

LAMOILLE NORTH SUPERVISORY UNION  
BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2014  
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

Board members present: Belvidere – Angie Evans; Cambridge – Bernard Barnes, Mark Stebbins, Jan Sander; Eden – David Whitcomb, Amy Fitzgerald; Hyde Park – Raven Walters, Dan Regan, Maxine Adams, Patti Hayford; Johnson – Edson Jones, Katie Orost; LUSD #18 – Beth Bailey, Carl Szlachetka, William Sander, Eve Gagne, Peter Ingvoldstad; Waterville – Becky Penberthy. Others: Edith Beatty, Charleen McFarlane, Marilyn Frederick, Catherine Gallagher.

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

**1. *Call to Order, Approval of Agenda, and Public Comment***

C. Szlachetka called the meeting to order at 6:02.

C. Szlachetka said he wanted to add to the agenda a report on the meeting the executive committee just had about superintendent performance measures.

E. Beatty said she had some things to bring up under Other Business. A. Fitzgerald said she has learned that boards cannot have Other Business on their agendas. E. Beatty said she can send out the information later.

**2. *Approval of Consent Agenda Items (Minutes 9.22.14)***

**MOTION: W. Sander moved to approve the consent agenda and the motion was seconded.** C. Szlachetka said he had a correction. In the summary of actions taken on p. 14, the vote to accept the recommendations of the Act 156 committee with regard to transportation was not included in its entirety.

D. Whitcomb said he would like to speak on the minutes. He left the last meeting before it ended and a lot of comments were made about his leaving. He wants to explain the rest of the story. Yes, he was irritated about the way the meeting was going. But he also had another reason. He was bleeding due to a medication he takes. That was the real reason he left.

C. Szlachetka read a statement. At the last meeting, shortly after he did not let D. Whitcomb speak, D. Whitcomb left in what appeared to be an angry manner. C. Szlachetka afterwards characterized that as “acting like a petulant child.” In subsequent conversation, D. Whitcomb informed C. Szlachetka of the real reason he left. C. Szlachetka apologizes for his comment because in this instance it was an inaccurate characterization of D. Whitcomb’s behavior. Additionally, in the last few weeks, C. Szlachetka received a phone call from D. Whitcomb inquiring about travel arrangements to a VSBA meeting. He felt it was none of D. Whitcomb’s business and that he was trying to find a conspiracy where none existed, so he responded with an answer that was not true. Since then the two of them have discussed this matter and Open Meeting Law and have agreed to disagree. He apologizes for his initial answer and pledges that in the future if he receives a similar

inquiry he will let the person know he doesn't believe it to be any of their business. C. Szlachetka has told D. Whitcomb that he doesn't feel board members need to like a board chair but it is important that they respect him. It is his sincere hope that neither of the above incidents or anything said since has prevented him from being respected.

D. Whitcomb thanked C. Szlachetka and they shook hands.

**The motion was passed.**

**3. *Vote on Act 156 Recommendations***

**A. *Vote to Centralize Licensed Special Education Employees Pursuant to Act 156 of 2013 §23***

**MOTION: W. Sander moved to centralize licensed special education employees pursuant to Act 156 of 2013 §23, A. Fitzgerald seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**B. *Vote Assessment Method: ADM or Child Count***

**MOTION: W. Sander moved to use ADM as the assessment method, seconded by D. Regan.** M. Frederick explained that the ADM (what we use for the October 1 count) is the basis for our assessments now. It is a count of all students. Child Count is a count of students who are on IEP's. ADM is a larger number and using a larger number helps mitigate costs to any particular district. **The motion was passed.**

**C. *Vote Paras: Centralize, Not Centralize, or Table for One Year***

**MOTION: D. Regan moved to table the matter of centralizing paras for one year and in the meantime to appoint a committee of board members to study the matter, consult with paras and administrators, and convey their findings including a recommendation to the full board, seconded by D. Whitcomb.**

J. Sander asked if the committee to study this would be the Act 156 committee. D. Regan said it could be if the board wants. W. Sander said he supports having it be the Act 156 committee.

W. Sander said he was under the impression administrators had been kept up to speed on the committee's work and recommendations. Finding that they weren't and that all weren't in support of centralizing paras changed his mind about supporting that recommendation. A period to reevaluate makes sense.

R. Walters said the one year time frame seems arbitrary. Why that period? E. Beatty said we are now in budget preparations for next year. Work could begin right away and a recommendation could be brought back whenever the committee is ready, but when the centralization actually happens must be aligned with the budget process.

D. Whitcomb said one reason to table this now is that he thinks the legislature will take another look at Act 156.

**The motion was passed.**

C. Szlachetka asked if the board wanted to talk about the composition of the committee. M. Stebbins suggested that each board could choose a representative at its next meeting. C. Szlachetka said that was how the Act 156 committee was supposed to be composed but attendance was often a problem. Since it was optional, often people didn't attend. Maybe attendance would be better next time. W. Sander said he thinks the Act 156 committee would be the appropriate one to address this. That committee could make sure it was in communication with principals. A. Fitzgerald suggested that each board put Act 156 committee representation on its next agenda so if the previously selected representative can't continue another rep can be chosen. Others agreed that was a good idea.

