

Slate Valley Modified Unified Union School District Meeting  
Regular Meeting  
November 13, 2017  
Fair Haven Union High School  
6:30 pm

Approved Minutes

Name	Role/Term	Town Representing	In Attendance
Kris Benway	Director of ARSU Spec Ed	ARSU	Yes
Jody Goodhue	Temp. Clerk/1 Year	Benson	No
David Renninger	Board Member/ 2 Year	Benson	Yes
Amy Munger	Board Member/3 Year	Benson	Yes
Toni Lobdell	Board Member/1 Year	Castleton	No
Liz Mackay	Board Member/2 Year	Castleton	Yes
Julie Finnegan	Board Member/3 Year	Castleton	Yes
Shannon Baldwin	Board Member/1 Year	Hubbardton	Yes
Joshua Hardt	Board Member/2 Year	Hubbardton	Yes
Mike Fallis	Board Member;3 Year	Hubbardton	Yes
John Oakman	Board Member/1 Year	West Haven 9/11/17	No
Angela Charron	Board Member/2 Year	West Haven	Yes
Michael (Trevor) Ezzo	Board Member/3 Year	West Haven	Yes
Tara Buxton	Board Member/1 Year	Fair Haven	Yes
Michael Bache	Board Member/2 Year	Fair Haven	Yes
Roy L. Eckler	Board Member/3 Year	Fair Haven	No
Peter Stone	Board Member/1 Year	Orwell NMD (Non Member District)	No
Glen Cousineau	Board Member/2 Year	Orwell NMD	Yes
David Carpenter	Board Member/3 Year	Orwell NMD	Yes
Brooke Olsen Farrell	Superintendent	Slate Valley MUUSD	Yes
Cheryl Scarzello	Business Manager	ARSU	Yes
Chris Cole	Technology Coordinator	ARSU	Yes
Sherri Nichols	Curriculum Coordinator	ARSU	No

**Audience Attending:** Kathleen Kilbourne, Linda Peltier, Jason Rasco, Deb Smith,

1. **Pledge of Allegiance/Call to Order:** Chairman Mike Bache called the Board meeting to Order starting with a Pledge of Allegiance @ 6:30 pm.

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Shannon Baldwin made motion to move agenda to accommodate the student presentation first. This was seconded by Julie Finnegan.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** October 23, 2017; Julie Finnegan made motion to approve the minutes of October 23, 2017, this was seconded by Glen Cousineau, with one correction to the Fair Haven Grade School Student Presentation to include a change of several 6th, 7th and 8th grade students not 66 sixth graders. Motion passed to approve minutes with this one correction.
4. **Public Comment:** None
5. **Correspondence:** None
6. **Student Presentation - FHUHS:** FHUHS student, Stiles Loper, introduced himself and read an essay that he had done for his class which spoke to thinking differently about attendance policies moving forward. This was an assignment from Ms. Doran. Students were asked to develop a Declaration of Independence as we move forward with looking at Proficiency Based/ Personalized Learning and to start thinking about what our schools might need to take into consideration. Jason Rasco thanked Stiles Loper for thinking outside of the box.
7. **Committee Reports:**
  - a) **Finance:** Next Meeting 11/15/17; they will be having their first look at proposed budget and firming up the budget timeline and priorities moving forward.
  - b) **Personnel Committee** has not yet had a committee meeting.
  - c) **Policy Committee** met before the last SVMUUSD meeting, reviewed several policies and made recommendations for wording changes, these will be forwarded for approval.
  - d) **Building and Grounds** met this evening prior to the SVMUUSD Board Meeting, next meeting scheduled for December 11th. Tonight's meeting had the 3 Chiefs of Maintenance presenting their individual schools 5 and 10 year plan of projected work to be done. Next meeting will focus on making a collective list of shared vendors and a prioritized list of work to be done in buildings and the ranked order of such. The Board also asked for a single format that all would report on.
  - e) **Negotiations-** There has been one successful Teacher Negotiations meeting thus far; next meeting is scheduled for December 6th at FHUHS. Support Staff Negotiations for the next round will be starting soon. They are trying to figure out which bargaining units will be part of this negotiation process moving forward.
8. **Central Office Staff Reports:**  
**Superintendent's Report**

