

Slate Valley Modified Unified Union School Board Meeting  
Monday, December 18, 2017  
Benson Village School  
6:30 p.m.

Approved Minutes

Name	Role/Term	Town Representing	In Attendance
Kris Benway	Director of ARSU Spec Ed	ARSU	No
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	Yes
Liz Mackay	Board Member/2 Year	Castleton	No
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	Yes
Angela Charron	Board Member/2 Year	West Haven	No
Michael (Trevor) Ezzo	Board Member/3 Year	West Haven	No
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	No
Brooke Olsen Farrell	Superintendent	Slate Valley MUUSD	Yes
Cheryl Scarzello	Business Manager	ARSU	Yes
Chris Cole	Technology Coordinator	ARSU	Yes
TBD	Curriculum Coordinator	ARSU	No

**Audience Members:** Linda Peltier, Kathleen Kilbourne, Kim Prehoda, Liz Moyer, Mary Gunn, Linda Heitkamp, Archie Clark, Eric Shaw, Christian Shaw, John Wurzbacher, Robert Senn, Kirk Shields, Tammy Ritchie, Brent Munger, Skip Cooke,

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:** Chairman Mike Bache called the meeting to order and began the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 pm.

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Tara Buxton made the motion to move the BVS student presentation to the beginning of the agenda, this was seconded by Glen Cousineau.
3. **Approval of Minutes of November 27, 2017:** Tara Buxton made a motion to approve the minutes of November 27, 2017 with no revisions, this was seconded by Glen Cousineau; motion carried by full Board.
4. **Student Presentation -BVS:** Breanna Cram, Ian Barber, Samantha Senn, Elizabeth Munger, Emily Shields, Regan Hoard, Dominic Morin, and Kastrin Shaw. The Benson Students are presenting on PLP's. The students talked about learning styles and how they learn best. They learned this information from a survey that students participated in. Students described the different components of a PLP, Personalized Learning Plan. They talked about collecting money to send to the victims of crisis in Puerto Rico. BVS raised money and bought water purification systems for the people of Puerto Rico (6 systems purchased). They also talked about Teacher Advisories and how they operate. BVS students also talked about their PBiS system.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Correspondence:** None
7. **Committee Reports:**
  - a. **Finance:** Finance Committee has met several times and has looked at the first round draft of the budget.
  - b. **Personnel:** This committee has not met yet though Brooke said they should form a meeting by end of January early February as we will need to start hiring staff for next year.
  - c. **Policies to Warn:** Julie Finnegan made a motion to warn Policies A21, A22, A24, B20 and C35; this was seconded by Glen Cousineau and motion was carried by the full Board.
    - Policy A21 - Public Participation at Board Meetings
    - Policy A22 - Notice of Non-Discrimination
    - Policy A24 - Board-Superintendent Relationship
    - Policy B20 - Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks
    - Policy C35 - In-District Transfer Program
  - d. **Building and Grounds - Tour of BVS Building:** Kim Prehoda, BVS Principal led a tour of the BVS for the SVMUUSD Board Members. Priorities, windows, flooring, water and heating system all need to be addressed. January 8, 2018 is the next scheduled meeting for Building and Grounds.
  - e. **Negotiations:** We have had one negotiations session for Teachers' since the last meeting. Support Staff Negotiations will be scheduled for January 31, 2018 at the FHUHS at 6:30 pm.

8. **Central Office Report:**

Superintendent's Report

I am happy to report that we have found an excellent candidate to assume the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment position on January 2nd. The finalist will be going before the ARSU Board on December 20th. We had 17 applicants for the position and interviewed 4 applicants. The committee was made up of board members from the personnel committee, principals and central office administration.

We have been focusing on the 1st drafts of the budget the past few weeks. The 1st draft of the ARSU Budget went to the ARSU board on November 15th. In order to increase efficiencies within the Supervisory Union we have consolidated nursing and brought the positions into the ARSU budget. We will be moving to a School Nurse Leader Model. This model was recommended by Vermont's

Education Quality Standards. It is designed to improve student outcomes, through increased quality of care, due to efficient and equitable school health services for all of our students.

