

LAMOILLE NORTH SUPERVISORY UNION
BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2009
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

Board members present: Belvidere – Freda Meyer, Angie Evans; Cambridge – Jan Sander; Eden – Warren Earle; Hyde Park – Kalee Roberts, Brian Marshall; Johnson – Tim Sullivan, Casey Romero, Greg Stefanski; Lamoille Union District #18 – William Sander, John Eisenhardt, Diana Osborn, S. Reber, S. Hamlyn-Prescott; Waterville – none. Others: Debra Taylor, Sue Cano, Chris Hinds, Gary Chicoine, Jeff Lindgren, Michelle Mathias, Brigid Scheffert, Judy Schultz, Brian Schaffer, Bonny Grant, Charleen McFarlane, Mary Anderson

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order

T. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:01.

2. Consent Agenda Items

(Approval of Agenda, Approval of Minutes 11.24.08, Approval of Policy Committee Minutes 1.12.09, Clerk's Report on Directors' Orders, Superintendent's Entry Plan Report #2, Final Termination and Liquidation of the LNSU 401(a) Retirement Plan)

MOTION: K. Roberts moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by W.

Earle. K. Roberts asked that Final Termination and Liquidation of the LNSU 401(a) Retirement Plan be taken out for further discussion. **The motion to approve the consent agenda with the exception of the 401(a) item was passed.**

3. Final Termination and Liquidation of the LNSU 401(a) Retirement Plan

K. Roberts said she wanted everyone to know how far ahead of the game G. Chicoine was. She said he had jumped in to work on this before the rules were clear. LNSU was perhaps the only SU to meet the original deadline, so now the deadline has been extended. She commended G. Chicoine for his work, and everyone applauded.

G. Chicoine said one motion (predistributed in the packets mailed out) is needed to amend the plan to make necessary technical revisions and establish a legal termination date of February 1, 2009. There is also a second issue requiring a motion. Forty participants in the plan being terminated had holdings in the Nationwide Fixed (Virtuoso Fund) account. There is a "market value adjustment" that will be charged to each of these participants unless the board takes action, resulting in each losing around 4% of his/her account balance. G. Chicoine has talked to K. Roberts, W. Sander, and T. Sullivan, who support a motion to pay the market value adjustment on behalf of those participants so they will get the full balance of their account.

MOTION: J. Eisenhardt moved that the LNSU chairman direct the LNSU Director of Human Resources to take on the administrative processing of the 401(a) liquidation paperwork on behalf of each plan participant in lieu of the third party administrator performing this task. The gross cost savings to districts will be approximately \$16,625. It is further directed that the LNSU pay the cost of the "market value adjustment" (MVA) that would otherwise be charged as part of

this liquidation to each of the 40 plan participants with holding in the Nationwide Fixed (Virtuoso Fund) account. The MVA fluctuates with US Treasury bill interest rates and is currently estimated to be approximately \$6,500.00. The net savings to member districts of the LNSU as a result of these two actions will be approximately \$10,000. The motion was seconded and passed.

MOTION: K. Roberts moved that the board adopt the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that Amendment Number Four to the LNSU Retirement Plan (the Plan) effective February 1, 2009, is hereby approved and adopted and that the Plan Administrator is authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the third party administrator of the Plan one or more counterparts of the amendments.

RESOLVED, that the LNSU Retirement Plan be terminated, effective as of February 1, 2009.

RESOLVED, that the Trustees of the Plan take such action as may be required to promptly terminate said Plan and distribute all assets to Participants.

RESOLVED, that all Plan Participants be notified of the Plan termination by distribution of the Notice of Plan Termination, attached hereto.

Warren Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

4. ***Administrative Council (AdCo) Report***

D. Taylor said that in the past, the position of chair has rotated among AdCo members, changing each semester. At the last meeting it was decided that D. Taylor would become chair of the group. Since the last LNSU meeting, AdCo has addressed Study Island security, PATH to Wellness programs happening in schools (a VEHI initiative), and professional development around a leadership-oriented article (*Addressing the Blind Spot of Our Time* by C. Otto Scharmer). They planned and executed the Jan. 19 LNSU in-service. They received a report from Barb Nash on after school programs in LNSU schools, had a presentation on Green Mountain Farm to School Program, discussed and planned the upcoming legislative breakfast, strategized a 2009-2010 calendar in cooperation with the other SU's who send to GMTCC, discussed a process for staff and student climate surveys, discussed a possible site visit to Chittenden Central, planned a presentation on the co-teaching pilot some schools have been involved in, discussed school closing and recent cold and snow days, and discussed the crisis planning schools will be working on this year. There will be a day-long AdCo meeting this Wednesday, focused on reviewing results of the assessment survey.

