

**MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD (MVSD)  
MEETING MINUTES  
SWANTON SCHOOL LIBRARY  
August 6, 2019  
6:30 PM**

**Present: Board members:** Board Chairperson, Chris Shepard (Highgate), Board Clerk, Meaghan Conly (Swanton), Vice Chair, Don Collins (Swanton), Steve Scott (Highgate), Devin Bachelder, (Franklin), Jen Chevalier (Highgate), Peter Magnant (Franklin) Absent from the Meeting: Terri O'Shea and Eric Beauregard

**Others Present:** Julie Regimbal, Superintendent of Schools, Lora McAllister, Business Manager, Robert Gervais, Director of Technology, Channel 15/16 cameraperson. Community Members: Jim Sullivan

**Call the Meeting to Order-** Chris Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

**Agenda Amendments-**

**Correspondence and Public Comments**

None

**Consent Agenda**

**Approval of the Minutes**

*Action: Steve Scott moved, seconded by Jen Chevalier to approve the July 16, 2019 meeting minutes. Meaghan Conly had one change on page 3 on the finance committee. The board approved the board minutes on a 6-0-1 vote. Devin Bachelder abstained from the vote.*

**Presentation**

Robert Gervais, MVSD Director of Technology, provided an overview of MVSD Google sites and website for the board. He explained on how to login to their email address, navigating to the Google Drive folder to access board meeting materials and showed them the website and specifically showed them the school board page. Robert is working directly with Rusty Gregoire on the website transferring Franklin Northwest website items to Missisquoi Valley School District website.

**School Resource Officer (SRO) Grant Opportunity**

Julie Regimbal met with the Swanton Police Department regarding a School Resource Officer (SRO) Grant Opportunity. The conditions of the grant is that the State grant pays for three years of the School Resource Officer and the local budget is responsible to pay for the fourth year. The position will be shared

between Swanton and Highgate because that is where the greatest need is. It is positive for school climate and as a resource in the building. They are for building relationships with kids and it is pretty positive. If the board is not interested, they can pull the grant. If the board would like to participate, they could have the representative from the Swanton Police Department to talk more about the program. She would like to hear if the board supports applying for the grant. There will be a contract to sign. Julie reported that Dena St. Amour is very much in support of the position. The police department would employ the officer for three years. There would be three years to budget for the fourth year. They have officers in Swanton that are already trained for this position. Peter Magnant would like to hear more information. She has not had the opportunity to talk with Patrick Hartnett, the principal, from Highgate about it. Don would like to hear from the Franklin principal to see if she has an interest in sharing the school resource officer.

### **Business Office Update**

Lora explained that currently unemployment is paid through a reimbursement model. She would like to investigate the costs of unemployment insurance through Vermont School Board's Insurance Trust. VSBIT shares the risks with 200 other supervisory union/districts which mitigates the peaks and valleys that the school district is currently experience. The premium is based on a 3 year average. VSBIT would also provide additional support in challenging the claims. There is about three years of gross wages and a lot of data that she has to gather so that she can obtain the rate from VSBIT. Lora wants to make sure that the board is interested prior to going further. We are currently paying 17 to 18% of the gross wages. There is no administration costs because we already belong to the VSBIT Group. There has been an increase in unemployment claims and cost in the last few years. As a merged district, we have more exposure. Don Collins mentioned that we can join and if we don't see the benefits, we can discontinue our participation with VSBIT. VSBIT will assign MVSD with a rate once we have provided them with the data. The board wanted to hear more information prior to making a decision. Lora will bring more information to the next meeting.

### **Policy**

Julie Regimbal reported that C20 Student Conduct and Discipline policy is a recommended policy from the Vermont School Board's Association and it is exactly like the policy that Franklin Northwest SU had. All the state statutory references are there. From now on, she will be bringing policies that have been reviewed by the administration. She can put up another survey on the policy for questions and board input. Board members asked why knives were separate from weapons. There is a variety of things that can be construed as a weapon. Some of this language is strategically placed in law because sharp objects could become weapons. She will provide a survey for the board and hopefully the board will adopt at the next meeting. The board expects that there are clear discipline procedures in the

school. Don stated that if a board member provides additional information that seems like a good idea, that it should be vetted by legal counsel.

### **Lease**

Julie Regimbal met with Dave Fosgate, the landlord for the Central Office building on Robin Hood Drive. At this time he is not in a position to pay for black topping the parking lot. He is getting a quote on costs of the blacktopping. In the interim, she will have a memo that they will continue the lease at the same rate until we have a new lease.

### **Food Service Management Contract**

Lora handed out a copy of the proposed food service manager contract. She has received one bid only and was hoping for more. They have worked very closely with the State and what we are looking for a fixed price for the meals which is required now. The prices vary per plate for each school. They have to account for commodities and it is part of the RFP process. Highgate was our very first fixed price contract. The free and reduced prices have gone down as well as the reimbursement from the State. If you go by category by category, Highgate costs are higher due to the smaller size of the school. They are trying to develop a baseline. MVU has the best rates due to the volume. The previous director of the child nutrition program is no longer there and she argued strongly not to sacrifice this program. The restrictions are that we must not use State or Federal revenues to supplement the free breakfast program.

