

**UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, January 30, 2023**  
**Final Minutes**

**Present:** Beth Erviti, Jen Taylor, Tilman Wolf, Jess Rocheleau, Erik Semb, Dan Hayes, Kate Woodward, Steven Blinder, Mandy Blackbird, Members; Craig Cohen, Chair; Corrina Wcislo, Director of Student Support Services; Lindsay Rodriguez, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Culkeen, Superintendent; Public Guests.

**1. Meeting Called to Order by Craig at 6:31 P.M.**

**2. Public Hearing: None.**

**3. Approval of the Minutes from November 14, 2022:**

**ERIK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 14, 2022. MANDY SECONDED. PASSES. (ONE ABSTENTION.)**

**4. New Business:**

1. Operational Efficiencies Study Grant:

Jennifer reported that we received a grant to study operational efficiencies across U#28 and have met with two representatives from the Collins Center. It should take six months, the first few weeks of which will be spent in gathering data from documents and interviews. Once this process is complete, we can start looking for trends.

Tilman asked whether the interviews will be done remotely or in person: Most will take place remotely.

**5. Old Business:**

1. FY24 Union #28 Budget - Discussion and Final Vote:

Caitlin presented the budget, which has not changed since the last JSC meeting. Craig reminded JSC that we did not take a final vote on it so as to give each SC an opportunity to review it. He invited comment. Caitlin noted that each SC has seen these numbers in the budgets for their schools.

**DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY24 UNION #28 BUDGET IN THE AMOUNT OF \$764,830. ERIK SECONDED. PASSES. (ONE ABSTENTION.)**

**6. Superintendent Report:**

Jennifer reported that we're working on passing budgets in all four districts. We also continue our U#28 professional development with the Hill Collaborative. She also recently sent out our family quarterly newsletter; the Central Office newsletter is forthcoming. The Rural Aid reports for DESE have been completed and sent off. Jo Comerford is supporting an Act that addresses problems faced by small, rural schools, particularly in how special education needs are funded. She's also sponsoring an Act that would provide payments to Quabbin watershed communities. Another Act addresses reimbursement of transportation of foster students. There's also an Act to reform the PILOT program (a report points out that rural communities who receive PILOT funds are shortchanged by millions). Finally, she's supporting another Act that would direct state agencies who administer grant programs to prioritize rural communities who share services.

Dan asked a question about the status of foster students under existing law. Jennifer said local school districts have to make up \$4 million of monies that should be reimbursed under federal law, but currently are not. Dan also noted that other U#28 staff are visiting SES to look at curriculum and instruction. Is this an example of the kind of collaboration we're looking to promote within the Union? Yes, and this is another reason why we need to increase

the Director of Curriculum and Instruction position, to better facilitate such collaboration. Jennifer also gave a shout-out to SES, whose social-emotional curriculum was praised in the Commissioner's report.

#### **7. Director of Finance and Operations Report:**

Caitlin reported that budget season is going well and is even inspiring, since the Town Meetings where budgets will be voted on are a time-honored sign of spring in these parts. Jennifer has been coaching Caitlin on calling snow days, which is an awesome responsibility, but so far, her calls have gone very well for the schools. Jennifer also praised Caitlin for helping with this and other things during the power outage.

Craig asked Caitlin to present the Expenditure Report. She reviewed the COLAs and noted that we might possibly have a budget surplus in some areas by the end of the school year. That's ideal, of course, but there are always expenses we haven't included yet that will come out by June 30. Our current balance is looking very good.

#### **8. Director of Student Support Services Report:**

Corrina presented an update on the Roadmap for Continuous Improvement. Our surveys brought in a lot of great information. Families seem to feel very good about culture and values as well as interprofessional expertise and collaboration. Children are rapidly gaining skills from interventions, and staff offer timely and effective supports. Feedback from families is generally positive about the supports in place and feel included as a team. Places where we could grow include enhancing co-teaching models, increasing use of "push-in" service delivery, and expanding professional development in several areas.

Mandy asked whether these surveys have been done in the past, and what kind of participation did we get? Corrina deferred to Jennifer: We haven't done a survey this large in her time here. Smaller surveys go out periodically in several areas. Jen thanked Corrina; they were happy to respond to the survey and to be a part of the Shutesbury community. Craig thanked Corrina as well.

#### **9. Director of Curriculum and Instruction Report:**

Lindsay presented on Professional Development in U#28. We're working with the Hill for Literacy to train staff on how the brain learns, the importance of a strong oral language base, and the broad features of effective instruction. Cognitive planning is key to effective instruction (planning out how to present information to students so that they can practice them easily). We utilize four major frameworks in the Hill PD curriculum that outline how students acquire literacy skills. We've split the CES PD on belonging and community into two sessions. We've done one activity on storytelling and resonance in which staff shared out what resonated with them in stories told by their colleagues. Another PD activity focused on having brave conversations. The PD survey we sent out to staff shows that a majority of respondents feel the PD has been helpful so far. She thanked JSC for seeing the value in a full-time position and laid out her goals for the rest of the year, which include visiting all classrooms for the literacy block. She'll be visiting SES as well as supporting curriculum planning at all schools. She served as a guest judge at the LES 6th Grade, which she thanked the school for.

Dan commented that it's nice to hear a lot about curriculum, belonging, and working together as a Union. Jen thanked Lindsay as well and was happy to hear we're incorporating social justice into our PD. The more intergroup dialogue we can do, the better; it would be good to look into field trips with schools from other communities.

#### **10. News/Updates from Each School and Union #28:**

Wendell/New Salem: Mandy reported that after five days of no school, our students missed a field trip to the UMass women's basketball game, and our hot chocolate night was cancelled as wekk. The 6th Grade is raising money for their field trip by hosting a Potato Bar and walking laps during 100 Mile Club. Jennifer gave a shout-out to the Wendell DPW working so closely and effectively with her to update her on conditions in the town during the storm and cleanup.

Leverett: Jess said we're excited to have an After School Program again after a long hiatus. The Safety Committee drafted a letter around gun safety encouraging safe gun storage, which is one of the most effective measures to

prevent gun violence. We had an amazing dance put on by the 6th Grade as well.

Shutesbury: Dan said we continue to work on our roof, and as Jennifer mentioned, we were mentioned in the Commissioner's report. We're preparing for an all-school musical and will be having our traditional Spaghetti Dinner soon. He mentioned a couple of conferences coming up on teaching for social justice and trauma response; he'll forward the information to the committee in case anyone else wants to attend.

Erving: No report.

**10. Future Items to Discuss:**

- Next Meeting Date: March 20, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.
- Budget & Personnel Committee - October 2023

**11. Adjournment at 7:36**

**ERIK MOVED TO ADJOURN. DAN SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYE.**