5. ***LNSU Goals Discussion – Work Session***

K. Roberts moved to recess formal board proceedings and turn over the floor to D. Taylor, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

D. Taylor gave a presentation: Charting the Course for the Future of Education with Hope, Resolve, and Unity of Purpose. Her desired outcome for the meeting is to establish a set of goals for LNSU that communicates a clear vision for the future of edu-

ation. She believes our youth are capable of learning and achieving at high levels, wants high-performing schools to become the norm, not the exception. Her vision is for our schools to be academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable.

She listed and discussed 5 realities we must face in goal-setting:

- Institutional resistance can inhibit school growth and improvement.
- Need to define and commit to a common purpose
- Shared responsibility
- Schools must respond to social issues
- We are a diverse community

She listed the core values developed in Feb. 2007, saying she thinks we can all agree those are important:

- Safe environment
- Instructional leadership
- High expectations for student achievement
- Focused mission
- Time on task

She listed 8 challenges facing our schools:

- Student achievement below expectations
- Resources on the decline
- Technology advancement needed
- System of PK-12 curriculum, instruction, assessment lacking
- Culture of change and improvement not universal
- Communication needs improvement on all levels
- Measurable ends or targets not established
- System of continuous improvement needs attention

She listed some nuggets from research to improve student achievement:

- Clarity of focus – on student achievement
- System of PK-12 curriculum, instruction, and assessment with common outcomes and assessments
- Continuous improvement through effective professional development and data based instructional decision using research based strategies
- Focus on range of academic experiences – all levels
 - Literacy in reading, math, science, and social studies
 - Enriching curriculum including technology, world language, visual and performing arts

She said the task for the evening is to engage in a goal setting process to achieve our preferred future and desired ends:

- Ongoing, continuous improvement of policies and practices with a focus on student achievement

- Aligned curriculum and assessment throughout the system
- Performance based accountability systems that drive and ensure sustainable change
- Interconnectivity to other curriculum across the LNSU
- Clear priorities for attaining universal success, with resources allocated to match those priorities
- Children who are prepared to be responsible and productive citizens

D. Taylor divided board members and administrators into 8 groups, and explained that groups would look at each of the 8 challenges she had listed in turn, moving carousel fashion from one to the next. Each challenge was to be written at the top of one of the charts distributed around the room. Then the sheet was to be divided in half and groups were asked to describe the current state on the top half and the desired state on the bottom half. After each person had visited each chart, people would be asked to prioritize which ones were most important collectively. She asked that people think about the needs of individual schools and also collective needs of the SU.

G. Stefanski asked where this list of challenges came from, and if there was a particular focus or scope D. Taylor had in mind. D. Taylor said the 8 challenges were issues raised in her interviews with board members, administrators, and community leaders. She listed only things that were mentioned multiple times. Eight large goals might be too much to take on; that's why we will be setting priorities. We may not get a perfectly wordsmithed goal for each challenge tonight. A group can work with her afterwards to put the ideas into a form that can be brought to future meetings. The goals we come up with should be more general than a classroom teacher's goals; they should be overarching goals for the whole SU. C. Romero asked how tonight's work is connected with what AdCo is doing this week. D. Taylor said AdCo has asked staff to engage in a survey identifying assessment practices, curriculum used, etc. Principals will bring survey results to this week's meeting, and they will discuss what is going well at each school and where schools may need ideas and assistance from others.

Each group visited each chart, then D. Taylor gave each person 5 dots to vote with by placing a dot next to one of the listed items. She said people could put more than 1 dot in the same place if they wanted to.

Spokespeople were selected to summarize what was listed on each of the charts.

Chart #2 (Resources on the decline) - T. Sullivan - The overarching trend was unfunded mandates. Also, taxpayers see schools as too expensive; the desired state would be for them to see schools as an investment.

Chart #1 (Student achievement below expectations) - W. Sander - There was some concern about accuracy of measurements and some uncertainty about the NECAP. The high school graduation rate was also mentioned. He would like to see it at 100%. There is an unrealistic state standard for calculating graduation rate.

Chart #3 (Technology advancement needed) - W. Earle - Technology is changing on a daily basis. We need professional development to integrate technology into core curriculum. We need money for hardware, training, etc. We need high speed internet for everyone, broad and creative integration of technology. It boils down to a need for more technology, for which we need people and money.

Chart #4 (System of PK-12 curriculum, instruction, assessment lacking) - J. Lindgren - We need a standardized curriculum and common local assessments for PK-12. Large systematic changes take time. It was suggested to use summer for some of the work.

