

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

2 **April 5, 2017**

3 **6:00 Fairfield Center School**

4 **Present for a Quorum:** James Farr, Steven LaRosa, Michael Malone, Nilda Gonnella-French, Mike  
5 L'Esperance, Nina Hunsicker Al Corey, via Google Hangouts.

6  
7 **Unable to Attend:** Jack McCarthy, Denise Smith, Martha Casavant-Ries.

8  
9 **Administrators:** Kevin Dirth, Superintendent; Julie Regimbal, Special Education Director; Jason Therrien,  
10 Assistant Principal SATEC; Angela Stebbins, SATEC Principal; Sean O'Dell, Curriculum Director; Shannon  
11 Warden, BFA Assistant Principal; David Kimel, Director Collins Perley; Joan Cavallo, SACS Principal; Preston  
12 Randall, BFA Guidance Director.

13  
14 **Others Present:** Several teachers remained after the Fairfield meeting.

- 15  
16 1. **Call to Order** – Kevin Dirth called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. to elect a Board Chair who would  
17 then run the meeting.  
18 2. **Pledge of Allegiance**  
19 3. **Board Reorganization**

20 A. Chair – Kevin Dirth asked for nominations for Chair. Michael Malone nominated Jim Farr;  
21 second by Steven LaRosa. There were no other nominations.

22 **Al Corey made a motion to close nominations and cast 1 ballot for Jim Farr for Chair; second by Nilda Gonnella-**  
23 **French. The motion passed unanimously.**

24 B. Vice Chair – Jim Farr asked for nominations for Vice-chair. Michael L'Esperance nominated  
25 Michael Malone; second by Al Corey.

26 **Al Corey made a motion to close nominations and cast 1 ballot for Michael Malone for Vice-Chair; second by**  
27 **Nilda Gonnella-French. The motion passed unanimously.**

28 C. Clerk – Jim Farr asked for nominations for Board Clerk. Jim Farr nominated Nilda Gonnella-  
29 French; second by Michael L'Esperance.

30 **Al Corey made a motion to close nominations and cast 1 ballot for Nilda Gonnella-French for Clerk; second by**  
31 **Michael L'Esperance. The motion passed unanimously.**

32 D. Checking Account Signatory(s) (Back-up for Treasurer, Amanda Forbes)

33 **Michael Malone made a motion to appoint Brenda Comstock and Julie Regimbal as checking account signatories**  
34 **in addition to Clerk Amanda Forbes; second by Michael L'Esperance. The motion passed unanimously.**

35 E. Other Appointments and Designations

36 **Michael Malone made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign teacher contracts; second by Al Corey. The motion**  
37 **passed unanimously.**

38 **Michael Malone made a motion to authorize the Superintendent, Principals, Business Manager, Director of**  
39 **Special Ed and Curriculum Director to sign other contracts; second by Nilda Gonnella-French. The motion passed**  
40 **unanimously.**

41 **Jim Farr made a motion to appoint Al Corey as the Board's representative to Collins Perley; second by Michael**  
42 **Malone. The motion passed unanimously.**

43 **Michael L'Esperance made a motion to appoint the truant officers as follows: BFA: SRO Officer; Fairfield:**  
44 **Principal; SACS: Assistant Principal/Dean of Students; SATEC: Principal; to designate the St. Albans Messenger as**  
45 **the newspaper for notices; to have meetings be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. each month.; to**  
46 **assign Brenda Comstock to be minute-taker; that postings of special meetings be at Central Office, St. Albans**

47 **Town & City Clerks, Fairfield Clerk, Fairfield Library, B.F.A., & Collins Perley; and that the procedures for handling**  
 48 **Directors orders be: Central Office prepares and reviews warrants weekly; Full Board reviews, votes to approve,**  
 49 **and signs;**

50 **Central Office prepares checks, School Treasurer signs, Central Office mails; second by Al Corey. The motion**  
 51 **passed unanimously.**

52 F. Code of Ethics – The Vt. School Board’s Association’s (VSBA) Code of Ethics was reviewed  
 53 and Directors signed the document.

54 G. FY 2018 Meeting Dates – A list of meeting dates and locations was provided to the Board.

55 4. **Visitors** - none

56 5. **Consent Agenda**

57 H. Approval of Minutes of March 1, 2017

58 **The consent agenda was adopted.**

59 6. **Host Site**

60 I. Host Presentation - Jill Ballou invited those present to join her at the Common School to  
 61 have a short Jazz concert by the students. It was enjoyed by all.

