

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

2 **August 23, 2017 6:00 Central Office 28 Catherine St., St. Albans, VT**

3 **MINUTES**

4 **Present for a Quorum:** James Farr, Steven LaRosa, Denise Smith, Mike L'Esperance, Jack
5 McCarthy (arrived at 6:08), Nilda Gonnella-French, Al Corey, Nina Hunsicker.

6
7 **Unable to Attend:** Martha Casavant-Ries, Michael Malone.

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9 **Administrators:** Kevin Dirth, Superintendent; Kathy Finck, Human Resource Director; Martha
10 Gagner, Business Manager; Jason Therrien, Assistant Principal SATEC; Angela Stebbins, SATEC
11 Principal; Sean O'Dell, Interim Fairfield Principal; Dave Kimel, Collins Perley Director, Stacie
12 Rouleau, SACS Dean of Students, Joan Cavallo, SACS Principal, Jill Ballou, Central Office
13 Administrator; Michelle Spence, Early Education Coordinator.

14
15 **Others:** Jeff Morrill

16
17 1. **Call to Order** – Jim Farr called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

18 2. **Agenda Review** – There were no changes needed

19 **Mike L'Esperance made a motion to approve the agenda; second by Steven LaRosa, The motion**
20 **passed unanimously.**

21 3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

22 4. **Visitors**

23 5. **Consent Agenda**

24 A. Approval of Minutes of July 19, 2017

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26 B. Grants - It was noted the Rise Vermont Grant needs Board approval, which will be if
27 the consent agenda is approved.

28 C. Employee Resignations

29 C1. Robert Harte, BFA Drama Teacher

30 C2. Paul Widjeskog, SACS Special Educator

31 **The Consent agenda was adopted.**

32 6. **Old Business**

33 A. Procedure for Meals Charging – Martha Gagner reported that at their retreat the
34 Administrators reviewed requirements for this procedure and within those
35 guidelines and Board input wrote what will work in the schools. Jim Farr asked
36 about lines 38 and 39 concerning up to five meals followed by students will always
37 be provided a meal. Ms. Gagner and Kathy Finck explained that the 5-meal
38 benchmark initiates the collection process, but that a student will never go without
39 a meal.

40 B. Secretary of State's Uniform Fee Schedule for Public Records requests - Kathy Finck
41 reported that to protect our resources if time consuming records requests are
42 made we would like to implement the fee schedule suggested by the Secretary of
43 State.

44 **Nina Hunsicker made a motion to adopt the Secretary of State’s Uniform Fee Schedule; second by**
 45 **Denise Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

46 C. 28 Catherine St. Building, Opportunity to Purchase – Jim Farr stated that this is a
 47 real estate discussion that will be discussed in executive session.

48 **Denise Smith made a motion to move this item to executive session as discussion about real estate**
 49 **prices and appraisals in open session would put the Board at a substantial disadvantage; second by**
 50 **Nilda Gonnella-French. The motion passed unanimously.**

51 7. **New Business**

52 A. Convocation - Kevin Dirth updated the Board on Convocation which is Friday August
 53 25 at Collins Perley 9:30 – 1:00. He asked that those who can attend please let him
 54 know in advance so we can have seats available.

55 B. Board Retreat - Jim Farr opened discussion whether the Board wants a Retreat this
 56 year, and if so, on what topics? Discussion was that the Board currently meets twice
 57 a month, do we need a retreat? It was stated that a retreat is a more relaxed setting
 58 for discussion. A retreat is not likely needed this fall, but there may be a need later.
 59 This item was tabled until December.

