

**Lamoille North Supervisory Union and
Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District Board
Minutes of Meeting
February 8, 2021**

Board Members Present: Cambridge: Laura Miller, Jan Sander, Bill Sander, Mark Stebbins, Eden: David Whitcomb, Jeff Hunsberger; Hyde Park: Chasity Fagnant, Patty Hayford, Tina Lowe, Lisa Barry; Johnson: Katie Orost, Bobbi Moulton, Mark Nielsen, Angela Lamell, Allen Audette, Jr.; Waterville: Bart Bezio

Board Members Absent: Belvidere: Stephanie Sweet; Cambridge: Bernard Barnes, Sue Prescott; Johnson: Bobbie Moulton

Administrators Present: Catherine Gallagher, Deb Clark, Charleen McFarlane, Michele Aumand, Denise Maurice, Erik Remmers, Melinda Mascolino, David Manning, Jan Epstein, Mary Anderson, Diane Reilly, Brian Schaffer, Jeremy Scannell, Dylan LaFlam, Karyl Kent, Flo Kelley, Brian Pena, Janet Murray, Jennifer Hulse, Wendy Savery

Others Present: Betzi Goodman, Darcey Fletcher, Denise Webster, Jacki Barresi-O'Connor, Samantha Bailey, Yvonne Jones, Becky Gonyea

Minute Taker: Sue Trainor

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment: Nielsen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Whitcomb made a motion, seconded by Lamell, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously. There was no public comment.

LNSU/LNEMUUSD Routine Business: Consent Agenda Items

Minutes of the January 25, 2021, meeting; January 26, 2021, Special Technology Committee

Meeting: Orost made a motion, seconded by Lamell, to approve the minutes. Bezio noted several words were missing on Page 3 of the Board minutes and needed to be corrected. Noting that change, the motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Board Orders: Miller passed on the Board Orders due to some technical issues she was experiencing.

Presentation: Recognizing and Addressing Domestic and Sexual Violence – Becky Gonyea, Clarina Howard Nichols Center: Gonyea, the Executive Director of the Center, informed the Board of the services that the Center provided for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Gonyea outlined the role that schools could play in addressing these issues, especially during this challenging time of COVID isolation. School personnel may be the first or only individuals to know that violence was occurring in the home. Gonyea outlined many of the signs that children could show if they were being impacted by domestic violence. Clarina Howard Nichols Center offered a wide variety of services in this area and Gonyea stated the 24-hour hotline – 802-888-5256 – was available to survivors and any community members who needed to discuss an issue. They also provided a shelter, outreach and education, and advocacy services. Addressing violence in the home could be difficult, but Gonyea asked what message was being sent to children and families if the community/school personnel stayed quiet.

Organizational Support for Universal School Meals: Karyl Kent, the Director of School Nutrition for the District, discussed the possibility of the District signing on as an organizational supporter of Universal School Meals alongside Hunger Free Vermont. Kent reported that the District's nutrition teams had been working since March 18th, 2020 to provide 355,000 free meals to children and families. They had been able to serve these meals for free due to waivers from the USDA.

Kent read a letter from a high school teacher that Kent had presented to the Joint Appropriations Committee in support of universal school meals. This letter outlined the relief that students felt when they were told the free meals would continue. The free lunches were more than just nutrition. They offered reassurance that the students wouldn't go hungry and that school was a safe place. Universal school meals meant students didn't have to experience shame or fear. As an administrator, this also meant that Kent didn't have to spend her time harassing families for payment.

Kent noted that the participation was up and students were prepared for academics. Kent stated that the waivers would end at the end of this school year. She hoped that the federal government would continue the waivers but had no idea whether that would happen. They were now asking the state to develop a plan to continue universal school meals. However, that could be several years out. In the meantime, they were looking at Provision 2.

Kent asked the Board if they would support becoming an organizational supporter of universal school meals. Agreeing to this was not committing to any funding or to Provision 2. It was simply stating that the District believed in the concept, that they saw the benefit and wanted students in the District to eat for free. Clark stated she hoped this would be a supervisory union conversation.

Whitcomb made a motion, seconded by J. Sander, to support the idea of universal school meals. J. Sander stated her belief that this should have happened years ago and now was the time to correct that. The motion then passed unanimously.

