

# MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD (MVSD)

## MEETING MINUTES

MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL LIBRARY

June 18, 2019

6:30 PM

**Present: Board members:** Board Chairperson, Chris Shepard (Highgate), Board Clerk, Meaghan Conly (Swanton), Vice Chair, Don Collins (Swanton), Eric Beauregard (Franklin), Devin Bachelder, (Franklin), Steve Scott (Highgate), Terri O'Shea, (Swanton) Jen Chevalier (Highgate). Absent from the board meeting: Peter Magnant Terri O'Shea is unable to vote because she has not completed the oath of office.

**Others Present:** Julie Regimbal, Superintendent of Schools, Lora McAllister, Business Manager. School Administrators: Dena St. Amour, Joyce Hakey, Justina Jennett, Kosha Patel, Director of Curriculum, Robert Gervais, Director of Technology. Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary. Channel 15/16 cameraperson. Community Members: Jay Denault, Ty Choiniere

**Call the Meeting to Order-** Chris Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:38pm.

**Agenda Amendments-** No Superintendent's Report

### Correspondence and Public Comments

None

### Consent Agenda

#### Approval of the Minutes

**Action:** Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve the April 30<sup>th</sup> annual meeting minutes. The board approved the board minutes on a 6-0-1 vote. Don Collins moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve the June 4, 2019 board minutes. The board approved 6-0-1 vote.

### Integrated Field Review (Presentation)

Kosha Patel explained that the Agency of Education evaluates each school district. The Integrated Field Review is part of the AOE's evaluation of each school's implementation of the Educational Quality Standards in Vermont. The AOE assesses quality through the IFR and annual snapshot along with data collected through SBAC, VTPEA and VTSA. The IFR Visiting Team consists of a group of peers visiting area schools to conduct interviews with different stakeholder groups such as students, teachers, parents and administrators. Josh Souliere, Assistant Director of the Educational Quality Review Team from the AOE, presented the results to the administrative team on May 9, 2019. He presented two commendations and two recommendations for each of the Education Quality Standards.

## Academic Proficiency

Education Quality Standards prioritize a coordinated curriculum in all subjects for each Supervisory Union/District that is aligned to the standards adopted by the State, instruction in all subjects and the transferable skills, a local assessment system for determining student achievement, multi-tiered systems of support for learners in meeting those standards and participation in the State assessment system

### ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY

Recommendations:

1. FNWSU should continue to develop and strengthen their proficiency-based learning practices to ensure consistent and effective implementation of those practices across all schools.
2. FNWSU should consider exploring the process of communicating local assessment information to stakeholders, particularly students, who are asking for more data to inform their learning.

### PERSONALIZATION

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, Career and Technical Education and instructional strategies that personalize learning for students.

- ❖ Personalized Learning Plans
- ❖ Flexible Pathways
- ❖ Full Breadth of Courses
- ❖ Student Voice and Choice

### PERSONALIZATION

Commendations:

1. FNWSU offers many opportunities for flexible pathways and course offerings, and has invested in positions across the supervisory union to support students in this process.
2. Students are provided with opportunities to share their voice, and have various modes of choice in their learning.

### PERSONALIZATION

Recommendations:

1. FNWSU should consider examining their personalized learning plan process to ensure the process is efficient, effective, and understood by all stakeholders.
2. FNWSU should explore innovative ways to communicate information, such as course offerings and flexible pathway options to stakeholders more effectively.

### SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the establishment of learning environments that promote the social and physical health of students, facilities that promote learning and security, support for preventing disciplinary infractions and responding appropriately when transgressions occur and engaging in inter-agency work to support students beyond the school day.

- ❖ MTSS
- ❖ Social/Emotional Health
- ❖ Physical Well-being
- ❖ Physical Environment

### SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Commendations:

1. FNWSU demonstrates consistent and purposeful attention to student appreciation and working toward goals as a school community. Examples included prominent display of student work, positive messaging, PBIS charts and expectations, recognition of students and classrooms, and creating visual reminders of school cultural expectations.

2. FNWSU demonstrates a purposeful level of commitment to the social-emotional and physical wellbeing of students across the supervisory union, as evidenced by multiple examples of programs, events, collaborations, and supports.

#### SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

##### Recommendations:

1. FNWSU should continue to examine the systemic coordination of social-emotional learning practices to bring more consistency to the accessibility of services and supports across schools.

#### HIGH QUALITY STAFFING

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the role of all school leaders in improving student learning and establish the expectation that school leaders will have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities in order to focus on improving student learning by ensuring that professional staff are appropriately licensed, a system of appropriate needs-based professional learning is available and aligned with staff evaluation and supervision policies, continuous improvement.

- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ Staff Evaluation
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Staffing

#### HIGH QUALITY STAFFING

##### Commendations:

1. FNWSU maintains strong alignment and cohesiveness in professional development offerings at the supervisory union and school levels, with opportunities for staff to build expertise from within.
2. Parents, teachers and other stakeholders report overall satisfaction with the hard work and approach of administrators, teachers and central office staff.

#### HIGH QUALITY STAFFING

##### Recommendation:

1. FNWSU should continue to provide professional learning to support the implementation of the new teacher evaluation model, in addition to the development and implementation of a new administrator/central office evaluation system.

The Vermont Education Quality Standards require that Supervisory Unions carry out their work in accordance with the fundamentals of accounting procedures, provide the full range and breadth of resources, and facilities to support student learning while doing so at a funding level supported by the local community and conduct the business of schooling in accordance with laws that govern education.

- ❖ Continuous Improvement
- ❖ Student Data System
- ❖ Financial Alignment
- ❖ Communication

#### INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

##### Commendations:

1. FNWSU is commended on their commitment to improving social-emotional learning and behavior supports across schools. Administration has prioritized the creation of positions in support of behavior and social-emotional learning, teachers have engaged in learning to the strengthening student-adult relationships, and students can articulate the sense of care and commitment they feel from the entire system.
2. FNWSU is commended for their use of data for improving teaching and learning in all schools. Administrators, teacher leaders, coaches and teachers all routinely (weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly) use data to adjust instructional practices to meet the needs of students.

#### INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

##### Recommendation:

1. While in some schools communication between home and school is reported to be strong, there are others wherein parents report irregular communication about student progress and disciplinary issues. We recommend that schools survey parents on communication effectiveness in order to identify the best and most consistent methods for home-school communication. The IFR Report also gave us ideas about areas we can improve upon to strengthen our implementation of the Education Quality Standards.

Kosha said she will provide SBAC and qualitative data in her next presentation.

Don asked Kosha what was the plan from here on? She stated that they are having an Admin Retreat on August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> and at that time, they will be working on our vision and action plan. She thanked the board and staff for supporting our work in the schools. Jay inquired about the improvement plan. Kosha gave copies of the continuous improvement plan to the board at the last meeting and each school is dovetailing the SU plan with professional development based on qualitative and quantitative measures.

### **MVSD Logo, Website and Board Email**

Robert Gervais showed several MVSD logos that were developed by a local graduate from Franklin, David Laroche. Julie Regimbal wanted something that represents MVSD but kept simple so that it can be used easily on websites, letterheads, t-shirts etc. They wanted to keep blue and white for the MVSD colors and have a river running through the M representing the Missisquoi River Valley. The end of all the emails will be MVSD schools.org. Robert will get new emails for the school board members. Robert cautioned if the board does not want their phone numbers on the website to let them know right away. Robert explained that fnwsu.org emails will forward to mvsd.org emails. Julie plans to set up a shared site for the school board where we can collaborate and share documents more easily and it will be secure. She explained that it will be important to use the board email instead of your personal or work email. School board correspondence could be subject to public record requests and in using your personal email, the other information in your email could be subject to the requests. You will be legally protected by using the district email. When David is done with the logo, we can make color adjustments to the logo. There are several renditions of the river. Robert explained that the email will be your first name.last name @MVSDschools.org. The first login for the board members will be firstname.lastname@fnwsu.org and then on July 8 this will change to firstname.lastname@mvsdschools.org He provided the board with the password.

Don asked what is the process on the logo? Julie stated that they just want approval to move forward. There were several comments about small revisions such as making extra ripples in the river etc. Don thought that the second logo was better than the first. Robert will run suggestions to David to work more on the logo.

### **MOU with the Association**

Because of the merging of the board, in 90 days we are suppose to open negotiations. They met with Suzanne Dirmaier and the President of the FNWSU NEA and discussed the options. The Association and the Administration agreed with the Memorandum of Understanding. They have moved the non-union to the Association. For example, because the custodians are in the master agreement, all of the custodians will be in the Association except for the Supervisors. The MOU has laid out what was done. If the non-union support staff had better benefits than what was in the master agreement, then the benefits are protected and grandfathered. The letters will be exchanged in the Fall for negotiating with the Educational Support Personnel and the Professional Staff. They are looking for the board chair to sign the MOU.

