

LAMOILLE NORTH SUPERVISORY UNION
BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

Board members present: Belvidere – Angie Evans; Cambridge – Bernard Barnes, Mark Stebbins, Jan Sander; Eden – David Whitcomb, Jeff Hunsberger; Hyde Park – Raven Walters, Dan Regan, Brian Marshall, Lisa Barry; Johnson – Katie Orost, Bobbie Moulton, Sara Davies Coe; LUSD #18 – Beth Bailey, Carl Szlachetka, Sue Hamlyn-Prescott; Waterville – Becky Penberthy, Amanda Tilton-Martin. Others: Edith Beatty, Charleen McFarlane, Diane Reilly, Rick McCraw, Wendy Savery, Catherine Gallagher, Brian Schaffer, Jeff Lindgren, Joe Teegarden, Lynda Brochu, Mary Anderson, Janet Murray, Kate Torrey, William Sander.

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 6:01. Introductions were made.

MOTION: J. Sander moved to approve the agenda, B. Penberthy seconded, and the motion was passed.

2. *Reorganization of the Board*

E. Beatty called for nominations for board chair. B. Penberthy nominated D. Whitcomb. D. Regan nominated C. Szlachetka. B. Bailey moved to vote by paper ballot, J. Sander seconded, and the motion passed. Ballots were distributed and counted. **D. Whitcomb was elected chair 9-7.** D. Whitcomb took over as chair.

D. Whitcomb said there are 36 slots on this board and even if not all are filled, it is the number of slots that count in determining whether a quorum is present. Eighteen board members were present. Nineteen would be a quorum for a board of 36. D. Whitcomb said we will find out for sure how many board members are needed for a quorum. We will conduct the meeting and if we later find out we were short a board member the board will have to agenda approval of the business conducted at this meeting.

D. Whitcomb called for nominations for vice chair. B. Bailey nominated D. Regan. K. Orost nominated C. Szlachetka. C. Szlachetka moved and A. Tilton-Martin seconded that nominations cease and that voting be done by ballot. Ballots were distributed and counted. **D. Regan was elected vice chair 12-4.**

C. Szlachetka nominated S. Hamlyn-Prescott as clerk. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said she is not a voting member of the board. D. Whitcomb said a person does not have to be a voting member to be elected to office. A. Tilton-Martin nominated B. Marshall. B. Marshall said he has reservations because he works out of town. He has served as clerk before and it does take time. He would prefer that someone else step up. K. Orost nominated C. Szlachetka. C. Szlachetka declined because of other obligations. B. Marshall nominated A. Tilton-Martin, who declined. After some discussion, A. Tilton-Martin said she would not decline if nominated again. B. Marshall nominated A. Tilton-Martin. **C. Szlachetka**

moved that nominations cease and that the chair cast one unanimous ballot for A. Tilton-Martin as clerk and the motion was seconded and passed.

The proposed meeting schedule is September 28, November 3, March 28, and May 3. D. Whitcomb said the chair can also call special meetings if necessary. **MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the proposed meeting schedule and the motion was passed.**

C. Szlachetka said one thing we talked about in the last year was that this board doesn't meet more than 3 or 4 times a year but there is a need to discuss business and possibly approve actions by administration more frequently. The best example was votes that occurred on the budget. He heard from many board members who were not pleased about being asked to approve the budget at the same meeting at which it was introduced. We could have had a special meeting to approve the budget but it is hard to get people to come to a special meeting. The executive committee talked about setting up committees with specific roles, such as budget or personnel committees. This year professional special ed staff were centralized. Hiring recommendations will probably still come from elementary school principals but approval has to occur at the SU level. A personnel committee could approve the superintendent's recommendations. The executive committee also talked about a policy committee. The high school, the SU, and elementary schools have some differences in policies.

D. Whitcomb asked, we now have an executive committee made up board chairs? C. Szlachetka said yes. W. Sander said it is made up of the LNSU chair and vice chair and all the other board chairs. D. Whitcomb said rules about having a quorum apply to committees and subcommittees as well. How many people do we want on the executive committee to make sure we can have a quorum? Do we want to stick with 8 people, requiring 5 for a quorum?