62 1. Jazz Ensemble at Common School

63 7. **Old Business**

64 J. Negotiations Update

65 J1. Professional Staff - James Farr reported they believe they have agreement on  
 66 the issues, and will be finalizing language now. The highlights are: 3-year  
 67 contract with a health savings account (H.S.A.) or health reimbursement  
 68 account (HRA) to cover all out-of-pocket expenses based on the gold consumer  
 69 driven health plan (CDHP); cash in lieu of insurance; salary schedule will be a  
 70 dollar increment and all schools will be on the same schedule; 100% of dental  
 71 paid by the Board; long-term disability insurance (LTD) including the Board  
 72 paying its share of the health insurance for 6-months for those out on LTD; life  
 73 insurance, VT retirement; sick days accumulated up to 95 with a one-time  
 74 buyout at \$50 per day for those currently with more than 95 days; co-curricular  
 75 and extra-curricular are moved out of the contract into guidelines.

76  
 77 J2. Support Staff - Michael Malone reported that the Union asked to cancel the  
 78 next meeting and to meet instead on April 18, which would give them time to  
 79 craft their response to our proposals. The labor board will need to determine  
 80 who is in and out of the union because no agreement was reached.

81  
 82 K. Fairfax Update – Jim Farr reported that the meeting that had been scheduled for last week  
 83 has been rescheduled so they have nothing to report.

84  
 85 L. Transition Plan – Kevin Dirth stated that not much has changed because the items left to  
 86 complete will largely be done at the end of June. Mr. Malone asked if there were any  
 87 concerns, and Dr. Dirth replied there were not.

88  
 89 M. Act 46 Update – Dr. Dirth reported that as part of a six-district cohort we attend meetings  
 90 with other districts going through unification. Last week’s meeting was a very good one  
 91 that confirmed that we are moving in the right direction. The next meeting is in May. In the  
 92 interim a consultant will be working directly with Maple Run via phone to address our

specific issues and questions. Jim Farr added that the meeting last week also confirmed that the Board is doing things right. There is a conversation at the group level about how to address attrition as a unified district.

8. **New Business**

N. Election Results – A comparison of the last few year’s budget votes was provided. It was noted that it appeared to be a very low turn-out. Jim Farr expressed to the Board that we had to look hard at finding efficiencies because next year the 10-cent incentive drops to 8 cents, effectively raising the tax rate 2 cents from the get-go.

O. Possible Building Purchase - Kevin Dirth reported that the land lord has offered the Board to purchase the building we are currently housed in for \$415,000. The offer included the land lord holding the mortgage at our current rent amount for 100 months. The building would be tax exempt, and would provide additional space that could allow the Early Childhood Program to move into the space and save their monthly rent, which could go towards building updates and improvements. Ultimately this would require taxpayer approval.

**Michael Malone made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to hire a structural engineer and an appraiser; second by Al Corey. The motion passed unanimously.**

P. Overnight Field Trips - Kevin Dirth explained that current local Boards have a variety of involvement for field trips, and this Board needs to determine what level this Board wants. There was lengthy discussion about the Principals having all authority to approve field trips, or whether out-of-state or out-of-country needed Board approval. It was asked if the Board should get an FYI about what trips were happening, where and when, and possible a presentation to the Board after out-of-country trips. It was discussed why the Board thought they had more knowledge and/or better judgement than Principals about trips going out-of-country, and what made those trips substantially different than other field trips that we’re saying Principals could approve?

**Al Corey made a motion to allow field trips to be approved by Principals except those outside of North America, which must be approved by the Board; second by Michael Malone.**

There was discussion about whether this would include Mexico and Canada.

**The motion failed: Al Corey, YES; Jim Farr, NO; Nina Hunsicker, NO; Michael L’Esperance, NO; Michael Malone, NO; Nilda Gonnella-French, NO; Steven LaRosa, NO.**

**Nina Hunsicker made a motion to allow field trips to be approved by Principals except those outside of the United States and Canada, which must be approved by the Board; second by Al Corey.**

**The motion failed: Al Corey, YES; Jim Farr, NO; Nina Hunsicker, YES; Michael L’Esperance, YES; Michael Malone, YES; Nilda Gonnella-French, NO; Steven LaRosa, NO.**

There was discussion about why the motions failed. Some said that it is not the Board’s role to micro-manage Administrators, others said it was whether the Board should approve out-of-state or out-of-country.