**B. Vote Cost Impact Method: Circuit Breaker or Single Year**

M. Frederick explained that in any redistribution of assessment, depending on the number of students in ADM, one district might get hit heavier than others. The impact of that in a single year might cause the budget to fluctuate more dramatically than usual. The Act 156 committee's recommendation was to use a "circuit breaker" approach where the change in the amount of the assessment would be spread out over 2-5 years instead of taking effect in a single year. When the committee was talking about centralizing all special ed costs, 5 years made sense, but now 2 or 3 might make more sense because there will be a smaller impact. The assessment pools all costs and one district could get a much higher portion of the assessment than it had been anticipating. The total assessment is going up.

W. Sander asked, since paras are not going to be centralized, there is no way to equalize costs for paras, right? M. Frederick said that is right.

R. Walters asked if centralization includes things like Laraway tuition. M. Frederick said the original recommendation was to centralize everything, including those costs. She needs clarification of whether the intent is just to centralize teachers or if the intent is to centralize everything except paras.

B. Penberthy said a vote on that is not on the agenda. W. Sander said we can clarify what we mean by the vote to centralize licensed special education employees.

M. Stebbins asked who oversees tuition to other schools. Does the money follow one of the licensed professionals? M. Frederick said her understanding is that those costs stay in individual budgets. (*P. Ingvoldstad arrived at 6:27.*)

M. Stebbins said a vote on this should have been on the agenda. W. Sander said costs such as outside tuition are the major special ed costs so centralizing them is the major aspect of centralization. M. Frederick said the committee recommended that all special ed expenses be centralized, but under Act 156 only licensed professionals need to be. K. Orost said the agenda item was "Vote on Act 156 Recommendations" so it might be appropriate to vote on centralization of other costs now. C. Gallagher said she is uncomfortable voting on something that was not explicitly expected at this meeting without building administrators here. She believes the expectation was that the board would only vote to bring in licensed pro-

professionals as required by the law. A. Fitzgerald said her board just discussed a vote on licensed professionals. That was what she expected to vote on tonight. C. Szlachetka said a vote on centralizing other special ed expenses can be on the agenda for the next meeting. D. Regan said he is not sure what the administrators' viewpoint would be, but this particular matter is a huge issue for boards and was one of the main reasons why the Act 156 committee brought its recommendations to the board as it did. This board should address it soon. A. Fitzgerald agreed. She said her board's discussion was very specific to what was going to be on this agenda and she would have a lot more questions specific to her school and would want a detailed conversation with M. Frederick about her school specifically before voting on centralizing other costs.

W. Sander said he thinks the board needs to clarify how many years impact will be spread over for the circuit breaker approach. M. Frederick said she thinks that can be decided when doing the budget, once she calculates the impact. A. Fitzgerald asked, if the board decides at its next meeting to centralize other special ed costs, will M. Frederick have enough time to adjust budgets accordingly? M. Frederick said she will prepare budgets with only licensed special educators centralized, but if the board decides to do something different in November she can pull other expenses out and put them into the central office budget.

**MOTION: W. Sander moved to adopt the circuit breaker approach for a period to be determined later, seconded by A. Fitzgerald, and the motion was passed.**

4. *Adjourn*

**MOTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 6:36, and the motion was passed.**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Donna E. Griffiths

Actions taken at the LNSU Board 10-28-14:

2. ***Approval of Consent Agenda Items (Minutes 9.22.14)***  
**MOTION: W. Sander moved to approve the consent agenda and the motion was seconded. The motion was passed.**
3. ***Vote on Act 156 Recommendations***
  - A. **Vote to Centralize Licensed Special Education Employees Pursuant to Act 156 of 2013 §23**  
**MOTION: W. Sander moved to centralize licensed special education employees pursuant to Act 156 of 2013 §23, A. Fitzgerald seconded, and the motion was passed.**
  - B. **Vote Assessment Method: ADM or Child Count**  
**MOTION: W. Sander moved to use ADM as the assessment method, seconded by D. Regan. The motion was passed.**
  - C. **Vote Paras: Centralize, Not Centralize, or Table for One Year**  
**MOTION: D. Regan moved to table the matter of centralizing paras for one year and in the meantime to appoint a committee of board members to study the matter, consult with paras and administrators, and convey their findings including a recommendation to the full board, seconded by D. Whitcomb. The motion was passed.**
  - D. **Vote Cost Impact Method: Circuit Breaker or Single Year**  
**MOTION: W. Sander moved to adopt the circuit breaker approach for a period to be determined later, seconded by A. Fitzgerald, and the motion was passed.**
4. ***Adjourn***  
**MOTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 6:36, and the motion was passed.**