E. Beatty said in her experience we have convened the executive committee on an ad hoc basis. The executive committee and other committees would just be working groups that would make recommendations to the full board, except for the personnel committee, which would have hiring authority delegated to it because of the need to hire personnel in a timely manner.

MOTION: C. Szlachetka moved to set up a subcommittee to meet in months the full board is not meeting (with the exception of summer, when the subcommittee could choose not to meet), consisting of chairs of each district board and the chair and vice chair of the LNSU board, seconded by B. Penberthy.

D. Regan said it sounds like this committee would replace the executive committee. C. Szlachetka agreed. D. Regan asked what the scope of the committee would be. Budget, policy, and personnel have been mentioned. Would this committee deal with all three? C. Szlachetka said he thinks that is open to discussion. D. Whitcomb said he thinks he misunderstood what C. Szlachetka's motion was about; he thought he was talking about the executive committee. C. Szlachetka said all right, let's say this committee is the executive

committee. D. Regan asked what the change is, since we already have an executive committee. C. Szlachetka said his experience has been that the executive committee has been somewhat informal and decisions always had to go back to the full board. He is thinking of a committee that would have authority to make personnel decisions in months when the full board was not meeting.

W. Sander said the executive committee is already defined in the bylaws. We might need to set up a separate personnel committee. D. Whitcomb said we don't have bylaws; we have a policy manual. We can set up a committee. W. Sander said the committee already exists.

The motion was passed.

E. Beatty asked if the board has voted to authorize that committee to approve new hires. C. Szlachetka said yes; that is what he intended in the motion.

D. Whitcomb said if subcommittees of that committee are needed, the board chair can appoint them or ask the membership to appoint them.

3. ***Approval of Consent Agenda Items (Minutes 11.24.14, Clerk's Report on Directors' Orders)***

MOTION: K. Orost moved to approve the minutes of November 24, 2014, B. Marshall seconded, and the motion was passed.

The board discussed the clerk's report on directors' orders that had been included the packet. C. McFarlane noted that it was the wrong report.

D. Griffiths reminded the board that the point of a consent agenda is to allow the board to save time by approving all the consent agenda items at once in a single motion. A board member can ask for an item to be removed for discussion, but the consent agenda items are things board members would usually be willing to approve with no discussion.

4. ***FERPA Confidentiality Sign-Off***

C. Gallagher said in the past we have had full confidentiality trainings every year. Now the full training is going to be reserved for new board member orientation. Training review information had been included in the information sent to board members before the meeting. She circulated a sign-off sheet for board members to indicate they have received training and invited anyone who had questions to ask her.

5. ***Approval of Request for Increase in Minute Taker Compensation***

D. Griffiths said she has been taking board minutes for quite a while now without an increase so she has been asking all the boards she works for to increase her rate. The LNSU board has been paying her \$50 for up to 2 hours, with an additional \$10 for each hour or part of an hour beyond that. She is asking for an increase to \$65 for the first 2 hours, keeping the \$10 for each additional hour or part of an hour.

MOTION: J. Sander moved to increase minute taker compensation to \$65 for the first two hours and \$10 for every additional hour or part of an hour, K. Orost seconded, and the motion was passed.

6. ***Approve Federal Funds Sub Grant Agreements***

MOTION: J. Sander moved and C. Szlachetka seconded to approve federal funds sub grant agreements between LNSU and the individual districts and the motion was passed.

7. ***Student Outcomes Report***

C. Gallagher, R. McCraw, and J. Murray gave a presentation on student growth factors, trends and outcomes.

C. Gallagher showed the total number of LNSU students, the number on IEP's, the number on 504 plans, and the number on education support plans for 2012, 2013, and 2014. The percentage of students on IEP's has increased. The biggest jump is in the early education population. We have had a decrease in the percentage on education support plans. C. Gallagher said she believes the reason for that is that we are providing personalized learning for all students. She showed the number of students in different disability categories for 2012, 2013, and 2014. The number with developmental delay has risen markedly. There has been a slight decrease in the number with emotional disturbance. The number in the Other Health Impairment category, which includes things like ADHD and ADD, has increased. We have been seeing a slight rise in autism.