We continue to work on the central office relocation to the high school. The bond bank revised their earlier thinking and let us know that the new Slate Valley Modified Unified Union School Board will be the board that needs to take a bond rather than the Fair Haven Union High School Board. The central office relocation will ultimately save taxpayers up to \$50,000 per year in costs to operate the central office in downtown Fair Haven should the bond be approved.

#### Director of Special Services

The Special Services area completed the annual Child Count of students eligible for special education in ARSU on December 1st. Our child count for December 1, 2017 totals 260 students in preschool through grade 12. This number is reflective of an increase of 21 students from last year. These numbers reflect nearly 20% of the total school population. As we have discussed with the boards in the past, the challenges are not simply with an increase in the number of students, but the increase in students with complex trauma backgrounds and needs. While the holidays and school breaks are often a welcome activity for many of us, this time of year can be particularly stressful for many of our students and their families.

In November, we concluded our 7th training session of the course Life Space Crisis Intervention. Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) is a therapeutic, verbal strategy for turning crisis situations into learning opportunities for children and youth with chronic patterns of self-defeating behaviors.

LSCI provides educators, counselors, youth workers, parents, and other caring adults with a roadmap through conflict to desired outcomes, using problems as an opportunity to teach and create positive relationships with youth. Several of the participants have referenced this course as one of the best professional development opportunities that has been made available for working with individuals with challenging behaviors.

#### Information Technology Coordinator

Students across the district have been engaging in a number of projects recently that have been augmented through the integration of technology resources. Castleton Elementary fifth grade students have been actively engaged in a STEM learning opportunity combining art and engineering. Each student created their own lithophane which then needed to be attached to a light source to illuminate their design. Students were then asked to use the engineering design process to design their own clip to hold their lithophane onto the light source. Both the lithophane and clip were printed using the 3D printer. Third graders at the Fair Haven Grade School recently concluded a unit in which they used their Chromebooks to conduct research about animals. Once they concluded their research, students created their own WeVideos in which each student narrated their own set of slides they had developed to share facts about their animal of study.

The next time you visit the Castleton Village School be sure to stop by and check out their new digital display in the entry hallway. The middle school students have worked together to create a streaming school news bulletin for the new display that is updated daily. Additionally, the iPad carts at CVS were recently updated to include Google Expeditions. Google Expedition kits use augmented reality to allow students to take “field trips” to many famous sites and landmark. Teachers have started using this resource with their students to enhance their lessons through the integration of technology.

This week also marks the annual Hour of Code across Vermont schools to support the development of computer science skills for all students. In the Castleton schools Ozobots, programmable mini robots, continue to be a fan favorite for elementary and middle school students alike. Currently students are refining their programming skills with the Ozobots through an Obstacle Course Challenge. In Benson, students have also been busily programming the school's robots and recently the BVS students taught one of their robots the lyrics to Mary Had a Little Lamb.

At the high school a new touch TV was installed in an English classroom as we continue to explore new types of technology to assess their potential for use in the classroom. The high school also recently received a new 3D printer to bolster the resources available in the high school makerspace

to support STEM teaching and learning. This new printer comes at a great time as a group of high school students are currently designing a 3D model of the Hubbardton Battlefield as part of 3D Vermont's Town History in 3D Competition. Castleton Village School also has groups of student taking part in this competition and they are working to create models of two local historic buildings.

#### Director of Finance

Health insurance has continued to take up a significant amount of time for the Business Office. Enrollment choices for 475 employees were submitted to Blue Cross Blue Shield on November 14th. This past week we worked with staff to complete the forms required by Future Planning Associates to set up health reimbursement accounts, health savings accounts, flexible spending accounts and limited purpose flexible spending accounts. Now payroll staff will begin to do all the set-ups in the system necessary for the first payroll of the new year on January 5th. During the month of November, all retroactive wage payments for teachers and unionized support staff were also processed. To say the least this fall has been extremely busy! The Business Office is looking forward to January when we are underway with our new health insurance plans.

