

**School Administrative Unit 101
Wakefield School Board
November 5, 2019
Paul School Library
Minutes – Amended & Approved**

Present: Chair Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair Tracey Kolb, Sandy Johnson, Jen McCawley, Relf Fogg; Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D’Agostino, Facilities Manager Joe Williams, Transportation Manager Brennan Peaslee, Principal James Lampron, Vice Principal Jenn Spector, Gavin Kearns, Jessica Cormier, Ted Taylor from Clearview TV, and members of the public including Dave Lee, Priscilla Colbath, Mary Collins, Jim Miller, Tara Sue Meyers, and special guest Matthew Murray of Vachon Clukay & Co.

Call to Order: Chair Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation: Matthew Murray, CPA, discussed the School District audit report, fund balances, regulations, Medicaid revenue, Special Education funding, saving in health insurance costs, improvements in record tracking such as Student Activities account, and other elements of the school budget review at length. Typical areas of budget fluctuations include the health insurance line, tuition revenue and special education costs. In response to a query about what strategies work well with regard to special education funding, Mr. Murray said currently the district has an active roster that can change at any given moment; the question is do you take the conservative approach – what happens if a family moves in with one or two children with special education needs that are drastic enough to require the student be sent out on their own bus on a daily basis. The district may choose to fund special education for any catastrophic occurrence. He discussed how other school districts appropriate for Special Education, reporting that other districts set aside between .71 percent to 6.5 percent, with an average 4.2 percent of the total budget appropriations in their special education expendable trusts.

Following his presentation Mr. Fogg requested copies of the Auditor’s Report for the School Board.

Grievance: Gavin Kearns, Wakefield Education Association Representative, distributed documents to board members and provided members with a history of the current grievance relating to unreimbursed course fees he had discussed with Superintendent Gregoire who had subsequently denied the grievance. Mr. Kearns said he was there to make the case course fees should be paid based on past practice. Registration and course fees, in addition

to tuition of up to \$3,000 per labor contract, had been paid in the past. The union was seeking reimbursement for fees paid by staff who are still at the school, \$624. In response, Mr. Gregoire stated there are examples over the past five years where fees have, and have not, been paid. There are invoices where fees were assigned, but not paid by the district. In the CBA, in the grievance process, the action grieved must be consistent. According to his findings, there were instances in 2015 where course fees were not reimbursed; in 2016-2017 almost all fees were paid under the interim superintendent. The following year, there were fees that were requested but none paid. Under the CBA, section 13.2, it states tuition costs will be paid, not tuition fees.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to pay the course registration fees total \$624 for the year 2019-2020 and going forward to only pay fees directly related to the graduate course fees at UNH. The intent is to pay the fees going forward; seconded by Mrs. McCawley. Members voted 4-1 in favor with Mr. Fogg opposed.

Mr. Fogg asked for copies of the change of wording in the labor contract currently under negotiation. He told Mr. Kearns that the current labor contract in effect was not legally obtained or binding.

Public Comment: Tara Sue Meyers thanked the board for supporting continuing education for the teachers.

Consent Agenda: Motion: Mrs. Johnson moved the approve the consent agenda (AP & Payroll manifests) seconded by Mrs. Kolb; members voted 4-1 in favor with Mr. Fogg opposed.

Minutes:

- **Motion: Oct. 15 Regular Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the Oct. 15 meeting minutes with amendments offered; seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Mrs. McCawley made an addition to page 10; she wanted to clarify that in the last paragraph, that the superintendent had explained to her about Common Core, what it was compared with what she perceived it to be, that the bigger issue that was said on camera and on Facebook that she had inappropriately had a conversation with the superintendent when she was on the school board and the thing to be clarified was that she had the conversation prior to joining the school board. She wants the notes to reflect that there is nothing wrong with her as a parent or school board member speaking to the superintendent about Common Core and she did not do anything inappropriate. Members voted 5-0 in favor of approving the Oct. 15 minutes as amended.