Key transitions we are interested in are the transitions from Pre-K to kindergarten, grade 3 to grade 4, grade 6 to grade 7, and grade 12 and beyond.

J. Murray talked about EEE trends and concerns. We are seeing increases in behavior problems, medical diagnoses, and autism diagnoses. Some LNSU staff had an opportunity to get training from the Howard Center to develop expertise in autism and develop plans for students with autism. We have been conducting more evaluations. This year we had quite an increase in students who had not previously had any interventions. Every year we seem to see an increased need for speech and OT services.

J. Murray talked about the pre-K to kindergarten transition. Implementation of Act 166 has been postponed. About 40-50% of districts in the state are going to become early adopters this coming year; the rest can wait until the following year. The Vermont Early Learning Challenge Grant is broken down into 24 areas. One that would affect our district is the most is the kindergarten readiness area. A group is going to revamp the kindergarten readiness assessment and how it is done so there is more consistency across the state. The Vermont Early Learning Standards came out of this grant. A draft of the standards just came out and they should be adopted by the end of June. The new standards are aligned with the Common Core and look at the whole child. A kindergarten readiness workshop for parents and professionals will be offered here in April.

J. Murray showed GOLD Assessment data – the percentage of 4-year-old students meeting the standard in each of 7 areas in fall 2013 and spring 2014. A lot of students come to us with pretty strong skills in most areas, but math and literacy are the areas where students have the most needs. We have put a lot of energy and effort into those areas.

C. Gallagher showed a list of trends that are concerning. We are seeing rises in homelessness, mental health diagnoses, poverty, and the number of state-placed students. Bullying and harassment is also a concern. She distributed an article discussing the impact of people living doubled-up (two families in one home.) That is the situation most of our homeless families are in.

Bullying and harassment are down 29% for 2014. C. Gallagher described some of the things we are doing about bullying and harassment. Where we have not succeeded is in parent involvement. Two years ago we had a forum. We wanted to bring parents in, but had a small turnout. Recently C. Gallagher had a wonderful conversation with a parent whose child alleged bullying. When asked what she thought bullying was, the parent described misconduct. Misconduct is no less painful but it is not accurate to call it bullying. C. Gallagher asked the parent to team with her to figure out ways of educating families.

C. Gallagher listed some positive trends:

- Creative paths to accessing opportunities
- More students becoming ineligible year over year for special education services at the secondary level
- Reduced number of students placed in alternative programs outside of the SU schools (lowest number since 2006 in 2014.)
- Building capacity in-house for mental health supports. One school is piloting a 5 on 1 program where one person works with 5 students, providing support where needed during the day.
- More targeted service delivery models for students which results in better programming and financial efficiencies
- More professional development in behavior assessment and programming
- Increased collaboration with our community partners. JSC has a program for behavior consultants.
- Increased focus on learning for every student
- Increased co-teaching opportunities which leads to greater inclusion and philosophy that all learners are regular education students first. Last year there were 8 co-teaching teams. This year there are 11.
- Increased collaboration with elementary and middle school teams to identify consistent expectations for student outcomes and encourage a fluid transition from elementary to middle school

R. McCraw presented some information on academics. Data use is changing in 3 ways: what data are collected, how data are stored, and how data are used.

The NECAP state assessment is going away. There will be no more administrations of the English/language arts or math NECAP's. The last administration of the science NECAP will be in spring of 2015-16. The NECAP will be replaced by the SBAC, which will first be administered later this spring. CES has already administered it to one grade. The SBAC is really different from the NECAP. It tests a much deeper level of knowledge. It is administered entirely online. It presents a very different experience for kids and for those administering it. Just last week the Vermont State Board of Education

stated that until we have more Common Core instruction and practice with the test the SBAC results will not support reliable and valid inferences about student performance and should not be used as the basis for any consequential purpose. They said the state will not use SBAC results from 2014-15 for the purpose of annual school evaluation determinations. We don't know what that means because the process of identifying schools is outlined in federal law. The state is working with the federal government on that.

