

1 **MAPLE RUN UNIFIED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**
2 **February 21, 2018 6:00 SACS 29 Bellows St. St. Albans, VT**
3 **MINUTES**
4

5 **Present for a Quorum:** James Farr, Steven LaRosa, Jack McCarthy, Michael Malone, Denise Smith, Nilda Gonnella-
6 French, Mike L'Esperance, Nina Hunsicker

7
8 **Unable to Attend:** Martha Casavant-Ries, Al Corey

9
10 **Administrators:** Martha Gagner, Business Manager; Jill Ballou, Central Office Administrator; Julie Regimbal, Special
11 Education Director; Jason Therrien, SATEC Assistant Principal; Joan Cavallo, SACS Principal; Stacie Rouleau, SACS
12 Dean of Students; Chris Mosca, BFA Principal; Leeann Wright, NWTC Director; David Kimel, CPSC Manager, Heather
13 Fitzgibbons BFA Assistant Principal; Preston Randall, BFA Director of Guidance, Joanne Wells, Assistant Director of
14 Special Education

15
16 **Visitors:** Jeff Morrill, Susan Casavant Magnon, Mitch Craib

- 17
18 1. **Call to Order** – James Farr called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
19 2. **Agenda Review** – A BFA Field Trip to Paris was added to the consent agenda, and setting High School
20 Choice numbers was added to New Business.

21 **Nilda Gonnella French made a motion to approve the modified agenda; seconded by Michael Malone. The**
22 **motion passed unanimously.**

- 23
24 3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
25 4. **Visitors- no visitors addressed the Board.**
26 5. **Host Site**

27 A. Presentation - Internal Internships: 4 Students presented from Grades 5-7. Middle School students
28 have begun having internal internships. The students have to apply to participate. The HOPE
29 program makes beautiful, high quality items. SACS began this process in January and now they are
30 up and running! Twenty interns are working within the school between 1 to 5 hours per week.
31 HOPE Presentation: Students shared their jobs: job technician, blogger, the students created a sugar
32 sift from recyclable materials. Another student shared that he used tools to make the sign that
33 reads, "Welcome - St. Albans City School - Safe, Achieving, and Caring Est. 1958". The students are
34 making special projects and then selling them to the community. With the money they make, they
35 can buy new t-shirts and "other fun things." The cutting boards they make are big hits!
36 Dan Deslaurier and Marc Hoben are the teachers who are overseeing the HOPE program. You can
37 look at their projects online and they can be made to order. There are community based projects,
38 school projects, and specific projects for individuals. The students are calculating prices, and will use
39 their projects as a part of their PLPs, explaining their learning to their parents. The products are in
40 high demand. The students are engaged in engineering, mathematics, writing, and science through
41 this project. The goal of the program is to ensure that it is sustainable. Students get to work on the
42 projects during their "specials" so they are not missing academic class time. The school board
43 mentioned how articulate the students were in explaining their projects.

- 44
45 6. **Consent Agenda**
46 A. Approval of Minutes January 17, 2018
47 B. Media Packets

- 48 C. Grants
- 49 D. (Added) Field Trip to Paris for BHS

50 **The consent agenda was approved.**

51

52 **7. Old Business**

- 53 - Truancy Presentation - Joanne Wells reported that all schools are making good referrals for Truancy
- 54 with 44 total referrals for Maple Run. This is about removing barriers. We seek a positive approach
- 55 by developing a protocol. Eleven of the referrals were not accepted because more information was
- 56 needed. Twelve were accepted and Department of Children and Families (DCF) accepted eight of
- 57 those referrals. We have two Truancy Officers through Northwest Counseling and Support Services
- 58 (NCSS). A High School position is funded through the Restorative Justice Center. Barriers include
- 59 housing and medical issues/interventions. Challenges include keeping the position staffed because it
- 60 is a very challenging position and staff need to have very specific skills. The successes are because of
- 61 developing high quality programs and making connections with families. Ms. Wells is happy to meet
- 62 with people to review the information packet. The following questions were asked and answered:
- 63 • What constitutes excessive absences? After 5 days the school makes a phone call to
- 64 parents/guardians. At 10 days, the school holds a Coordinated Service Plan (CSP). This brings the
- 65 agencies to the table to meet the families and serves as a think tank. At 15 days, the school makes a
- 66 referral to the truancy panel. The panel is made up of representatives from NCSS, DCF, a States
- 67 Attorney, and Jeff Benay, of Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union. The group then decides what
- 68 happens next.
- 69 • Is there a point where legal action is taken? The States Attorney sits on the panel and is able to
- 70 make that determination. This is a highly collaborative panel that decides if it goes to court or DCF,
- 71 etc. This panel is a great example of a community partnership.
- 72 • On the protocol - what happens when no one answers the phone? The truancy specialist makes
- 73 home visits. Typically, parents want to engage because they are looking for resources.
- 74 • What type of action can the court take? The court can assign a person to work directly with the
- 75 family. The court would like to come back to the panel and have additional conversation.
- 76 • What happens if a child doesn't attend? At the high school level, kids drop out which is what we are
- 77 trying to prevent. On a K-8 Level it's about finding out how to remove barriers. We often find that
- 78 substance abuse is taking place in the homes.
- 79 • How do you add up absenteeism? The team looks carefully at why the child is absent and requires a
- 80 doctor's note if it's medical.
- 81 • Was there a time that the state required a child to attend school in order to move on to the next
- 82 grade? Yes, a long time ago.

