

UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, March 20, 2017
Final Minutes

Present: Johanna Bartlett, Jack Radner, Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Fred Steinberg, Sarah Dolven, Dick Baldwin, Bethany Seeger, Carla Halpern, Breta Petraccia, Tara Acker, Renee Tela; Dan Hayes, Chair; Prudence Marsh, Director of Student Support Services; Stephen Cass, Interim Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent.

1. Meeting Called to Order by Dan at 7:00 P.M.

2. Public Hearings: None

3. Approval of the Minutes from January 18, 2017

JSC offered several emendations to the minutes.

DICK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2017 AS EMENDED. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

4. Budget & Personnel Committee – Update

Bethany reported that the committee decided on who's taking notes and reviewed the search for Director of Operations and Finance

5. Central Office Renovations – Update

Jennifer reported that the Erving Recreation Commission, who are neighbors in the offices downstairs of U#28, are looking for a maintenance person and reached out to U#28 administration for a list maintenance issues that this person might be able to take care of. U#28 is grateful they reached out in this way and came up with a comprehensive list.

6. Director of Finance and Operations Search Process

Jennifer reported that last week, the committee had interviews with five candidates who made it through the screening process (she thanked the members of the screening committee for their work). The three final candidates will be presenting on an entry plan this week, and hopefully we'll be able to select a finalist this Thursday. Johanna commented that the screening process went very well and they feel confident about the final candidates.

7. Superintendent Evaluation – Discuss the Process

Jennifer reviewed the process: first, the Superintendent's goals must first be accepted (they have been), then the Superintendent provides an update on these goals in the spring, and JSC evaluates progress towards these goals with the help of a rubric. Most of the feedback will be provided electronically this year; U#28 has been working with a local firm, Suzor IT, to develop these tools in order to make it easier for the Chair to collate and review the feedback.

Dan affirmed that we need to get the feedback tool out soon so that current school committee members can use it before the turnover in membership this May (new members will also be able to provide feedback). Jennifer didn't know if the tool would be available by May; if not, we'll just use paper this year and use the tool next year. Bethany asked how much the tool will cost; web services can be expensive. Jennifer responded that Suzor IT knows our budget parameters, and the electronic documents are already available from DESE.

Jennifer reported on her progress towards her goals (she distributed copies of them):

Goal 1: Implementation of Universal Design for Learning in U#28: She has been working with staff to create a professional development plan for implementation of Universal Design for Learning at each of the four schools. She recently stepped into classrooms as a participant in an Equitable Math class. She also shares positive feedback on Universal Design for Learning with teachers. Prudy praised the cooperation and cross-fertilization of ideas that pursuing UDL has generated. Finally, Jennifer reported that she and Prudy have submitted a proposal to present their research at an upcoming conference.

Goal 2: Creating a Strategic Plan for U#28: This was done hand-in-hand with her amazing Leadership Team. This plan includes a Vision Statement and a Theory of Action that apply across the union as well as strategic initiatives that are specific to each school. Various tools are being used to develop and deploy this plan.

Goal 3: Learning Together: Building Adult Community in Schools: Jennifer praised Chip Wood, the facilitator of this ongoing training, which focuses on becoming familiar with and modeling practices and protocols that address adult relational trust. The training will conclude at the end of the current school year.

Goal 4: Participation in Massachusetts Rural Schools Lobbying Initiative: Jennifer has been participating in this initiative led by Superintendents of rural districts; recently, they held a summit at Mohawk. A Rural Schools Aid proposal and a lobbying plan are under development, as are advocacy statements that can be used by school committees and community members.

JSC thanked Jennifer for her work on these. Dan praised Goal 2 in particular; this has been needed for some time. Jennifer has been asked to speak to her Superintendent cohort in June about the high-functioning Leadership Team in the union.

JOHANNA MOVED TO APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S GOALS. DICK SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

8. News/Updates from Each School and Union #28

Wendell / New Salem: Carla said SRS just participated in a Geography Bee. We're raising money for the 5th and 6th Grades to go back to Nature's Classroom and several running events are coming up, including one that's conducted jointly with Mahar as well as the Rabbit Run.

We've also moved to a standards-based report card. They haven't heard about how SRS students enjoyed the U#28 MCBA event. Prudy added that she greatly enjoyed Community Sing last Friday; the new music teacher Michael Kortina and the participating parents are all wonderful.

Leverett: Tara reported that their Librarian received the President's Award West from the Massachusetts Library Association, a career award. The senior-most teacher, Mr. Stewart, hosted an Aztec-Inca-Maya Fair at which students taught participants about these cultures, complete with costumes and food. Bethany noted the Kindergarten did a presentation recently, and that they're getting involved with the Makerspace Program at LES, which is more of a creative space at this point.

Shutesbury: Lauren reported that yoga classes have been underway at SES. A Drama Club is starting up as well; there was one last year directed by students, and this year there's a bit more adult participation. The 2nd Grade is going to the Amherst Natural History Museum soon, and our Librarian was chosen for the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award, which rotates among the schools within the union. Fred added an Art Show is coming up next week, which includes framing and auctioning of student work. Negotiations on teacher salaries are nearly finished; Fred thanked Lauren for her work on that. Lastly, this week is Spirit Week; today is Crazy Hat-Hair Day, followed by Opposite Day, Blast from the Past, and Moose Day (students pick the days).

Erving: Breta reported that EES did a sort of teacher exchange on math and science; Jennifer added it was part of the ongoing work with Chip Wood around creating supportive adult communities at each school in the union. A community member has also been coming in to do special physical education units, including ones on karate and hula-hooping. The Science Fair is also upcoming. Dan asked about EES outreach to children who are too young to come to school yet; this program is being developed into a nonprofit. Breta added that the Preschool population is significantly on the rise and will benefit from this.

9. Review Meeting Calendar for 2017/2018

Dan noted that creating an advanced meeting calendar is part of an attempt to ensure a quorum at these infrequent but important meetings. Carla said it would be fine with her to hold a meeting on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Other members noted that it's hard to get a quorum at meetings during long weekends. The date was changed to January 22.

JACK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING CALENDAR AS EMENDED. BRETA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS. (One abstention.)

10. BDDA – Emergency Appointment of Acting Superintendent Policy

JOHANNA MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BDDA – EMERGENCY APPOINTMENT OF ACTING SUPERINTENDENT POLICY AS EMENDED. DICK SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

11. Future Items

- a. Next Meeting Date – May 15

Dan invited JSC members to submit agenda items to BettyLou any time.

Stephen noted that the town side of the U#28 budget will be about 40% greater than last year because two staff were not receiving benefits, but while the budget increase looks high, the actual expenses have been flat over the past few years.

12. Executive Session

JOHANNA MOVED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONDUCT STRATEGY SESSIONS IN PREPARATION TO CONDUCT CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH NONUNION PERSONNEL, NOT TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AFTERWARD. JACK SECONDED. ALL VOICE VOTES AYE.