- **Motion: Oct. 22 Workshop Minutes:** Mrs. Kolb made a motion to accept the Oct. 22 budget workshop meeting minutes as amended, to correct on page 15, updating the dollar amount to \$4,306 on the delete the Truancy Officer. Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion; members voted in favor 5-0.

Superintendent's Report:

Mr. Gregoire highlighted his report which included the Legislative Update, discussion of participating in a data workshop with Demonstrated Success, Professional Development, Proofs of Residency tallies for Paul School, Spaulding High School and Kingswood High School students.

Mr. Gregoire also received a request from Jim Miller on behalf of Clearview Community TV requesting permission to install a Wi-Fi encoder to enable live streaming coverage of meetings and events at the school. When the camera is on it would live feed to a couple places including the Clearview Community TV Facebook page. This is already being done at town hall; Mr. Miller said they are ready to proceed. There is no fee to the school.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to allow the administration to share information necessary to complete the process so that Clearview can stream live meetings. Mrs. Kolb seconded the motion. Mrs. McCawley suggested encouraging the station to cover sporting events as well. Mr. Miller said that may be possible in the future; coverage requires a paid employee. A teacher, parents or student over 18 can be trained to use the camera. Mr. Fogg suggested creating a media club for students. Members voted 4-0-1 in favor with Mr. Fogg abstaining.

Demonstrated Success

A team of teachers and administrators attended a data workshop with educational consultants from Demonstrated Success. The workshop was part of a plan to look deeper into data as it pertains to student success, aligns to standards, is demonstrated in our curriculum and more. A leadership team along with SAU and school administration will take part in examining and interpreting the data.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to continue the meeting beyond 8 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Johnson, members voted 5-0 in favor.

Professional Development

Mr. Gregoire reported that teachers are participating in professional development in both math and language arts while building administration is working with Pam Clarke in calibrating teacher observations.

Mr. Gregoire informed the board that the Joint Agreement AREA meeting with Rochester was rescheduled to December 9th in Rochester [time to be confirmed, tentatively 6:30 p.m.]

Residency Proofs

Mr. Gregoire updated the board on the number of residency proofs received to date from Paul School, Spaulding and Kingswood families.

Business Administrator's Report

Mrs. D'Agostino provided an overview of her report: Food Service participation is up; the National Food Service Application was approved in October and claims are being submitted and paid. Included in the packet was a Capital Reserve Report, 2019 Tax Rate breakdown and history; and monthly financial reports as of Oct. 31, 2019. Mrs. D'Agostino also reported that many school districts are reducing their projections for anticipated Medicaid revenue significantly.

Budget Freeze

Motion: At the superintendent's request, Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to freeze the school district budget, with exception of previously approved hires of paraprofessionals for Kindergarten and a new bus driver; Mr. Gregoire added that we want to protect the bottom line; we want to make sure we don't end up in the same situation we were in last year. He added that currently we haven't encumbered or hired two paraprofessionals and a math consultant we'd like to continue working with. Freezing the budget provides more oversight. A freeze does not prevent the board from approving expenditure. Members voted all in favor 5-0 of the motion.

Walsh Road bus stop

Mrs. Peaslee presented her solution to the Walsh Road bus stop safety issue. The bus stop will remain on Lovell Lake Road (109), dropping all students off at the door side. We have added Copp Hill Road to the bus route, for students that need to walk down Walsh Road or Copp Hill Road. This is approximately .5 miles from the town line on Walsh Road. We also have added Ryan Road which is approximately .9 miles and we have added Berry Road approximately 1.4 miles.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion to accept the proposal, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted all in favor 5-0. Mr. Gregoire will send letters to the parents on Walsh Road.

New Business

- **Bus Recall:** Mrs. Peaslee reported a recall on school bus seat cushioning that may or may not involved our buses. Any necessary repairs will be done on site by the bus company.
- **Child Care Center:** The district had heard that the Wakefield Child Care Center is closing and that another provider is planning on opening a new center, which may impact the capacity for student transportation. Mr. Gregoire noted another bus route may be required in the event the child care center closes; Mrs. Brennan presented a plan to lower roster numbers on the buses and to address the potential for a new child care center in town. Discussion ensued. **Motion:** Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to accept Plan B, to hire another CDL driver and start a new elementary route to lower the numbers o all the buses and to utilize an existing spare bus. Members voted all in favor 5-0.

Facilities Report

- **Water Test:** Mr. Williams reported the water tests following installation of the filters came back negative. **Motion:** Mrs. Kolb made a motion seconded by Mrs. McCawley to retest the water for lead and copper every 30 days until it has been established the water levels are safe; this will be done to gauge how long the new filters last. The cost is \$100 a month to replace the filters monthly. Members voted all in favor, 5-0.
- **Replacement Stove:** Mr. Williams received three quotes for replacement stove for the cafeteria but after further review it was determined there wasn't enough funds in the budget line to replace the equipment; the replacement equipment line had a balance of \$2,000 only. Mr. Williams had thought funds were carried from last year. No further action was taken.

Policies: First Reading

- **EFAA – Meal Charging (new, required by law):** Mr. Gregoire reviewed the highlights of this lengthy policy. Highlights include wording that parents are responsible for any purchase restrictions on their child's account; a bank fee of \$25 for returned checks is allowed; parents must monitor account; superintendent establishes procedure for low balance procedure. A variety of communications options are available. It's the parent's responsibility to explain to students the necessity of not using the school meal program, not the responsibility of the teacher. The district works with families eligible for the Free or Reduced cost lunch program. Unpaid balances can be pursued in court. This is a first reading. Mr. Gregoire will send out his bulleted items.

- **GADA – Employment References and Verification (new, required by law)** This policy requires the district act in good faith when providing employment references and verification of employment for current and former employees. The Policy would prohibit the School District, and its employees, contractors, and agents from providing a recommendation of employment... if he/she or the District has knowledge or probable cause to believe the other employee, contractor or agent engaged in illegal sexual misconduct with a minor or student.

Mrs. McCawley asked if the SAU website could include a link to the list of New Hampshire sex offenders. Mr. Gregoire said he thinks that school district policy does not allow dissemination of information on sex offenders; in addition, he thinks the policy requires the Superintendent to notify these individuals that they are not allowed at school without written permission, i.e., to attend a meeting and so forth. He will look into whether including a link to the NH sex offender list is considered dissemination of information.

Other Business:

- **Wakefield School Board Scholarship Essay Writing prompts:** members discussed potential prompts. Mrs. Johnson suggested, “Who has been the most important influential person in your life and why.” Mr. Fogg suggested a question on how the students interpret the State of New Hampshire Constitution. Members were invited to submit essay questions to the SAU.
- **Suggestion regarding NH Standards, curriculum:** Mrs. McCawley said we haven’t had an open forum yet on Common Core, NH Standards. She wanted to put out another plan that meets in the middle: stick with current books, teachers, and methods we’re utilizing but just realign and reorganize the timing of teaching, to better prepare our students for the tests. Mrs. Johnson said the state tests are based on the benchmarks of Common Core. Mrs. Kolb was in favor of a compromise and of thinking outside the box. Mr. Gregoire asked if the board wanted him to look into aligning curriculum with the testing; this may require having discussions with the State of NH DOE around our standards and a determination of what time, effort and energy would be required.
- **91-A Request:** Mr. Fogg asked the status of a Right to Know 91-A request he made on September 9, regarding what steps administration has taken to date that better the standards. He said he felt the Superintendent was not providing the information he had requested and that he had not received the information. Mrs. Kolb said the board brought [curriculum] it to the table for discussion and has worked on it.

Public comment: Mrs. Colbath said many states are abandoning Common Core standards and are looking at the archived Massachusetts Standards that the Paul School has been using. She suggested leaving the curriculum as-is.

Nominations/Resignation: Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to accept with regret the resignation of Kathy Cuddy. Members voted 5-0 in favor.

Adjournment: Members made, seconded and approved a motion to adjourn at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Larissa Mulkern
Administrative Assistant