

**Lamoille North Supervisory Union and
Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District Board
Minutes of Meeting
January 25, 2021**

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

Board Members Absent: Cambridge: Bernard Barnes

Administrators Present: Catherine Gallagher, Deb Clark, Charleen McFarlane, Michele Aumand, Denise Maurice, Tommy O'Connor, Erik Remmers, Melinda Mascolino, David Manning, Jan Epstein, Diane Reilly, Jeremy Scannell, Bethann Pirie, Dylan LaFlam, Flo Kelley, Brian Pena

Others Present: Betzi Goodman, Darcey Fletcher, Denise Webster, Greg Stokes, Amy O'Toole, Erin Carr, Renee McWilliams, Trisha Hutchins, Maggie McGee, Galen Reese

Minute Taker: Sue Trainor

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment: Nielson called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Moulton made a motion, seconded by Whitcomb, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously. There was no public comment.

LNSU/LN MUUSD Routine Business: Consent Agenda Items

Minutes of the January 11, 2021 Board Meeting, January 5, 2021, FCC Committee Meeting: J. Sander made a motion, seconded by Bezio, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Orders: Miller made a motion to approve the Board Orders of January 8, 2021. Sweet seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

21CCLC After School Program AOE Visit and Review: Tommy O'Connor informed the Board that the after school program was scheduled for a full project review by the AOE on February 18th. As part of the review process, the Project Director, administrators, and site coordinators would be reviewed by the State team. O'Connor encouraged any members of the School Board or the general public who had knowledge of the program to set up an appointment through him for an interview with the State Board.

Elementary School Gymnasiums: LaFlam reported that elementary school principals had heard from community members about being able to use elementary school gyms for sports. LaFlam explained that all the elementary school gyms were being used as isolation spaces, overflow for the food service program that was organizing food kits, and also auxiliary classrooms. The gyms were also being used as the main spot for afterschool programs. While LaFlam understood that people wanted to be able to use the gyms, the amount of effort and time it would take to remove the isolation rooms and reinstall them would be very difficult. They currently did not have the personnel to do that in addition to the COVID cleaning that was required for the afterschool programs. Lamell asked if all of the elementary schools were in the same situation. LaFlam stated they were, but he noted that the middle school multipurpose room was available on Sundays. However, they would still need to follow COVID sanitization protocols and that might require hiring new staff or a cleaning contractor.

Potential Litigation regarding Hyde Park Water and Wastewater Rate Hikes: Clark informed the Board that Hyde Park had projected large increases in their water rates. There was potential litigation that the School Board had been invited to join. Orost made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss the issue, the premature disclosure of which could place the School Board at a disadvantage. Orost invited the administrative team and LaFlam to join the Executive Session. Miller seconded the

motion. The Board went into Executive Session at 6:13 p.m. The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:43 p.m.

Orost made a motion that it was in the best interests of the District's taxpayers that they join the Courthouse and Sheriff's Department in pursuing legal action against the Hyde Park Village and Light Department. Lowe seconded the motion. Sixteen members voted for the motion. Whitcomb abstained. Moulton was absent.

The aye votes were Audette, Barry, Bezio, Fagnant, Hayford, Hunsberger, Lamell, Lowe, Miller, Nielsen, Orost, Prescott, B. Sander, J. Sander, Stebbins, Sweet.

Suspend Requirement of Comingling of 3/2/21 Ballots, per the Secretary of State Directive

Dated 1/20/21: Clark informed the Board that H.48 had just passed, which allowed the Secretary of State to create new rules for the 2021 annual meeting. The issue that had been of concern to the District Clerk was the need to bring the ballots to the high school and comingling them following the vote. The Secretary of State's Office had advised, "If pursuant to its Articles of Agreement a union school district or unified school district is required to compile the ballots cast by voters in the member towns before counting the results, the legislative body may vote that ballots for the 2021 annual meeting are not required to be compiled for counting. In such case the ballots may be counted by each member town and the results reported to the school district clerk for determination of the official district-wide results." Clark then outlined the benefits of this action. Whitcomb made a motion, seconded by Stebbins, to approve the suspension of comingling the ballots before counting the results. The motion passed unanimously.

Central Office/Director Updates: Gallagher congratulated Michele Aumand for being nominated as the VEHI PATH Rockstar. The Board congratulated Aumand on the nomination. The District currently had one active COVID case in the Cambridge elementary school. Working with the Department of Health, the decision was made to go fully remote this week. Remote learning was going very well this week and they were looking forward to being back in school on Monday. Gallagher reported there were no incidents of school-based transmission of COVID. Schools were very safe places to be. Gallagher stated the schools were doing everything right, but they were seeing activity in the communities. She reminded the Board that multi-household gatherings were still being discouraged and she encouraged people to be careful. Gallagher noted they were working to get educators the vaccinations they needed. For those employees who were concerned, it was suggested they contact the Governor as the School Board couldn't issue vaccinations even if they might want to.

