

**Lamoille North Supervisory Union and
Lamoille North Modified Unified Union District Board Special Board Meeting
Minutes of Meeting
January 29, 2018**

Members Present: Belvidere: Angie Evans; Cambridge: Laura Miller; Eden: Jeff Hunsberger; Hyde Park: Andrew Beaupre, Chasity Fagnant, Patti Hayford; Johnson: Bobbie Moulton, Mark Nielsen, Angela Lamell, Katie Orost (Acting Chair); Waterville: Amanda Tilton-Martin

Members Absent: David Whitcomb, Mark Stebbins, Heather Rodriguez, Sue Hamblyn-Prescott, Jan Sander, Bill Sander, Lisa Barry, Heather Hobart (left at 6:03 p.m.)

Others Present: Catherine Gallagher, Deborah Clark, Charleen McFarlane, Michele Aumand, Brian Pena, Dylan Laflam, Diane Reilly, David Manning, Melinda Mascolino, Brian Schaffer, Wendy Savery, Jennifer Stevens, Jan Epstein, Lucy Boyden, Janet Murray

Minute Taker: Sue Trainor

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment: Chair Orost called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Moulton made a motion, seconded by Nielsen, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously. As part of public comment, Superintendent Gallagher read a letter from Mark Ferriman, a parent from Johnson, who wrote to appeal the decision not to transport his son to their driveway. Mr. Ferriman's letter is attached. Gallagher noted that this correspondence was considered to be public comment and, as a result, typically the Board would not engage in conversation on the matter. However, Gallagher wanted the Board to understand how bus routes were determined. Clark explained that LVT developed the bus routes with the registrar. A number of factors were considered, including the age of students, the distance, and the safety of roads. If a parent called with concerns or requested a change, Clark would drive the route several times and discuss the matter with LVT. In this particular case, the student was older and currently attending the high school. It was a little less than a half-mile walk. Special consideration had been given to a student on the route in the past. When that student graduated, those special considerations went away and the route was modified. Clark noted that ultimately transportation was not an entitlement. The District did the best they could with the resources available to help the youngest and most vulnerable students. Clark stated they tried to keep walking distance to less than a half-mile. Clark noted that if the District provided door-to-door service for every student, it would \$500,000. Gallagher stated this decision could be appealed to the Board but it would be setting a precedent.

LNSU/LN MUUSD Routine Business: Consent Agenda Items:

Minutes of the January 8, 2018, and January 16, 2018, Meetings: Moulton made a motion, seconded by Hunsberger, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Miller then requested that the January 8th minutes be changed to reflect a name change from Mary LaFountain to Carrie LaFountain on page 3. Further, on page 5, Miller asked that the 226% loss of special education figure be reviewed.

Minutes of the January 8 and January 11, 2018, Budget Committee Meeting; Minutes of the December 11, 2017, Curriculum Committee Meeting: Tilton-Martin made a motion, seconded by Hunsberger, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Orders: No vote was taken.

Eden Principal Contract Renewal: Hunsberger made a motion to enter into Executive Session and he asked that only Board members and the Superintendent remain. Lamell seconded the motion. The Board went into Executive Session at 6:11 p.m. The Board then reconvened at 6:26 p.m. Hunsberger made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation regarding the terms of the contract with the Principal of Eden Central School. Moulton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review Bids for Internet and Ethernet Service Contract Renewals: Pena reported he had received a response from three vendors. VTel was disqualified, as they had not met the minimum services requested. FirstLight was not currently in place at Hyde Park and Johnson so those sites would cost extra to add. FairPoint was already in place and there would be no additional work needed. Pena recommended the Board approve a 60-month contract with FairPoint for \$601,905. Tilton-Martin made a motion to accept FairPoint's bid for Internet and Ethernet access and support. Moulton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Eden Central School Administrator Presentation: Melinda Mascolino highlighted the behavioral support system at Eden Central and introduced Andrew Belitsos, one of the two individuals responsible for running the Planning Room. Annissa Parrett was the other member of the team and had been unable to attend tonight's meeting. Belitsos explained that he began working at Eden when the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support model was beginning and they tied the work together. He explained that choosing the Eden Eagle mascot was a school community effort and they now used the acquisition of eagle feathers as reinforcement and incentives. Mascolino noted the 5th and 6th Graders had been introduced to Habits of Mind. Anne McPherson, Guidance Counselor, would be going to Restorative Justice training and would incorporate that in order to go deeper when students needed to understand their behavior. Belitsos explained they had organized a number of puzzle parties to reinforce positive behavior. They were able to collaborate with a number of local schools that were already using the PBIS model. They learned the importance of moving away from prizes and instead providing incentives to work toward an experiential community goal. Mascolino explained that student expectations were posted everywhere in the building and were reiterated throughout the day by the teachers. The expectations were to show respect to everything and everyone around you, to have a safe body, and have fun while learning. Mascolino stated that Belitsos and Parrett went above and beyond in organizing themed puzzle parties. Mascolino explained that the school also held a monthly community meeting that was run by one grade. That grade level would then invite other grade levels to share their learning.