October has been a busy month! Preparations for next year's budget are well under way. As you may be aware it will be a difficult budget season with a potential 80 million dollar deficit in the Vermont Education Fund. The Administrative Team has been working hard to reorganize our current structure as we transition into a merged entity. Our focus has been to increase efficiency and decrease any duplication of effort throughout the organization. In addition, school boards this month will be asked to consider early retirement incentives for teachers, support staff and administrative assistants/secretaries. We hope to gain flexibility through attrition and reorganization rather than reductions in force.

On another note, ARSU is currently looking for a new Curriculum Director. Sherri Nichols has decided to move on. We thank Sherri for all of her work in the district on behalf of our students and wish her nothing but the best. The Superintendent noted that the three Administrators in Central Office have picked up the duties vacated by the Curriculum Director. A committee will be interviewing for this position; interviews are currently scheduled for Nov. 20, 2017. Linda Peltier was also recognized as a Principal stepping up to the plate to take on some of the roles that Sherri held in ARSU.

#### **Curriculum & Staff Development**

On October 20, 2017 the entire ARSU staff went through refresher courses on the following: Hazing, Harassment and Bullying, Mandatory Reporting, and VT NEA Boundary Training. Teachers also had an opportunity to be trained on using data analysis to inform instructional practices (the recent F&P data was utilized for this K-5 and SBAC data for all other grades).

#### **Director of Special Services**

All special services staff have completed the fall time studies and the time samples have been reviewed to confirm staff time allocations that are eligible for state special education reimbursement. Additionally, the administrators have been working hard to determine staffing and funding needs for next year so that the appropriate fiscal determinations can be made for all budget entities. This year's projections are certainly higher than anticipated due to the large influx of students into the supervisory union with programming needs for out of district or highly individualized programming. The current number of children served on IEP's in ARSU is 263 students.

On October 20, 2017, the district faculty participated in a full day of Mandatory Trainings and grade level meetings. The day began with a review session of the Hazing, Harassment and Bullying policies and procedures. We then engaged all faculty and staff in Mandatory Reporting Training which was facilitated by the Division of Children and Families (DCF). The afternoon concluded with all employees participating in a training session titled, "***Professional Boundaries and Social Networking for School Employees.***" The materials for this training were provided by the Vermont NEA and the sessions were co-facilitated by teams of support staff, teachers, and district administrators. We have since been invited to do this same training for coaches and volunteers throughout the supervisory union.

#### **Information Technology Coordinator**

The budget process is in full swing as we work on building a combined Slate Valley Unified technology budget. This new budget will bring into alignment many of the goals that we have been working on as individual school districts. With this budget there will be a renewed focus on technology integration to make sure that we are taking full advantage of the investments that have been made in technology.

Over the last month K-5 teachers have spent time piloting the online math resource Zearn as a means to support math instruction. Zearn makes use of our district 1:1 program by engaging students in online learning in which they are provided instruction in a variety of math topics which they are then asked to demonstrate their understanding of through interactive modules. Teachers have also started to pilot another math resource known as Reflex. Reflex is designed to support students in developing fact fluency.

Additionally, during the last district wide in-service, members of the technology department spent time in the afternoon working with faculty and staff around the implementation of a data-informed decision making process. Material was presented around the Data Wise Continuous Improvement process. The Data Wise process was developed in a joint effort between the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Boston City Public Schools as a framework by which to make efficient use of data in looking to improve student learning outcomes.

### **Director of Finance**

Open enrollment for the entire district concluded in October. The Business Office has now begun doing the work to input the plan selections of 475 employees into VEHI's database. With the addition of Health Reimbursement Accounts and Health Savings Accounts to the four plan choices staff now have for health insurance, the district's health insurance plans have become quite complicated to administer.

