

UNION #28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, September 16, 2019
Final Minutes

Present: Jen Malcolm Brown, Barbara Doyle, Karyn Briand, Brian Guerin, Gene Stamell, Bethany Seeger, Johanna Bartlett, Carla Halpern, 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 7:02 P.M.

2. Reorganization of the Committee - Chair and Vice-Chair

DAN MOVED TO NOMINATE LAUREN FOR CHAIR. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

CARLA MOVED TO NOMINATE BETHANY FOR VICE-CHAIR. DAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

3. Public Hearings: None.

4. Approval of the Minutes from May 20, 2019:

JSC members offered one emendation to the minutes.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2019, AS EMENDED. JOHANNA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

5. New Business:

Superintendent Evaluation Report: Lauren explained proposed changes to the process, including a simpler feedback form that would allow outgoing members to contribute their insights before they leave office and subcommittees that gather feedback from each town's members to submit to the JSC Chair. She invited input from JSC.

Bethany suggested setting a deadline in summer for outgoing member feedback; there's not much going on then and it could allow them more breathing room to get their feedback in. Dan asked how feedback would be combined by the Chair; would each town have a separate summary? Lauren seemed to suggest no: individual feedback is still gathered, and the town subcommittee is just a helpful gathering mechanism. It's easier to connect with the people on your own committee than for the JSC Chair to reach out to all members in all five towns. Dan expressed concerns about clearly defining who does the evaluation as well as when: we want to make sure the Superintendent is being treated fairly by incoming members who have no working relationship with them at that point. Jenn supported the subcommittee framework because of how it could help in gathering feedback. Prudy wondered how it's okay that only one person (the JSC Chair) is responsible for this whole process, when doing the work of the evaluation is part of the job of being a committee member; Lauren responded that the subcommittee idea is intended to address this. Dan said he'll check with CES to see if we might be able to streamline the feedback process online as they have; it's easy the way they do it. Johanna chimed in that the State's forms are daunting, and that's a big part of the roadblock. Karyn agreed: she found the forms overwhelming.

Lauren distributed the Summative Evaluation results from Spring 2019. In every area, Jennifer received Proficient or Exemplary ratings. A couple of concerns raised included presence at LES and staff buy-in for UDL. Jennifer was also praised on a number of points, including the healthy work environment she creates. Gene expressed startlement that only six of twenty-five committee members actually submitted their evaluations. Why isn't every committee member doing this important part of their job? JSC members generally agreed, although it's also a challenge to ask these volunteers to do more. Dan praised Jennifer for her work; U#28 is humming along because of her spectacular leadership. Johanna agreed.

6. Budget and Personnel: No report.

7. Superintendent Report:

Present 2019-2020 Educator Evaluation Goals: Jennifer distributed her goals for the year as well as background on them. There are four focus areas for the entire Leadership Team:

1. Revisioning Core Values: Working with the Leadership Team to update the core values shared across our towns and school districts.
2. Developing knowledge of cultural stuff through lens of UDL, attending workshops and conferences focused on social diversity, cultural competence, etc.
3. Universal Design for Learning: Working with Learning Design Integration Team to create subcommittees focusing on specific populations of students. Reading Jonathan Mooney's *Normal Sucks*, which addresses learning challenges students have perhaps will lead reading group at schools. Applied for a grant from DESE that will be used to pilot a state-created evaluation tool for interventions. Prudy added that it's thrilling for us to be so engaged with UDL because it's at the forefront of what the State is doing.
4. Family and Community Engagement: Facilitating opportunities for family to be involved at their schools, attending local and state meetings on this topic, creating a Family Engagement Document to outline what families might do, working with CNC Director to continue to engage children before they come into our schools.

Jennifer explained that UDL isn't something we "do" (another piece of curricula), but a way of thinking about what we're already doing across the schools; it's the lens through which we'll work. It's a way of embedding a lot of already existing ideas about the variability among learners and how to redesign learning environments to remove barriers for all of them. A lot of the work involves preplanning to ensure that access is increased for all learners.