The draft audited financial statements are coming in from RHR Smith & Co. I am hoping to finalize the drafts before the end of the month.

The Business Office and Chris Cole held its first implementation project meeting with the folks from Tyler Technology. Our conversion to Infinite Visions Enterprise Edition Software Suite (IVVE) will be the next large project for the Business Office that will occupy most of our time in the spring. Not only will we be migrating to new software, we will be going from 8 databases to 3, we will be converting our chart of accounts to comply with State of Vermont AOE specifications, and we will begin operating a new school district as of July 1st. Also thrown in there is the possibility of an office move!

### 9. **Principal's Reports:**

#### **Benson Village School Principal's Report (Kim Prehoda):**

The Benson Bears had their first PBIS celebration at the end of November. This was planned and led by the students in Mr. Clark's TA, the Ant Army. Students built scarecrows and made fun fall creations at the craft stations. It was tons of fun!

Our middle school students are headed to the Benson Museum this month. They will be examining and reporting on artifacts. What a great opportunity, right here in our own community.

January 11th is our Winter Concert which is always a crowd-pleaser!

January 21st is the 8th Grade Basket Raffle at the Fair Haven Legion. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year, supporting the 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C. We usually have over 100 baskets!

#### **Castleton Village School Principal's Report (Linda Peltier):**

This year our student-led conferences are held right after the end of the first marking period. These conferences provide an opportunity for our students to reflect upon their success during the school year to date and to provide their parents or guardians with examples of what they have learned in each of the academic areas.

The students arrange the necessary equipment and refreshments, prepare a formal invitation, and conduct the meetings. We view this as an extremely positive opportunity for these students to emphasize their strengths, acknowledge their weaknesses and, with an adult support in attendance, plan for their approach to the next marking period. This is an opportunity to open up or improve lines of communication with each student about their role in their education.

#### **Castleton Elementary School Principal's Report (Kathleen Kilbourne):**

We hosted Richard Sobol, an author/photographer for children's nonfiction text. He presented to all students and presented to our community in the evening as well. We had our PBIS Dance Party (which was earned by the students earning paw prints for being respectful, responsible and safe and ready to learn).

A CES grant team is currently working on applying for the CLIF grant which could result in \$25,000.00 towards ELA and Literacy materials (including each child receiving 10 new books). This application is due in January and awarded in March of 2018 for the following school year.

**Fair Haven Grade School Principal's Report (Skip Cooke):**

Students have been very busy the past few weeks not only in the classroom but also with complementing activities. A significant number of our students recently participated in the Green Mountain Music tryouts for choral and instrumental. We learned yesterday that many were selected and will be part of the music festival later in the school year. A large number of our students are also involved in winter athletics with the basketball game schedule kicking off on Thursday night for middle school girls and boys. Being involved in activities always has a positive impact on academics.

We are preparing for our first school-wide PBIS celebration. Students have worked very hard this first trimester and are looking forward to closing the year celebrating their successes. We will be hosting a presenter who incorporates basketball skills and positive behavior into meaningful lifelong goals.

Grades 3 - 5 General Music students and the Jazz Band performed for a standing room only crowd last week. The first Winter Concert was warmly received by parents and community. The music students shared a variety musical skills along with the traditional choral. The Jazz Band rocked the crowd with a variety of pieces including student solo parts. Concerts will continue throughout the year with the next one scheduled in January.

**Fair Haven Union High School Principal's Report (Jason Rasco):**

"Words matter. They are powerful. What you say matters. Please be mindful of the words that you use and how you use them." These were statements made during our school wide assembly on Monday, December 11th. During the assembly volunteers helped me in demonstrating an activity that I asked everyone to participate in upon our departure. The activity is called Talk Behind My Back, and each person was going to speak to the others about another person who was not facing the group but instead of gossip, rumor, and negative comments they were instructed to take turns saying positive things about the person such as their character strengths and how they contributed to the Slater Community.