Gallagher informed the Board that the Title 4, Safe and Healthy School grant, had been approved. Within that grant was funding for a diversity coach. This funding would allow the District to begin working with Miles Smith, the NVU Equity and Inclusion Director. Smith would speak with the Board on March 22nd about equity and his work in schools. The District had also formed a partnership with Building Better Futures. The District was also working on bringing in speakers to speak on issues that were relevant to the schools. Gallagher was very pleased with how things were going and thanked the entire support staff for being so collaborative and willing to do anything for students and families.

Clark reported she had received the first reliable equalized pupil count numbers. She informed the FCC last week that they were now showing an increase in equalized pupils for the first time. The reports that would be in the annual report documents were slightly different as far as tax rates and per pupil spending than what had been shown at the prior Board meeting and was in the Warning. Overall, the MUUSD showed an increase of 22.97 in equalized pupils; .13 in the elementary and 22.84 in the secondary. What this meant was the per pupil spending at the middle school/high school went from \$16,569 to \$15,988. The per pupil spending at the elementary decreased \$4.00. The combined

homestead rates went from 1.6344 to 1.6071 or from an increase of \$56.64 per \$100,000 of property value to \$29.33 per \$100,000 of property value.

For Cambridge, their equalized pupils increased by 11.39 students; 4.8 at the elementary, 6.59 at the secondary. Their elementary per pupil spending went from \$17,356 to \$17,084. The combined homestead rate went from 1.5796 to 1.5411 or from \$53.37 per \$100,000 of property value to \$14.09 per \$100,000 of property value.

Principal/Director Updates:

Belvidere/Waterville: Epstein stated they were holding a winter carnival activity that would be tied into the PBIS system. The PE teacher would be spearheading the event. Teachers were starting their winter assessments. Epstein noted that thanks to Senator Leahy and the Vermont Space Grant Consortium, grades 4 through 8 were able to connect with an astronaut who was part of the next group of astronauts going to the moon and eventually to Mars. The astronaut gave a virtual presentation to grade 4 through 6 and she was very inspiring.

Eden: Mascolino expressed appreciation to O'Connor and his staff with the after school program. They had been very creative with the students and Mascolino outlined some of the projects they were involved in. The staff had been lamenting the fact that there wasn't a sense of community because they were in their own pods. Because of that, the winter sports committee decided to have a snow sculpture afternoon, with the sculptures being placed around the parking lot. Each class would do a gallery walk and families would be able to drive through the parking lot to view the sculptures.

Hyde Park: Reilly stated teachers were working on assessments, moving forward on academics and continuing to support the students with social/emotional learning. They were now in the middle of Operation Valentine in which the students would mail valentines to someone's home. There wouldn't be a valentine exchange this year. Instead they would create valentines with a positive affirmation and redistribute them to the entire school community. Operation I Heart Hyde Park would be taking place and students would be putting hearts throughout the town.

Johnson: Manning reported that many of the teachers were working on the mid-year assessments in literacy and math and he was looking forward to comparing them to the fall assessments. There were thirty students who had gone through the problem solving team process. This was part of the MCSS work that the District had been undertaking over the past few years. They were continuing to look for a person to fill a long-term sub position in the Distance Learning Academy.

At this point in the meeting J. Sander asked if the Board could pass a resolution recommending that teachers get vaccines and send the resolution to the Governor. Miller made a motion to create a resolution to submit to the Governor that stated that the School Board believed that the health of teachers and staff was important and that the Board thought teachers should have the option to have the vaccine as soon as possible. Whitcomb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Middle School: Maurice highlighted the work that Jon Brown was doing as part of his class work toward his administrative licensure. He was working on an action research case study with Olivia Bryce, one of the school's math teachers, on a mini-action research project. Maurice applauded both of them for working together on this project.

GMTCC: Remmers stated they had two cases of COVID in the building. One of the cases impacted the administrative office and, as a result, Remmers needed to quarantine. He expressed appreciation to his

faculty and staff who covered all the bases, from doing health screenings to keeping the building and programs running.

LNSU Support Staff Master Agreement: Prescott thanked the Board Negotiation Committee (BNC) members who had worked on this agreement with her. The BNC was looking for a motion to ratify the Support Staff Master Agreement for FY22. Orost made a motion, seconded by Stebbins, to ratify the agreement. Prescott explained this was a one-year contract for FY22. The support staff would receive an increase of \$1, effective July 1, 2021. The hiring grid was changed so the base rate for new hires would be \$14.30, which got the District closer to the \$15 base rate. The only language change was to remove some outdated language regarding health coverage, which was now determined by the statewide health commission. This agreement was accomplished in one working session. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board called a recess at 7:29 p.m. in order for Cambridge members to meet separately. The Board then reconvened with the Cambridge members at 7:33 p.m.

Other Business: There was no other business.

Adjourn: Orost made a motion, seconded by Stebbins, to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m.