

1 **MAPLE RUN UNIFIED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

2 **February 17, 2021 6:00 PM Zoom Meeting**

3

4 **MINUTES**

5 **Present for a Quorum via Zoom:** Joanna Jerosse, Al Corey, Grant Henderson, Steven LaRosa,
6 Jack McCarthy, Nina Hunsicker, Nilda Gonnella-French, Jeff Morrill, Alisha Sawyer, Susan
7 Magnan (6:16)

8 **Unable to Attend:**

9 **Administrators:** Kevin Dirth, Superintendent; Bill Kimball, Assistant Superintendent; Martha
10 Gagner, Business Manager; Stephanie Ripley, Early Childhood Director; Joan Cavallo, SACS
11 Principal; Stacie Rouleau, SACS Assistant Principal; Leeann Wright, NCTC Director; Lisa
12 Durocher, Assistant Director NCTC; Andrea Racek, Special Education Director; Sara Kattam,
13 BFA Assistant Principal; Martin Kattam, Director of Technology and Innovation; Brett
14 Blanchard, BFA Principal; Dr. O'Dell, FCS Principal; Tim Viens, CP Director, Angela Stebbins,
15 SATEC Principal; Jason Therrien, SATEC Assistant Principal; Alexis Hoyt, Director of Student
16 Support; Heather Fitzgerald, Assistant BFA Principal.

17 **Guests:** Keith Jackson, Mike Campbell, Erin Rocheleau, Jen Williamson, Sara Auer, Reier
18 Erickson, Justin (ipad), Angela Sturm.

19 1. **Call to Order** Jeff Morrill called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

20 2. **Agenda Review – Jeff Morrill added item 7D - Personnel Update**
21 **Al Corey made a motion to approve the modified agenda; second by Jack McCarthy. The**
22 **motion passed unanimously.**

23 3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

24 4. **Visitors –** Jen Williamson spoke about the news article on sexting and that the Agency of
25 Education has set standards to set up a committee and she hopes it will be education
26 based not run by the sheriff's department.

27 5. **Consent Agenda**

28 A. Approval of Minutes - Feb 3, 2021 Board Minutes, Feb 8 ESP Planning Minutes.
29 The consent agenda was adopted.

30 6. **Old Business**

31 A. COVID Update - Kevin Dirth reported that this week we have had more cases and
32 SATEC has gone completely remote for this week to be safe because of the
33 number out due to quarantining. Yesterday was a "snow" day but we were able
34 to have a remote day. Sports are now able to compete. Vaccinations are going
35 well. As of today, the music program will be opening up more for the students.
36 Nina Hunsicker asked how parents can reach out for social emotional support for
37 the students. Touching base with the classroom teacher, 7th and 8th has support
38 through guidance when there is a concern; and parents or students can contact
39 guidance anytime.

40 B. FY22 Budget - Martha Gagner explained the change in tax rate. She provided
41 some graphs giving some information to answer a question at a previous meeting

- 42 about five years of revenues and expenses. She also reviewed the tax rates that
 43 have had minimal change since we merged.
- 44 C. Budget Information Presentation review – Martha Gagner shared the draft for
 45 the information meeting presentation to review questions and make any
 46 adjustments needed. Kevin Dirth stated that the informational meeting is next
 47 Wednesday Feb 24th from 6-7 pm through Zoom. Northwest Access TV will be
 48 there to take questions. Jeff Morrill and Building Administrators will be present at
 49 BFA.

50 7. New Business

- 51 A. Central Office Potential Restructuring - Bill Kimball reported that he has been
 52 looking at the structure of Central Office. He is looking at an Assistant
 53 Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. He is also looking at
 54 a Human Resource Coordinator (non-Admin). These positions would be cost
 55 neutral. For the HR position he is seeking someone from a non-profit or business
 56 sector, education knowledge would be a plus.
- 57 B. Upcoming Organizational Meeting – Jeff Morrill reminded the Board that this is a
 58 reorganization that needs to be done. Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk positions will need
 59 to be filled. There are races in both the City and Town so we could have new
 60 people joining the Board. Mr. Morrill thanked Steve LaRosa for his time since he
 61 is not returning. It was asked whether there could be a conversation about
 62 nominations prior to the organizational meeting. Bill Kimball spoke to the Board
 63 about succession training for both the Board and the Organization.
- 64 C. Staff Request for unpaid leave (**Action**) Request for a year of unpaid leave.

