

## **WSSU Board Meeting**

### **Draft Minutes**

**August 26, 2019**

**Present:** Amy McMullen, Elizabeth Burrows, Scott Richardson, Jacqui Antonovich, Colleen Spence, Nicki Buck, Beth Carter, Sean Whalen, Bill Yates, AnneMarie Redmond, Nancy Pedrick, Angie Ladeau, Dave Baker, Karen Woolsey

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM.

**Minutes:** July 29

Amy McMullen asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Bill Yates moved; seconded by Nicki Buck. Scott Richardson asked why the need to list members not at the meeting. Amy McMullen mentioned it will be discussed. Sean Whalen felt did not have adequate time to scan the minutes as just got them this morning. AnneMarie Redmond agreed. Diane will send a message to board as soon as the minutes are posted. Minutes were tabled.

**Additions or Corrections:** Discuss Portrait of Graduate. Special Education staffing

**Discussion Items:**

**Policy:**

All policies that were revised, all required and recommended are on the website. Suggested policies out there and could decide if want them part of it. Scott Richardson asked about intradistrict school choice and not approved anything. Dave Baker mentioned he felt got consensus if need would do it anyway. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned when glance at minutes she felt the board did want a policy. Bill Yates mentioned he brought up that Dave would feel more comfortable starting with principals. Beth Carter thought agreed to principals if they felt if in the best need of the child. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned principals have not had the ability before. Scott Richardson feels the evolution of this is confusing. Elizabeth Burrows felt that always told did not have the ability. Amy McMullen mentioned she knows of a few instances where students have attended other schools and up to the receiving town if wanted the sending town to pay tuition. Conversation is if family wanted their student to go to another school should we have a policy so they do not have to pay tuition. Decision of accepting students would be left to the two principals. Elizabeth Burrows feels it would be nice for parents to have a point of reference as to what does the SU have to say about this. Bill Yates agrees that 1. Like that and 2. Policy put out is too complicated. Beth Carter asked if should be a certain number of kids. Bill Yates mentioned up to the two principals and superintendent has the final say.

Amy McMullen mentioned where fell apart was around transportation. Scott Richardson feels confusion was talked about months ago and could there be a mass concentration at another school and settled on something that is just for extraordinary needs. Scott mentioned he is fine with this as administrators and leader have final say. When reduced to such a small part of the community, not offering transportation is not fair or equitable. Talking about most disadvantaged and troubled students. Bill Yates feels there might be situations where those students with special needs, and do not say sole responsibility of parents, but leave up to principals, special education coordinator, and superintendent as to what accommodations made

to make happen. If there is a real need for a student to be transported then administration will look at it. Dave Baker cautions if necessary through IEP or individual program as may offer in one school and not another. Could be slippery slope if say parent request. Dave felt this is why put a halt on this. At building level principals know the student the best. Heard board say do not want request made because dislike of a certain individual or no sport. Limits criteria and what would fall under this. Bill Yates feels is important to put in their logistics of the placement would be worked out between the two principals and superintendent. Beth Carter mentioned that transporting one student is expensive. Karen Woolsey is concerned about talking about special circumstances in a policy as people want to rationalize reasons that are not there. Colleen Spence asked why add logistics but keep it as simple as can. Elizabeth Burrows suggested saying principals make all decisions pertaining to this including all logistics. Dave Baker felt the decision the board made is if in fact your administrator felt transferring student was in the best of that student and tuition would not follow. Sean Whalen had a question on legal ramifications of transportation. If required to provide transportation that could be a problem. Colleen Spence feels that required transfers we are going outside. Dave Baker mentioned if say not or will you open yourself up. State law says you may provide transportation. Karen Woolsey mentioned if no transportation would bring up if required to get students to public school. Worried that parent goes to principals and want transfer and principals say sure that is not an IEP decision but is a family decision and does not need to be written in. If IEP team feels a student should go elsewhere that is a placement. Do not want to give anyone false hope. Beth Carter feels if become too many individuals on an IEP and, not transferring tuition, what happens to numbers. Karen Woolsey mentioned is all SU wide. Karen Woolsey cautioned once say no to one student cannot accept another and is worried about this.

Dave Baker feels that the more discuss this is convinced that very few circumstances approve a transfer. Would be if circumstances come up. Do not see a lot of opportunity unless go the whole way. This is based on principals taking request and board waiving tuition and need statement in policy manual. Mount Ascutney has a separate issue around this. Administrative team likes opportunities for all kids. Scott Richardson feels this is an opportunity for board members from a single district to get information and allow leaders to do this and may hear that need an opportunity to provide transportation for a need not aware of. Dave Baker mentioned if consider transportation would bring to board level.

Elizabeth Burrows asked if Mount Ascutney School District talked about teachers applying for grants and would bring to SU level as a policy. Dave Baker mentioned this went to the administrative team and need something that talks about what someone has to do. Amy McMullen mentioned have a policy for next meeting for intradistrict choice and grant writing.

