

**NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, December 1, 2016**  
**Swift River School 7:00 p.m.**

**Final Minutes**

Call Meeting to Order

**A. Public Hearings**

Danika presented about Nature's Classroom 11/16-18/16 – the kids learned about the effects of food waste, the outdoor education teachers led team building activities; night hike, reflection; meadow time; ropes course; pioneer village (blacksmithing, woodworking, cooking over fire); skit night/campfire; wilderness survival.

**B. Warrants – Record in minutes with numbers**

The following warrants were distributed and signed by the school committee members:

Bills: 4517, 4518, 4519, 8512

Payroll: 411, 412, 811, 812, 1006, 4110, 8101, 8120

**C. Superintendent's Report \***

Leadership team continued the U28 strategic plan. They hope to have a draft ready for Jan/Feb. Jen attended the superintendent induction session – 2nd year – they looked at sustaining effective leadership and ensuring high impact; they met with the leadership team to discuss goals; two of the U28 schools participated in Monte's march (against hunger).

**D. Director of Finance and Operations Report \***

This year's expenditures seem to be in good shape at the moment. DOF is comfortable the SRS is doing okay. Grants came in a little higher than anticipated which makes up for lack of kindergarten grant – other grants cover it. There was \$251k in school choice account at beginning of the year; \$140k from school choice is coming in this year but the school is spending \$180k so the school needs to take \$40k from the incoming funds. If we continue to spend down the school choice funds at this rate, we won't have the buffer in the future. There has been a four percent enrollment increase in nine years (14% with school choice). One would expect a two percent expenditure increase if the number of students remained constant – SRS student enrollment has increased but the budget has not increased commensurately. The school is asking for a 12.28% increase.

**D. Principal's Report \***

The report was mailed to the committee in advance – enrollment remained steady at 171;

- Water sodium limit is below the state maximum - it had spiked but given the rain, it has come back down. Now the school doesn't need to use bottled water.
- The roof is prepared for snow.
- PTCA is holding a supermarket sweep (\$10/ticket).
- Winter concert is on 12/23 at 10am. PTCA will have samples of dean's beans, chocolates, selling dean's beans coffee, and bake sale for nature's classroom for next year.
- Wendell general store – two percent of proceeds on dean's beans coffee is being given to the SRS.

- The school provided six families with thanksgiving dinners (food drive) – SRS had an abundance so it was donated to Mahar.
- Science fair was less well attended (less student participation) – Carla asked that the committee think about making it more accessible – move the event timing.

**F. Committee Reports**

- a. **Collaborative for Educational Services:** CES had an annual audit – auditor was at the meeting - \$37m budget. There were two presentations: 1) DYS – reducing school to prison pipeline 2)SEIS presentation (Special Education Information Session)
- b. **Budget and Personnel** – no quorum
- c. **Joint Supervisory** – no quorum

**G. Report from Mahar Representatives:** The committee had a long meeting.

- During public comments parents brought up concerns about communication – the committee will be looking to make things more consistent.
- There was a presentation during which the committee learned about the life skills program (health) – focusing on environmental concerns, learning throughout the life cycle, drugs, communicable diseases, and financial planning.
- The school held a mock election – 285 students participated – Stan Rosenberg attended.
- Report on standardized testing with MCAS/PARCC and college prep testing – data are okay – not horrible, not fantastic.
- The committee approved the rural schools initiative; report from another member school – Petersham Center School.
- The committee is looking at subsidizing AP exams for students.
- The school is offering new courses – street percussion, journalism, technology & multi-media, functional Spanish.
- E-learning pilot – can we make snow days more productive? The idea is to have students do lessons from home (during snow days). The committee approved the pilot. Carla suggested the NS-W committee think about whether SRS wants to consider it.
- There was a discussion about a move to form a supervisory union

**H. December Items**

- a. MASC Conference Information: Johanna attended (paid by Mahar) – she said it was really useful and interesting. There was a workshop on Chapter 70 – states get a minimum of 17.5% of their foundation budget whether they need it or not. Also discussed were:

- Social and emotional intelligence – the importance of it. School committees need to be messengers to the community. Funding for social/emotional issues is as important as physical disabilities.
  - MA consortium for innovative assessment – ways to assess with performance assessments.
  - Western MA rural schools meeting
- b. Glenn Koocher’s Visit: there are dates for new committee members to attend ‘charting the course’
- c. Resolution in Support of MA Rural Schools: Jen is asking committee to vote on three things:
- i. Resolution in support MA rural schools – Carla made motion, Jack second (AIF)
  - ii. Our committee joins MA rural schools coalition; Carla made motion; Melissa second (AIF)
  - iii. Crisis in rural MA: a proposal to establish rural school aid – to support the MA rural public school aid proposal – Carla made motion; Dick second (AIF)
4. Policy Update and Review:
- a. Vote to Delete: the committee voted to delete both policies below - both are irrelevant – U28 appoints acting superintendent; mid-year home schooling policy – committee can’t force parents do anything - Jack made motion; Dave second (AIF)
    - IHBG-RA – Mid-year Home Schooling Policy \*
    - BDDA – Emergency Appointment of Acting Superintendent \*
- I. **Future Business**
1. Next Meeting Date – January 5, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
  2. New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – January 5, 2017, 2016 6:30 p.m.
- J. **Approval of the Minutes of November 3, 2016:** Carla first, Dick second; AIF
- K. **Adjournment:** Carl made motion to adjourn; Jack second (AIF - adjourned 8:52pm)

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Rulf Fountain

New Salem/Wendell School Committee member