60 C. Administrator Retreat - Kevin Dirth reported that the administrators met for two
 61 days, August 9th and 10th. It started with a team building activity led by Joanne Wells
 62 and Michelle Spence. It focused on self-reflection and culminated with comparing
 63 the goals and what is important to administrators to the core values. The one thing
 64 that was a solid theme was that the administrators are very student centric. Next
 65 was roles and responsibilities facilitated by Julie Regimbal. There was a review of
 66 the process of determining roles and relationships as a team moving forward.
 67 Administrative sharing of responsibility during the interim of Sean O’Dell being
 68 principal at Fairfield was determined who will fill in to cover any gaps. The
 69 administrators finalized an employee handbook, which was led by Kathy Finck. Act
 70 46 Convenings was discussed and there will be at least one administrator attending
 71 each meeting. The investigations discussion was facilitated by Joanne Wells.
 72 Specifically, they were looking for Harassment, Hazing and Bullying clarity and
 73 consistency around procedures documentation timelines. Some areas were
 74 resolved but a refresher training will be scheduled with Heather Lynn facilitating,
 75 where she will answer our specific questions. The process for capital projects was
 76 led by Martha Gagner. Now that we are one district a process needs to be in place
 77 for future projects. Ms. Gagner will create a document with all of the projects and
 78 the Leadership team will prioritize them, and that will come to the Board for
 79 authorization to use capital reserve funds. Professional Development was led by
 80 Sean O’Dell and Michelle Spence. They focused on collaborating on certifications,
 81 and mandated training, and integrating the needs of Special Educators and Early
 82 Childhood Educators. Meal Charge procedure was completed, as was seen on the
 83 agenda earlier. Dr. Dirth shared the process that Ms. Gagner and Ms. Finck used to
 84 finalize this procedure. Framework for district-wide teacher evaluations began day

85 two, which Jill Ballou led. It was determined that each school is looking at high level
 86 education evidence, but each does it a little different. It was determined that the
 87 guidelines would be set, but getting there may look different at each school.
 88 Components were agreed on, we’re looking for best practices, but there will be
 89 continuing conversation at the Leadership meetings. Early Ed uses an electronic
 90 form for walk throughs and it allows immediate feedback to the teacher for
 91 questions, kudos, suggestions, etc. Administrators are currently addressing year one
 92 and two teachers. Veteran teachers are on schedule to be discussed next year.
 93 Developing a district-wide hiring process was facilitated by Kathy Finck and Dr.
 94 Dirth. The process is still in the works, but there was conversation which brought
 95 out areas to focus on and how there can be better communication. Para educators,
 96 substitutes and custodial staff are difficult positions for all schools to keep filled,
 97 and strategies were discussed to improve opportunities here such as job fairs and
 98 additional recruiting. Common Local Assessments was led by Dr. O’Dell. The
 99 administrators want to be able to look at data together, to see how the district’s
 100 students are doing, so they are looking at a common assessment system everyone
 101 will use. Sean O’Dell also facilitated Defining Equity. The administrators participated
 102 in an activity to look at equity. It is not equality, it is not fairness. This deep
 103 discussion about areas of need and whether they are really equity issues, and if not,
 104 they should come off the list. If it is, we need to look at it and approach a corrective
 105 action soon. It was asked what the end result was. Dr. Dirth responded that the
 106 Board will see the final result of where there are inequities and what the
 107 administrators feel needs to be done to fix it. Integrating early ed into the schools
 108 more effectively and the transition into high school did not get covered, but will be
 109 discussed during Leadership meetings.

110 8. Other Business

- 111 A. Warrants– Warrants were attached for approval.

112 **Nina Hunsicker made a motion to approve the warrants; second by Jack McCarthy. The motion passed**
 113 **unanimously.**

- 114 B. Superintendent’s Report - Kevin Dirth asked if there were any questions on his
 115 report or on the job description for Central Office Administrator. He then presented
 116 a cupcake to Angela Stebbins to celebrate her birthday.
- 117 C. Central Office Administrators - Kathy Finck reported working on Educational
 118 Support Staff negotiations, non-union guidelines, the teacher contract, summer and
 119 tutoring wage schedules, and working with the business department on the time
 120 management system to get it up and running. Dr. Dirth added that Ms. Finck will be
 121 out of work for four to eight weeks for a medical procedure. Julie Regimbal
 122 reported having a busy summer hiring, meeting with teachers and parents, and
 123 paraprofessionals preparing for school start. She will be meeting with all of the
 124 Special Educators for professional development. Child count reports have come out,
 125 and we had a significant jump this year for students eligible for special services,
 126 bringing us to 20% of our district’s students are eligible for special education