Gene wondered how this translates down to the actual classroom teacher: some of it sounds obvious, some of it wonderful, but he'd want to see how it works day to day. It would take a lot of time, and he'd want to be sure that such an investment of time leads to real, significant changes. Lauren explained how Jennifer and Prudy do walkthroughs in the schools to note where UDL is being applied and where it could help. Dan added it's really a paradigm shift rather than something discrete that's taught. Jen asked for some example of how teachers are helped to increase their engagement with UDL; Jennifer responded that feedback on classroom arrangements or techniques are shared with teachers and Principals. Johanna said as a teacher, she feels a lot of this is already embraced by teachers: it's just good teaching, and in the past they'd have to fight school systems to be able to do these things. Lauren emphasized the value of having a shared standard of what the goals of UDL are as well.

8. Director of Finance and Operations Report:

Bruce reported that we finished the year with a little over \$2,000 in our account, which is pretty good given the circumstances last year. This year began with some significant challenges: we suffered two ransomware attacks and have had to rebuild our data, we've been short someone in the office this summer, and we have an upcoming retirement this fall. We're re-envisioning our Department a little bit. Jennifer elaborated: grant writing is being shifted to the Student Services Coordinator, the Accounts Payable position will focus only on that work, and grand management is coming back under Bruce. The Towns have been extremely cooperative with us during this trying data loss, but we're just about back to where we need to be. Most of the expense of recovery has been covered by insurance, thankfully, and our data is now cloud based, making it as secure as our accounting system (also cloud based).

Bruce distributed a draft of the budget process for U#28; it starts Oct 11 and goes through February. He invited input from JSC.

9. U#28 Policy Subcommittee: No votes, quorum lost

Policy Update and Review:

First Reading on:

BEDA – Notification of School Committee Meetings
BEDB – Agenda Format
BEDG – Minutes

Second Reading, First Vote on:

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

Final Vote on:

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

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

Wendell/New Salem: Carla reported that we've hired a bunch of great new staff. Sadly, there's been some vandalism, including broken lights, eggings, and stolen goat pen panels. We're working on increasing security and figuring out what happened. The 6th Graders are on their Nature's Classroom field trip this week. In New Salem, we have impending broadband, and we've discussed the possibility of unionizing the non-teacher staff with the teachers. The 6th Grade teacher gave a presentation on her anti-racist curriculum, which was amazing. We're thinking of collaborating with our regional middle and high school on this, but we might want to collaborate with other schools as well. It's a tough balance making everyone feel included while not making minority children feel like they have to be spokespeople. Johanna added that our 6th Grade teacher has had some training on this and is willing to lead workshops at other schools. The new Phys Ed teacher is from Barnstable, where he was a surfer (!).

Leverett: Bethany reported that we have a new Principal, who filled a whopping seven positions first thing, including a new Director of Food Services (good reviews so far from the kids). We got some money last year to build a sensory hallway, encouraging kids to interact more creatively and actively with the space. Peace Day and Mountain Day are both coming up.

Shutesbury: Lauren reported that there's an exciting 5th and 6th Grade campout on school grounds coming up. Our Phys Ed teacher is fantastic, the kids love him, and he's taken over the Afterschool program. Also, last year, a group of students came to an SSC meeting to present on bringing back chocolate milk; they were extremely well prepared and well spoken, and they got their wish: chocolate milk has been brought back several days a week. The PTO is raising money, and we have a new Performing Arts teacher.

Erving: Jennifer reported that there's a new Principal and some staff changes. The Art teacher here is amazing, running her class like a studio. Things are humming along at EES.

11. Future Items to Discuss:

- Next Meeting Date: November 25, 2019
- Budget & Personnel Committee: October 21, 2019

11. Adjournment at 8:25:

DAN MOVED TO ADJOURN. CARLA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.