83

84 James Farr stated that he misspoke on the consent agenda. One of the grants is a Samsung grant for \$25,000 which

85 all Board members were okay with that being in, and approved with the consent agenda.

- 86
- 87 8. E20 - Community Use of Facilities Policy - This policy was re-posted for comments on February 9 after the
- 88 Feb. 7 Board Meeting was cancelled. After reviewing comments, administration seeks a motion to
- 89 approve policy E20 Community Use of Facilities. Kathy Finck was not present but she has a
- 90 recommendation to approve the policy.

91 **Jack made a motion to approve the E20 - Community Use of Facilities Policy; seconded by Nina Hunsicker.**

92 Michael Malone stated that Fairfield Town still would like to use the gym as for the annual Town Meeting
93 and any other special Town meetings that might arise, and suggested consideration of a municipal facility
94 contract as a separate policy.

95 James Farr asked if there were agreements in place. Mr. Malone said no, but there were agreements, and
96 a resident, Bet Howrigan, was going to check in with the town clerk. Mr. Malone would like to look at a
97 municipal policy that covers Fairfield and could extend for the other schools. Fairfield would like to have
98 first rights on Town Meeting and if there were an emergency, the town can use the gym. Mr. Farr
99 suggested adding this to a different agenda. E-20 is what we are focusing on in this motion.

100 Julie Regimbal asked Steve LaRosa if his questions had been resolved. There was discussion on what
101 constitutes a public disturbance. Ms. Regimbal stated that Administration is fine with the policy.

102 **The question was called. The motion passed 6.5-0-.5. Michael Malone abstained.**

- 103
104 9. FY19 Budget Discussion – Martha Gagner explained her process of creating the budget information and
105 explained that tonight was to gather input on anything that should be added, changed or modified from
106 the power point presentation.

107 James Farr will present the information at the information meeting, and confirmed that the Principals
108 would speak to the slides in individual schools next week. It was stated that the information meeting will
109 be next Wednesday at BFA Library. **ex post facto correction: Information meeting is Wednesday February**
110 **28 at Central Office Board Room.**

111 Kevin Dirth will explain the 5-year plan slides.

112 The Board acknowledged the work that went into this well done the presentation. Martha Gagner replied
113 that it was a group effort. They hope that the Messenger attends to cover the information.

114 **10. New Business**

- 115 A. Non-union, co- and extra-curricular guidelines – James Farr reported that co and extra-curricular
116 guidelines aren't ready for discussion. Julie Regimbal stated that they would like a target range of
117 money for the non-union staff. Kathy Finck has worked on this with the administration. Martha
118 Gagner stated that some of the things that were clarified were health insurance. The non-union
119 guidelines cover IT staff, Central Office staff, Administrative Assistants, and Tutors, etc. The Board
120 tabled target range of money as they would like more information. No rates were set tonight.

121 **Michael Malone made a motion to approve the non-union guidelines as presented by administration; second by**
122 **Steve LaRosa. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 123
124 B. Banking Resolution – Martha Gagner explained that there is a credit card for online purchases
125 currently with Bank of Montreal. It is being proposed that it be moved to People's United Bank. This
126 credit card account would be under the MRUSD name and we'd close out the Montreal account. The
127 Board Clerk, Nilda Gonnella-French needs to sign the banking resolution.

128 **Michael Malone made a motion to open a new credit card account with People's United Bank with credit up to**
129 **\$50,000, and close the old account with the Montreal bank; second by Nina Hunsicker. The motion passed**
130 **unanimously.**

- 131 C. Side letter Grandfathered Vacation Leave – Martha Gagner explained that seven staff lost vacation
132 time with the new contract. The side letter is a proposal to allow the individuals to continue to have
133 their number of days until they catch up with the schedule. This would only be good until it is
134 negotiated in the new contract.

