

UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, March 19, 2018
Final Minutes

Present: Johanna Bartlett, Anna Wetherby, Erik Semb, Brian Guerin, Carl Seppala, Craig Cohen, Bethany Seeger, Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Melissa Burke, Tara Acker; Dan Hayes, Chair; Bruce Turner, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Steve Kaczmarczyk, Public Guest.

1. Meeting Called to Order by Dan at 7:00 P.M.

2. Public Hearings: None.

3. Approval of the Minutes from January 10, 2018:

ERIK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2018. LAUREN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS (ONE ABSTENTION).

4. Central Office Personnel Changes

Jennifer reported on two upcoming retirements at Central Office, both of whom will be sorely missed. We're in the process of reviewing these job descriptions but will still need to fill the positions.

5. Director of Finance and Operations Report

Bruce reported that school committees have all passed their budgets save one. He's submitted paperwork to the state for funds for capital refurbishment and repair at two schools. He also recently attended an event with state representatives where they discussed education funding across the state. He's also taken a course on working with ESL students that was illuminating and beneficial. Next year is the last year of our transportation contract; he'll be meeting with business managers across Franklin County to look at how they can go out together for their next bid.

Dan asked about expenses at Central Office. Bruce responded that some lines will be shifted around to allow grant monies like those from Title II-A to cover PD and some other zero-budget items that have expenses. The bookkeeping line turned out to be underfunded this year, but we can put off some equipment purchases to cover that. There are some moving parts, but nothing that breaks the bank. We're also waiting for the Erving Town Meeting for approval to repair the sink.

6. Superintendent's Report:

Jennifer reported on a recent Rural Schools Coalition meeting that was attended by state representatives. Rep. Lee also came out for a meeting; she's been very supportive of our rural schools and is trying to raise awareness of the unique challenges we face among her colleagues. Jennifer also discussed a proposal to change the school committee meeting schedules (reducing

the total number for each town and JSC meetings to quarterly ones). Fewer meetings should increase participation as well as the chances of a quorum. The individual school committees can decide to do this or not on their own, and JSC will have to vote on the change. JSC members spoke in favor of the proposal, since the meeting schedule is quite demanding not only on committee members, but on the Central Office staff who must attend *all* the meetings.

Finally, Jennifer discussed where she's currently at with each of her goals for the upcoming Summative Evaluation.

The first goal was to implement Universal Design for Learning across the Union. Jennifer has provided PD and leadership training on UDL for teachers and staff as well as provided guidance on UDL principles and conducted walkthroughs at each school to provide feedback on UDL implementation there.

The second goal was to develop leadership, both personally and at the level of the Leadership Team. Jennifer has conducted a workshop with Prudy at a Superintendents' conference, attended the New Superintendents Induction Program, consulted with education leaders, attended a Human Resources summit and a conference on education in the digital age, and continues to meet with other superintendents to discuss challenges and share solutions.

The third goal was to develop collaborative relationships with community members and legislators. Jennifer has met with our state representatives to discuss rural school issues and advance our concerns, participated in a forum regarding our budget, shared fiscal conditions and challenges with members of Union #28 towns, met with area representatives from DESE to share information and learn more about how to apply for state aid, and drafted a public letter discussing the recent student walkouts and other actions taken in response to the Parkland, FL shooting.

The fourth goal was to establish a Data Dashboard for use in policy decisions made by the Leadership Team. Jennifer is working with the Leadership Team to learn about what data would be best to include and how to go about tracking and incorporating it effectively.

JSC discussed the feeling that there seems to be some movement at the state level towards providing more aid to rural schools; our legislators might be starting to get the full picture about where we live. Regionalization can't be the answer for everything; as Dan noted, organizations like CES can also play an important role in solutions. Also, data is quite important, but numbers by themselves can be very misleading. The Union #28 administrators talk about data in a way that makes it meaningful and relevant.

Johanna reminded JSC that it's important to reflect on any concerns with the Superintendent now (early in the evaluation process) as well as to encourage community members to bring their concerns forward so they can be addressed.

7. Union #28 Policy Subcommittee: No report.

8. News/Updates from Each School and Union #28

Wendell / New Salem: Anna reported that our music teacher, Mr. Cortina, took 6th Grade chorus went down to a contest in Longmeadow this past weekend. Our students are getting a strong education in music. Students sang songs during the walkout as well.

Leverett: Tara reported that LSC is working with the Selectboard to pass a budget. The loss of the state Early Education grant has had a severe impact on our budget. A lower-than-level budget is on the table now, and we hope to avoid the 2% increase budget the Selectboard originally requested, which would result in cuts to art, music, and other programs. It seems that the Selectboard is open to allowing LES to use Free Cash to make up part of the shortfall this year, but we're trying to figure out what else we might be able to propose at Town Meeting; we're not close to our tax levy ceiling yet. Any advice? Long term, we're trying to facilitate more communication among committees and develop a strategic plan; we're also putting together a Best Practices manual. JSC members advised them to mobilize parents and perhaps even plan for an Override down the road. All these towns face the same problems. JSC also advised working closely with Fin Com and Selectboard members. Perhaps more revenue can be brought it from the state via PILOT payments for conserved land. It's also possible to alternate bonuses with raises as well as to open schools to the community for use in the summer. In other news, the Art Show happened tonight; it was lively. The MCBA Books in Action night was also wonderful.

Shutesbury: Lauren reported that SES has a hard time maintaining momentum with all the Snow Days. Students participated in the walkout, and she appreciated that the administrators made it possible for all students to feel comfortable with their decisions about whether or not to participate. The Moose on the Move program is running apace. Planning for the Spaghetti Supper on May 11 is simmering now as well. Dan added that the MCBA Books in Action event was marvelous as usual.

Erving: Brian reported that the All-School Play is coming up in April; it's a lot of work, but worth it! Jennifer added that EES math teachers are sharing how they teach with parents and community members tomorrow night.

9. Future Items to Discuss

Jennifer briefly reviewed the process she goes through in deciding whether to call a Snow Day. She draws on information from NOAA and other news sources and starts talking early with area Superintendents. Our geography is challenging and diverse, of course, and a further complication is that Union #28 children have siblings who attend three different middle and high schools. Ultimately, she could never live with herself if one of her students got hurt, so she will always err on the side of caution.

a. Next Meeting Date: Monday, May 21, 2018, 7:00 P.M. Swift River Elementary School

10. Executive Session to Conduct Contract Negotiations with Nonunion Personnel at 8:05 P.M.

DAN MOVED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONDUCT CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH NONUNION PERSONNEL, NOT TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AFTERWARD. JOHANNA SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYE.