

**School Administrative Unit #101**  
**Wakefield School Board**  
**October 1, 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, Student Services Administrator Anne Kebler, Principal James Lampron, Assistant Principal Jenn Spector, Transportation Director Brennan Peaslee, School Resource Officer Dave Landry, Penny Huckins, Julie Crowley, Gavin Kearns, Lori Jerram, Priscilla Colbath, Norma Joy, David Lee, Ted Taylor, Jim Miller, and Steve Brown

**Call to Order:** Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comments:** Mrs. Colbath and Mr. Brown suggestions additions and corrections to the minutes of the Sept. 17 board meeting. Mrs. Colbath added to page 3 that Mrs. Kolb said “I wouldn’t mind making a motion,” and Mr. Ouellette had said it was too early for that, and on page 9 Mr. Gregoire had asked if the board wanted to hold a public hearing on Oct. 1; members agreed with Mr. Ouellette asking if that would be the only thing on the agenda, and Mr. Gregoire responded yes, except negotiations. The board agreed to have a public forum with nothing else on the agenda, Mrs. Colbath said. Mr. Brown said most of his statement was omitted and the one sentence included is wrong. He said it took the school board nine months of going back and forth between Common Core and the Mass. Standards to make a decision and it took three years to come up with new curriculum.

**Consent Agenda:** Mrs. Johnson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda [AP & Payroll manifests, Monthly Financial Report-September] seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted 4-1 in favor with Mr. Fogg opposed.

**Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the minutes with amendments offered, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted 4-1 in favor with Mrs. Johnson opposed. Mr. Fogg asked to add comments to the minutes that reflected the statements that Mrs. McCawley was not a fan of Common Core. Mrs. McCawley said she had not been convinced in years prior of Common Core; she said Mr. Gregoire had explained to her what it was. Mr. Fogg said what he wanted the minutes to reflect was during the time period Mr. Gregoire had convinced her that Common Core was not bad; and that when she had said that, the school district was not for Common Core, but the administrator was in favor and he wanted that reflected in the minutes.

**Superintendent’s Report:** Mr. Gregoire reviewed his report, which included: Legislative Update 2019, Strafford Learning Center Board meeting, Budget Development, and an upcoming meeting regarding Demonstrated Success and efforts to bolster our reading and math programs.