Mascolino explained that the Planning Room had a variety of methods to assist students, including coloring breaks for students, tablets to use on the bus, and weighted vests to use in the classroom. Belitsos stated the students were very self-sufficient when taking coloring breaks, using a timer to know when it was time to stop. Belitsos explained the corrective plans they used with the different grade levels and noted that 10% of the population required Tier 2 interventions. Mascolino explained that the Planning Room team was constantly involved with students. Mascolino highlighted as an example that Parrett arranged the school bus seating and Belitsos reviewed the tapes from the school bus on a daily basis. If students weren't behaving, the seating was changed. Mascolino thought the variety of accommodations was one reason there were no one-on-one paraeducators being used at the school. Belitsos stated Eden Central was a small school, but this type of support definitely required two people to deliver this type of service.

Central Office Report: Gallagher provided an article to Board members entitled “Troublemakers”. Gallagher stated her desire for all elementary school principals to share the article with their teachers. The article discussed how schools responded to students pegged as troublemakers and offered six basic strategies to be used in the classrooms so that students weren’t sent out of the classroom. Sending a student out of the classroom sent the message that the student wasn’t wanted. This label then followed them throughout their school years. Gallagher understood that some students could frustrate teachers, but it was up to the leaders of the building, with support from Gallagher and the Board, to ensure that children were engaged. She noted that often it was those children pegged as troublemakers who were independent, creative, and needed another avenue for expression. Gallagher wanted teachers to think about the messages that were being sent to the students. She noted there were more and more students who had struggles outside of school. Gallagher wanted to keep students safe and engaged during the day and did not want them sent away from the classroom.

Clark reported that the MUUSD finances were doing well. The SU finances were falling in line. Projections would be happening in the next month or so, but overall the finances were healthy. Clark then discussed whether petitions were required for the election of Board members. Clark consulted with Paul Giuliani, a municipal lawyer. 16 VSA 706(e) discussed the establishment of a new union district. At that time, it was required under statute that all the Board members were elected by Australian ballot assuming that the union district was also voted in. On April 12, 2016 the member towns voted to join and elected their directors. 16 VSA 706(k) (a) noted that subsequent elections were processed the way that the town had always done the elections for their directors. Hyde Park and Johnson elected their town directors by Australian ballot, so they would have to do petitions for the election. Eden, Belvidere, Waterville and Cambridge elected directors from the floor, so no petition would be necessary. Going forward, Board members would be elected at the town level and would be warned in the town warnings. Clark confirmed that the town clerks were aware of this.

