

UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, January 13, 2020
Final Minutes

Present: Jen Malcolm Brown, Beth Erviti, Barbara Doyle, Elizabeth Devlin, Erik Semb, Bethany Seeger, Johanna Bartlett, Carla Halpern, Dan Hayes, Members; Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Chair; Bruce Turner, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Culkeen, Superintendent; Public Guests.

1. Meeting Called to Order by Lauren at 6:30 P.M.

2. Public Hearings: None.

3. Adam Suzor – Suzor IT Presentation:

Jennifer introduced representatives from Suzor IT (Adam Suzor and Evan Paradise) and explained the tech needs of our schools (tech support and tech education). Suzor IT currently provides tech support for Central Offices and gave a presentation on providing essential tech support to the entire Union. Adam introduced himself and summarized Suzor IT and its clients (mainly municipal and schools). They focus on protecting schools against malicious attacks like ransomware and phishing. They don't sell hardware or software to clients, but offer fixed-rate services, a model that's worked well so far. Adam will be presenting to individual school committees as well, offering more details of their services. Jennifer explained that she and Bruce feel strongly that data protection is something we need to take seriously and start to find a plan for.

Dan asked if Suzor IT covers the schools within a municipality if they serve that municipality; it depends on the municipality, but they offer a 50% discount for municipalities if their school is already a client. They already work for New Salem. Several committee members expressed an interest in having Select Board members attend individual SC meetings at which Suzor IT will be presenting. Adam stressed that tech is complicated, which makes it difficult for a single person to take on everything. Suzor IT aims to support the tech specialists in the schools. Jennifer and JSC thanked the representatives for attending.

4. Approval of the Minutes from November 25, 2019:

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 25, 2019. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

5. New Business:

1. Cyber Security – Discussion and Technology Committee Formation: Bruce reported that our auditors have recommended that we set up a SubCommittee that will be responsible for establishing and monitoring technology and data protection policy. This is a “significant deficiency” in our audit, Jennifer added, so it must be addressed. Bruce explained this would take the burden off him and Jennifer and transfer it to JSC, where it rightly belongs, since Central Office houses considerable financial data. This SubCommittee would ensure that we're not vulnerable to attacks like we suffered last spring.

Lauren asked what the SubCommittee actually do, given that members might not have a cybersecurity background. Jennifer said we'd have templates the SubCommittee could use to craft policy going forward. Suzor IT would be happy to advise and assist. Bethany asked how this might have helped in the attack last spring. Jennifer said it would include preventative policies, and Bruce said it would be used to advance our technology to make us less vulnerable. Bethany thought the SubCommittee could help assess the tech assets and needs at each school. The tech positions tend to be built around the individuals in those roles. Having an outside resource like this SubCommittee (or Suzor IT) could help provide continuity across all four schools, especially for things like student and financial information. Jennifer said she envisioned the SubCommittee as including a couple of tech positions from the schools as well as Bruce. She encouraged JSC members to return to their committees and spread the word. Carla asked whether the SubCommittee would include only JSC members or not; the tech director at SRS, for example, would be a great member. Dan noted that we have non-members on hiring committees. Johanna

suggested we invite the tech directors at each school.

Bethany volunteered / was volunteered by Dan.

6. Budget and Personnel Committee: None.

7. Superintendent Report:

Jennifer reported on the progress toward her goals:

1. **Revising Core Values:** By the end of the year, she and the Leadership Team will have a draft 5-year strategic plan. Right now, they're deep into the statement of core values. They're drafting statements that capture the main revising themes.
2. **Developing knowledge of cultural stuff through lens of UDL,** attending workshops and conferences focused on social diversity, cultural competence, participating in book studies with colleagues, and engaging in discussions with school and district leaders: Jennifer reported on the books she's read and the summits and workshops she's attended in an effort to increase her own personal knowledge.
3. **Universal Design for Learning:** Jennifer is continuing to work with teacher design teams and the Director of Learning Design to identify how we can lower barriers to success in each of the schools. She's also been working to create documents to be used to assess UDL by district management groups. We're also crafting educational rounds among teachers so that they can share best practices. Jennifer sees administration as providing support for that opportunity, but letting the teachers be in charge of their process.
4. **Family and Community Engagement:** Facilitating opportunities for family to be involved at their schools, attending local and state meetings on this topic, creating a Family Engagement Document to outline what families might do, working with CNC Director to continue to engage children before they come into our schools. Jennifer has attended many school events, including dinners, community sings, concerts, community learning sessions, etc. She and the CNC Director have a goal of drafting a family engagement document.