**Business Administrator’s Report:** Mrs. D’Agostino said this was a preliminary report [dated as of Sept. 27, 2019.]

**Old Business:**

**New Hampshire Standards:** Mr. Ouellette noted the ground rules for public comment and asked the public to speak to the facts; comment is limited to three minutes. He said the board did not say it was going to decide tonight and would like to hear from more people. Mrs. Joy said this should be a public forum and not a discussion in the middle of a school board meeting. She said this needs to be publicly advertised. Mr. Fogg said this would be the first step in a longer process. Mr. Fogg read School Board Policy IGA [Curriculum Development] and Policy IGD [Curriculum Adoption] and said it's the Superintendent's duty to make sure the School Board follows policy. Mr. Gregoire added the policies are specific to curriculum, not standards, and that curriculum is driven by standards. Extensive board member dialogue followed regarding, but not limited to, history of school standards, adoption of Massachusetts Standards in 2015, the work of the Curriculum & Assessment committee leading to the recommendation to update to NH Standards; the reasoning and benefits of setting current NH Standards, rejection of Common Core by the former school board, and criticism of Common Core.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Miller asked why we need to do this and why now? The board has much more to do. Mr. Brown said he researched the NH DOE where he did not find that NH had the fourth best standards in the country. Mrs. Peaslee asked if we were aligned with Spaulding High School standards and Mr. Gregoire responded that we are not on the same standards – the goal is to put the students on same playing field. Mrs. Peaslee said it concerns her as a mom of three students that we're not on same curriculum. Lori Jerram disagreed that the standards are 'dumbing down' students and was surprised to learn the school is not aligned with state standards. Gavin Kearns said he appreciated Mr. Fogg's earlier statement that he wanted teachers to have freedom; he is given the freedom to teach. Standards set a minimum benchmark. Mr. Miller reiterated his question as to why the standards are being brought up now; the upper grades have above average math scores. Mrs. Kolb said many people asked her about test scores; teachers are reticent to come forward; she is bringing the curriculum information to the board. Mrs. McCawley said she was horrified at how political this issue has been made. She will decide based on what's best for the kids – she doesn't think it will be a big change. Mr. Gregoire said there is improvements in some grades, but they can get better. Mr. Fogg said when the board rejected Common Core the idea was to create better standards than what was offered; he believes Common Core limits academic achievement. Mrs. McCawley supports setting minimum benchmarks. Mr. Gregoire said Common Core only requires teaching on four documents in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades and those include the U.S. Constitution, and a piece of Classical Literature. Mrs. Johnson said Common Core is getting back to basics. Mrs. McCawley said in response to 'why now?', its because people are not happy with low test scores and they are looking to make it better. Mrs. Kolb said a lot of things are working at the school; all we did was bring information to the table. Mr. Ouellette asked if the board would like to hold another meeting. Mrs. McCawley said she thinks this was a good exchange. Mrs. Kolb said people in the community want her to support the students. Mr. Lee said there are a lot of problems with this board; the perception is that the board is hiding something. He referenced nonmeetings. He's been in town for years and has not heard of a nonmeeting. Mrs. Kolb said this was researched thoroughly; when you get into negotiations, whether for property, insurance or CBA [collective bargaining agreements], there is an RSA that states the meeting does not have to be posted or minutes taken. Mr. Gregoire said the attorney said 50 percent of schools get it wrong – holding discussions about negotiations in a nonmeeting is a fully legal process. Mr. Lee said the perception is that the board is hiding something and needs to do some communicating to people. Mr. Fogg said negotiations can be done in a nonmeeting and everything that can be done is explained; but the problem is that with no record no one is going to know what participants were thinking. Business should be done in public or nonpublic meetings. Additional discussion ensued. Mr. Lee said the website needs to be updated daily and is not user friendly.

**Motion:** Mr. Ouellette made a motion to hold a public forum seconded by Mr. Fogg; members voted all in favor 5-0. The date set was Oct. 17, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Paul School Gymnasium/Multi-Purpose room. Suggestions were made to invite guest speakers and post information for the public.

**Motion:** Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to continue the meeting beyond 8 p.m. Members voted all in favor 5-0.

**Policies:** Second reading DAF – Administration of Federal Grant Funds

**Motion:** Mr. Fogg made a motion to reject policy DAF, which failed to garner a second. Motion failed. It was noted that policy DAF is required if a district is receiving federal grant funds; this district receives federal grant funds.

**Motion:** Mrs. Johnson made a motion to accept policy DAF, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted 4-1 with Mr. Fogg opposed.

**Other Business:**

Website: Mrs. Kolb recognized the website is lacking and the board will be discussing and a proposal from MoxDog at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Fogg there are websites that are free such as one used by SAU13.

**Public Comment:** Jim Miller: Members criticizing their critics is wasting time. He and Mr. Lee criticized the 3-minute public comment limit. Mr. Kearns referenced PACE schools [Performance Assessment for Competency Education] which he has researched in the past. He said instead of state or standardized testing you use local assessments based on local standards, use the testing in place to see how the kids are doing. The idea is that it has kids apply what they are doing instead of multiple choice or filling in the blanks. Mr. Lee said he didn't blame the two people who walked out of the meeting – they felt they were not being acknowledged. He said it was rude of the board to see two members on phone watching the ticking go down [to the three-minute time limit]. Mrs. Johnson said she was asked to keep time. She said the board is not required to have public comment periods and can put parameters on that time. The purpose of a time limit is so people can have a say. Mr. Ouellette said he's been on the board for seven years and this is no change from this board to the board before this. People don't see eye to eye. There will be bickering; this is nothing new.

**Other – Scheduling:** Members and staff discussed scheduling dates for budget preparation and presentation with the town's Budget Committee. Mr. Gregoire was asked touch base with Budget Committee Chair Jerry O'Connor regarding any flexibility with the Budget Committee dates. The suggested dates were Nov. 12 for the School District presentation to the Budget Committee; the intent is to have a draft budget to the school board by the Oct. 15 meeting. A school board budget workshop was planned for Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. Additional meetings may be necessary.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:  
Larissa Mulkern  
Administrative Assistant