As a result, there will be increased reliance on local assessments. We will not have a reliable state level assessment for a year at least and when we do have it it will be hard to match up with NECAP results. R. McCraw listed common local English/language arts assessments. LNSU has common benchmark assessments for grades K-8 that assess Common Core standards in 4 general areas.

A new student data warehouse (VCAT) is being filled. It is web-based, so it will be available to all teachers. It will contain a critical mass of data by mid-June. There will be grant-supported teacher training in June and August.

Implementation of professional learning communities continues in all schools. This requires accommodations in scheduling for students and adults. There is a possibility of grant-supported reinforcing of PLC training this spring.

Other curriculum, instruction and assessment work under way is in the areas of Common Core reading, writing and math; Next Generation Science Standards; and SBAC test preparation for teachers and students.

R. McCraw showed the percentage of students in grades K-6 who achieved the target level on the end-of-year Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment in 2013-14.

English/language arts common assessments for grades 7 and 8 are under development. The AIMSweb reading assessment will be replaced for next year. Some schools may still elect to use AIMSweb but many teachers have reservations about it because it is a timed test.

R. McCraw showed the percent of possible points achieved by students in grades K-8 on the 2013-14 LNSU math spring benchmark assessment. Scores were lower in the higher grades. R. McCraw thinks the best explanation for that is all the work we have done in recent years in early math.

He showed data indicating that the pace of learning is not affected by transitions. The average increase in scores from January to May was greater in 4th grade than in 3rd grade and greater in 7th grade than in 6th grade.

He showed the percentage of students scoring at each level in the science NECAP for each year from 2010-11 to 2013-14. Scores are not ideal either statewide or in LNSU. They have been relatively flat both statewide and in LNSU.

He showed the percentage of students who reported they were bound for college, the workforce, or the military in 2013, 2014, and 2015. In 2015, 98% of students were in one of those categories.

C. Gallagher highlighted some positives from our schools. In CES, science NECAP scores continue their high trajectory. For upwards of 10 years CES has participated in Odyssey of the Mind, which gives students experience in collaborating and problem solving. Hyde Park has something similar, Destination Imagination. Hyde Park also is one of the only elementary schools in the state that has an outdoor education program. HPES is piloting a 5 on 1 consulting model for students that need extra support. ECS and WES have a collective professional learning community and they have WIN (What I Need) – blocks of time every day that provide opportunities for students to get practice, re-teaching or enrichment, based on student-teacher consultation. This year JES teachers received coaching in writing because they had identified a need to improve in writing skills. D. Manning reports seeing that students are proud of their writing and their writing seems more advanced and thoughtful. JES has been a model in internal behavior support with its intervention room system. LUMS has become an exemplar in how to correctly investigate allegations of bullying and harassment. Their model will be available to the rest of the SU in the fall. LUMS does progress monitoring every 5 weeks, rather than waiting for problems and reacting. LUHS has seen an increase from 5 students to over 50 this year accessing vouchers for dual enrollment. LUHS also brought in internal drug and alcohol supports instead of outsourcing. One hundred percent of GMTCC students graduate work-ready in their fields.

C. Szlachetka said he has questioned in the past how prepared kids are to enter kindergarten. How consistent are we between towns in applying the kindergarten readiness assessment? He has also always questioned how, in the transition to middle school, differently prepared students from different towns affect the whole class. Is it possible that a student would be judged as ready for kindergarten in one district and not another? J. Murray said all teachers go through the same training for the GOLD assessment and should rate consistently.

C. Szlachetka said in the past people have knocked holes in methods we have used to assess student achievement because they say that each year a different group is tested so the methods can't be used to see individual growth. It seems R. McCraw showed we are starting to assess individual growth. Is that true?

R. McCraw said the literacy committee has created a grid of assessments to be given at all elementary schools. There is an agreement that everyone will assess in the same way. The results will go in VCAT. One thing we can do with VCAT is look all students who have been here 5 years, excluding those who came or went during that time. C. Szlachetka asked if he will be reporting on that. R. McCraw said yes.