Our auditors, RHR Smith & Co., were in the office on October 25th to complete their audit field work on the Title I and Title II grants. I expect to receive the draft financial statements soon. Once I have reviewed the statements, final reports will be issued. I hope to be able to present the final reports at your December board meetings.

The primary focus for the months of November and December will be on formulating the first Slate Valley Modified Unified Union School District budget for fiscal year 2019. The Finance Committee has asked for the first draft of the Slate Valley budget to be at the same level of education spending as the combined districts were in FY18. The ARSU Leadership Team has been working hard to find ways in which we can operate more efficiently in order to create savings.

9. **November 1st enrollments:** Total Enrollment including Pre-K District Total of 1,355.  
Enrollment - November 1, 2017

	Benson	C/H	FH	Orwell	Total
Pre-K	18	44	46	19	
K	7	34	38	16	
1	2	33	46	11	
2	8	38	24	17	
3	5	32	35	14	
4	4	52	23	9	
5	7	34	38	15	
6	10	35	33	14	
7	11	40	41	15	
8	9	43	33	12	
Ungraded	0	0	0	0	
Total	81	385	357	142	965

#### **FHUHS**

9	120
10	78
11	96
12	96

Total: 390  
District Total: 1355

10. **By-Laws - Action:** At the last policy meeting it was suggested to add a section to the By-Laws regarding Executive Session, this was done and now By-Laws are ready to be warned. Julie Finnegan made motion to approve the By-Laws with the addition of the section on Executive Session. This was seconded by Angela Charron. David Carpenter then made an amendment to the motion regarding a drafting error (omission of Orwell from the list), this error was corrected. Julie again made **motion** to correct the draft error, seconded by Angela Charron. Motion carried by full Board to adopt the By-Laws.

11. **Enrollment Presentation - Discussion:** Chris Cole presented a visual representation of student enrollments and also of co-curricular activities offered and overall projected attendees in each of the sports events per previous Board request.  
[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1\\_tvpYi-5rWzd0w6VJ7mBygl\\_dFj-4sVZ](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1_tvpYi-5rWzd0w6VJ7mBygl_dFj-4sVZ)  
David Carpenter asked if Orwell as a non-member school district could have the data included in this report. Discussion ensued. If Orwell data was added directly to this same report it impacts budget going forward for SVMUUSD. Other members spoke out about supporting David's request because our actions should be based on whether we want to attract Orwell to join or not. Per Superintendent, Orwell would have to call a re-vote to join SVMUUSD by March 8th, 2018. All agreed that we had the data and this could be shared with Orwell, in question was whether it was to be added to the current report.
12. **Central Office Relocation:** The architect from Black River had been back to view the site and possible relocation of an exit in the area where the Central Office staff would be located. The architect also needed to understand the high school theater area so that he might propose some plans to assist a contractor. He would also be developing information for the Bond on these two separate issues. The high school Board is desiring two separate bond questions, one for the work on the theater area and one for the relocation of Central Office to FHUHS. The Bonds being put together will specify a dollar amount for each not to exceed ... The Architect understands the time frame for having these Bonds ready.
13. **Other Business:** Trevor Ezzo asks about the union issue with regard to Maintenance as he understands some of the schools are unionized and some are not. He expressed concern of not forcing all to be in union, is it an all or nothing? Cheryl Scarzello shared information from the VT Labor Relations Board and referenced a White Paper which speaks to this issue. Discussion ensued. Superintendent will seek more clarity on this. The Superintendent recognized that we in ARSU have one of the most complicated support staff in the State and it will be very challenging to synchronize these agreements.
14. **Agenda Building:**
1. Principal's Reports
  2. CVS Student Presentation
  3. CVS Building Tour
  4. Job Descriptions for Board to consider. Technology and Building and Grounds Reconfigurations to be shared.
  5. 1st Draft of Budget to be shared (rough draft)
  6. Policy Committee meets prior to SVMUUSD on this evening and may have additional policies to warn.
15. **Executive Session - if needed:** None
16. **Adjournment:** Julie Finnegan made motion to adjourn, this was seconded by Glen Cousineau at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Bonnie Lenihan