*Action: Don Collins moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to accept the bid as received and authorize the board chair execute the bid summary and sign the contract. The elementary meal price has increased by 10 cents to \$2.65 which is required. The motion carries 7-0 vote.*

### **Revised Hot Lunch Meal Price**

Asking \$2.95 for MVU Hot Lunch Price and \$2.65 for the Elementary Schools. MVU has a lot more options for food such as a salad bar, soup, pizza, and the regular hot lunch meal.

*Action: Don Collins moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to accept the hot lunch prices as presented. The board voted 7-0.*

### **Warrants**

Lora McAllister shared the check warrants for the board's approval.

*Action: Devin Bachelder moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to approve the check warrants totaling \$1,901,466.56. The motion carried 7-0 vote.*

### **Superintendent's Report**

Julie Regimbal reported that they are looking at the mission statements at all of the schools on Monday with the Administrators at the Retreat. Moved away from the mission statement and more around what we value. They will develop something with the administrative team and then will bring it to the board to work with.

They have been receiving some updates on Act 173 Special Ed Finance Law. There has been an agreement to delay the implementation of the block grant funding portion. On June 7<sup>th</sup>, the AOE sent out a memo changing policy as to what special education contracts from service providers should look like and that tuition to special ed independent schools, such as Soar, Baird or the Laraway School may need to be paid with general education funds effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. This last policy change is a significant change in policy and many would argue that it is a redefinition of what constitutes a Free and Appropriate Public Education. None of the specialized schools were notified of this language. Various educational organizations have responded to this memo asking for them to stop or slow down this implementation. There has not been a response from the AOE to date. The AOE sent out two memos that were surprised by change of policies. What should be in a special contract? Tuition for kids outside of school, how should the contract read, and specialized schools that specialize in special ed such as Project Soar and Baird should be paid with general education money. She was appointed as a Superintendent representative to Special Ed Council by the Secretary of Education and the Governor. If one 1/3 or 2/3 of the special ed funding went to general education, it would be a huge funding shift.

Julie attended a key note in Stowe with the literacy coaches on the role of engagement in children's learning lives. Explored the questions of how we fully engage students in their work and what are the differences between compliance, participation, motivation and engagement. Talk less about motivating kids and engaging them instead.

During the Crossroads summer programming, the Vermont Works for Women provided a week for learning at the MVU Ag Building. Rose's girls is a wonderful program that gives girls experiences with welding, using power tools and making things with their hands. It encourages more young women to explore these trades.

Kosha Patel reported that the Partnerships in Literacy and Learning (PLL) presented their findings from our K-6 Literacy Audit to administrators and literacy coaches. The audit presented data based on teacher surveys, interviews with principals, interviews with literacy coaches, interview with the curriculum directors, and examination of curriculum documents and local/state data. Many strengths were identified for FNWSU including solid systems in place including an aligned curriculum, PLCs and intervention. Student have opportunities to read and write with teacher expertise in literacy instruction. Collaboration is valued and in place throughout the district. Some priorities were identified to guide our literacy work moving forward: Create a shared vision for literacy success, Rethinking collaborative time and build opportunities for shared professional learning.

Upcoming Events: Administrators' Retreat is August 12 and 13, New Teacher Training on August 14 and 15 and In-Service for all MVSD Staff is August 20-22.

Wendy Cunningham provided an overview from the Early Childhood Program in the Superintendent's letter. Focus is getting all the Early Childhood Classroom licensed. July was a productive month for the MVSD Early Childhood Program (ECP):

- 26 students received comprehensive summer services.
- The 2019/2020 enrollment process is well situated. Franklin and Highgate are nearing capacity while Swanton has openings and can accommodate a limited number of students who move to town over the summer.
- The Highgate classroom has moved and is on track to be licensed by mid August.

In August work will focus on getting classrooms, families and students ready for the first days of school. Families will have an opportunity to schedule a home visit to meet members of their team and discuss how to best support their child through this important transition. Information packets are going out in the mail with school-specific information and instructions for how to arrange a home visit.

Preparations are nearing completion for the MVSD ECP team inservice in collaboration with the Maple Run Unified School District Early Childhood Program. This year the back to school sessions will focus on:

#### Trauma Informed Practices

- Flip It! Strategy for Transforming Challenging Behavior
- Connect 4 Learning Curriculum Committee Work
- Handle With Care Training
- Multi-Tiered Strategies for Adult Relationships and Teaching Supports
- Mandated CDD Training

#### Future Agenda Items

Policies

Truancy

VSBA

Don Collins would like VSBA to come to present. This an opportunity for membership to tell the VSBA what they would like and expect from VSBA. Don thinks we will see some changes and this is our opportunity to provide input. The next VSBA meeting is in Enosburg.

Jen Chevalier is interested in the continuous improvement plan in place with Science. Julie suggested that Jen meet with Kosha Patel.

Negotiations

#### Next Meeting Date

The board's next meeting is on August 20<sup>th</sup> in Franklin at 6:30pm.

Chris Shepard said he went over a process on how to pair the schools with Julie. It will be in our email packet as a link. The first meeting of the month will be at MVU. The second meeting will rotate amongst the elementary schools. Will keep a rotation of pairing the principals.

Jim Sullivan is planning on having an Ag Program committee meeting before school starts.

**Anticipated Executive Session:** None

**Adjournment**

*Action: Peter Magnant moved, seconded by Steve Scott to adjourn at 8:15pm. The board approved 7-0 vote.*

Respectfully submitted,

Meaghan Conly, Board Clerk

Submitted by Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary