

New Salem/Wendell School Committee
FINAL Minutes
September 8, 2016

Present: Johanna Bartlett, chair; Dick Baldwin; Carla Halpern, Alyssa Rulf Fountain, Melissa Burke, Jack Radner, David Briand, members; Kelly Sullivan, Principal; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Aaron Osborne, U28 Director of Finance, Lisa Aubin and Diane Adams, teachers.

Public Hearings:

Warrants: The following warrants were distributed and signed:

- a. Bill – 4508, 4509, 4510, 4511, 8505, 8506 and 8507.
- b. Payroll – 406, 806, 1001, 4060 and 4070

Teacher Presentation: The committee viewed a video of Danika Tyminski's presentation, Small School/Big Heart

Superintendent's Report:

- Jen discussed the Leadership Team's attendance at the Second Annual CAST Symposium – the latest research and strategies to motivate and engage learners. Presenters included Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practice, research, instructional design, and learning analytics experts. The UDL guiding principle for curriculum development is giving all individuals equal opportunity to learn.
- Jen, along with the Director of Student Support Services, will be participating in the year-long course, Universally Designed Leadership.
- The 2016-17 Leadership Team will be working with Chip Wood during the year (meeting every other month) to discuss how to incorporate the adult community into the schools and Union. The ultimate goal is to improve professional capacity, trust, collaboration, instructional quality, and student outcomes by bringing community members into the school community.
- Jen welcomed back staff to Erving Elementary on August 29th. The theme was reflection, passion, and love.

Director of Finance and Operations Report: Aaron discussed the expenditure report:

- Teacher salary regular education - \$72k of the \$80k negative variance will use approved School Choice funds (deliberately not spent yet)
- Teacher specialist regular education – although there is no variance, there is \$16k of CPC grant funds that have not been allocated (50% funding was budgeted but 100% funding was approved for FY17)
- Teacher specialist SPED – the \$10k negative variance is the result of \$17k Circuit Breaker funding that has been approved but not yet applied

- Instructional specialist SPED – the \$12k positive variance is the result of staffing changes
- Therapeutic services – the \$8k positive variance is due to elimination of a .2 FTE physical therapist position. The funds will be spent on contracted services
- Teacher aide salary regular education – the \$36k negative variance comes from: 1) loss of \$11,200 kindergarten grant, and 2) staff categorization between regular and special education – this will be resolved in FY18
- Nurse’s salary – the \$8k negative variance is the result of a consolidation between two part-time positions to one full-time position
- The net variances (and their offsets) is a net positive of \$12k that will be used in other areas

Principal’s Report:

- Kelly discussed all of the work that Larry, Walter, and a summer crew accomplished over the summer (e.g., building face lift, new paint job, repairing rotted door frames, new carpeting, and replacing sections of the split rail fence around the playground.
- The school was able to find a machine to more efficiently strip and wax the floors
- The well pump (and wiring harness) was replaced over the summer after it failed
- The water heater in the kindergarten was replaced and two handwashing sinks were installed, one in the kitchen, the other in the cafeteria
- The school is in the process of purchasing a new tractor with many accessories that will ultimately reduce the need for manual labor and will be safer
- Asbestos was found under the carpet in the kindergarten. The old parts of the school will be tested for asbestos.
- Annie, the Wendell bus driver of 20 years, is leaving. She will be replaced by a new driver – Corrine.
- New, flexible seating is being introduced throughout the building
- Enrollment is up to 170 students

Committee Reports:

- Collaborative – no report
- B&P – no report
- Joint supervisory – no report
- Mahar
 - Carla reported meetings will move to an every other month schedule
 - This year there will only be three houses instead of four – students appear to be adjusting well
 - The Mahar co-principals are now permanent
 - A telemedicine pilot project with Haywood Hospital for behavioral health is underway
 - Mahar approved the new teacher contract
 - A student trip to Puerto Rico is being discussed

- The committee reviewed the drug policy – some of the language will need to be changed
- The committee approved lifting the charter school cap
- Mahar now has a community eligibility grant which will provide free breakfast and lunch
- The committee discussed issues with funding for rural schools in western districts - the rural superintendents advocacy group is calling for sparsity aid – per-pupil expenditure (WI is an example)
- Chapter 70 funds have come in – towns are receiving reimbursements

September Items:

- Building Blocks of Learning – a new curriculum was briefly discussed
- Parking at Swift River School – school committee members are being asked to park in the back of the building and enter through a cafeteria door instead of the front entrance
- Fence Discussion – the fence has been installed along Wendell Road - David Briand discussed some of the issues he experienced with the process
- Charter School Resolution – Johanna Bartlett discussed some of the issues surrounding charter schools (e.g., inequity in transportation, the effect on other public schools – siphon students and teachers from public schools resulting in the loss of programs)
- New committee members – Amy Palmer (of Wendell) will be recommended to the select board. Rick Rolski (New Salem) is being recommended for the New Salem school committee. There were no objections.
- The Quabbin West Regional School District – discussions are in the first stages. Early feedback has not been encouraging. Will need to talk with DESE. If the discussion is to move forward, a study committee will be formed.
- Home school requests:
 - Requests for Connor and Madeline Misra were approved (motion to approved was initiated by Carla; second by Jack)
 - Request for Erin Maher – there was concern about lack of specificity in the documentation. This request will appear again on the October agenda. The committee asked Jen to gather additional information
- Substitute rates – Swift River rates are comparable to surrounding towns. It is sometimes difficult to find substitutes and even more so for nurses. This will be brought up in future discussion after the joint supervisory discussion
- Procedure regarding missed school committee meetings – tabled until next meeting
- Policy update and review
 - First reading on:
 - GCF – staff hiring
 - GCDBA – course credit reimbursement
 - GCFA – staff placement

- JC – student attendance
- Future Business:
 - Next meeting date is October 6, 2016 for committee reorganization. Wendell will meet at 6:30; New Salem will meet at 6:45
 - The committee will again review the above mentioned policies
 - Home school request for Erin Maher
 - Substitute rates
 - Procedure regarding missed school committee meetings
- Minutes: Carla moved to approve the June 2, 2016 minutes; Dick seconded and the committee approved AIF
- Adjourn: Carla moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50pm. Melissa seconded AIF

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Rulf Fountain
Committee Secretary