135 **Michael Malone made a motion to approve the side letter for grandfathered vacation leave; second by Nina**
136 **Hunsicker. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
- D. (Added) Set the Number for School Choice - ACT 129 – It was explained that the number of High School students allowed to attend from outside of the district was increased last year from a total of 20, at five per grade, to 25 cumulative. 40 students are allowed to attend other schools from BFA. There are only three students who attend elsewhere. Students coming in from outside of the district are not counted in the receiving school’s average daily membership, and tuition does not follow them. Chris Mosca, BFA Principal expressed support for Act 129 and is happy to receive as many students as can be absorbed. James Farr stated he would not support adding any more than a total of 25.

146 **Michael Malone made a motion to keep both the number of incoming and outgoing students for Act 129 the**
147 **same as last year; second by Nina Hunsicker. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 148
149
150
151
152
153
- E. Staff Matters - Resignations and retirements were acknowledged. One person who is retiring now would like the \$1,000 breach of contract fee waived due to specific circumstances. The administration reported that this is customarily done on a case by case basis and approves this one being waived due to circumstances. Sorrow was expressed after receiving Administrator Geoff Lyons’ retirement.

154 **Steve LaRosa made a motion to waive the breach of contract fee for Brenda Rich due to special circumstances;**
155 **second by Denise Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

156
157 **11. Other Business**

- 158 A. Warrants

159 **Michael Malone made a motion to approve the warrants; second by Steve LaRosa. The motion passed**
160 **unanimously.**

- 161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
- B. Administrator’s Report - Joan Cavallo reported that Leah Mermelstein is coming to do Writer’s Workshop Model, and literacy teachers are very excited. Small cohorts are modeling, sharing, and debriefing together. The first annual staff fun night is this Friday. Adults only. 60 people are attending. A variety of activities will be taking place. “Open doors for adults” and Ms. Cavallo is thrilled to have such interest. All City School staff (except for bus drivers) were trained on Implicit Bias and it went very well. Jamillah led the training which was tailored for the teachers.

- 169 C. Principal’s Voices

- 170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
- Chris Mosca reported that BFA had a serious situation involving a threatening message. What happened recently in Parkland FL made it more difficult to address. BFA worked to minimize risk and ensure that students were safe by going into “secure the schools” mode. Most likely, this was a copycat situation but it was taken very seriously. St. Albans Police advised an early dismissal. It took 38 minutes to get 800 students off the premises. Mr. Mosca is very proud of how well the students and staff handled the situation. Additional support will be on campus for the remainder of the week.
 - James Farr stated that discussions like this are good. The Board needs to look at these things. Perhaps there should be security discussions a couple of times per year. Mr. Farr would like to include a discussion on this topic at a future meeting once Superintendent Dirth returns. The board would like to support the schools and the community as much as possible.
 - There is a community forum on Safety in Schools at City Hall being arranged for March 14.
 - Leeann Wright reported on a trip to the State House where Bernie Sanders and his guest from Germany discussed internships as a way to increase the labor pool for advanced manufacturing.

- 184 On Friday, 8th grade students visit NWTC and selects two classes of their choice to attend.
185 Current NWTC students design activities for the 8th graders.
186
 - 187 ■ Dave Kimel reported a variety of activities and community events taking place at the complex in
188 March, including the March 10 Railroad Show.
 - 189 ■ Jason Therrien reported on the new choral director working on movement, singing, and dance.
190 SATEC is feeling very lucky to have him. Rise VT showcased SATEC with their ongoing work with
191 Wellness.
 - 192 ■ Stacie Rouleau described SACS upcoming Brain States Training on March 20. Brain States goes
193 along with Conscious Discipline. The Board is invited and parents are very interested.

194 **12. Agenda Items for Future Meetings** - Security discussions; Municipal Use Policy; Kathy Finck is asked to look
195 at current agreements; Reorganization - Two new board members

196 The Board thanked Mike L’Esperance and Denise Smith for their service as they go off the Board. Denise
197 Smith stated that this is a great place to start and you feel like you’re making a difference. It’s been fun.
198 Mike L’Esperance said he would like to thank everyone for being so helpful with the transition to Maple
199 Run. He feels that it will be more successful in the future. It’s been a pleasure and the kids are far better off
200 than they would have been. Thank you all.

201 **13. Potential Executive Session** – None needed.

202 **14. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.**

203
204 Respectfully Submitted (from notes),
205 Brenda Comstock