

UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, May 20, 2019
Final Minutes

Present: Carl Seppala, Jenn Eichorn, Brian Guerin, Kip Fonsh, Gene Stamell, Bethany Seeger, Johanna Bartlett, Carla Halpern, Erik Semb, Beth Erviti, Dan Hayes, Members; Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Chair; Prudence Marsh, Director of Student Support Services; Bruce Turner, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Public Guests

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

2. Public Hearings: None. JSC members introduced themselves to each other.

3. Approval of the Minutes from March 18, 2019:

JSC members offered one emendation to the minutes.

BETHANY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 18, 2019, AS EMENDED. BETH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

4. New Business:

Warwick Community School - Discussion: Lauren said that the representatives from Warwick Community School have kept in touch and are still interested in discussing the possibility of joining U#28; they want to create a working group. What does JSC think? Johanna said that it seems everything is up in the air, so there doesn't seem to be any urgency for us, and that she'd like Jennifer's thoughts on the issue. Lauren noted that we don't even know what we want from this: should we even form a working group in that case? Beth said she'd like to see an actual proposal from WCS first; how can we decide if it's good for U#28 otherwise? Dan agreed: it's on them to indicate what they're asking for and what they can provide. Then we can see whether it would work for us. Bethany agreed as well: it's not clear what the advantage would be for us, and they need to figure out all the details of what it would mean for them to leave their current union. Dan said he certainly feels for them given their position, but that given all the issues we have to contend with already, he's not sure that, personally, he'd have the energy to take on investigating this possibility. Johanna agreed wholeheartedly. Lauren will get back to WCS reps with this feedback.

5. Budget and Personnel:

Bethany reported that there's not much going on here, and won't be until fall. There were some bills from CES for training in 2017 to the tune of several hundred dollars that didn't surface until recently, so the SubCommittee needs JSC to vote on paying these bills. Bruce elaborated: the trainings were on legal issues, and the bills somehow got misdirected to individual schools and partially paid. Dan wondered what went wrong and how it might be corrected; he's ready to take any feedback to CES from Jennifer and Bruce, if they can figure out the source of the problem on their end. Bethany continued: this fall, Bruce will put together an education differential proposal for some of the Central Office staff as we begin the budget process.

CARLA MOVED TO PAY \$575 TO SETTLE THE CES BILL. DAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

6. Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Evaluation: Jennifer distributed her Summative Report and supporting materials. She reviewed the Goals for this year:

- 1) Integrating Universal Design for Learning: She and the Leadership Team have created a UDL Integration Team with two members from each school, facilitated by the Director of Learning Design.

The Team met three times over the course of the year, which they agreed was not often enough. They're creating a self-assessment tool for others to use in their own practice. We will be exploring UDL in a Professional Development Day next year. The Team will continue next year, perhaps with a different membership. UDL work has begun across the Union.

- 2) **Rewriting the Guidelines for Accommodation Plans:** She's gathered information from other districts about their practices as well as from state bodies in order to create a new, living document that will be of service to the U#28 students. A 63-page draft plan has been created for which we'll seek feedback from the staff in our schools. Underlying all Accommodation Plans is UDL and a commitment to equal access to education for all students, something U#28 prioritizes. The final version of the Plan will be structured in a way to make it easy for staff to access online resources.

Kip asked how much PD Jennifer thinks educators will need to implement UDL. Jennifer and Pru responded that there will be several trainings each year, and there's an ongoing commitment from the Principals to collaborate with educators on individual student Plans as needed. We plan to give educators significant time with the Guidelines to make them comfortable with the document and the online resources attached to it. Bethany asked that a draft copy be shared with JSC; Jennifer agreed. Lauren asked about the walkthrough process: the Principals are the ones who give specific feedback to educators, while Jennifer and Pru are looking more broadly for evidence of six elements of UDL. The goal is to do a walkthrough every week, but this often doesn't happen at busier times of the year. Beth asked about UDL as a topic in education at the state level: it's in the DESE literature right now, and it's been studied and acted on internationally. Gene commented that there isn't much money for PD anywhere, so there needs to be a buy-in for teachers to feel it's worthwhile; he thus supports as much as we can spare for PD. Jennifer and Pru emphasized that this is mainly about supporting equitable access to education for all students, and that the language of UDL is well entrenched in the Union, which is the product of a common effort by our staff across the schools: that's buy-in. Dan added that at SES, he sees teams of educators and staff working on decisions together, rather than the Principal handing down all decisions from on high, so the questions about PD and buy-in are important, but the process is the key, and in the Union we do very well to foster a collaborative and effective process.

- 3) **Survey on School Climate and Culture:** We got 98 responses to our survey, which was distributed to the school staff who attended the Professional Collaboration Day last fall. Jennifer, the Leadership Team, and the Director of Learning Design have met several times to discuss the results. They'll be presenting a brief overview of the survey results this Friday, asking for feedback. This feedback and the survey results will inform our decisions going forward.

