

THE NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
FINAL Minutes
February 4, 2016

PRESENT: Johanna Bartlett, chair; Dick Baldwin, Jessalyn Zaykoski, Carla Halpern, David Briand, John Fitzgerald, Alyssa Rulf-Fountain, John Dewitt, members; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Aaron Osborne, U28 Director of Finance; 4 teachers were also present.

Call the Meeting to Order: Johanna called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Public Hearings: 4 teachers from Swift River attended the meeting to discuss their thoughts since the testing forum. Tina presented the main questions, which were: What do we do next in regards to standardized testing? Is there a possibility of opting out as a school considering PARCC will be nonexistent as of next year? Where does the committee stand on this issue? She noted a strong opposition to the test from parents indicating that many parents were choosing to opt their children out regardless. The PTCA was very involved in the issue. Johanna responded with a concern of a financial threat if the school did opt out. She noted that Glen Koocher said no school has been financially penalized yet. Carla noted a concern of being penalized with a change in the level of the school. SRS is now a Level 1 school. What if SRS was dropped to a Level 4 school and taken over by the state? She requested to find out more information before making a decision. Kelley and Jennifer said they would research this. John D. indicated the possibility of reuniting the Franklin County Caucus. He also volunteered to be a liaison with the PTCA. There was a lengthy discussion between the committee and the teachers with both sides voicing their concerns. The committee wanted to stand up for the cause, but it is undecided what is the best way to do this. **Dick moved that Swift River School join the call for a moratorium on high stakes testing. John F. seconded this and the committee approved AIF.** The committee decided to send the Board of Education a letter indicating that SRS is joining the call for a moratorium. The letter will be written to the Board of Education and Mitchell Chester. It will also be sent to James Peyser and the elected state representatives as well as to the newspapers. The committee will bring this issue forward to the U28 Supervisory Committee and see how the other 3 schools feel about the issue and what they are doing about it.

Warrants:

- a. Bill – 4035, 4036, 4037, 4038, 4039, 4041, 8011, 8012.
- b. Payroll – 415, 416, 814, 815, 4150, 4151, 4152, 4160, 8140, 8150.

Superintendent's Report: Jennifer reported that Chapter 70 monies were increased by only 1.6% overall. This was less than hoped for. She noted she is in the midst of her mid year cycle review and will be presenting to the U28 committee this month. Jennifer confirmed she has been getting reports from her leadership team and she just completed another session of the New Superintendents Introductory Program.

Director of Finance and Operations Report: Aaron announced that the school is on target for salaries this FY. There are no concerns as of now on the expenditure report. The Kindergarten grant was funded and will be added into the budget for FY17. He also added that the Chapter 70 monies awarded to SRS have increased by about 5%. Aaron told the committee that he had a constructive meeting with the finance committees from both New Salem and Wendell.

Principal's Report: Kelley announced the enrollment is now at 161. There was no power this morning, but it was back on by 9:45 and the 5th and 6th grades were able to attend their field trip to UMass for a cultural drumming presentation. She reported that yesterday a student was injured in gym and the 1st responder arrived within 5 minutes, the ambulance was at the school within 8 minutes. The response was exactly as it should have been. The student was all right and was back in school the next day. Kelley attended the 2nd grade presentation of their flat-o-rama's last week, which were wonderful. She told the committee about her intention to freshen up the music room over February vacation. She also talked about the capital improvements being tackled during 2016-2017 such as new rugs, a replacement tractor, and the possibility of a generator.

Collaborative: Johanna reported that charter schools would like to put a question on the ballot regarding the amount of charter schools allowed. She noted this was not good for Western Massachusetts because there is not a large enough population to support charter schools and public schools. Johanna also informed the committee that the Collaborative has helped Mahar with a new program for their school.

B&P: Jess reported that the committee met and discussed the largest drivers of the budget which were the tech upgrade and aligning the salary schedule of the U28 Administrative Assistant to the Director of Support Services with the current clerical pay schedule of the other U28 clerical employees. She noted there were no changes to the budget since it was presented to the committee in January.

Mahar: Carla reported that Mahar received a grant for a digital upgrade. The school will have a Google certified trainer for educators come after school once a week to train teachers if they have any digital questions. The school plans to have chrome books for all students soon. Carla also spoke about an out of district placement for a student, which is an unexpected change to the budget.

School Committee Alternates to the B&P: John moved to vote all members of the committee as alternates on the B&P. Dick seconded and the committee approved AIF.

Policy Update and Review:

1. Carla moved to adopt the JKAA-Physical Restraint of Students policy. John D seconded and the committee approved AIF.
2. Carla moved to adopt the DA-A- Food Service Accounts Policy. John D seconded and the committee approved AIF.
3. Carla moved to adopt the JFABA-Tuitioned-In Student Policy. Jess seconds and the committee approved AIF.

Minutes: Carla moved to accept the minutes from January 7, 2016. Dick seconded and the committee approved AIF.

Adjournment: Carla moved to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Dick seconded and the committee approved AIF.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessalyn Zaykoski, Committee Secretary