

LAMOILLE NORTH SUPERVISORY UNION
BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2009
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

Board members present: Belvidere – Angie Evans, Freda Meyer; Cambridge – Jan Sander, Heather Sheppard, Jeff Coslett; Eden – Warren Earle; Hyde Park – Kalee Roberts, Brian Marshall, Jim Lipinski; Johnson – Tim Sullivan, Greg Stefanski, Richard West, Edson Jones; Waterville – Marshall Pahl, Becky Penberthy; Lamoille Union District #18 – Peter Ingvaldstad, Diana Osborn, Steve Reber, William Sander, David Whitcomb, Beth Bailey; Others – Debra Taylor (Superintendent), Charleen McFarlane (Exec. Asst. to Supt.), Amy Cole (Interim Curric., Instr., and Assessment Director), Marilyn Frederick (Business Manager), Gary Chicoine (Human Resources Director), Brian Schaffer (LUHS Principal), Chris Hindes (LUMS Principal), Michelle Mathias (HPES Principal), Jeff Lindgren (ECS Principal), Mary Anderson (CES Principal), Amie Desautels.

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order*

D. Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:02.

2. *Board Reorganization*

B. Penberthy nominated W. Sander for board chair. K. Roberts nominated T. Sullivan. Paper ballots were collected and counted, and D. Taylor announced that W. Sander had won 8-7.

K. Roberts nominated T. Sullivan as vice chair. Hearing no further nominations:
MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved that nominations cease and that one unanimous ballot be cast for T. Sullivan as vice chair, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

P. Ingvaldstad nominated B. Marshall as clerk. Hearing no further nominations:
MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved that nominations cease and that one unanimous ballot be cast for B. Marshall as clerk, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

3. *Approval of Agenda*

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda, and the motion was passed.

4. *Minutes Approval*

MOTION: K. Roberts moved to approve the minutes of January 26, 2009, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

MOTION: S. Reber moved to approve the Goals Committee minutes of February 10, 2009, and the motion was seconded and passed.

5. *Clerk's Report on Directors' Orders*

B. Marshall said since his last report, LNSU has spent \$332,651.19 (not counting payroll.) He listed the large or unusual expenses – mostly insurance.

6. Superintendent's Entry Plan Report #3

D. Taylor said she is continuing to progress through the activities she had outlined. She has made progress in nearly all areas. She is beginning to work on outreach such as web communication. She has met with the Commissioner of Education and the Johnson State College president, and has a meeting scheduled with the UVM president. She hopes to have completed the majority of entry plan tasks by the end of the school year.

7. Johnson Elementary Intervention Program Summary

D. Taylor said it was requested that information be provided regarding JES's intervention program. A written description was included in the packet as a start. She suggested that if discussion is desired, the board wait until B. Scheffert can be here. D. Whitcomb said he would like to see this studied further. A majority of board members indicated they would be interested in a presentation at a future meeting.

8. FERPA Confidentiality Training

D. Taylor went over what is confidential, when information should be kept confidential, the 2-part test to determine who can have access to confidential information, and the consequences for a breach of confidentiality. She discussed some additional key concepts about FERPA. She noted that this training information should be reviewed with all local board members, either as part of a regular meeting or at another time. Graduating students have the right to request immediate destruction of their special education records, but VT special education audit requirements prevent us from doing this. The VT DOE must resolve this issue. The Supreme Court has ruled that students may grade each other's work and call out the score to the teacher. Email is not to be used to conduct business or exchange information with parents or service providers relevant to a student's educational record.

W. Sander asked, what if a parent emails something inappropriately to a teacher or principal? D. Taylor said if a parent emails, we would contact them and tell them it is not appropriate. The restriction on communicating by email is related less to FERPA than to VT statute. We would be required to print all email communications and put them in students' files, and we don't want to undertake that. A board could enter into an agreement with an individual parent to permit email communication; one board has done that.

9. Administrative Council (AdCo) Report

D. Taylor said since January AdCo has studied *Schooling by Design* with Bob Stanton, had assessment committee meetings, spent time reviewing instructional practices from the survey of LNSU schools, met Amy Cole, made plans for an LNSU-wide in-service next year in the area of math, finalized the regional calendar for students for 2009-10 in cooperation with other supervisory unions who send to GMTCC, discussed town meeting results, had presentations on the co-teaching pilot programs in some LNSU schools, discussed moving forward with an LNSU technology plan, followed information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, worked on LNSU-wide participation in a mobile dental van program, and discussed the legislative breakfasts, and heard reports on a state

committee's work. They will be reviewing results of the curriculum meeting with teachers and discussing long range in-service planning.