Jennifer then reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation forms and let JSC know when and where they can access her evidence. Bethany wondered whether former school committee members can participate in the Evaluation: Leverett cycled some members already. Could we move the Evaluation earlier? Kip thought it's not legal since they're not school committee members now. Lauren said JSC has looked into this before, but she's not confident enough in her knowledge to make a call either way. We can look into it again. Jennifer noted this is the earliest that JSC has undertaken the Evaluation in her tenure. JSC members agreed this is just a troublesome cycle because the Superintendent can't present her results before the school year is nearly through. State laws regarding which portions of the Evaluation are public have also changed, complicating the process. Lauren said we'll check out state laws and timing and get back to JSC.

7. Director of Finance and Operations Report:

Purchase Card - Discussion: Bruce distributed information about Purchasing (or Procurement or Payment) Cards. Currently, the Union can't purchase anything that requires a card; such purchases are made using personal cards. Software we use is also subscribed to through personal cards. Adopting a P-Card would update our business practices and eliminate our reliance on personal cards for Union business. All tax and financial information attached to the card is the district's, and the card doesn't cost any fee. We can control spending limits and authorized users, and our tax-exempt number is on the card. We can get this through MASBO (the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials), which works with the Bank of Montreal to provide the financial

services.

Beth asked who would get these cards and how the card usage would be controlled. Jennifer responded that for now, they'd only be used at Central Office: herself, Bruce, and Pam. We can expand later. Also, the card issuer can track spending and provide reports for us. Ultimately, the Principals could use these cards as well; they have to approve Purchase Orders anyway, and they could use the card to make the actual purchase more easily. Kip asked whether this could facilitate district-wide purchases: it could, and we'd get a small return on purchases using the card. This isn't for bulk purchasing, however. It's mainly to eliminate the use of personal cards, with all the associated problems thereof (waiting for reimbursement, carrying balances, being liable for the purchase, etc.). Dan said this is being used by districts in Massachusetts and is a recommended practice. Bruce added that he implemented this system in a previous position.

DAN MOVED TO ADOPT THIS RESOLUTION: WHEREAS THE CITY COUNCIL ETC. CARLA SECONDED. MOTION PASSES (11 AYES, 1 ABSTENTION).

In other news, we've had three good Town Meetings that passed budgets. SES also got accepted for boiler work and an accelerated repair project from MSBA, but the roof is in desperate need of repair. The original plan included the roof, but the age threshold has been raised to 27 years from 25. Shutesbury is taking a pass on the project since the boiler work isn't as critical as the roof. It's been an enormously frustrating process.

8. U#28 Policy Subcommittee:

Policy Update and Review:

First Reading on:

BBA - School Committee Powers and Duties
BBAA - School Committee Member Authority

Second Reading, First Vote on:

AC - Nondiscrimination
ADDA - Background Checks
ADD-R - DCJIS Model CORI Policy

Jennifer will edit these policies so that they use gender neutral pronouns. Bethany noted that we should differentiate among school committees and JSC in our policies; we just need to make the terms clear so that there's no ambiguity. Jennifer will work on this.

CARLA MOVED TO APPROVE POLICIES AC - NONDISCRIMINATION, ADDA - BACKGROUND CHECKS, AND ADD-R - DCJIS MODEL CORI POLICY. DAN SECONDED. MOTION PASSES (ONE ABSTENTION).

9. School Updates:

Wendell/New Salem: Carla reported that we just had the Rabbit Run and the Spring Carnival, all sans rain! We voted in a new school committee member from New Salem who's a former educator. We've also been approached by someone from the Petersham Center School; she was directed to talk to Lauren. The Spring Concert is this Thursday, preceded by a dinner to raise money for a field trip to Nature's Classroom, so come eat some wonderful food and listen to great music. Field Day is coming up soon. Jennifer gave a public thank-you to Kelly Sullivan, who brought her several meals while she was suffering from shingles.

Leverett: Bethany reported that Town Meeting went well for LES; the town as a whole is supportive of the school. LES provides childcare for Town Meeting, and we're looking at having the Town pay for this. We had a big breakfast and fun bingo game at the school last week, and this week the 5th Graders have a play and an Ice Cream Social. Field Day is coming up soon. We have two new members on the committee. Jennifer added that we're wrapping up the Principal search, perhaps this week.

Shutesbury: Lauren reported on the Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction, which were both very special. Arts Night, Portfolio, Field Day, and Step-Up Day are all coming soon. Jennifer praised the service and conversation at the Spaghetti Dinner. Jenn added that there was a lot of support for the school at Town Meeting.

Erving: Erik said not much is going on at EES. The new Principal visited, and we're both excited to have her and sad to see our current Principal go. The 6th Grade field trip to New York went great.

10. Future Items to Discuss:

Lauren said Pam is setting up a Doodle poll for our next meeting in September. Jennifer requested feedback from the school committees on which days of the week work well.

- Next Meeting Date: September
- Joint Supervisory Policy Sub-Committee: September
- Budget & Personnel Committee: TBD (if needed)

11. Adjournment at 8:23:

DAN MOVED TO ADJOURN. BETH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.