

**Waitsfield Elementary School**  
WAITSFIELD BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS Minutes  
January 19, 2015 7:00 PM  
Waitsfield Elementary School

**ATTENDEES**

**Board Members Present:** Eve Frankel, Helen Kellogg, Rob Williams, Ben Loveless, Christine Sullivan

**WES and WWSU Members:** Kaiya Korb

**Community Members:** none

**CALL TO ORDER**

Rob Williams called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

**DISCUSSION**

**Audience and written communication** – none submitted.

**Policy Review Packet #5:** WES board to give feedback to the executive committee, for final drafts to be reviewed in late spring.

G-5: Selection of Instructional Materials: Christine & Kaiya suggested the addition of all protected classes under note 6. Kaiya noted that the purpose of this policy is to ensure that a broad an array of opinions is offered in resources used in the schools.

G-7: Educational Support System – no comments added.

G-8: The board is not currently playing the role described in the policy in the first bullet. Rob noted that the addition of “may” in reference to the participants involved in action planning in number 1, and in number 5 note that the action planning team will reconvene rather than the board.

G-9-R: Retention, Promotion & Acceleration of Students- it is the policy of each district school that each student progress in his or her education program. Reference to VT framework of standards and learning Opportunities is no longer relevant. Kaiya noted the need for input from Sheila. What is valuable in this policy is the reference to the role of myriad factors including social, emotional, physical and mental growth, along with others.

**Education Legislation & Political Activity Update:** little response to the Valley Reporter article on the budget was received. Eve noted that ours is a very responsible budget, likely contributing to the lack of feedback. Helen noted that the community members are now tracking the shifts in state support for our community school, which drive the budget challenges more than our programmatic and staffing choices.

## **ACTION**

**Proposed 2015-16 Budget:** Kaiya noted that there was an error in the Valley Reporter with respect to staffing for the preschool program. We will be able to flex to have a second teacher step in on larger attendance days. Despite this, we will in fact spend less than prior year. We anticipate an increase in transportation costs, given the recent bids received. Overall, we anticipate spending roughly \$46,000 more than the current year. This includes contracted services cost going up, transportation, equipment investment, software that was once covered by federal grants no longer available.

Kaiya ran through the tax implication calculation, which results in an anticipated \$.03 increase for the Waitsfield component of the residential tax rate.

**Budget approval:** Eve Frankel made a motion to approve the 2015-16 budget of \$2,433,540. Helen Kellogg seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**Annual School Board Warning:** Helen Kellogg made a motion to approve the warning of the annual meeting. Christine Sullivan seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**Approval of December 15, 2014 Minutes:** Eve Frankel made a motion to approve the minutes from December 15, 2014 meeting. Christine Sullivan seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

## **REPORTS**

**Principal's Report:** Winter program allows the staff to do a bulk of the action plan professional work. There is a focus on writing, with opinion writing particularly looked at across WWSU. We're also looking at the work we're doing around climate and interventions to confirm that we are providing a consistent range of support across subjects. Staff continues to work with PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems).

We're doing work to prepare for the SBAC test, to be administered through a computer. As a result, we will have 5/6 grades take it in March and then 3/4 grades will take it two weeks later. We will have a "data shift" from the NECAP of prior years to SBAC and need to determine how we best use data near term through our local assessments. Kaiya noted that the winter program is part of the school day, designed to provide new, multi age experiences. It is not

optional, as some parents have assumed. Finally, Kaiya spoke to facility plans. There was a recent heating issue in the kindergarten room, which led to a short term shift to the French classroom. The issue has since been resolved. With respect to the solar project, Chris Badger and Valerie Capels have started to work through the specific financing plan for how the school's expenses are clear and workable. These changes will soon be written into the MOU, but have not as yet. The array is up and functioning, but as yet no agreement with the school. If the agreement becomes ready before our next meeting, the school board will convene a short meeting to move it forward. It's an exciting program for the school that could result in savings. Kaiya will keep us apprised. Thanks to Chris Badger for his time on our behalf.

**WWSU Representative's report:** Eve spoke to the adequacy funding proposal reviewed at the WWSU meeting with the representatives present. A VT Digger meeting focused solely on education funding and many are involved in the conversation. WES is in a really good place relative to other WWSU budgets, but we are all facing declining enrollment. Also, Harwood will be going up 5%, in large part because of special education requirements. As WES reduces the special education requirements, we are passing it up to Harwood. Harwood is cutting many core activities including gymnastics, languages etc. There increases are largely based on federal mandates. The Harwood board is making many tough choices this year. All board members around the WWSU need to understand and speak to this with community members. Fayston, Moretown and Waitsfield met about declining enrollment and considered applying for a grant to look at all options- from governance, to merging schools, and other options. When you move costs aside, people focus on what quality we are delivering when our numbers dip so low. This yields a more substantive conversation. Each board will have to vote to support the grant application at the February meeting. The grant will be for \$10,000 to support a consultant doing the work. A subcommittee will be needed to oversee.

The executive committee approved the school calendar for next year that does not involve half days. It will involve three weeks of 4 days at the onset of the year, and then a series of additional 4 day weeks throughout the year. Christine noted that this can result in kids not settling in to schoolwork until the fourth week of the year.

Eve noted that Brigid will have her other hip operated on and will be out of the office starting in late February.

Rob suggested that the three town board – Moretown, Fayston and Waitsfield – will reconvene after the town meeting to see where the legislative proposals for

education funding have netted out. Rob also mentioned that there remains interest in a state or public bank. If we were to bank our education budget ourselves, we would save millions on interest payments made to commercial banks. This represents a creative source of revenue. Eve added that she's opposed to using income tax as a source of revenue, given the volatility of income tax in the state. Property taxes are more steady and predictable.

**Superintendent's report:** Brigid was not able to join our meeting due to illness.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Eve Frankel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ben Loveless seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm. The next meeting will be Monday February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Kellogg  
Clerk and Secretary