IT Update: Pena explained that he would be going out for another bid for internet and Ethernet service at Cambridge Elementary, as the response they received was not satisfactory. Pena was also moving towards sending out an RFP for wireless access point upgrades for Hyde Park. He announced the MUUSD had received approval for a matching grant, which would allow for reimbursement of up to \$25,000 for 911 compliance. Unfortunately, Cambridge was not awarded a matching grant. A committee would be formed soon to review the current IT position and how to best move forward with that position from a district standpoint. Pena had been working on the website update information requested by the Superintendent. He explained that after receiving information from individuals responsible for providing content on their school website, all together for all schools, 10.5 hours per week or a total of 41 hours was spent maintaining websites. Each school managed their website differently, with Johnson having 13 teachers maintain their website, while Cambridge had only one person. He believed if this situation were restructured and a person hired to take on website management, it would take that person more than 40 hours. Finally, Pena informed the Board he had received a bid response from the current webmaster on managing every website, including GMTCC. The estimate they provided was broken into three phases, would run approximately 23 weeks, and would include fact-finding, development, and reviewing the websites. The bid was \$24,600. The bid would be less if GMTCC were not included, but Pena would prefer it be included.

Facilities Update: Laflam informed the Board that the first informational meeting of the Bond Committee had been held prior to this meeting. There were three towns that had open bonds: Hyde Park, Johnson and Eden. Laflam then provided the Board with an update on the Hyde Park Project.

The project was on budget; there had been 44 change orders to date for a total of \$184,000. There was a contingency fund of \$300,000, so he was comfortable with where they were budget-wise. The occupancy date had been pushed back to April 20th, with a complete closeout in August. This meant Hyde Park Elementary would remain at the Plaza for the rest of the school year. There would be guided tours on February 8th for staff and board members. Eden had a bond totaling \$311,000, which would be used primarily for insulating the garage and paving. Johnson had \$260,000 in a bond that would be used for IT infrastructure and HVAC. Laflam expected that all bonds would be closed out by the Fall of 2018. Laflam noted that another bid request would be going out for a truck. The 2006 truck blew a rod and would need to be replaced. He reported that GMTCC had received an equipment grant and would be purchasing a tractor for Robtoy Farm. Laflam then noted he would begin working on facility use, the fee schedule and expectations for all the use of the buildings. He explained that with the budget being tight next year, he was looking at weekend building usage and overtime costs. Miller stated that building use had been a hot topic in the past when discussing Act 46. She stated that she believed changes could not occur for five years. Laflam stated he was just trying to streamline the process and limit the overhead. He did not intend to limit the use of any building. Evans asked if there would be a fee for Belvidere. Laflam said there would not be a fee any time soon. Hunsberger stated this topic was a sensitive one and Laflam needed to be aware of that before having any public conversation about it. Miller agreed a universal form was helpful, but again stated it was her understanding that nothing could be changed for five years.

Elementary Principal Updates:

Johnson: Manning expressed his appreciation to the Superintendent for sharing the article on troublemakers and shining a light on the issue. He explained that he had been a guidance counselor for years and often wondered why he met so many freshmen students who were so angry. He knew now that it started when they were told in kindergarten that they didn't fit in and that message then being repeated for years. Manning then informed the Board his school had held two lockdown drills. During the first drill, students practiced scattering, with the main message being doing what the adult told them to do. Next week they would practice barricading the doors. They will practice evacuating the building in the spring. Manning stated the school had a PBIS event this week with staff competing with games. Johnson would be holding a school play on February 21st and 23rd. Finally, Johnson won the Breakfast in the Classroom challenge. There was a 150% increase in students eating breakfast in the classroom. This had not happened without growing pains, but the benefit was that a lot of students were now getting breakfast.

Hyde Park: Reilly informed the Board she would be making a Bedbugs 101 presentation with Orkin the following night and this continued to be a community problem. For the 30th year the school was participating in Sports for Life and students were skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, skating, and bowling. Reilly stated the Certificate of Occupancy would be in place at the beginning of May. While staff would be able to go into the building, it wouldn't be ready for students. Landscaping would need to be done to ensure that all construction materials were removed. Reilly stated they would remain at the Plaza until the end of the school year and everyone was looking forward to moving into the new building.

Eden: Mascolino addressed the article that Gallagher had presented earlier. She noted there were students who came to the planning room more often than other students. She reported that prior to returning to class, the Planning team members would hold those students' hands and ask, "What kind of kid are you?" The student would reply, "I'm a good kid." Mascolino reported Eden had received a Vermont Rural Partnership Grant and would be building an outdoor learning space.

