

Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union Board Meeting Minutes September 16, 2020

I. Present at the meeting:

Amy McMullen
Nicole Buck
Nancy Pedrick
Colleen Spence
Kris Garnjost
Sean Whalen
Scott Richardson
Elizabeth Burrows
Bill Yates
Mark Yuengling
Anne Redmond
Christine Bourne
Jenifer Aldrich
Colleen Deschamp
Kate Ryan
Katie Ahern
Angie Ledoux
David Baker

Several staff and community members

Special Guest: Jameson Davis

II. Policy Documents, starting with Anti-Racism Policy:

Special Guest, Jameson Davis, is a third-year Vermont Law School Student. While serving on the Hartford Select Board, he helped to pen the town's anti-racism policy. He has offered to help WSESU through the process of drafting policy and procedures.

It is important that the definition of racism, for the purpose of the policy, touches on certain points without sugar-coating them. BIPOC individuals are targeted specifically, so the policy must reflect that it is there to guard against racism towards BIPOC people-- and not broadened phrases like "marginalized community members."

The policy should hold individuals accountable when used. It should also include means by which to measure progress.

The procedures document will probably bring about the most cultural, everyday changes. It will require that each school undergo a "lifestyle" change. It will include bi-annual reports, but in a way that puts information out there without anyone feeling vulnerable. For example, a log of incidents, how they were reported, how they were handled, discipline, and so on, would be collected as data.

Jameson talked about his qualifications to do this work, which are myriad, including work with the SPLC, state (city?) of New York, several other SUs, and others, and how he got started/why he got started. He was a singular Black student during his young days, who was used as a point of reference for all things related to Black people. He grew to dread being

singled out, and it deeply affected him as a young person. He decided to use the privilege of attending law school, starting with his helping to get the Ethnic Studies bill passed. This year, in light of the countrywide social uprising, he decided to help schools take proactive, rather than reactive, measures.

Anne: With so few people of color in the mix, how do you feel about white people making anti-racism policies?

Jameson: We applaud that you are doing this work. You have to have diversity as part of the conversation. When the policy is done, it is going to be up to us to do the work towards its implementation every single day.

Angie: Beyond the policy, how do we encourage BIPOC part of the process without microaggressions?

Jameson: They will join if it is safe for them to, and if they want to. That space must be ready for their presence. It's important that a person not be made to feel the only reason they are being invited is for their Blackness. Is our program ready for a person of color to be a part?

Sean Whalen moved to establish an anti-racism task force. The movement was seconded by Nicole Buck. The movement passed unanimously.

Elizabeth agreed to communicate with Jameson and Arielle to find dates they are available, and then to send out a Doodle poll.

Interested parties for the first meeting include:

Elizabeth Burrows
Nancy Pedrick
Colleen Spence
Amy McMullen
Nicki Buck
Kris Garnjost
Mark Yuengling
Sean Whalen

III. School Opening

The first week went better than expected. Distance learning is better than expected, too.

Staff feelings about the first week:

Angie asked re. Interdisciplinary units, unified arts, safety, buildings. 29 teams responded, 179 staff from all areas

- >ID units: establishing routines, establishing Canvas
- >Unified Arts: missed having their own space; positive response about what Unified Arts bring
- >Safety: most felt safe or very safe; better than expected
- >Building cleanliness: 55% meets expectation; 35% does not meet
- >We are so glad to be back with students
- >Canvas/VTVLC frustrations
- >Patience and understanding
- >Anne Redmond: maybe post a sign-out sheet for each time a cleaning has occurred
- >Amy: bussing question: how has screening gone? Thermometers batteries die in cold weather; bus screening seems to be improving otherwise.

IV. Policies

Social Media: Combined with VSBA?

Bill: most recent copy just shared

We took Weathersfield and shaped it to address concerns from the last meeting

>Family members

>Age limit

Personal social media not required (covered in VSBA policy), would like to replace w/All employees' responsibility for private social media accounts; expectation of what it means to be a school employee

The policies are not integrated.

Anne-Marie: Weren't we going to fit Weathersfield in to VSBA?

Bill: there's a portion that needs to be added; redundancies have been removed

Scott: we were looking to come up with language that honored what each does, but we can't alter the Electronic Communications policy.

Bill: That's why no changes.

We'll have Electronic Communications and Social Media policies to pass at next meeting.

Modes of Instruction

Amy: we talked about monthly status report to board.

Scott: VSBA has a bunch of required policies that have been released, but not approved by our board.

David: Laurie will cross-check and get to the board.

Nicole Buck motioned to approve the Modes of Instruction policy; Scott Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. **Next meeting will take place on 9/30.** Agenda items to include update on anti-racism task force, electronic communications/social media policies, other policies.

VI. **Executive Session:** At 8:30, Nancy Pedrick motioned to move to executive session for personnel and litigation matters; the motion was seconded by Kris Garnjost. The motion carried unanimously, and the board entered executive session at 8:30.

At 8:49, Nancy Pedrick motioned to exit executive session; Kris Garnjost seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

VII. **Adjournment:** At 8:49, Sean Whalen moved to adjourn the meeting. Colleen Spence seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Burrows