

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

Board members present: Belvidere – Angie Evans (via speaker phone); Cambridge – Jan Sander; Eden – Warren Earle; Hyde Park – Brian Marshall, Jim Lipinski; Johnson – Richard West; LUSD #18 – John Eisenhardt, Diana Osborn, Steve Reber, William Sander, Sue Hamlyn-Prescott (7:23); Waterville – none. Others: Debra Taylor, Sue Cano, Marilyn Frederick, Charleen McFarlane, Gary Chicoine, Brian Schaffer, Chris Hinds, Joe Teegarden, Michelle Mathias, Jeff Lindgren, Dave White, Dave Manning, John Coppens.

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

W. Sander called the meeting to order at 6:19.

D. Taylor introduced Dave White, the new Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. He comes from the VT DOE, and has worked in public schools in the area of science. D. White said he is excited about this opportunity, and has been impressed with the people and direction in the SU.

D. Taylor introduced Dave Manning, who will be the new JES principal. He is a Hyde Park resident, and is currently an associate principal at Hazen Union. D. Manning said he is excited about his new position.

2. Consent Agenda Items

A. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

W. Sander suggested one motion for the first 3 items combined.

MOTION: W. Earle moved to approve the agenda, the minutes of March 30, and the Executive Committee minutes of May 12, seconded by S. Reber, and the motion was passed.

B. Superintendent's Entry Plan Report #4

D. Taylor said her report had been emailed to everyone. She noted that there was only one area in which she did not make progress – preparing information on LNSU schools for realtors. She hopes to revisit that next year.

C. Appoint Plan Administrator for LNSU 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan for Licensed Professional Staff

S. Reber moved to appoint LNSU Business Manager Marilyn Frederick as plan administrator for LNSU 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan for Licensed Professional Staff effective July 1, 2009. W. Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

D. Appoint Plan Administrator for LNSU 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan for Support Staff

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E. Clerk's Report on Directors' Orders

B. Marshall said he had approved a total of \$51,882.66 in orders since the last meeting. There was nothing unusual. He will start including in his report how much we have approved in grant-funded programs. The total for grants since the last meeting was \$482,700.19. W. Sander asked, where are we in terms of the budget? M. Frederick said we are in good shape; she is projecting a fund balance of around \$8K.

3. Other Business – Unifund Lease Purchase

M. Frederick said the board had previously approved a lease purchase for Unifund in the amount of \$42,940. When she realized there would be a fund balance, she asked the board to allow her to delay taking out the lease until she could see whether some of the fund balance could be used to decrease the lease amount. Now she feels confident we can take out a lease in the amount of \$35,000, using some of the fund balance for the rest, which should still leave a fund balance of over \$5,000. This should allow us to pay off the lease amount in 4 years instead of 5. M. Frederick would use the same company that won the bid previously; only the amount would be different.

MOTION: D. Osborn moved to revise the amount for the Unifund lease purchase to up to \$35,000, W. Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

4. LNSU Technology Plan Approval

D. Taylor thanked Keith Myers from Cambridge and John Coppens for their work on the plan. She summarized the strategies incorporated in the plan. Strategies are in 4 categories, student centered learning, leadership in student centered environment, flexible learning communities, and engaged community partners.

MOTION: S. Reber moved to approve the LNSU Technology Plan, and the motion was seconded. S. Reber asked, how much of the staffing for this is at central office, and how much at the schools? D. Taylor said this plan doesn't allocate resources. Some of the work will be accomplished by staff at schools – for instance, some teachers might do training. The plan provides a common set of strategies, and it might provide opportunities to do bulk purchasing, as well as the potential to seek other funds. S. Reber asked, is it her sense that staffing is sufficient or will it have to increase? D. Taylor said administrators have identified that they want to establish structures so that teachers can integrate technology more. M. Mathias said that HPES tracks their work orders for repairs, etc., to get a handle on utilization of their tech people; she feels that is important. She said LNSU should recognize how important technology is in society. Technology is an educational necessity, and deserves the same emphasis as math and literacy. She thinks we need to think hard about making sure technology is not on the bottom of the budget anymore. J. Lindgren said in some form, either at the SU level, or the local level, or shared, we probably will need more personnel. He agrees with

M. Mathias that technology is just as important as academics. D. Osborn asked about development of the plan – was it from the teachers up, or did it originate at the SU level? D. Taylor said it was agreed at the administrative level to embark on the process, then administrators engaged teachers at each school. The plan has been discussed and shared at two AdCo meetings. S. Cano said it is also based on national recommendations. M. Frederick said it's what we need to get E-rate money. S. Reber asked, are stimulus funds available for this? D. Taylor said we have received a large increase in Title I funds, and there will be stimulus funds in the areas of IDEA B and Title I. Her office is working with administrators to decide how the funds will be used. They are still waiting for guidance on requirements. J. Teegarden said, in regard to the question of whether additional resources will be needed, he believes we are collaborating and centralizing. He thinks the board ought to think about how we would deal with the situation if J. Coppens or the contractor who handles E-rate work were to leave. We ought to be thinking about having more people who can handle that work. He feels we are getting ourselves into a box where if something breaks, we're in trouble. M. Mathias agreed. She said when computers are down in schools, that's like having a manufacturing line down. **The motion was passed.**

5. ***Ratify LNSU Long Term Plan Based on Goals***

A draft long range plan was distributed. (*J. Coppens left at 6:53.*)

MOTION: S. Reber moved to accept the LNSU Long Range Plan, W. Earle seconded, and the motion was passed.

