

Waitsfield Elementary School
WAITSFIELD BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS Minutes
November 18, 2013 7:00 PM
Waitsfield Elementary School

ATTENDEES

Board Members Present: Eve Frankel, Todd White, Helen Kellogg, Allison Champlin, Rob Williams

WES and WWSU Members: Kaiya Korb, Brigid Scheffert, Michelle Baker

Community Members: Suzanne Peterson

CALL TO ORDER

Rob Williams called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Eve Frankel made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2013 board meeting. Allison Champion seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION

Audience and written communication – Kaiya heard positive feedback from community members coming through the doors of the school at the ski & skate sale, specifically around the volunteers. Eve noted the grace and unique skill Bear Simmons and Amy Jamieson among others bring to the effort. The board agreed to write a thank you piece to the Valley Reporter to recognize this work.

Tuitioning Non-resident Students; Brigid stressed the need for operating with a policy as a guide, even if each school takes a slightly different approach. Brigid provided a worksheet to help us define our process, guiding us through a number of considerations regarding different scenarios. Brigid noted that two superintendents could sign a memorandum of understanding under extenuating circumstances, agree that a sending supervisory union can cover the full costs of a child being tuitioned to another school district. Brigid outlined that extenuating circumstances are significant issues where a child is significantly at risk, not just a parent moving across town. Brigid also noted that in VT, kids go to school based on where they live, and that all funding is structured on that premise.

The board went through the questions in the workbook with the following choices:

- 1) The WES board **will not** accept non-resident students from schools

- within our WWSU.
- 2) The WES board **will not** accept non-resident students from schools outside of the WWSU.
 - 3) We **will accept** students on a tuition basis from towns that do not operate a school
 - 4) We **do not wish to waive tuition** for non-resident students under any circumstances.
 - 5) The board **will not** entertain accepting a student on the first day of school, provided the family can document and confirm residency before 10/1. The board **will allow** a child to stay on for the remaining quarter, with tuition paid or waived, in the event that the family moved.
 - 6) The WES board agrees that the Superintendent could enter into an MOU with another superintendent for the health and safety of a student.

Budget: Kaiya reviewed an overview of the meaningful budget changes. This is by in large a level service budget, albeit at 5.5% increase. There are no significant increases or decreases of services. One element of the increase is driven by a professional salary increase per the three-year contract started two years ago. Another element of the increase is the continuation of the second kindergarten position, given the large incoming population. The third major element of the budget is increases in technology to keep up with our current equipment. Health insurance is estimated at a 4.5% increase. The Middlebury foreign language program started this year, is being planned for again next year. Finally, there is a 21 student first grade math class anticipated for next year, which will benefit from a second classroom or support person to help give the contact needed in that classroom. The WWSU technical custodian has been a highly efficient resource and should be continued and budgeted accordingly. There is a slight decrease in special education services expected next year. Kaiya anticipated a \$6K contribution toward the deficit from last year, with the assumption that the remaining \$3K will be found within this year.

The board discussed both concerns about class size and whether 20 is too high at the kindergarten or first grade level, technology use and maintenance, and the interactive language program. Rob asked Kaiya to provide several scenarios for the budget at the next meeting.

Kaiya spoke to the capital improvement (maintenance reserve) line being more than the fund balance from the prior year. This will be pulled fully from this year's budget. Kaiya walked through the \$21K items recommended in the capital improvement budget and showed the breadth of needs and the focus of

her attention for this coming year.

Board discussion about budget with WES staff and letter to the community: The board will plan to discuss the budget with the WES staff before the budget is submitted to the town for the annual report. The staff meeting will be January 7th at 2:30 pm.

ACTION

Foodservice agreement with Fayston: Waitsfield and Fayston met to discuss the level of service. The team noted that the costs are largely fixed through personnel while the food costs are roughly \$1.25 per meal. Fayston would like to review the price two times a year to charge actual costs versus a fixed price. Waitsfield is concerned that we are not having an equitable experience. Fayston is concerned that their taxpayers are subsidizing Waitsfield lunches.

Eve Frankel made a motion to authorize the board chair to approve fiscal year FY2014 Waitsfield food service agreement with Fayston. Todd White seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Financial Report: Fund balance is slated to be \$2,294.

Principal Report: The artist residency will be a collaboration with Yestermorrow focused on the building arts. They will focus on building an outdoor classroom, with local landscape architects, masons and other community members. The ski & skate sale was supported by well over 100 volunteers including almost all staff. The 5th grade trip to Boston was a wonderful experience. The 5/6 grade play happened with support from the PTA and was terrific. So while assessments remain an important part of the school, they are among the many important things happening in our school.

WWSU Representative's report: Eve feels that we are advocates for what happens within our SU. The WWSU has a 32M budget with 381+ employees and 17 buildings and 2443 students. We have a very lean central office and accounting software from the 90s that can't be updated. We have no central HR function unlike other SUs. The WWSU is proposing 11.1% increasing, which equates to a .2% increase for Waitsfield's share. Healthcare is driving that up, as are the negotiated salaries. The WWSU needs a new server and website, each for \$4K. Our SU is minimally staffed relative to other SUs our size and does not outsource negotiation or searches to consultants and contractors.

Superintendent's report: Working largely in Montpelier in the legislative session and the on boarding of the new secretary of education. Brigid is working on the website analysis and updating, as the critical tool for communicating with the community. She's also working on the WWSU action plan. Discussion is growing around a statewide student calendar and teacher contract. Concerns are being raised about the number of days a teacher needs to be out of the classroom for professional development to keep up with the new developments. A statewide calendar that factors 170-80 student days plus 20 teacher training days would enable teachers to do both. Support staff contract negotiations are beginning shortly and will be an annual process. The executive committee voted unanimously not to take on Granville and Hancock as part of our SU. It is not in our best interest and does not prevent our servicing those students right now. And Brigid just started a blog – scheffertssharing@blogspot.com

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm. The next meeting will be Monday December 16th at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Kellogg
Clerk and Secretary