C. Szlachetka asked, in light of the SBAC not being reliable, are we coming up with any interim measure?

R. McCraw said we are staying with the same local assessments. The state is not producing an alternative to the SBAC.

C. Szlachetka asked when results of the interim assessments will be available. R. McCraw said his intent is to have a lot of the data in VCAT by the end of the year.

J. Sander asked if R. McCraw has any idea why the percentage of students who met the Fountas and Pinnell target shows a huge drop in 6th grade. R. McCraw said he is looking into it but doesn't have an explanation yet.

E. Beatty thanked C. Gallagher, J. Murray, R. McCraw and the principals who worked with them on their presentation.

K. Torrey said there are still too many children in our community who don't go to pre-school or who don't enter school until they turn 6, partway through their kindergarten year. She doesn't think parents realize what kindergarten is nowadays. She thinks it is time to start talking about making 5 the mandatory age to start school. She suggested that is something board members could talk to legislators about. J. Murray said a lot of early educators have been asking if it is time to change the mandatory age for school. She thinks it is.

E. Beatty said she noticed in the presentation the impact of professional development on math.

7. Superintendent's Report

We are in the final stages of the search for a new GMTCC director. There are two strong candidates. Tomorrow night at the CEC community members can meet the candidates and talk to them. Sherry Lussier and Chris Miller have been very professional and collaborative while knowing they are both internal candidates for the same position. E. Beatty will have final interviews with the candidates on Thursday after a team does site visits.

The two sides in support staff negotiations are trying to reach a settlement. Teacher contract negotiations are just beginning and are off to a great start.

A team has been working on behalf of LNSU to create a plan for implementing proficiency based graduation requirements. Hand in hand with that is personalized learning plans. We need to engage as a community and talk about what matters most. New board member orientation is coming soon, hopefully in April, after all new members are on board. Any board member can attend the training. We are trying to engage in more board development work. We will be drawing on our partners at VSBA. We are going to begin to articulate what matters most for our students, what our common work is and what our outcomes are. The boards' work is to establish outcomes and results and the administrators work is implementation.

8. LNSU Contracts

E. Beatty said all the licensed special educators who are currently employed in district schools are going to be employed by central office. Central office will issue letters of in-

tent to all of them but won't issue contracts until negotiations have ended and a new master agreement is agreed upon.

9. Adjourn

Other Business was not listed on the agenda. C. Szlachetka said he had some other business. D. Whitcomb said we can take it up next time.

MOTION: B. Bailey moved to adjourn at 7:48, C. Szlachetka seconded, and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED

Actions taken at the LNSU Board 3-23-15:

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

MOTION: J. Sander moved to approve the agenda, B. Penberthy seconded, and the motion was passed.

2. *Reorganization of the Board*

D. Whitcomb was elected chair 9-7.

D. Regan was elected vice chair 12-4.

C. Szlachetka moved that nominations cease and that the chair cast one unanimous ballot for A. Tilton-Martin as clerk and the motion was seconded and passed.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the proposed meeting schedule and the motion was passed.

MOTION: C. Szlachetka moved to set up a subcommittee to meet in months the full board is not meeting (with the exception of summer, when the subcommittee could choose not to meet), consisting of chairs of each district board and the chair and vice chair of the LNSU board, seconded by B. Penberthy. The motion was passed.

3. *Approval of Consent Agenda Items (Minutes 11.24.14, Clerk's Report on Directors' Orders)*

MOTION: K. Orost moved to approve the minutes of November 24, 2014, B. Marshall seconded, and the motion was passed.

5. *Approval of Request for Increase in Minute Taker Compensation*

MOTION: J. Sander moved to increase minute taker compensation to \$65 for the first two hours and \$10 for every additional hour or part of an hour, K. Orost seconded, and the motion was passed.

6. *Approve Federal Funds Sub Grant Agreements*

MOTION: J. Sander moved and C. Szlachetka seconded to approve federal funds sub grant agreements between LNSU and the individual districts and the motion was passed.

7. *Student Outcomes Report*

9. *Adjourn*

MOTION: B. Bailey moved to adjourn at 7:48, C. Szlachetka seconded, and the motion was passed.