**Action:** *Steve Scott moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to authorize the board chair to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Association. The board voted 6-0-2 with Devin Bachelder abstaining from the vote and Terri O'shea unable to vote.*

Julie explained that in the past there was one representative from each town serving on the negotiations committee. She is seeking volunteers to serve on the committee. The following board members volunteered to serve for the Professional Staff: Eric Beauregard from Franklin, Don Collins from Swanton and Chris Shepard from Highgate. Julie discussed that there are more specifics and different aspects for the support staff than the professional so it may require more time. For the Support Staff Negotiations the following volunteered: Jen Chevalier from Highgate, Terri O'Shea from Swanton. Devin suggested that Peter Magnant could serve from Franklin.

### **Lease Agreement**

Julie Regimbal met with David Fosgate regarding the first year lease is up this August. They discussed the terms with the space. She asked them to work on the parking situation. They discussed a 3-5 year lease, which protects both parties. He will do a modest increase to the rent once he reviews the taxes and insurance increases he has incurred. He will remove the posts. There are no major changes. The Supervisory Union now pays for the snow removal. Don suggested that we should ask him to pave the parking lot, it would be a good investment in his property. Julie will ask to see if he is willing to do so.

### **Petition**

Julie Regimbal has a petition that was filed. There is no action required by the board but there is a petition submitted to the board. Jay Denault knows that there are not enough signatures needed for the petition. It was submitted to re-affirm the desire by the Town of Franklin as a reminder that at the Franklin Town Meeting, the community would still like the opportunity as provided by statute that Franklin voters wants to vote on the sale of the property.

### **Line of Credit**

Lora McAllister reported that the recent vote authorized the board to borrow money to pay the current expenditures. Lora recommended that we use People's United Bank. This is the bank that MVSD will be using for their bank accounts, giving the highest rate on interest.

**Action:** Don Collins moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to approve awarding the line of credit to People's United Bank and approving all board members to sign the document. The board voted 7-0-1.

### **Peoples United Corporate Credit Card**

Lora explained that they have P-Cards with the Bank of Montreal. She had a lengthy conversation with Peoples United Bank. There is no requirement for a personal social security number. There is a cash reward program like they have with the Bank of Montreal. She would prefer to work with Peoples United for P-Cards as they have local representatives in Burlington instead of calling out of the country to Montreal, as well as secure online reporting and statements. They have the same administrative oversight, fraud prevention and can spend up to one million with one percent cash back. Lora feels that the staff time involved will be better, easier program to administer and really likes that it is local in Burlington. They will have one corporate account with about thirty P-Cards. There is a \$150,000 per month credit limit. Because of the cash back, they would like to utilize as much as possible. They follow the accounts payable process and the reconciliation is completed on all purchases. She has a P Card resolution form to be approved and signed by the board clerk. Becky Hart, Robin Blouin and Lora McAllister will be the administrators in charge. There are no fees and can choose the kind of statement we wish. Jen Chevalier asked what types of things are we using the P Card for? Lora responded that they use them for supplies, utilities, professional development, travel, hotel stay as an example. Jay Denault stated that in the past the check warrants show the use of P Cards for questionable charges. The transaction disburses funds before the board approves the charges. Lora responded that the electronic transfer of funds do not occur before the board has a chance to review the charges. She added that cards will be issued primarily by departments such as a facilities card, and professional development. Each

school can track what they spend. Ty Choiniere asked how the rewards are credited? Lora said they will be credited as a revenue. Jay Denault asked what happens when the seller receives the dollars if the board does not approve the expense. Lora replied if the board does not approve a charge, they would return the item, and will get the charges reversed or get a refund if it has already been paid. She explained that it is hard to operate without a P Card. Jay asked if there is a policy on the use of P Cards. Lora responded that there is a procedure for P Card that falls under Accounts Payable. Jay stated that they should not be used for personal purchases. Lora stated that the procedure is approved by the auditors. Julie said that the procedure will be updated.

**Action:** *Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve the P Card resolution with People's United Bank and authorize the board clerk to sign the resolution. 7-0-1*

### **Financial Management Internal Controls**

Lora explained there is a review of checks and balances that the fiscal office pays attention to. The district is audited by a CPA. She provided with a financial management internal controls questionnaire that they will complete. She wanted to make an awareness to the board that we are doing our due diligence and we pay attention to. Devin Bachelder said that the finance committee would like to see it after it is completed.

### **Board Member Code of Ethics**

Julie Regimbal handed out to the board the code of ethics for board members for their review, approval and their signature. Don Collins moved, seconded by Devin Bachelder to adopt the code of ethics for all board members. The board approved 7-0-1 vote. Someone asked Julie about hiring a teacher under contract. Julie explained that it is in statute that you shall not hire teachers under contract in another district unless the Superintendent of the hiring district calls the Superintendent of the affected district permission to interview. A teacher could lose his/her license if he/she breaks their contract.

