

New Salem/Wendell School Committee  
Final Minutes  
November 3, 2016

Present: Carla Halpern, Rik Rolski, David Briand, Melissa Burke, Alyssa Rulf Fountain, Dick Baldwin, Jack Radner, Jessalyn Zaykoski

Members: Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Steven Cass, Interim U28 Director of Finance

Teachers: Linda Balk (Kindergarten)

Public: Shelby Ashline, reporter from the Greenfield Recorder

Carla called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

- a. Public Hearings - Robin (parent) talked about Nature's Classroom, an outdoor education experience. They are planning to bring the 6th grade class on a three-day trip this year and would like to plan for a week-long trip next year. The focus is on science and team building. Schools can choose a curriculum on which to focus. The school asked the school committee to vote on approving a trip to New Hampshire this year – the sixth grade class has already raised the funds. Funds have been raised for kids who can't afford the trip. Two school staff chaperones and parent chaperones will accompany the class. The class will participate in a high and low ropes course, zip line, etc. Melissa made a motion to approve the trip, Dick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous – AIF.
- b. Warrants – The following warrants were distributed and signed by the members: Bill – 4513, 4514, 4515, 4516, 8508, 8509, 8510 and 8511. Payroll – 409, 410, 809, 810, 1004, 4100, 8011, 8090 and 8100.
- c. Teacher Presentation - Linda Balk talked about the Foundations Program (letter-sound recognition) in the Kindergarten. The Wonders Literacy Curriculum is designed to be paced so it matches students where they are developmentally. In Social studies students are learning what it means to be a citizen – the class voted for a kitten or puppy. Kids are feeling empowered by having a voice. The class is working on fostering friendships and managing feelings/impulsivity. The class says the pledge of allegiance every day and they discuss feeling proud of where you live, building on school community and what it means to be a member. In science the kids are learning about the change of seasons and butterfly metamorphosis. In math (Everyday Math) the kids are learning about manipulatives, patterning, shapes – names of shapes, how to put shapes together to make bigger shapes, attributes, counting 1-20, what the numbers look like, weighing/measuring.
- d. Superintendent's report. The first union-wide professional collaboration day was on October 21, hosted by Erving Elementary School. At the meeting, Universal Design Learning was discussed. There was a presenter and in the afternoon they held professional learning communities. Grade level staff looked at STEM standards but through the lens of universal learning. Other groups looked at

- how to infuse universal learning into everyday practice. New STEM standards will be implemented over the course of the next two years. MA will begin assessing the standards in 2017-2018 and by 2018-2019 MCAS will test these standards. The next generation of MCAS will be computer-based in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade - staff are thinking about the technology skills that will be necessary. Leadership is also looking at school/building objectives strategically – trying to make global objectives their own and reflective of the community. Leadership will also continue to work with the rural schools advocacy group, given the very distinct needs in rural communities. Jennifer is drafting an advocacy statement and resolution on behalf of our union. Jennifer also met with Representative Stan Rosenberg. In the coming months they will work to support a resolution about universal design for learning – multiple ways of engaging students, teach to all students (in multiple ways), taking into account all student differences.
- e. U28 Interim Director of Finance report. Currently, the biggest challenge will be staying on budget while trying not to deplete the school choice funds. Next year's budget has a big draw from school choice – this is the 'slush fund' – so we need to hang onto it for emergencies. Next year's preliminary budget will potentially have a large increase due to an out of district placement (the current out of district placement is graduating but it's possible the school will have another). Enrollment has gone up but the budget has not gone up commensurately – projected enrollment is increasing, leaving little/no room for school choice. Finance staff will need to talk with towns about funding the school without school choice funds. If more students with needs continue to come, we will not have the funds. Will need to work with the towns to raise more money. Towns have received budgets – conversation will need to happen early. Questions from school committee members: Dick Baldwin asked if the plan is incremental increases or one large increase. David Briand suggested asking the tax assessors if we can reassess commercial versus residential tax rates.
- f. Principal's report.
- The school just received a new student on Monday, 10/31 – enrollment is at 171.
  - There was a big fund-raiser (for nature's classroom and 6<sup>th</sup> grade trip) on Saturday the school held the monster dash. Sixth graders raised over \$1,000 with a spaghetti dinner. There was also a Fall basket raffle that raised \$1,500.
  - The school is wrapping up teacher/parent conferences. Dinner angels flocked to provide meals.
  - School staff are still figuring out what to serve for breakfast in classrooms – it is a work in progress. Kids get a smoothie choice, granola bar, cereal, French toast sticks, egg sandwiches.
  - Kelley discussed one of the best parts of the day – she and Prudy (director of people services) – do observations in the classrooms – they see things from different lenses.

- Teachers had a lot of positive feedback about the curriculum day – Katie Novak was the presenter – they broke into grade levels in the afternoon.

g. Committee reports

1. U28 Collaborative – no meeting
2. B&P – the committee met with Steven Cass; the committee reorganized – same positions will be held.
  - Superintendent rubric for assessment. Dan would like to do a 360 evaluation instead of just from the bottom up. Jennifer will look into that.
  - Budget (union 28) – Aaron’s goal was to make positions in budget more transparent – how staff is paid vs. hours spent. For example, Gillian Budine is paid through grants and therefore doesn’t show up in budget. She will become a union 28 employee so she is in the budget but it won’t cost the school any more money – the grant will still pay. Prudy Marsh and Terry Evans – are also paid from grants – the grants will be moved to the schools and they will be paid by the school (becoming union 28 employees). How support staff are paid needs clarification – paying hourly gets complicated due to flexibility necessary to do the job. All parties agreed hourly support staff would switch to salaried positions which will take into account overtime. The salaries will be comparable, just a very small increase but this measure will allow flexibility in the central office.
  - The cost for rent of the central office was discussed during the meeting – they can afford \$7,000. They may be looking to move (the old library in Erving may be available).
  - Substitute pay – we want to be competitive and will have to pay more. We can increase pay by \$10/day across the board – union 28 members will need to vote on this in individual school committee meetings.
  - Contracts – the committee will need to look at the superintendent and director of finance contracts – how can we better incentivize the positions so we aren’t a revolving door. We’ll need to deal with this issue in order to keep staff. B&P will continue to review.
  - Search for director of finance – principal will be on search committee.
  - Computer network system in U28 offices – we now have a complex system to back-up our system – we can do very quick backups that won’t affect productivity.
  - The definition of ‘incapacitated’ being honed for the superintendent position.
  - Next meeting November 10 in Leverett.
3. Joint supervisory meeting – no meeting
4. Mahar – no meeting

h. November Items

5. Policy update and review:

o Final vote on :

1. GCFA staff placement – Dick made the motion, Jess second. No discussion. AIF
2. GCDBA – course credit reimbursement – Melissa made the motion, Jack second. No further discussion. AIF
3. GCF – staff hiring – Melissa made motion, Dick second. No discussion. AIF
4. JC – student attendance – Rik made motion, David second. No further discussion. AIF.

i. Future business

6. Next meeting: December 1, 2016
7. Approve minutes from 10/6. Dick made motion, Rik second. Jen has two edits – D. superintendent's report – met with Chip Wood about building adult community. F. B&P committee met to discuss acting superintendent, not interim superintendent. Approved as amended.
8. Adjourn – Dick made motion; Jack second.  
\*\*Thank you to Jess Zaykoski for her service on the School Committee – she is stepping down to take a job at Swift River School.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:04.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alyssa Rulf-Fountain  
New Salem/Wendell School Committee member