W. Earle asked if D. Taylor could provide a written list in the future. She said she would email copies of this list.

10. Curriculum and Assessment Committee – NECAP Recap

Amy Cole introduced herself and talked a little about her background, then gave a presentation on NECAP results and school accountability determinations. (*M. Anderson arrived at 6:39.*) For context, she explained the components of a comprehensive instructional program – curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Every school is required to have a comprehensive local assessment plan, which should consider classroom evidence, local assessments, and state assessments. She gave examples of some of the evidence and assessment different schools are using. She explained the difference between the teaching year/school and the testing year/school.

S. Reber asked, why not give the NECAP every year? A. Cole said the state of VT was required to assess students in grades 3-8, and 1 high school grade. VT, NH, and RI collaborated on developing the NECAP, and they picked 11th grade as the year to test. Not all high school students take the same courses, so the states set expectations covering all of high school, not grade-specific expectations. The test is designed to give feedback on schools, not individual students. ME just joined with the other states giving the NECAP, but they are not doing the 11th grade test. W. Sander asked if the results are comparable among the 4 states. (*J. Coslett arrived at 6:48.*) A. Cole said RI has more poverty and students who do not speak English as their first language, and their results have been lower. NH has had results pretty comparable to VT's.

A. Cole showed graphs of NECAP results for all schools. We have some small schools where there may be only 20-25 students in an individual grade, which means scores will fluctuate. Some groups are too small for results to be statistically significant. She showed results for students on free and reduced lunch. (This does not include those who would be eligible but choose not to apply.) She cautioned that because numbers are small, fluctuations may not mean much. She showed results for students with disabilities (small numbers of students), and results by gender. Females are generally outperforming males in some, but not all, areas.

G. Stefanski said it is important to look at the data over time. Will the board get a chance to do that at some point? A. Cole said she can eventually put together data for multiple years. There are only 2 years worth of high school data so far. B. Schaffer noted that last year was the first year for the science NECAP. K. Roberts said she is interested in seeing data on, for example, how many kids who are proficient in reading are not proficient in math. A. Cole said this is one test, one snapshot; we shouldn't jump to conclusions about individual students based on results. She looked at students who were not proficient in grade 3 and what hap-

pened with them in grade 4. Some were proficient the next year, some were not. B. Schaffer asked how long it takes for something to qualify as a trend. A. Cole said she thought 3-5 years would be reasonable.

P. Ingvaldstad asked, can we look at the top performing schools in VT as role models, and see what they're doing differently? A. Cole said some schools have very high free and reduced lunch rates, and are outperforming others. They are schools we should be looking to. Some have intervention programs, "double dip" programs where students get regular instruction plus remedial instruction, and extra resources in their buildings. In the absence of those things, schools with higher free/reduced lunch numbers generally don't do as well. P. Ingvaldstad asked, should we work on looking at those models? A. Cole said administrators and teachers have been asking about that all along.

W. Sander asked about comparing NECAP results to other measures. A. Cole said she doesn't have access to the results of other assessments schools have in place. (*M. Pahl left at 7:03.*) Individual schools look at that. S. Reber said there is talk about increased standardization across schools. It sounds like the NECAP alone isn't all we need. Are we talking about moving toward local assessments that can be reported to the board? A. Cole said the benefit for individual schools to adopt a local assessment plan is that they can do it relatively quickly. The benefit to doing it across LNSU is increased standardization, etc., but assessments shouldn't be adopted unless they will be used, so teachers need to buy in. There needs to be conversation among individual schools. There is some interest.

A. Cole explained the school accountability system, gave the current status of LNSU schools, and described the consequences and supports for schools that don't make AYP. There is more specificity in consequences for Title I schools. School choice cannot be implemented within most Vermont school districts because there is not usually more than one school of comparable grade span in a district. D. Osborn asked, is there any talk about allowing school choice within the SU? A. Cole said there has been conversation about that, but the difficulty of transferring money is a barrier. Schools in some SU's are making deals among themselves. B. Schaffer asked, of the 218 schools that are shown as having made AYP, what percentage just didn't have high enough numbers to be evaluated? A. Cole didn't know. W. Sander wondered how rigorously the tests have been normed. D. Taylor said the NECAP is a program assessment, not an assessment for individual students. It was developed to connect to grade level expectations. A. Cole said the GLE's were designed with educators at the table. Local assessments are important because there are always questions about how well a test tests whether kids really know the subject matter.

