

**Missisquoi Valley School District Special Board Meeting**  
**Highgate Elementary School Library**  
**Thursday March 28, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**

**4. Approval of the minutes (Action)**

a. [March 12, 2024](#)

Meaghan Conly motioned, seconded by Pierrette Bouchard. The board approved 6-0-1 (Renick Darnell-Martin abstained)

**5. Administrative Reports [Franklin](#), [Highgate](#), [Swanton](#)**

Joyce Hakey highlighted Franklin's report noting an eclipse presentation conducted at the school and the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Senior Dinner. Pierrette Bouchard asked Chris Dodge about Swanton interns versus student teacher, which Chris explained. Yeshua Pastina highlighted the Sarah Ward final Highgate visit and VTCAP testing. Kosha Patel shared that MVSD is a state monitoring site this year.

**6. Presentations and Discussion Items**

a. Academic Progress at MVSD: Kosha Patel

Kosha Patel presented academic progress and the new district reading program [[Academic Progress at MVSD](#)].

Kosha Patel, MVSD Director of Curriculum and Instruction, shared data on student progress in our school District. She began by presenting the results from last spring's VTCAP state assessment. MVSD students performed better on this assessment than they have historically and are generally performing at the state average level in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This is a significant increase from the previous year. Kosha Patel also shared Fall to Winter local data showing that students are growing in their skills throughout the school year in ELA and Math.

Kosha also highlighted the reading program that the district has purchased with grant funding and the process and research that led to that decision. She shared the district implementation plan and the expected benefits to our students

b. [Town Meeting Feedback information](#)

Presented by Julie Regimbal. Feedback gathered from employees, families, and community. Three quarters of respondents did vote on town meeting day. Respondents stated they needed more reminders to vote. Meaghan Conly asked about additional signage, Lora McAllister will investigate more signs. Additional messaging needs to be generated regarding borrowing in anticipation of taxes, 50% of respondents did not want the district to borrow money. Discussion regarding overstaffing when there are approximately 30 positions less than when the district merged. Julie Regimbal shared spending per pupil information demonstrating the lower spending per pupil of MVSD while the student test scores are increasing. Jen Chevalier suggested sending out links to click for more budget information. Meaghan Conly suggested setting up events in social media for the revote. Julie Regimbal suggested resharing information via social media. Elaine Nester asked how we get information to voters without children in school. Julie Regimbal explained the use of fliers going to residences, newspaper inserts, this time there

**Missisquoi Valley School District Special Board Meeting**  
**Highgate Elementary School Library**  
**Thursday March 28, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**

will be a Messenger article on the revote, Lora McAllister shared that there is strong collaboration with the towns as well. Elaine Nester suggested a flier to include at local establishments where they can take something with them.

**7. Revised Budget Adoption (Action)**

Renick Darnell-Martin explained the proposed revised budget as determined by the Finance Committee. The new proposed budget is \$49,744,437, a reduction of \$1,035,000 (2.4% reduction), lowering tax rate equivalent by \$0.07. Don Collins asked if all of the cuts were coming from facilities, the answer was yes, Don Collins shared concerns over perspective if no other cuts were made. Renick Darnell-Martin explained that even though this isn't a desirable cut, the board was strategic in their planning for the budget and the finance committee determined that cutting facilities would have the least impact on students and their programming. Julie Regimbal explained that several staffing and salary changes had already been included in the first draft budget and cuts in staffing would affect what programming is available for students. Meaghan Conly supported that this is the best draft we can come with at this time, referencing that cutting positions could have a negative economic impact on the community. After some deliberation the board indicated support for the Finance Committee's recommendation on a revised budget.

Moved by Renick Darnell-Martin to adopt the revised budget of \$49,744,437, seconded by Stephanie Gagne. The board approved 9-0.

Joanne mentioned an additional informal budget meeting to be conducted in Franklin on Saturday April 13, 2024. Discussion on where is best to advertise and how the word can get out best in each town.

**8. Revised Budget Warning Approval (Action)**

Julie Regimbal read the original Article 2 and a revised version of Article 2. Discussion regarding the meaning of borrowing in anticipation of taxes and comparison of languages. Peter Magnant and Don Collins suggest leaving as is. Lora McAllister noted that Highgate voting location changes from Highgate Elementary to the Highgate Arena and proper signage must be displayed.

Julie Regimbal read the Revised Budget Warning

Moved by Don Collins to approve as read, seconded by Elaine Nester. The board approved 9-0.

**9. New Professional Hires (Action)**

Julie Regimbal presented a new professional hire, Shannon Smullen. Motion made by Meaghan Conly to approve new teacher hire, seconded by Pierrette Bouchard. The board approved 8-0.

**10. Employee Matter: Side Letter of Agreement (Finding for Executive Session)**

**11.**

**Missisquoi Valley School District Special Board Meeting**  
**Highgate Elementary School Library**  
**Thursday March 28, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**

**12. Committee Membership:**

Facilities – Peter Magnant, Don Collins, Stephanie Gagne, Renick Darnell-Martin (alternate)  
Finance – Pierrette Bouchard, Renick Darnell-Martin, Elaine Nester  
Policy Committee – unnecessary, full board business  
Student Success Committee – Meaghan Conly, Elaine Nester, Stephanie Gagne, Joanne Johnston  
Ag Advisory Committee – Joanne Johnston, Don Collins  
Negotiations – Peter Magnant, Pierrette Bouchard, Jen Chevalier/Renick Darnell-Martin (alternates)

**13. Future Agenda Items:** Stem Fair, Work Based Learning, Cyber Security, Teen Leadership Program

**14. Future Board Meeting:**

MVSD Board Meeting on April 9, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the MVU Library

**15. Possible Executive Session: for the purpose of a Confidential employee matter** (as premature public knowledge would put one or more parties at a substantial disadvantage) Motion for finding for executive session as premature public knowledge would put one or more parties at a substantial disadvantage by Meaghan Conly, seconded by Renick Darnell-Martin, inviting in Bonnie Moulton and Julie Regimbal. The board approved 8-0. Enter executive session 8:52 p.m.

Exit executive session at 9:05 p.m. Motion made by Don Collins to accept the recommendation of the Human Resources Director, seconded by Jen Chevalier to authorize the board chair to sign the side letter of agreement for the employee RP. Board approved 7-0-1 (Stephanie Gagne abstained).

**16. Adjourn meeting**

Meaghan Conly moved to adjourn; Stephanie Gagne seconded. The board approved 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.