6. ***Approve LEAP/IDEA B (Local Education Action Plan / Individuals with Disabilities Act B)***

S. Cano said each year central office brings a detailed plan to the LNSU board for approval, outlining allocation of federal special ed money we expect to receive the next fiscal year. This year there will be our regular allocation and also additional money from ARRA. They have been working to get answers about appropriate use of the stimulus money, but don't feel they have every question answered, so they will be coming back later with information about how they would like to make investments into the future of students with stimulus funds, but tonight they would like approval for spending the regular allocation. Details are not yet available about how each school will spend the money, but they would like the board to authorize central office to work with principals and local boards to develop details which will be submitted to the VT DOE.

MOTION: W. Earle moved to accept and approve the FY10 Local Education Agency Plan (LEAP) for Federal Funds in the known amount of \$445,502 for ages 3-21 years and \$12,691 for preschool and any and all carry-over or other funds that may become available inclusive of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (A.R.R.A.) potential monies of \$520,150 for ages 3-21 and \$18,616 for preschool with spending contingent on respective member board authorization and approval. The motion was seconded and passed.

7. ***Approve CFP (Consolidated Federal Programs)***

M. Frederick talked about Consolidated Federal Program (CFP) grants. Our regular allocation is going up. She is asking for approval for the amounts set aside for

each district. We never had formal sub-grants until last year; then we found out there have to be individual sub-grants formalized at each local board meeting. **MOTION: J. Lipinski moved to accept awarded federal funds allocated for the FY10 Consolidated Federal Program (CFP) Grants in the amount of \$938,595, and any and all carry-over or other federal monies that may become available, inclusive of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (A.R.R.A.) potential monies of \$516,995, with spending contingent on respective member board authorization and approval; additionally, to authorize the Superintendent and the Business Manager as Finance Officer to act as the Board's agent to sign the Sub-Grant Agreement with each member district and act as agent for these and any federal or state financial matters. J. Sander seconded, and the motion was passed.**

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

An update was included in the packets sent to board members.

9. ***Superintendent Evaluation Process***

D. Taylor noted that information about a suggested evaluation process was in the packet. She also provided a draft evaluation instrument. At the recent executive committee meeting, she shared some ideas about the evaluation process. She suggests that it consist of two parts – a formative part (concerning goals) and a summative part (concerning established criteria.) She discussed the rationale for evaluation, the proposed process, and the components the evaluation should cover (policy and governance, planning and assessment, instructional leadership, organizational management, communications and community, and professionalism.) She said board members and administrators could fill out the evaluation instrument. She presented a suggested timeline, starting with an executive committee meeting in August where she would present an instrument and new strategic formative goals, to be approved by the full board in September. She would complete a progress report in January, as well as a self-evaluation and formative goals final summary. In March, the board would complete the summative evaluation instrument. In April/May, the chair would meet with the superintendent in a post-evaluation conference, then the evaluation would be finalized at a board meeting. (*S. Hamlyn-Prescott arrived at 7:23.*)

W. Sander said evaluation of the superintendent is one of the pivotal things the LNSU board does. However, school board members have limited contact with the superintendent. No one has been satisfied with any instrument used in the past.

J. Lindgren asked, will there be an opportunity for community members to weigh in? D. Taylor said she thinks that has been in place in the past, but it is not typical of superintendent evaluations. The evaluation is to give performance feedback. Community members are even more removed from knowledge of the superintendent's work than the board. She's not opposed, but whether it makes sense depends on the purpose. S. Reber said he thinks that would be hard to organize. And the community has a forum for feedback – board members. District boards should solicit opinions from the community. J. Lindgren said his question is how

to solicit those opinions. W. Earle said board members are in a better position to filter community input and distinguish constructive criticism from non-constructive criticism.

D. Osborn said she appreciates that D. Taylor is involving the board at this early stage. In the past, the board has been more reactive. She thinks this process and timeline address many concerns from past evaluations.

J. Sander asked, will there be opportunity for teacher input? D. Taylor said we could do that, but she works primarily with administrators and board members. She would be open to it, but we need to distinguish what we want the instrument to do. B. Schaffer questioned the relevance of quick, “how do I feel about this person” type questions, such as those on the climate survey. He thinks looking at the direction schools are heading will prove to be more effective than getting quick, automatic responses. S. Cano said she sees D. Taylor regularly seeking feedback. She thinks it would be great to have community members and teachers giving input, but the reality is that the principals and administrators work most closely with D. Taylor. They have to put effort into doing the best job possible with the instrument, and the board needs to entrust them. Principals and administrators need to commit to giving genuine input. M. Mathias agreed. She said administrative staff in central office are very aware of the whole goal and mission of LNSU, and those are the things that the leadership role of the superintendent is being measured on. Reaching out to people who are not familiar with LNSU’s goals and mission is not fair to them or to D. Taylor. She thinks her faculty would not feel comfortable evaluating D. Taylor because they would not feel they have enough information. W. Earle said he feels his evaluation of the superintendent should be based on information he gets from the principal and teachers and other people who work with her. Without that information, he wouldn’t know enough to evaluate her.