#### SU Name:

Elizabeth Burrows asked, from the minutes, was a pretty robust discussion and not understand why changing the SU name. Amy McMullen mentioned because the acronym WSESU could stand for Windham and emails are identical. Felt as renamed one district was a good opportunity to think about the SU. Sean Whalen feels the least of our problems is renaming the SU. Dave Baker mentioned no one internally pushing only logistical. Nancy Pedrick suggested changing our district to Windsor Bridge and then change to Mount Ascutney SU. Dave Baker mentioned it is tough to go backwards. Dave Baker feels the item should be removed from

future agendas. Scott Richardson feels it should be tabled as was to go to other boards to discuss.

Preliminary Budget:

Dave Baker mentioned he and Ed Connors spoke that appointed a subcommittee of this group in the past and has been done. Elizabeth Burrows asked if the budget will be aligned with goals. Dave Baker mentioned in light of portrait work we have continuous planning goals and look at when forming the budget but will not have short and long range goals until get through this. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned this happens every year that do not have goals to point to. Dave Baker mentioned the CIP (Continuous Improvement Plan) has goals and will share with the whole SU. The strategic plan sunset in 2019 and why went back to CIP goals. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned so realistically will not have goals this year and Portrait of Graduate will not be done until late spring and is broad framework of the strategic plan. Dave Baker mentioned all the CIP plans went to the AOE. The CIP is specific/measurable goals. Dave Baker mentioned the planning piece is required by the state and is most of the budget. Other is supplies, transportation.

Dave Baker mentioned a lot around professional development as mostly grant and teachers have money for professional credits. We are on a tight timeline as districts cannot finalize budgets until the SU budget finalized. Angie Ladeau mentioned this was the intention of the CIP plan and required for the last two years in this format.

SU Budget Committee: Nicki Buck, Bill Yates, Beth Carter, and Sean Whalen.

Sean Whalen mentioned boards have not had financials in a few meetings. Dave Baker mentioned he talked to Ed Connors as want accurate year end balances from 2019 and first quarter. Ed feels financials will be ready for the September meetings. Elizabeth Burrows asked that he have send numbers out in advance of the meeting.

Karen Woolsey mentioned for year-end closings had received e-mails from the AOE with disputes and holds up reimbursements as have to provide data to the AOE.

Nicole Buck mentioned the free and reduced population was reduced last year and lost some Title 1 funding. Dave Baker mentioned not count as SU level. Try and get as many forms in as can per SU. Angie Ladeau mentioned the grant is not fully funded but funded 90% of allocations but is not sure how much will get from the federal government. What happened with Weathersfield situation was we had to do a report that IT creates and send to state based on free and reduced forms. The State has a new student longitudinal data system and submit in a certain format. Grant just opened and sent letter to SU's if numbers not correct in grant is because not corrected in SLDS. The tech department had to redo and submit to be recertified. Form received was mealtime numbers and thought was submitted in grants management system and noticed number was not fixed. The tech department had to go back and look at algorithm and the state does not have the correct number. To correct would have had to redo application and anything funded and anyone receiving a salary would have to be locally reimbursed. We use grants money from time approved and approved in June when Dave signed. Determined that funds lost would have been more than funds getting.

Dave Baker mentioned the Portal opened late so what did in mid-July was look if rewrote what would it cost districts to run locally and felt was not worth it. Angie Ladeau mentioned this may affect what received over the SU. Dave Baker mentioned expecting 10% more of the money and feel can fully fund. We lost an instructional coach and decided not to replace. Sean Whalen feels someone should take responsibility for the mistake and apologize. Bill Yates mentioned what Angie laid out was the state of Vermont spent money on a data system that does not work. Grant system does not work well. Karen Woolsey mentioned with her grant she used the same wording as last year with grant and this year rejected.

Dave Baker mentioned he and Angie will take responsibility as made the decision to go forward as cost more to pay for summer school. We had to make a decision on the spot. Angie Ladeau mentioned if remove grant application had to do very soon. Karen Woolsey mentioned the state will not take responsibility. Angie mentioned did not spend money on things that were not previously approved. The Trump administration would like to do away with Title 2 funding. Angie mentioned anticipating more money coming in. Dave Baker mentioned Angie did yeoman's work trying to get everything funded as could. Did her best to get support to students. Bill Yates mentioned is a tough situation for us that work with it. Extremely important to get free/reduced forms in as is a critical number. Sean Whalen feels Weathersfield's was misrepresented by 18 students. Angie mentioned as soon as saw it redid it and when got back questioned it again. Beth Carter feels we need checks and balances in this system. Angie mentioned the tech department and I understand how important it is. We will make sure we have done our due diligence on our end. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned she understands the problem and you did the best you could. Is there a chance will be rectified? Angie mentioned will be rectified in child nutrition but cannot be in grant.

#### Portrait of a Graduate:

Dave Baker mentioned the building principals are working hard to put together the design team. Staff and community members are coming forward. We hope to finalize lists as early as the first week in September as need to get a letter out to the team as the first meeting is at Windsor. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned in May, at the retreat, the board was asked to approve approximately \$5,000 for the first part and this was the thing at Fairlee. Dave Baker mentioned the initial check was for Patel for us to join planning process. Elizabeth Burrows asked how come we do not know how much this will cost. Dave Baker mentioned cost will be around \$25,000 and trying to get grants and erate money.