The Board then expressed their appreciation to Karyl Kent for the work that she did for the students and families in the District.

Central Office Updates: Gallagher thanked the team at Hyde Park Elementary School for the work they had done recently with a positive COVID case. Gallagher noted the District had been able to streamline the process of what to do when there was a positive case in one of the schools. The communication, intuition, and ability to navigate a positive case so efficiently and with compassion amazed her.

Gallagher then informed the Board that all administrators, staff and students would be working with the diversity coaches. They had been able to hire Miles Smith from NVU through grant funding and he would begin meeting with every school. He would start meetings with a privilege quiz that would challenge every assumption a person had. Gallagher stated they were doing this work because it was meaningful and important.

Gallagher reported she had visited schools in Waterville, Eden and Johnson today. She noted that the teachers were like family to the students and the students were resilient, fiercely independent and confident.

Clark stated she had been told that the yield was going up. If it went up the \$622 they were forecasting, it would be above the current year's yield. This could result in a \$50 to \$60 per \$100,000 of property value decrease. She noted though that the numbers kept changing.

Principal/Director Updates:

Cambridge: Anderson stated she was pleased to report she had hired a new bus driver. Anderson noted that her written report highlighted how her teachers were celebrating Black History Month in their classrooms. There was a desire to engage in discussions around equity and diversity at the upcoming staff meeting. Cambridge was participating in the Big Change Roundup. Anderson also reported that while the school had been experiencing a lull in the census, since returning from the December break six new students had enrolled in the school.

Hyde Park: Reilly stated the school was participating in Operation Valentine, which involved sending postcards to people in the community and placing hearts throughout Hyde Park. They were focusing on supporting Black history and literature throughout the school year. The equity work being done in the district has been uplifting and thought provoking. Reilly expressed her appreciation to Wendy Savery for the work she had been doing to assist administrators behind the scenes.

Johnson: Manning informed the Board that his written report provided details on the school's work to add more students to the four-day a week schedule. He wanted the Board to know that each time a

student was added, teachers had to be flexible and rearrange the classroom. Manning stated that required procedures were now engrained in students and they often reminded him if he forgot. Regarding Black History Month, Manning highlighted the work of the STEM teacher who had developed activities in which students learned about African games and culture. This required both research on the part of the students and then creating the games. Manning then spoke of a situation involving his son that had opened Manning's eyes to privilege.

Belvidere/Waterville: Epstein reported that reading *How to Be An Anti-Racist* had been an amazing process for her. She was encouraging her staff to read it. Her staff was looking forward to working with Miles Smith on February 18th. The school would be participating in the Big Change Roundup. The 4th, 5th and 6th grade was involved in Project Linus. They were making blankets and donating them to children in need. Winter Carnival would take place before February break.

Eden: Mascolino highlighted the benchmarks from the Star Renaissance Math Assessment. Twelve students in 5th grade were at or above the benchmark level, with only one student who was receiving special education services not meeting the benchmark level. Ten students in the 6th grade were at or above the benchmarks, with two students who were receiving special education services not meeting the benchmark. Mascolino stated there was incredible instruction taking place and it was great news considering the amount of time missed in the spring.

Middle School: Maurice stated staff would be meeting with Miles Smith this week and were very excited to get more involved in racial equity and diversity training work. She was impressed by how much information was embedded in the teaching currently going on. Maurice outlined a number of examples of this, such as students in Social Studies reviewing Supreme Court cases and how those led to the civil rights movement. Maurice stated her appreciation for the creativity of the theatre program that had developed ways to have students participate on stage safely.

GMTCC: Remmers reported that while it was early, they had already received a lot of applications. They were in the process of beginning to interview applicants for the programs. GMTCC was also working on the diversity, equity and inclusion components. The staff was focusing on the issue of privilege and exploring what that meant for those in the facility. They would also be working with Miles Smith. GMTCC students were progressing toward their industry certifications as if it were a regular year. The Allied Health students had taken their written LNA exam and had all passed. The clinical component still needed to take place and GMTCC was trying to be creative in how to accomplish this. Remmers then provided a link to the virtual tour of GMTCC, filmed and edited by Elias Gillen as part of a co-op experience.

Other Business: There was no other business.

Adjourn: Orost made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m.