11. *Adopt LNSU Goals*

D. Taylor asked the board to review the 3 goals recommended by the LNSU Goals Committee and then give approval to proceed and to develop a more detailed plan.

MOTION: T. Sullivan moved to adopt the goals as recommended, seconded by K. Roberts.

K. Roberts proposed the amendment, which T. Sullivan agreed to, that Goal #1 should say that the assessments used will become public information, i.e. will periodically be reported out publicly on an aggregate basis.

D. Osborn asked about the 3rd goal. Are the “higher expectations” mentioned expectations of our students or by our students? Also, who will be surveyed after 6 years? D. Taylor said the purpose is to get feedback from those we have served. A number of potential survey instruments are already developed. We would get feedback from former students to determine how our programs have provided them with the skills, ability, and knowledge they need to succeed post high school. There might be an associated expense. W. Sander said the group saw this as a meaningful way of assessing ultimate success. Working out the logistics will be more difficult.

D. Osborn recommended rephrasing the goal to make it clearer. D. Taylor said the first phrase is addressing engagement of students while they are with us. P. Ingvaldstad said it is almost like 2 objectives: measuring success and getting context into the learning environment. Should there be 4 goals instead of 3? He said he thinks it will be hard to get a statistically significant response 6 years out. But we can measure whether kids see the context of what they’re learning now. B. Schaffer said he could make information on VSAC survey results available in the future. W. Earle said he thought surveying students 6 years after graduation might be a waste of resources compared to figuring out how to best help them while they are in school. H. Sheppard said social networking sites might be a less-scientific but lower-cost way to contact former students. J. Sander said some classes have electronic mailing lists.

3rd goal would be further refined.

T. Sullivan asked where additional refinement of goals will occur. D. Taylor said her office is working with administrators and teachers. They would work with a variety of stakeholders.

MOTION: D. Osborn moved to amend the first sentence in Goal 3 by replacing “higher expectations” with “the most successful outcomes possible,” seconded by W. Earle.

W. Sander said what he sees in the whole SU is that we seem to be at the point where we’re serving well the students who are motivated, but we (and the rest of the country) are largely failing kids who don’t have motivation, family support, etc. He sees getting to those kids as a major need. K. Roberts said her view is that we serve some kids well by accident, not by design. Plenty of bright kids are also lost – that’s just the nature of kids. When we talk about contextually meaningful curriculum, she’s not sure there is a magic bullet of how to define that to serve each kid. She has some problem with the phrase “most successful outcome.” What does that mean, and who are we to measure it?

M. Mathias suggested alternative wording: "Students will be able to use their knowledge and skill on worthy tasks in situations of importance."

D. Osborn withdrew her amendment, saying she would prefer to send the goal to the committee to let them further refine it.

The motion to adopt the goals as recommended, with K. Roberts' amendment to Goal #1, was passed.

12. *Study Island Demo*

M. Mathias said Study Island is an internet-based educational tool based on VT standards and the NECAP. It provides practice, reinforcement, and assessment. It is engaging and challenging. But it is not instruction. It is not being used to replace a classroom teacher or to take some of her workload away. It has heightened interest for students because it allows them to use technology. It provides exposure to the same kind of language found on the NECAP. Students find the language challenging and, if it is used consistently, this can help them learn to read more slowly and carefully. It helps them begin to develop strategies about how to approach multiple choice and multiple part questions.

M. Anderson said she learned about Study Island through an email ad. She checked it out and finally decided to use it in the CES summer program, mostly for math. Teachers found that kids loved it. She thinks it helped with improvement in math scores for free/reduced students.

M. Mathias showed an example of a report that would be available to faculty. She gets usage stats by email. She showed examples of first grade level math and 6th grade reading questions. T. Sullivan asked, who is this available to? M. Mathias said to students at any of the LNSU elementary schools. All have secure logins. Study Island is a secure site. Parents can access it with their students. HPES just added kindergarten and first grade students. D. Taylor said a couple of schools haven't been able to try it out because until recently they didn't have broadband internet access.