It was a step in the direction of healing a community that has been disrupted and injured. It will take a concerted effort on everyone's part to move forward, and I have every confidence in our students, staff, and greater community to move us in that direction. Already, our student-led SHINE group and our newly formed PBIS committee are making plans of help and support.

10. **Central Office Relocation:** The Architect came down with Engineers and gave some more refined plans and today sent cost estimates, which came in higher than originally anticipated. All the existing utilities look as though it would support the office. The estimated costs for this renovation came in at \$325,000.00. The budget is significantly down from last year and we need to determine if we want to incorporate this into this budget or to look at a bond to make this happen. Rough estimate of \$75,000.00 to look at updating the front entrance of the FHUHS as well. This \$75,000.00 would be in addition to the \$325,000.00. The next SVMUUSD meeting is at FHUHS and the Board could take a walk through to see what classrooms and office space are being proposed. Brooke noted that the work would not be done before September, and this would require us to continue to rent the office space where we are. The total project would last some 4-6 weeks.
11. **Budget:** Cheryl handed out two versions of the Combined FY 19 budget for all schools. These are the same as presented to the Finance Committee last week on 12/14/17. Cheryl is receiving new information daily from the State of VT. She noted that today she received information on the Special Ed Expenditures line but did not have time to update this document for tonight's meeting. She presented an overview of the revenue and expenditures. She indicated that she just today started

working on forecasts for each department. She mentioned that all of her time has been consumed with working in Excel Spread sheets for a 21,000,000.00 plus budget. She handed out a sheet which addresses Capital Reserve Funds. This would have to become a question on the ballot in March. Mike Bache indicated that it makes sense to have a reserve fund, the question becomes for what amount. Discussion ensued. Mike Fallis asks what amount might be suggested to establish a reserve fund. There was not a specific amount recommended. Julie Finnegan suggests waiting to determine if we are developing a bond, before asking taxpayers for an additional amount. Cheryl said we can just ask for permission to establish a reserve fund without attaching an amount to it. Chris Cole suggested perhaps including an amount like \$46,000.00, which would be the exact amount that is combined from Benson and Fair Haven. Glen Cousineau suggested the question read as.., Can we put 40-50% of the budget surplus into a reserve fund in FY19. Cheryl indicated we would need to get a legal opinion on this. Discussion ensued about whether to include the \$400,000.00 for Central Office Relocation and renovation to the front of FHUHS in a bond or in the regular budget. Is this the year to add it to the budget since we are already down over 1,000,000.00+. If we were to bond this the funding from the bond would be available by August 2018. If it is not bonded and is done through the budget the funding would be available on July 1, 2018, Amy Munger and other Board members would like to see what the impact to the FY 19 budget would be to include the \$400,000.00 relocation costs are before making a decision. Cheryl will work up these figures. Going forward Cheryl will need to break out the SVMUUSD as Slate Valley A which would encompass a budget for K-8 and Slate Valley B which would encompass budget for 9-12.

12. **Negotiations Update:** There has been one Teacher Negotiation meeting thus far and it went well. The Support Staff Negotiations are beginning on January 31, 2018. Currently FHGS and C/H pay to have coaches finger-printed. The other schools in the district do not, but we need SVMUUSD to develop consistency. Julie Finnegan made the motion to have the SVMUUSD pay for this for all coaches moving forward. Toni Lobdell seconded this. Motion was carried by the full Board.

13. **Other Business:** None

14. **Agenda Building:**

- Include New Job Descriptions
- Discuss Budget with changes discussed this evening
- Central Office Relocation and walkthrough at FHUHS

15. **Executive Session -If Needed:**

16. **Adjournment:** Toni Lobdell made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. and this was seconded by Julie Finnegan. Motion carried by the full Board.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bonnie Lenihan