

Waitsfield Elementary Board of School Directors

August 25, 2016

5:00 p.m., Waitsfield School Library

Present: Eva Frankel, Christine Sullivan, Barclay Rappeport, Jeremy Gulley(5:18 arrival), Jonathan Goldhammer (5:27 arrival)

WWSU & WES staff: Brigid Nease (5:18 arrival),

Public: Chris Keating

5:10pm. Meeting called to order.

Additions and Edits to Agenda: Agenda was rearranged to accommodate late arriving members.

Action Items:

Approval of June Meeting Minutes: Move to approve the 6/28 minutes made by Christine Sullivan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eva Frankel. Unanimous approval.

Authorize Signatories for Checking Account: Signatories need to be updated. Cards are used for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade trip each year. Eva moved to approve Dan Greenleaf, Michelle Baker, and Kaiya Korb to be signatories. Christine Sullivan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous approval.

Reports:

Financial Report : Food Service report reflected the close of the past fiscal year. Numbers remain consistent for participation. Free/reduced numbers in the school have decreased. We see fewer students having breakfast, likely as a diminishment of the number of students for whom the meal is free. Food costs were significantly higher than expected; Fayston School Board is looking into this to see if it can be addressed. We have fewer students coming in this year, although the increased day of the larger pre-school group might offset what we anticipate to be a decrease in the number of students using the food service program in the coming year.

The financial report presented is a draft, pending the audit from the finalists. We ended the year with a \$62,643 balance in the general fund. This was due to unanticipated reduced expenses/contracted services and a tuitioned student. There was also a balance in the Maintenance Reserve Fund. Partial work has been accomplished while some projects still will need to be addressed. The maintenance fund can be accessed throughout the coming year, as it is a special fund, but the general fund balance will be rolled into the HUUSD budget for FY18.

The School Based Activity Accounts have an ending balance of \$3192.59. These are accounts to be used to account for monies earned and received by the students to be used for the benefit of the students.

Principal's Report: Staff have been focusing on the coming year with creativity and enthusiasm. A focus for the year will be work around the newly being installed Mad River Path behind the school, from the General

Wait House to the far end of the field to the north of the school. This year's artist residency will also work around the path. Two artists will be here – local artist Eddie Merma will be helping kids build 'play hives.' Paolo Coleman from Cambridge, MA will also be in attendance. He will be building temporary structures with the kids using bamboo and mazes in the knotweed. He will also return in the winter to make further temporary structures. The 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade is exploring making signs about the path as well. Kaiya is also working with Yestermorrow to construct an outdoor classroom space thanks to a donation from a community member.

Teachers had an in-service day today. There was a presentation that was grounded in looking at the messages from the environment that can be used to inform how we think about our school and the structure of our programs. The overall focus was on ensuring that all students have what they need to be successful.

Kaiya also shared that SBAC scores will be released on 8/30. A preview shows that while our scores are generally strong we still have some work on some grade level math scores.

Parent conferences will be earlier in November this year. There are mechanisms in place so parents and educators can address any concern with all concerned parties instead of just the homeroom teacher.

Superintendent's Report: The Supervisory Union ended the year with a budget surplus of \$20,000. Improvements in the office environment have been created (new chairs and reconfiguration of work spaces.) There are 38 new employees in the WWSU: 19 new teachers and 19 support staff. There are three main pieces of work currently in play. Act 46 has been successfully voted on yet the AOE is not providing any support. Brigid is working with several superintendents to share work in this new territory. August 31<sup>st</sup> is an organizational meeting for the new board with the Secretary of the AOE. No business can be conducted at this meeting; its purpose is a swearing in. The implementation of universal Pre-K has been a rocky road. There are 19 separate preschool providers serving students from our supervisory union. Per state law, all staff have to be background checked/fingerprinted and certified. The Secretary of Administration for the state of VT notified the SU of a conflict between two laws regarding teacher screening. All staff will need to be re-screened at the central office on Friday or Monday. Educational quality standards are out. The integrated field review had been put on hold but the WWSU should be going through the review with the state this year. There will also be teacher negotiations this year.

#### Action

Approve Board Order: Voucher 1179 in the amount of \$1343.75 – Jonathan Goldhammer moved to approve, Christine Sullivan 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Voucher 1005 in the amount of \$8783.26 – Jonathan Goldhammer moved to confirm, Christine Sullivan 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Voucher 1022 in the amount of \$147,741.55 – Jonathan Goldhammer moved to approve, Christine Sullivan 2<sup>nd</sup>.

All vouchers were unanimously accepted.

Christine moved that we recess for dinner at 6:15pm, Jonathan Goldhammer 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous acceptance.

The board returned from recess at 6:42pm and entered the retreat portion of the meeting.

#### DISCUSSION

Given the Roles & Responsibilities of a School Board, what will be the role of the WES board in this coming year?

- a. Identify work "in progress" for WES, WWSU, VT and beyond.

What we won't have to do – policy work and budget work are the two major actions that won't be handled by the WES Board. A budget will be presented to the Unified Board to assist them in creating the unified budget.

Discussions revolved around what steps will be taken when there are school specific needs, eg 2<sup>nd</sup> Kindergarten classroom or creating a list of the skillsets amongst the entire staff to see where sharing can occur.

The unified board will need to come up with priorities. School choice will be a subject that will come up quickly.

Communication will be key. There could be an assumption from the part of this board that it would be helpful to put together information and providing to the Unified Board.

The capital improvement plan should be shared to the UB so it's apparent the direction that was intended prior to the unification. The legal work of closing the school district will be a major step as well.

Discussion regarding the role of the WES board going forward. As our responsibilities decline it's imperative that board members stay in tune with the Unified Board to be able to communicate it to our local community. Each meeting will have 14 board members, 2 principals and 4 WWSU staff members in attendance. There is discussion about rotating the HUUSD board meetings and there will be challenges. Brigid suggested a tour of each school to familiarize the board members with the schools.

Community Engagement/Establishment of Community Council is broadly defined. Each local school can establish their own community council/advisory/problem solving group of people. Kaiya suggested that the board further the community council. Christine suggested that the framework of a council is set up and then it can be activated situationally as needed.

Eva pointed out that WES does a great job in communication and this will be a responsibility going forward to encourage execution of the same as unification takes place.

Letter to the community: Discussion of releasing a letter to the community on what is happening on the board and with the new board. Jeremy volunteered to draft a letter.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm – Eva moved, Jeremy 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimous acceptance.