-based Reading Proficiency vs. Real-world Reading Requirements

While a gap exists in secondary school between some students' reading levels and the instructional materials used, an even more alarming disconnect can be found between student levels and real-world reading requirements. The table lists just a few of them under Personal Use Reading, Newspapers, and Career Clusters.

The greatest gap occurs between the reading requirements of the workplace and students' present reading levels. The International Center has done a detailed study of the readability levels of a wide array of print materials encountered in the workplace. These occupational reading materials were linked to the 16 Career Clusters defined by the U.S. Department of Education at three job levels: entry, intermediate, and advanced.

The International Center's Lexile analysis reveals that a large number of entry-level jobs have higher reading requirements than are required for high school graduation. The table shows the 75th percentile measures for entry-level occupations in the 12 Career Clusters for which we had adequate samples of reading materials. The third quartile was used because we believe that employees need to be able to read at least 75 percent of workplace documents to be successful on the job.

Entry-level jobs today often have higher reading requirements than many of the more advanced positions in the same field. Moreover, while white-collar workers may do more reading on the job, the material that many blue-collar workers must read is both complex and extremely critical to job performance. Poor comprehension of technical manuals and installation instructions, for example, can have disastrous results.

By comparison with the entry-level – repeat: *entry*-level – occupational reading requirements, consider again the reading ability levels of our mid-range students in grades 10-12. There is clearly a disparity between high school students' reading skills and the reading proficiency levels they need for work and for much of the reading they will do in their personal lives. The appendix contains additional information on the Lexile measures for reading related to K-12 education and to the world beyond school.

Moving from Defining to Solving the Problem

The table summarizes the reading challenge: The real world requires substantially higher levels of reading proficiency than most students possess. States need to be sure that the reading proficiency levels they set under *No Child Left Behind* reflect not just traditional academic measures of reading competence, but also the larger picture of what individuals will need for employability and success in life after graduation. This broader view of reading competency is an example of the academic proficiency that must become part of program improvement under NCLB.

Can schools close the gap? The answer is yes. The International Center has had the opportunity to work with selected schools that have experienced substantial success in closing the gap, and we have learned much from them. Among the lessons:

- Schools need to share with educators, parents, and the general public easy-to-understand data (such as in the table) that explains the gap between where students are and where they need to be.

- The amount and complexity of reading that students must do increase dramatically at the secondary level. Educators need to initiate a preK-12 literacy plan for all students with a strong emphasis on reading in the content area in grades 7-12.
- Schools need to match students to instructional materials at appropriate reading levels.
- Schools need to provide comprehensive, well-focused, and sustained staff development on the need for reading instruction that involves all teachers, with particular emphasis on grade 7-12 teachers and the inherent benefits to their students' performance in the content area.
- Schools need an ongoing reading assessment system to measure students' continuous progress (AYP) in reading.
- Schools need a way to compare where students are in reading and where they need to be to fulfill their educational and real-world goals and obligations. The Lexile Framework for Reading is an excellent metric to do this.
- Parents need to become active partners in reading initiatives.

Summary

Our information-based society demands high reading proficiency levels. We have data that defines what those demands are, and successful practices have been created to address them. Schools must use the resources available and address this critical area. We believe that K-12 literacy may be the best investment of energy and resources that schools can make. The human and economic consequences of not closing the gap – for our students and our country – are too severe to ignore.

Appendix

Lexile Measures of Readers and Classroom Reading Materials

Grade	Lexile Reader Measures (middle 50% of students-the interquartile range-at mid-year)	Lexile Text Measures (middle 50% of materials found in a typical grade-level classroom)
1	up to 300L	200 to 400L
2	140 to 500L	300 to 500L
3	330 to 700L	500 to 700L
4	445 to 810L	650 to 850L
5	565 to 910L	750 to 950L
6	665 to 1000L	850 to 1050L
7	735 to 1065L	950 to 1075L
8	805 to 1100L	1000 to 1100L
9	855 to 1165L	1050 to 1150L
10	905 to 1195L	1100 to 1200L
11 and 12	940 to 1210L	1100 to 1300L

Lexile Measures of Selected National and State Examinations

Grade	SAT-9	NAEP	One State's Competency Tests
3	580L		680L (reading/writing test)
4	760L	820L	
5	810L		
6	850L		790L (reading/writing test)
7	900L		
8	930L	990L	
9			980L (literacy test)
10	1100L		
11			
12		1150L	

Text Measures of Entry-level Occupational Reading Materials*

Career Clusters <i>in alphabetical order</i>	Lexile Text Measure (3 rd Quartile Range)
Agriculture/Natural Resources	1270 – 1510L
Architecture/Construction	1210 – 1340L
Arts/AV Technology/Communications	1100 – 1190L
Business and Administration	1210 – 1310L
Education and Training	1320 – 1370L
Health Science	1260 – 1300L
Hospitality and Tourism	1230 – 1260L
Human Services	1050 – 1200L
Law and Public Safety	1420 – 1740L
Manufacturing	1200 – 1310L
Retail/Wholesale Sales and Service	1180 – 1270L
Scientific Research/Engineering	1190 – 1250L
Transportation, Distribution and Logistics	1170 – 1350L

* for the 13 Career Clusters for which there were adequate text samples

Lexile Measures of Newspapers

Newspaper/Wire Service	Lexile Measure
Arkansas Democrat Gazette	1230L
Associated Press	1310L
Charlotte Observer	1120L
Chicago Tribune	1310L
Los Angeles Times	1330L
Miami Herald	1200L
New York Daily News	1230L
New York Times	1380L
Raleigh News & Observer	1220L
Reuters	1440L
San Francisco Examiner	1230L
UPI	1370L
USA Today	1200L
Wall Street Journal	1320L
Washington Post	1350L