65 **Al Corey made a motion to approve the request for one year of unpaid leave; second by Jack**
 66 **McCarthy. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 67 D. *Personnel Update was moved to Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) 3.

68

69 8. Other Business

- 70 A. Warrants

71 **Al Corey made a motion to approve the warrants, acknowledging that passage of this motion**
 72 **will act as individual Board Member authorization of their signature on these warrants;**
 73 **second Jack McCarthy. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 74 B. Superintendent's Report - Kevin Dirth stated that we are losing two valuable
 75 Board members: Steven LaRosa and Jeff Morrill, he thanked them for all of their
 76 work and commitment. Dr. Dirth presented a plaque that was made by students
 77 at City School.

- 78 C. Board Announcements – Sue Magnan announced big ski races coming up in a few
 79 weeks. Nina Hunsicker thanked Steven LaRosa and Jeff Morrill for their years of
 80 service.

81 Steven LaRosa read the following: I would first like to express my gratitude to
 82 those in this community who have placed their trust in me these past five years.
 83 It has truly been an honor to have been a board member for the Maple Run
 84 Unified School District.

85 To my fellow board members, whose dedication and hard work has been an
 86 inspiration, as well as an asset to our community, thank you. It's been a pleasure

87 working with all of you. To whomever assumes my seat this coming March 2nd, I
 88 wish them all the best as they take their oath of office and join this committed
 89 team.

90 To Kevin, our principals, and all of the administrative staff, who show up at every
 91 board meeting prepared to address the issues and take our questions, as well as
 92 share with us the many triumphs of our staff and students, thank you for your
 93 dedication and continued work to make this a better district.

94 And a special thanks to our educators, professional staff, and everyone else
 95 within the MRUSD who have always dedicated themselves to the betterment of
 96 our students and families. Your ongoing efforts to teach and advocate for our
 97 students, even through the challenges brought on by the pandemic, is truly
 98 amazing and inspiring. My wife is a middle school teacher in another district. I've
 99 seen what you're up against. Thank you.

100 To the parents and students in our district, thank you for your unwavering
 101 commitment to educational excellence in our school district. And thank you as
 102 well for your understanding and dedication to making the most of our current
 103 situation. We very much look forward to the day when the challenges and joys of
 104 school --from the classroom, band room, hard 'ack, stage, field and rink, can be
 105 shared again in person.

106 And finally, I would like to close by sharing with you my views regarding an issue
 107 that will be addressed by the district in the upcoming months. I refer here to the
 108 debate surrounding the SRO position.

109 I do believe the board has acted wisely in establishing a study committee to
 110 examine the SRO position. And while I am, as I'm sure all of you are, open to
 111 whatever may be presented, as of now I have come to believe that the best path
 112 forward is to maintain a working relationship with local law enforcement that
 113 does not include the daily in-school presence of an armed uniformed police
 114 officer. And even though I cannot predict the recommendations of the study
 115 committee, I am heartened to know that this board will, as always, give careful
 116 and reasoned consideration to the findings presented. I would only ask that
 117 everyone please keep in mind that, in my view at least, any perceived sense of
 118 safety that the SROs bring to some within our community comes at the expense
 119 of others. If our mission statement is to mean anything, we need to always be
 120 examining what might work best for everyone.

121 Thanks so much and best wishes to all.

122 **9. Agenda Items for Future Meeting – Reorganization, SRO Committee Update at the 2nd**
 123 **March meeting.**

124 **10. Potential Executive Session**

125 **Al Corey made a motion to enter Executive Session at 7:15 and invited Dr. Dirth; second by**
 126 **Nina Hunsicker. The motion passed unanimously.**

127 Exited Executive Session at 7:37.

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129 **11. Adjourn 7:38 p.m.**

130 Respectfully Submitted,

131 Brenda Comstock

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