**Michael Malone made a motion to table this until the next meeting and ask Administrators to provide their proposal; second by Nina Hunsicker. The motion passed: Al Corey, YES; Jim Farr, YES; Nina Hunsicker, YES; Michael L’Esperance, NO; Michael Malone, YES; Nilda Gonnella-French, YES; Steven LaRosa, YES.**

- 140 Q. Humanities Camp Grant SACS – Joan Cavallo reported that this is the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the grant  
 141 allowing a summer camp, and this year it will be for two weeks. This year's theme is  
 142 diversity and local food, and will take place in July.

143 **Nilda Gonnella-French made a motion to approve the grant; second by Michael Malone. The motion passed**  
 144 **unanimously.**

- 145 R. \*Employee Matters  
 146 R1. Administrative Contracts

147 **Nilda Gonnella-French made a motion to move this item to executive session as it included individual contract**  
 148 **strategy; second by Michael L'Esperance. The motion passed unanimously.**

149 9. Other Business

- 150 S. Superintendent Report - Kevin Dirth reported that his report was provided and thanked all  
 151 who have contributed to the success of where we are today.  
 152  
 153 T. Administrator's Report- Jill Ballou reported that her newsletter was also provided. She  
 154 highlighted some of the areas that collaboration has already been helpful: the recent  
 155 speaker came because they could split the cost with SATEC; there will be an afternoon  
 156 French teacher next year because BFA will provide that teacher for time not needed at BFA;  
 157 and that summer school is expanded to three weeks this summer. Ms. Ballou also noted  
 158 April 12 students will be visiting NWTC and Project Sweet Talk will be held on May 5.  
 159

- 160 U. Administrator's Report – Central Office Administrators reported updates:  
 161 Julie Regimbal, Director of Special Ed reported the March and April have been busy. There  
 162 have been observations of new teachers; hiring three new special educators; working on  
 163 the new special education web presence where she would like part for family resources,  
 164 part for teacher resources. They are currently meeting about summer services.  
 165

166 Joanne Wells, Assistant Director of Special Ed added that they are working on transitioning  
 167 eight graders to high school. She reported that at her Vermont Council of Special Education  
 168 Directors meeting she asked the head of the Agency of Human Services about the cost of  
 169 mental health for students, and whether it would ever become an entitlement for kids. The  
 170 answer was no.  
 171

172 Martha Gagner, Business Manager reported they have been busy with gearing up for the  
 173 merge, working on consolidation of the databases, setting up new bank accounts, and  
 174 working with HR supporting the Board on negotiations for both professional and support  
 175 staff, as well as on an RFP for a time management system. They are working with a  
 176 consultant on transportation, which will be coming to the Board soon. Ms. Gagner also  
 177 reported that she has been involved in Federal monitoring for Federal grants and the SACS  
 178 nutrition program.  
 179

180 Sean O'Dell, Curriculum Director reported he has been busy working on the new website  
 181 and change over to new email, which is scheduled to happen in July. The longitudinal data  
 182 system having k-12 in one database is in progress, he has attended a proficiency based  
 183 learning workshop, and organized a district-wide professional development day on the  
 184 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community (LGBT) that went very well. He thanked  
 185 all involved for this success. The Board asked if there was something that could be

presented to the Board.

- V. Principal’s Voices - This section is for Principals to make announcements, provide additional input, or generally speak to issues/happenings at their school, if they want to.
  - Angela Stebbins reported on their work on systems that work for 80% of the students, and working with the other 20%; the Junior Iron Chef competition where SATEC students placed; and the Odyssey of the Mind competition where SATEC students placed in both division I and division II.
  - Jason Therrien reported that he helped with the mock interviews at NWTC, and he gave a hats off to the tech center students who did very well in those interviews. He acknowledged that it shows the strength of the programs and teachers at NWTC.
  - Joan Cavallo reported on the upcoming kindergarten night and the efolio night for parents on April 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - Shannon Warden reported that BFA has begun Standards Based Assessments (SBAC), which are new for the school this year.
- W. Dave Kimel reported that it is an incredibly busy time at the Complex, and he is grateful for his top-quality staff. He also thanked Sean O’Dell for organizing the LGBT event which was well received.

10. **Agenda Items for Future Meeting** – When grants need to come to the Board (at what level); Administrators proposal on Field Trips; Student participation in Board meetings; transportation.

11. **Potential Executive Session**

**Michael L’Esperance made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss Administrative contracts, inviting the Superintendent, at 8:19 p.m.; second by Al Corey. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Executive Session ended at 9:12 p.m.**

**Michael Malone made a motion to approve the administrative contracts as presented and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the contracts on behalf of the Board; second by Michael L’Esperance. The motion passed anonymously.**

12. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Brenda Comstock