Elizabeth Burrows asked if childcare will be provided. Dave Baker mentioned this is still being discussed. Elizabeth feels need childcare and should be the same people at all meetings. Find a couple of providers that could go to meetings. Dave Baker mentioned it requires a lot of organization and have to figure out ways to pay and other option is do not pick husband/wife team. Elizabeth Burrows feels it is unequitable to not provide childcare and those are the ones most want to reach, and everyone should have the opportunity to participate. AnneMarie Redmond asked about high school kids as parents right there. Dave Baker mentioned principals not willing to organize that, and if someone wants to, go ahead. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned principals will put in work on everything else, but childcare does not seem important. Dave Baker mentioned he does not want to make this mandatory. It sounds easy to do.

Elizabeth Burrows asked if there was a budget for it. Dave Baker mentioned there is not but could probably find some money. The principals going to Lake Fairlee was paid by their professional development. Amy McMullen is going to contact Student Council at Windsor for childcare and see if they are willing to do this. Sean Whalen mentioned he has provided childcare at Weathersfield and is willing to help. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned she has the name of someone who might be interested in doing all four sites.

Dave Baker mentioned this can be discussed at individual boards and make this clear.

Amy McMullen mentioned letters went out to the entire community. Scott Richardson mentioned looking for business leaders, leaders in your community and looking for cream of the crop and may not get at the graduation needs that everyone in the community looking for. Beth Carter suggested maybe look at what letters the other schools have sent out. Dave Baker mentioned they used the same template. Administrators trying to culture list. Like to think design team is represented demographically. If single parent at home, you are probably not one who will volunteer. Scott Richardson mentioned that ground rules that commit to four meetings and maybe that's too much. Dave Baker mentioned this is one of the criteria our administrations want. Sean Whalen mentioned Patel has very specific recommendations. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned we need more than just parent from a community, we need everyone. The team should six community members, six teacher/support staff, six parents, two students, and two board members. Jacqui Antonovich mentioned in Weathersfield board members gave specific names to the principal. Dave Baker mentioned when speak to demographic trying to get a person who used to be a parent and things not worked well. The strength will be in conversations around the table. We try to bring some level of harmony around the table. Have conversation of what is important.

Sean Whalen wanted to know how other districts are doing this. One message I received was asking board members to be ambassadors and recruit members. Took concerns to local board and asked to bring leaders to this. Opposition is loyal opposition. Sean feels this has fallen to principals in all towns and using the same template. Sean feels has not done what was asked to do. Sounds like have not fulfilled first thing had to do as board members. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned she interpreted it differently and talked with the principal about potential list and felt was conflict of interest to reach out to them myself, but principal could. We agreed that sometimes people will volunteer when asked to. Dave Baker mentioned each principal did it a little differently. The template in terms of invitation was created by JeanMarie from information read. When get the final list will send to board members that were at the retreat.

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned not objecting to having a retreat but object that does not have it at a local place. Sean Whalen shares Elizabeth's concern. Sean Whalen mentioned part of my objection is that as board members we are there as volunteers and if closer would not lose a whole day of work.

Karen Woolsey mentioned sometimes we work late into the night. No one in this SU attends a national conference as are very conservative about this. The administrators are in this room every week and sometimes helps to not be in the same space.

Sean Whalen mentioned with Portrait of a Graduate it would be nice to know what should tell people will happen at this meeting and communicate soon. Dave Baker mentioned there will be a very detailed description. Amy McMullen mentioned what Sean is asking is could we have an idea of what the meeting will look like before the invitation goes out. Dave Baker will see what can do about this. We just asked for a template of the invitation and you can use this.

**Staffing Letter:**

Sean Whalen mentioned the board had not received the letter and how did this get disseminated. Karen Woolsey mentioned Dave Baker was to send again. Karen mentioned the letter was to let people know, as with the rest of the state, staffing shortage for support staff. We want to hire people who can do the work and are continuing to look. Asking colleagues and school staff to work together. Some due to attrition and some as new kids came in over the summer. Some have been replaced and some moved some around. We hired some for new kids that came in. We are short about nine people and these are significant positions. We advertise locally, SchoolSpring, and word of mouth. Working hard to do it. Karen mentioned worked with Indeed and Craigslist, but people do not know what applying for. The time spent is not worth it. Some of it is there are no places for people to live. AnneMarie Redmond mentioned put it out to people in the community. Sean Whalen asked if the nine positions include HCPS. Karen mentioned looked simultaneously and working collaboratively. We have families looking for homes and is part of the problem.

**Around SU:** tabled

**Agenda:** September 23

Policy for Intradistrict Choice, Grant Writing

Financials

Update on Position Hiring for Special Education

Update on Design Team Meeting

**Adjournment:**

Amy McMullen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sean Whalen moved; seconded by Colleen Spence; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tessier, Board Secretary