Chart #5 (Culture of change and improvement not universal) - C. Hindes - There is not universal agreement on where and to what degree change needs to take place. We are lacking some data points needed to decide where change needs to take place. A common language of assessment can help..

Chart #6 (Communication needs improvement on all levels) - B. Marshall - There is a lack of internet connectivity within towns where kids live as well as at schools. There is not enough opportunity or incentive for teachers to collaborate. Boards not communicating with the public or with each other got the most votes.

Chart #7 (Measurable ends or targets not established) - D. Osborn - A challenge is agreeing on what success is. Ends or targets are well-established for some subgroups. We need to identify what group we are talking about and what the measurement would be.

Chart #8 (System of continuous improvement needs attention) - K. Roberts – There is a question as to whether a system exists. We need to develop an SU-wide integrated system. There is interest in tracking cohorts. Principals have info boards don't have access to. We need a system of reporting progress. Professional development was mentioned.

D. Taylor said she would provide information for everyone's binders on the system of supports. Applications for the assessment position have been collected and narrowed down to one or two finalists. She will email board members with an update. Her goal is to engage administrators and board members in the interview process. She will go through board chairs to select interview participants.

W. Sander asked for discussion about issues not listed on the charts. He brought up the system of PK-12 assessment. He said students might all meet grade level expectations in elementary school but still arrive at the middle school with different levels of proficiency. They might have the same raw scores but different gaps. That speaks to the necessity of an integrated curriculum. S. Reber asked, do we have data showing there is an issue? C. Hindes said we have 3 years of NECAP data for 8th graders, who are assessed on 7th grade knowledge. S. Reber asked, are we seeing big differences among 7th graders from different schools? C. Hindes said students have varying levels

of preparedness. They are working on developing local assessments. S. Reber asked if C. Hindes would say there is not a clear crisis here; we still have a lot to learn. C. Hindes said he would agree, but the literature suggests that the more coordinated curriculum is, the better student outcomes are.

G. Stefansk asked what is next. D. Taylor said identifying and prioritizing issues is a good starting point for setting goals. The next step is to codify all the info on the charts and identify priorities. She suggested that she and volunteers bring back a prioritized list based on review of tonight's charts for the board to talk about at the March meeting. D. Osborn said she can already make more informed decisions now when she meets with her local board, after learning more about other people's thoughts. D. Taylor said there are a number of ways we can proceed. Some school districts have a formal strategic plan, others have a looser set of goals. We can decide which we want. She asked who would like to volunteer to be on a committee to identify priorities. S. Reber asked, shouldn't our boards be consulted? J. Lindgren, M. Mathias, W. Sander, T. Sullivan, S. Reber, and C. Hindes volunteered to be on the committee.

6. ***Other Business***

W. Sander asked about recent bus problems. D. Taylor said fuel in some of the buses froze, but the bus company apologized and they are making some changes to prevent it from happening again. A number of administrators felt that on a very cold day, kids might be colder if they were not in school.

7. ***Adopt LNSU Policies***

B. Marshall moved to adopt Policy 1.6 (Board Relations with Staff), seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

W. Sander moved to adopt Policy 1.11 (Superintendent Appointment and Duties), seconded by W. Earle. C. Romero suggested a friendly amendment – changing “appointment” to “employment.” D. Taylor said the statute uses the word “appointment.” The amendment was accepted, and the motion was passed.

W.Sander moved to approve Policy 7.2 (Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability), seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

8. ***Other Business***

W. Earle said he had asked C. McFarlane not to send him paper copies of documents also sent out by email, and he suggested others might want to make the same request.

9. ***Adjourn***

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:55, and the motion was passed.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna E. Griffiths

Actions taken at the LNSU Board Meeting 1/26/09:

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Warren Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

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9. *Adjourn*

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LNSU Retirement Plan

Notice of Plan Termination

We would like to notify all participants in our Retirement Plan ("Plan") that the Plan will be terminated effective February 1, 2009.

All participants in the Plan will become 100% vested in their employer profit sharing account as of the date of termination.

The benefits will be valued and participants will be paid out their total account balance in the Plan. Once the final reconciliation of the Plan is completed, you will receive a packet of information and election forms which will permit you to specify the manner in which you wish to receive your benefit.

You will have the option of rolling over your account into a personal rollover IRA or to another employer-sponsored plan in order to continue to defer taxation on your retirement savings. You also will have the option of taking a distribution in cash, which will be subject to income taxes (and may be subject to penalty taxes if you are under age 59 ½ and still employed by LNSU).

If you have any questions, you are encouraged to ask a Plan representative.

December 30, 2008