Waterville: Epstein reported they would be partnering with Eden classroom teachers on writing calibration. Epstein informed the Board that Waterville had three Wednesdays set aside as winter sports days. Students would ski, snowboard, skate, or cross-country ski and parents would chaperone. This was partially funded by the PTO, by parents, and through the school budget. Epstein then explained that Waterville also had a PBIS activity during the months of January and February. As part of the Cougar theme, cougar paws were earned to work toward a faculty-run fun day. Students learned about sportsmanship and cooperation and had a fun time.

Middle School, High School and GMTCC Principal/Director Updates:

Middle School: Savery provided the Board with details on the 6th grade to 7th grade transition process. The process began in February and ran through June. In February, nightly informational visits began at all elementary schools for 6th grade parents and students. In early April, a visit to the middle school would take place where students would meet teachers and learn more about the curriculum and programs. Placement was determined in May, with the middle school team spending a great deal of time trying to balance the teams. Students received their determination letters by the end of May and in early June the students would visit their team, with 7th graders acting as escorts.

High School: Boyden reported the Senior Class and Special Events Committee had held a very successful Winter Ball. Boyden then informed the Board that Mr. Jewett had been calling all students to his office and handing out awards. Schaffer explained that Jewett had reviewed the entire school roster and attempted to identify students who didn't have any disciplinary issues and were good citizens of the community. This provided an opportunity to give a brief recognition and positive feedback specific to individual students. Schaffer noted the school had one foot in the Carnegie world and one in the proficiency-based world. This effort was an attempt to recognize more students and at this point approximately 200 students had been recognized at an assembly last week. Schaffer then reported on the traditional process at the school of how a proposal became a course and it was time to review this with the Board. The high school was now getting pressure from students, from parents, and from Act 77 for flexible pathways for personalized learning opportunities. As an example, Schaffer discussed the Capstone Class, which all juniors would need to take. This would also need to fit in with individual areas of student interest. Schaffer thought there needed to be quick movement to develop a process for this coursework.

Subcommittee Reports: There were no reports.

Other Business: There was no other business.

Adjourn: Moulton made a motion, seconded by Nielsen, to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Mark Ferriman [mailto:mark.ferriman@insu.org]

>> Sent: Thursday, January 04, 2018 9:56 PM

>> To: Catherine Gallagher <cgallagher@insu.org>; dwhitcomb@luhs18.org

>> Cc: Michele Aumand <maumand@insu.org>

>> Subject: Board decision for appeal

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>> Good evening David, my name is Mark Ferriman, a parent of a student attending LUHS, living in the town of Johnson.

>> I've been advised to write to the board asking to be placed on the agenda for board decision at the next meeting. I wish to appeal the administrations decision to not transport my son to our driveway.

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>> Prior to this school year, school buses were running to our driveway since 2011. Administration provided an explanation for this change. I was told the transportation was provided because I had a disabled child? That was not the case, this has been addressed in written communication with the administration.

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>> I've had extensive dialogue with the superintendent of schools and the business manager, both have given this matter their attention and taken steps to personally research and drive the route, making a mild modification to the route before ruling that it meets the policies definition of a suitable drop off spot.

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>> I did suggest that walking the route would give a more accurate prospective of the distance and terrain that is required. I was told that was not necessary.

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>> My appeal is based on weather and terrain changes that come with the winter conditions. Today for example, the outside temperature was minus 21 with heavy winds. The walking distance is approximately half a mile. There are no sidewalks, the road had not been plowed and there were snow banks on each side of the road. Heavy construction equipment use the road. There is a steep hill to walk with limited traction that spans half of the route. This is not necessarily noticeable when driven in a vehicle.

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>> My son has concerns for his safety, as do we, as his parents and feel that the school has a level of responsibility as well.

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>> I thank the board for giving this matter attention and hope to hear from the board soon, based on the current dangerous weather conditions.

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>> Many Thanks,

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>> Mark Ferriman, M.A.