Beth asked how assessment will work for Goal #1. Jennifer said we're working with a state assessment initiative that provides different assessment tools as well as access to a consultant; we're crafting the assessment using these resources. Elizabeth asked how the Leadership Team is gathering information from the communities. Jennifer said there are many different ways, including surveys; we're not there just yet, but that stage will involve all stakeholders. JSC members expressed admiration for the strategic planning underway and for the focus on lowering barriers for students as well as making it easier for teachers to share best practices.

8. Director of Finance and Operations Report:

Bruce reported that it's budget time! We've passed one so far, and there are four to go. Leverett and Shutesbury have switched Town Meeting dates. We have a new employee at Central Office who's coming along well. We're well into the second phase of the project at Swift River School, going out to bid in early February so that doors and windows can be delivered by early summer. There have been some energy problems at EES that we'll be applying for a grant for, and we're reapplying for a grant for the roof and boiler at SES. There was a phone system failure at LES and some other schools are also looking to upgrade their systems. He's working with Food Service Directors to try to keep costs down and make things more efficient across the Union. We're also looking at a potential change of office; Jennifer added we're looking for approximately 2,000 sq. ft., including six 10x10 offices and a conference space. A kitchen area would be nice too. The Building Committee is pursuing this, but she also distributed a proposed layout to committee members in case they or those in the community might know of likely locations.

9. U#28 Policy Subcommittee:

Policy Update and Review:

First Reading on:

BEDH – Public Participation at School Committee Meetings
BGB – Policy Adoption
BHE – Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members
GBA – Equal Employment Opportunities
GBEA – Staff Ethics – Conflict of Interest

Second Reading, First Vote on:

BEDA – Notification of School Committee Meetings
BEDB – Agenda Format
BEDG – Minutes

Final Vote on:

BBA – School Committee Powers and Duties
BBAA – School Committee Member Authority

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BEDA – NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BEDB – AGENDA FORMAT. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BEDG – MINUTES. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BBA – SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BBAA – SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY. BARBARA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

10. News/Updates from Each School and Union #28:

Wendell/New Salem: Carla reported that we had a beautiful Winter Concert and our annual Clothing Swap. We put together 12 Thanksgiving baskets for needy families and held a raffle to purchase gifts for 9 children. The Suzor IT presentation to our school was excellent (how could it be otherwise? The presenters are both SRS alums). We voted to join the Massachusetts Rural School Coalition and received Rural Aid this year. One homeschooled student has opted to return to the school. Barbara added we had Candy Bar Bingo before Christmas to raise money for Nature's Classroom.

Leverett: Bethany reported it's been quiet of late. There was a chorus event in December. LSC decided on an abbreviated schedule this year, but after one skipped meeting, LSC members felt they were out of touch with what was going on at the school, so we reinstated brief meetings. Jennifer attended the Hot and Cold Pack Presentation; 6th Grade students had to create and present hot or cold packs to pitch to "medical industry representatives." All of their prototypes were successful.

Shutesbury: Lauren reported that the Moose On the Move Club is up and running again (literally). *Annie*, the school-wide musical, has been a wild success. Lauren expressed admiration for SES's strength at creating events that students of all ages can participate in. Also, our 5th Graders have had Skype interviews with scientists at UMass as well as field trips there. Jen added we're in the middle of a photography contest, and we had a Clothing Swap back in November.

Erving: Erik has no idea what's going on up at EES. Jennifer pinch-hit for him and noted they had a holiday shop at which the 6th Graders do all the wrapping, helping out the younger kids. They ran out of gifts on the first day and had to request more donations. Chip Wood is continuing to work with EES on child development and building community.

11. Future Items to Discuss:

- Next Meeting Date: March 16, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m. – Swift River School
- Budget & Personnel Committee: none

12. Adjournment at 7:43:

JOHANNA MOVED TO ADJOURN. CARLA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.