Lexile Measures of Personal Reading

Citizen Reading Material	Lexile Measure
Form W-4 Employee Withholding	1260L
Employee's Withholding Exemption Certificate [Arkansas Form AR4EC]	1350L
U.S. Dept. of Justice (INS) - Employment Eligibility Verification	1340L
Safety Notice for Spa Owner	1390L
Prospectuses 2002 - College Retirement Equities Fund, TIAA Real Estate Acct.	1460L
Connections – Health Coverage	1400L
Medical Insurance – Proposed Benefit Package [Airtherm]	1280L
Provider Directory [Aetna U.S. Healthcare]	1520L
Vision One Discount Program [Aetna U.S. Healthcare]	1360L
Open Choice PPO [Aetna U.S. Healthcare]	1280L
Pharmacy Directory [Aetna U.S. Healthcare]	1180L
GM Protection Plan/Warranty	1150L
2002 Cadillac Eldorado Brochure	1150L
Privacy Act Notice to Students [Empire State College]	1780L
Entry to the Teaching Profession - How to Get Certification [Empire State College]	1270L
Academic Policy [Empire State College]	1250L
Empire State College Student Handbook	1320L
Arkansas Driver's Manual	1020L
State Employment Application [Arkansas]	1410L

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DRAFT

Ends Public Engagement Event Script

Participants: members of the public, invitations to specific stake holders

Setting: room large enough to accommodate group, round tables for groups of 6-10, tables covered with paper that can be written on, markers on each table, one person with laptop to type notes of conversation. Screen, projector, laptop, sound, Internet for streaming video projection. Blog site setup for general comments (<http://brsuends.blogspot.com>) for participants and others.

Process: Focus Group. Entire group will view short videos together. After each video, smaller groups at table will discuss videos based on provided study guide questions. Groups then will be reorganized and assigned to new tables for each subsequent video. Data will be collected and analyzed by Board group and distilled down to draft policy language. Blog available with embedded videos for participants and non participants to record thoughts.

Program:

1. Welcome and Introductions (Board Chair)
2. Purpose of Ends Policies and Overview of Process (Superintendent or Board Chair) – focus on thinking about the future
3. Facilitation of process (Board Chair or outside facilitator)
 - a) Video #1 (11 min.): Sir Ken Robinson – Changing Education Paradigms (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcdGpL4U>) – a conversation about content and pedagogy, which content and practices from the past should be brought forward into the future
 - b) Video #2: (12 min.): Dan Meyer – Math Curriculum Makeover (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlvKWEvKSi8&feature=player_embedded) – a conversation about how to teach math, how our students learn, and the role of technology in delivering curriculum
 - c) Video #3: Changing to Learn (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDdCyr1DZM&feature=player_embedded) – a conversation about what schooling should look like in the 21st Century.
4. Wrap up and Thank You (Board Chair)

The Dorset School
Principal's Report
Rosanna Moran
September 2011

Enrollment as of September 20, 2011—164

Opening of school went very well. We cancelled our In Service and all activities for Monday, August 29th, but all teachers were present for the In Service on Tuesday, August 30th. (One had to be picked up and housed for a few days, but the staff really came together and helped!) We were grateful to the BRSU for postponing the SU wide meeting that had been scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, as it gave the teachers a bit of breathing room before the children came back. Our opening day meeting was well attended by many parents.

Our two new teachers, Kristin Morey in Grade 1 and Amanda Chalmers in Grade 5/6 seem to be fitting in well. Beth Marsh and Stephanie Sumner are serving as mentors for them.

We hired two paraprofessionals during the first week of school; one for a vacant special education position, and the other to replace Chelsie Leggett as media center assistant. (Chelsie was offered a full time teaching job.) The two new paraprofessionals are DeeDee Anglum—Special Education para—she holds a Masters Degree in Social Work and has quite a bit of experience working in nutrition and volunteering in schools. The Media Assistant is Vickie Lehr. Vickie is a retired teacher and was the long term substitute for Ellen Saltonstall last year. We just received the news that a 1:1 paraprofessional in the Kindergarten will be resigning at the end of the month, so we will be hiring for that position as well.

The Dorset Recreational Facilities Committee continues to meet to determine the budget for the entire project as well as what will comprise the first phase of the playground renovation.

The DPV is sponsoring a Meet the Principal Breakfast on Thursday, September 22nd. Originally it was to be an event for new families, but it was decided that having new families network with families who have been here would be more beneficial. Additionally, it gives a time for parents to come and meet me on an informal basis.

We have made a few changes here at the school; I have been working to make the duty schedule more equitable for all teachers, we have rearranged the lunch and recess schedule and I have also been looking at classroom instructional time. In the DNN of 9/21 I informed parents that they would no longer be able to call into their child's classroom with information regarding transportation and play dates. If they call the school, they will be put into the teachers' voice mail.

Personnel—I have asked Brenda MacDonald and case managers to look at IEPs and Paraprofessionals. We have one fewer Special Ed paraprofessional this year compared to last year, and I want to ensure that all students are receiving the services that they need, and that are listed in their IEP.

Curriculum Night will be held on Monday, September 26th. We have created a 'rolling schedule' so that parents with multiple children will be able to visit all teachers and hear their presentations.

NECAP materials have arrived and we will be scheduling that between October 3rd and October 26th.

I am really enjoying working with the students, parents and teachers!