### **Committee Assignments**

Lora explained the process that she recommends for paying the bills similar to what some of the local school districts currently follow. The finance committee will come into our office to review the bills, hopefully once a week or every other week. Utility bills are standard and in order to avoid paying late charges, will be paid prior to approval. The treasurer will sign the checks after the board committee reviews and approves the bills. Lora explained that having a finance committee meeting is not an effective use of time. When the committee comes in to the office, they can take their time to review the bills, ask questions if they have one and the bill can be reviewed immediately if needed. Currently, MVSD has Steve Scott and Devin Bachelder on the finance committee. Don suggested that someone from Swanton should also serve on the committee. Chris Shepard suggested that if we go to a three member finance committee that we should require two out of the three signatures for approval of the bills. Don stated that now that the community has approved the budget, that we should put our best foot forward and be very responsible with the finances. Meaghan Conly volunteered to be the third member on the finance committee.

**Action:** *Don Collins moved, seconded by Eric Beauregard to appoint a three member finance committee and allow the approval of the check warrants with two of the three finance committee member's signatures. The board approved the motion on a 7-0-1 vote.*

Ty Choiniere suggested that the board has a buildings and ground committee so that there is board input on decisions that are made in the buildings.

### **Policies- Third Reading and Adoption**

Julie Regimbal appreciates every single comment that the board members submitted regarding the policies. In these mandatory policies, most of the language is in statute and so we can not change the legal language around these policies. These policies have been warned and so we can not make radical changes to them. The typos have been corrected and the changes are being made on the website in real time. When there is a policy made in the google docs domain, it shows right up on the website and any changes show up right away. These are mandated policies and they will pretty much look identical around the state. If the board would like to make the Firearms policy stronger, we could do so. Maple Run did make it stronger by adding encouraging others to use a firearm could be included in the policy as a violation. At this time she recommends adopting the policies tonight so that the new district will have these policies in place effective on July 1<sup>st</sup> and those changes can be added later if the board wishes. Ac The board decided to adopt the policies in sections. *(Terri O'Shea left the meeting at 8:30pm.)*

**Action:** *Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve Policy A1. The board approved 7-0.*

**Action:** *Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Devin Bachelder to approve policies B1-B7. The board approved 7-0. Julie went through the comments that were made on the policies and provided an explanation..*

### **Discussion on C9 Nutrition and Wellness Policy**

*Julie stated that the AOE nutrition review had looked at the wrong policy. Julie contacted them and they said our policy is fine. The only difference is food should not be used as a reward or punishment. Where it states in the policy, "The school shall inform parents, guardians, or other school volunteers to consider nutritional quality when selecting any food for donations, class parties, snacks, lunches or other celebrations. She chose the following option to allow the most flexibility in the policy: "It is the policy of the district that, when feasible, food provided but not sold should be limited to those foods that improve the diet and health of students, help mitigate childhood obesity, and model healthy choices." Most board members felt with the wording "when feasible" that the policy should be ok.*

**Action:** *Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Don Collins to approve C1-C11 policies. The board approved 7-0.*

**Action:** *Devin Bachelder moved, seconded by Don Collins to adopt policies D1-D6. The board approved 7-0.*

**Action:** *Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Devin Bachelder to approve the E! Title One Policy. The board approved 7-0.*

**Action:** *Eric Beauregard moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to adopt F1 Travel Reimbursement Policy. The board approved 7-0.*

### **Superintendent's Report**

Julie thanked the community for approving the budget and for supporting our schools. It means a lot to teachers, support staff and the principals.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The board decided on their next meeting on July 16<sup>th</sup> in Highgate at 6:30pm. They will not be meeting on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The meetings will be on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. Julie reminded the board members that there is a board member celebration tomorrow night at the Abby starting at 6:30pm.

### **Other-Public Comment**

Jay Denault provided an Act 46 Update to the board. This past Monday, Judge Mello denied all the counts against the plaintiffs. New motions for a stay were filed by the school boards' attorneys to the state's Supreme Court asking its judges to stay mergers while they consider the merits of the

lawsuit. All the new motions have been filed in the Vermont Supreme Court. This will take place in Montpelier. As an additional note, Jay told the board that our law firm was representing the defendants testifying with Mount Mansfield in court clearly in support for mergers.

**Anticipated Executive Session** None

**Adjournment**

Steve Scott moved, *seconded by Jen Chevalier to adjourn at 9:20pm*. The board approved 7-0 vote.  
Respectfully submitted,

Meaghan Conly, Board Clerk

Submitted by Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary