

UNION 28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, June 15, 2016
Final Minutes

Present: Scott Bastarache, Dick Baldwin, Johanna Bartlett, Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Fred Steinberg, Son Hui May, Audra Goscenski, Carla Halpern, Tara Acker; Dan Hayes, Chair; Prudence Marsh, Director of Student Support Services; Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent.

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

2. Public Hearings: None

3. Approval of the Minutes from March 23, 2016

SCOTT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2016. SON HUI SECONDED. UNANIMOUS (TWO ABSTENTIONS).

4. Budget & Personnel Committee Update

Aaron reported that Scott got an article on the Erving warrant for Town Meeting to install a security system at Central Office (camera and buzzer). Jennifer thanked Scott for his unflagging support in pursuing this funding.

5. Regionalization Update

Audra reported that there have been no votes taken in Leverett or Shutesbury supporting regionalization, although Leverett did vote to continue to consider the possibilities. Dan added that there seems to be no interest in Shutesbury in pursuing regionalization.

6. News/Updates From Each School and Union #28

Wendell / New Salem: Johanna reported that we had a recent evening concert, which was a huge success; tonight is the school play. The 6th Grade Field Trip is 6/16 and Graduation is 6/21. Three teachers and two staff members are retiring and searches are about to commence, and the PTCA is working to reconstitute itself/rebrand.

Leverett: Audra reported that today was Field Day, including a staff vs. students softball game. LES recently had a silent auction and a lovely dinner put together by Leverett's food service director, a chef. Several grades have taken class trips recently, and 2nd Graders tested hypotheses. Next Tuesday (6/21) is Jump-Up Day for the younger kids.

Erving: Son Hui reported that EES had a band event at which older students introduced their instruments to younger ones; this was followed by a wonderful concert. Graduation is 6/16, and there has been a ton of field trips recently to everywhere from Connecticut to Boston. 4th Graders took a trip to the Braille Press in Boston; the press will be donating a book to every student and teacher to thank them for their fundraising efforts to support the press. The PTO

BBQ is coming up, and there are five staff members retiring. EES is also looking at participating in the MCBA Book Award event.

Shutesbury: Fred reported that SSC voted to approve School Choice since the 1st, 3rd, and 6th Grades had low enrollments. Dan said SES had a successful annual Spaghetti Dinner and silent auction, and the whole SES community is working to build a track a la SRS that can be utilized by students as well as community members. Lauren added that students are offering their final portfolios; Prudy echoed her admiration for the depth of thought and care that the students clearly put into their work.

Dan thanked JSC members for reporting on these events; it's wonderful to hear about the many positive and unique things each school is up to. He also thanked the staff and parents at all U#28 schools for making these happen.

7. Superintendent Report

Jennifer's report will be addressed under #9 below.

8. Director of Finance and Operations Report

Aaron noted that the proposed FY17-18 Budget has been distributed to JSC. A final vote on the Budget will happen about next January; it will be worked on until then, and there are several items that require significant conversation, such as grant-funded positions. Aaron feels the true cost of the Central Office be made clear to the towns, with grant money flowing directly to schools.

Dan asked whether there were any big changes; Aaron said no, though it has been made easier to read, and the budget process has been streamlined somewhat. He said that it's all right if JSC votes on it in September rather than now, since that would give everyone more time to look it over and digest it. At a question from Johanna, Aaron made clear that all the U#28 school budgets will be following the same timeline.

As for the Expenditure Report, we're trending positive going into the end of the year; we plan to use these funds to make necessary updates, especially to the Internet service, which is a home plan from 2006 with a bandwidth cap to match. Our computers have been upgraded to Windows 10 from Windows 7, so they use more data as a matter of course. We don't need what the schools have, but we do need to upgrade our service.

Erving and New Salem have each been awarded \$12,000 in grants from EOS (a foundation focused on student nutrition) for breakfast in the classroom starting next school year. EOS representatives were greatly impressed by the quality of the food service in U#28 schools, and how these communities have decided to subsidize the programs to achieve this higher quality; Aaron is confident that SRS's and EES's programs will be shining examples for them.

Dan wondered whether some of the excess funding could be used for interior wall paint; Aaron responded that the network issue is front and center. An A/C unit has been replaced as well, and some storage reorganization, shelving and painting has been done out of pocket by Central

Office staff. A certain minimum amount of storage is required because many kinds of files have to be kept for a specified timespan.

9. Superintendent Evaluation

Dan explained the evaluation process: Jennifer will present her self-evaluation and artifacts supporting it, then JSC members will fill out their evaluation forms. The details of these forms are not made public in order to allow the Superintendent some confidential time to discuss the feedback; the summary of the evaluation will be made public, however.

Jennifer reviewed the process so far, including setting goals and completing a mid-cycle review. She summarized the work she's done in the four standards she set at the start of the year:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership: We have instituted four Professional Development Days in the form of Professional Learning Communities across the Union. We worked collaboratively with a consultant on carrying out this process. We're continuing to work on standards, which will be part of our focus next year. We also had a PLC among the Principals. I also attended several panel presentations and conferences on accessibility and support for all students.

Standard II: Management and Operations: We continue to grow in our Leadership Team meetings. We have Tactical and Strategic meetings. The Central Office team has worked together on presentations to school committees as well as improved and modernized some office procedures. We've also participated in the District Governance Project through MASC and gathered feedback from school committees during the budgeting process in order to help things move along smoothly.

Standard III: Connecting with the Fin Coms and Selectboards in the towns has also been very important in this process. Jennifer joined a recently formed Rural District Superintendent Consortium that works on the issues faced by rural districts.

Standard IV: Professional Culture: We have worked to build our professional culture, recognizing the impact of culture on the working conditions in the schools and hence the students' learning environments. We'll continue to work on strengthening our commonalities across the Union while supporting the unique culture at each U#28 school. The Leadership Team completed a professional leadership survey that offers each member a profile of their strengths and areas for growth. Feedback from staff and from each other has really strengthened our work.

(During a brief break, Dan thanked all JSC members for their service, and lamented the fact that we don't always get to thank members who move on. To wit, Dan thanked Scott for his long service on U#28 committees.)

Jennifer went on to review progress on her goals:

Goal 1: Entry Plan and Effective Direction Setting: The Entry Plan was successfully carried out, and Direction Setting work continues to shape the overall Strategic Plan.

Goal 2: Maintain Momentum During Transition: We've made a lot of progress here, thanks in large part to the dynamic nature of the U#28 Leadership Team and school staff. Overall, we've strengthened communication and relationships between and among U#28 Superintendent's Office and each School Committee.

Goal 3: Participation in New Superintendent Induction Program: I had monthly meetings with my cohort group as well as individual meetings with another Western Mass Superintendent; I also had monthly consultations with my coach, who was a Superintendent in Western Mass himself. It's been very helpful to discuss issues with other Superintendents as well as to analyze case studies, then come back to the districts and try things out.

Goal 4: Fair and Effective Classroom Teacher Evaluation: We calibrated the evaluation process and created forms to guide our work as observers in the classroom.

Audra asked what Jennifer was most proud of, and what she thought she would like to work on most; she responded that it's paramount to her that every student has the support and access they need to be successful, and she's proud of the work they've done in this area. She would like to continue to work to reach out to parents and also to understand the budget process. Johanna asked about the classroom evaluation process; what goes into that? Jennifer explained the areas in the evaluation form, and how they all came directly from the Principals.

Son Hui inquired about parent evaluation forms for teachers – we used to have these, but not now. What happened to them? Jennifer said DESE is looking at developing these, as well as forms for staff evaluation of Principals. It's not a mandate now, but rather a recommendation. Prudy noted that the Leadership Team went to a DESE-sponsored training on evaluation at which they saw samples of forms students might use to evaluate teachers; these were quite refined and capable of communicating that individual student's learning style to the teacher.

Dan noted that it seems the Superintendent evaluation process has been evolving over the years, and it's getting better and better. He'll be attending a MASC course this Saturday on what's going on at the state level regarding this. Johanna observed the process seemed more organized and clear this year.

10. Future Items

- a. Next Meeting Date – TBD in September

11. Adjournment

JOHANNA MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:30. TARA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.