S. Reber asked, are we approving the whole timeline, or the first item on the timeline? D. Taylor said the first item on the timeline. S. Reber said the timeline is a huge help. He said perhaps there should be an additional step after the superintendent presents the instrument and formative goals to the executive committee – getting input from the local boards, then giving feedback to the executive committee. D. Taylor agreed we could have another committee meeting if there are a variety of opinions, or just bring the local board input to the full board. S. Reber said the feedback could also just be given to the superintendent before the full board meeting. D. Taylor suggested that feedback from local boards be gathered and given to the superintendent and the LNSU board chair before the full board meeting.

10. Lamoille North Board Meeting Structure

D. Taylor said that alternative board meeting schedules were discussed at the recent executive committee meeting. Currently there is one week each month with 5 local board meetings and another with 6, and there are 6 LNSU board meetings in the year. An alternative could be to have carousel meetings – one meeting of

all boards in a regional location (which could rotate) once a month. Following common discussion, individual boards could meet separately, and central office staff could rotate among meetings. It has been suggested that it might be difficult to have monthly carousel meetings. D. Taylor suggested there could be 3 carousel meetings a year, perhaps the 4th Monday in September (with a theme of policy), the 4th Monday in January (budget), and the 4th Monday in March (plan.)

J. Sander said she likes the idea of 3 meetings, but by the 4th Monday in January their budget is being printed, and everyone has already had a lot of budget discussion. M. Frederick said discussing budget in September might be better. D. Osborn asked how the 3 meeting schedule would mesh with the twice a month local board schedule. D. Taylor said each carousel meeting would take the place of an LNSU meeting and potentially of an individual school board's second monthly meeting. W. Sander said we have had variations on this in the past. S. Reber said he thinks it's an interesting idea, and he would be happy doing it. He feels limiting it to 3 carousel meetings is a good compromise. The key is to have an interesting speaker or something interesting that will happen. B. Schaffer is in favor of adding efficiency. He said he would hate to go through the process of setting up a new schedule knowing we might not get a quorum with that schedule. S. Cano said these are changing times. With a schedule like this, maybe we could invite the commissioner or legislators to carousel meetings. Having a limited number of carousel meetings opens some doors. M. Mathias said in a lot of ways this schedule fits well with what administrators have been doing with *Schooling by Design* and working collaboratively. She said we can't ignore the impact on D. Taylor of many late nights at meetings.

Board chairs gave feedback from their local boards. B. Marshall said the HPES board didn't have an in-depth discussion. Some negatives of carousel meetings were mentioned. A significant one is that it eliminates the possibility of community involvement. Also, at past carousel meetings the board found themselves waiting until late at night for the superintendent or business manager. But we can probably work with those challenges. J. Sander said Cambridge discussed the pros and cons. One drawback is that carousel meetings limit community involvement, but the board doesn't have a lot anyway. W. Earle said the kids of all LNSU schools need to be a unit, but he wants to make sure Eden maintains its autonomy.

J. Lindgren said carousel meetings would provide an opportunity for guest speakers, and discussion of education issues. We could focus on students and learning, which would be a good investment of time and resources. D. Osborn said the schedule needs to be reflective of what we want to achieve as a board. She suggested individual boards could meet before the regional meeting. She feels the idea that this board is supposed to represent each town often doesn't work out. Information moves down to local boards, but not up from local boards. Maybe we need more information moving the other way, and local boards making decisions, not just receiving information. W. Sander said it would be difficult to

schedule individual board meetings first and fit their meetings into the time restraints. J. Sander suggested that on carousel meeting nights, local boards could either not have their meetings or have just an abbreviated agenda for crucial business. D. Taylor said the LU board does that sometimes when they want to devote a meeting to goal setting – they have a brief business meeting first, then work on goals. M. Frederick said if local boards are going to cancel their meetings when there is a carousel meeting, it might work well to schedule the carousel meetings to eliminate meetings that are often hard for people to come to, such as the first meeting in June. She also noted that she gives the same general budget talk many times. Perhaps she could do it once in the fall at a carousel meeting.

MOTION: J. Sander moved to direct the superintendent and board chair to further explore the concept of carousel meetings, taking into consideration the comments made this evening. The motion was seconded and passed.

11. *Executive Session on Status of Labor Contract Negotiations*

MOTION: J. Sander moved to enter executive session for contract discussion, with the superintendent remaining, at 8:02, and the motion was seconded and passed. The board immediately consented out of session and voted to include M. Frederick and G. Chicoine in the session, then re-entered executive session. The board consented out of session at 9:00.

12. *Adjourn*

ACTION: It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 9:00, and the motion passed.

DRRAFT

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna E. Griffiths

Actions taken at the LNSU Board Meeting 5/26/09:

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