13. *Report on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (aka Stimulus)*

M. Frederick distributed information on ARRA. VT DOE is waiting for the US Dept. of Ed. to issue guidance concerning the details of the implementation and accountability provisions. We don't have figures yet on how much will come to our schools. W. Sander suggested schools should get estimates for things like solar energy projects.

14. *Board Meeting Schedule*

D. Taylor proposed meeting on May 28, Sept. 28, Nov. 23, and Dec. 8 (if the budget has not yet been approved) in 2009, and Jan. 25, Mar. 22, and May 24 in 2010. She said the board has not typically had a July meeting.

MOTION: W. Earle moved to adopt the schedule proposed by D. Taylor, and the motion was seconded and passed.

15. *Other Business*

D. Whitcomb said there was discussion at Eden's town meeting of an accounting issue that has been going on for 4 years. It arose when Roger Derby was handling

finances on an interim basis. There were some weeks when the proper amount of insurance money was not taken out for some ECS employees. Several calls were made about it to central office, but central office said the paychecks were correct. Eventually, \$13K was mistakenly paid out. D. Whitcomb, P. Cray, W. Earle, and Eden residents want to know how the \$13K got paid.

The following resolution was passed unanimously by 84 voters at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Eden School District (held at town meeting):

The voters of the Eden School District demand a full accounting by the Lamoille North Supervisory Union into the mistakes made with respect to employees of Eden Central School's health insurance withholdings in the past. We demand to know how the \$13,000+ was made up and accounted for.

D. Whitcomb said he feels M. Frederick is doing an excellent job, and she had nothing to do with the mistake, but she will have to look into it now.

K. Roberts said the clerk had asked the board for a resolution authorizing him to sign directors' orders. She suggested that at the May meeting we might want to look at other things that should be done annually, such as codifying how to divide money.

MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved to pass a resolution authorizing the clerk to sign director's orders on behalf of the LNSU board, W. Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

D. Taylor said a hearing on Bill 24 (repeal of the requirement for 2 votes on the budget) is scheduled for 1:30 on Apr. 2 at the state house. She encouraged people to make their views known to state representatives.

M. Frederick said at the May meeting, she would like to bring a request not to take out a loan for the full amount originally approved for the Unifund lease, due to a favorable fund balance.

G. Chicoine said both teacher and support staff negotiations are at an impasse, and we are going into mediation. Teacher and support staff mediation sessions will be April 27th and 28th. G. Chicoine invited as many board members as can come to participate. The meetings will be at the GMTCC Community Education Center at 4:30.

16. *Adjourn*

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:45, and the motion was passed.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna E. Griffiths

Actions taken at the LU District #18 Board Meeting 3/30/09:

2. ***Board Reorganization***

B. Penberthy nominated W. Sander for board chair. K. Roberts nominated T. Sullivan. Paper ballots were collected and counted, and D. Taylor announced that W. Sander had won 8-7.

K. Roberts nominated T. Sullivan as vice chair. Hearing no further nominations:
MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved that nominations cease and that one unanimous ballot be cast for T. Sullivan as vice chair, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

P. Ingvaldstad nominated B. Marshall as clerk. Hearing no further nominations:
MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved that nominations cease and that one unanimous ballot be cast for B. Marshall as clerk, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

3. ***Approval of Agenda***

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda, and the motion was passed.

4. ***Minutes Approval***

MOTION: K. Roberts moved to approve the minutes of January 26, 2009, seconded by W. Earle, and the motion was passed.

MOTION: S. Reber moved to approve the Goals Committee minutes of February 10, 2009, and the motion was seconded and passed.

11. ***Adopt LNSU Goals***

MOTION: T. Sullivan moved to adopt the goals as recommended, seconded by K. Roberts.

K. Roberts proposed the amendment, which T. Sullivan agreed to, that Goal #1 should say that the assessments used will become public information, i.e. will periodically be reported out publicly on an aggregate basis.

The motion was passed.

14. ***Board Meeting Schedule***

D. Taylor proposed meeting on May 28, Sept. 28, Nov. 23, and Dec. 8 (if the budget has not yet been approved) in 2009, and Jan. 25, Mar. 22, and May 24 in 2010. She said the board has not typically had a July meeting.

MOTION: W. Earle moved to adopt the schedule proposed by D. Taylor, and the motion was seconded and passed.

15. ***Other Business***

MOTION: P. Ingvaldstad moved to pass a resolution authorizing the clerk to sign director's orders on behalf of the LNSU board, W. Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

16. ***Adjourn***

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:45, and the motion was passed.