127 services. The largest jump was in preschool aged children, which is positive that we
 128 are catching students younger and getting them into services sooner. Michelle
 129 Spence reported they are nearly moved in, but not enough for a tour yet. She
 130 enjoys being right next door. All PreK staff were in buildings this morning
 131 participating at in-service, which was new this year. They returned reporting feeling
 132 very welcome and included. Adopting new interdisciplinary curriculum that they are
 133 excited about. Jill Ballou reported her work on homeless referrals that are coming
 134 in. Additionally, she attended SACS in-service today and she participated in the
 135 conscious discipline and it was very inspiring. She has been learning quite a bit
 136 about Human Resources entering people into the time management system at BFA.
 137 She is scheduling committee meetings, and mentioned the Wellness Policy has had
 138 a meeting and they shared best practices and how to make our policy stronger. Ms.
 139 Ballou will be revamping our Professional Development form soon. Joanne Wells
 140 reported that professional development workshop at the tech center on trauma
 141 informed schools and behavior interventionist has real interest this year. These
 142 work nicely with the conscious discipline that goes on at SACS. She also trains the
 143 Northwest Counseling staff on this. Community partnerships will continue. Martha
 144 Gagner working closely with Human Resources to get the time management system
 145 in place for the start of the school year. Budget account codes are being created as
 146 we go, getting all staff in the payroll system with correct leaves and benefit plans,
 147 preparing for the annual audit in September.

- 148 D. Principal's Voices - This section is for Principals to make announcements, provide
 149 additional input, or generally speak to issues/happenings at their school. Sean
 150 O'Dell reported that teachers came back for the first day today. The Enosburg
 151 teachers brought lunch today (Grady's mom works in Enosburg). The Math Studio
 152 program is in the first year of three. Several other districts travelled up to join them.
 153 Angela Stebbins reported that they were also involved with the Math Studio. They
 154 adopted two new math programs with in-service trainings taking place tomorrow.
 155 Mary Rose Bedard, the after-school coordinator, held several soccer clinics, where
 156 she involved the BFA coaches, and tonight she invited students from all of the
 157 schools in the district. First and second grade teachers are offering a parent's night
 158 before school. Jason Therrien added collaboration on athletics and after school
 159 programs has gone well and they are meeting with all the schools to work out how
 160 to branch out from soccer to basketball. This is a collaborative effort from the
 161 ground up. Dave Kimel reported that the after-school activities are filling up at
 162 Collins Perley. Mr. Kimel reviewed how Collins Perley fits in with all of the other
 163 schools in the district. The facilities have been used for funerals, and he feels that
 164 this is another service to the community. Many districts close the campuses down,
 165 but he believes that the community gains a great deal from allowing this. Joan
 166 Cavallo reported that this is the first day back, which comes with the same jitters as
 167 teachers get. Eleven from SACS went to Conscious Discipline in North Carolina. This
 168 morning they kicked off the first of what will be about 12 sessions that the 11
 169 trained will be the trainers. The energy is great. Tier one in math is solid. Tier two

170 and three are training to improve the instruction at this level. They have front stairs
171 and tomorrow morning the cottage is being delivered. Stacie Rouleau reported that
172 she is enjoying being on the other side of training.

173 1. **Agenda Items for Future Meeting:** Board Retreat; Transportation on Busing; Negotiations.

174 2. **Potential Executive Session**

175 **Nilda Gonnella-French made a motion to enter Executive Session for negotiating a real estate**
176 **purchase as per 1 VSA 3132, inviting Kevin Dirth and Martha Gagner to attend, at 7:56 p.m.; second**
177 **by Al Corey. The motion passed unanimously.**

178 **Executive Session ended at 8:45 p.m.**

179 3. **Adjourn**

180 **The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**

181
182 Respectfully Submitted
183 Brenda Comstock