

**Lamoille North Supervisory Union and
Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District Board
Minutes of Meeting
April 10, 2023**

Board Members Present: Belvidere: Stephanie Sweet; Cambridge: Denise Webster, Mark Stebbins, Christy Liddy, Jan Sander (phone), Sue Prescott, Tommy O'Connor; Eden: Jeff Hunsberger, David Whitcomb (phone); Hyde Park: Lisa Barry, Patty Hayford, Chasity Fagnant; Johnson: Mark Nielsen, Angela Lamell, Katie Orost, Allen Audette, Monica Stearns; Waterville: Bart Bezio

Board Members Absent: Hyde Park: Tina Lowe

Administrators Present: Catherine Gallagher, Deb Clark, Michele Aumand, Rachel Crawford, Brian Pena, Denise Maurice, Melinda Mascolino, Betzi Goodman, Jan Epstein, Erik Remmers, Diane Reilly, Valerie Sullivan, Rene Thibault, Bethann Pirie, David Manning, Dylan Laflam

Others: Sara Reed; Student Representatives: Sophie Hunsberger, Ellie Neckers, Julia-Rose Daley, Jessica Orost, Alyx West

Minute Taker: Sue Trainor

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment: Chair Nielsen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The agenda was amended to add Teacher Hire. Barry made a motion, seconded by O'Connor, to approve the amended agenda. The motion passed unanimously. There was no public comment.

LNSU/LNEMUUSD Routine Business – Consent Agenda Items:

Minutes of March 13, 2023, School Board Meeting; Minutes of Curriculum Committee Meeting and Social-Racial Justice Committee Meeting: Orost made a motion, seconded by Fagnant, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Orders: Fagnant made a motion, seconded by Stebbins, to approve the Board Orders. The motion passed unanimously.

Teacher Hire: Crawford sought the approval of the Board to hire James Love, Jr. as a math teacher at the high school. Love accepted the position on Friday. The recommended salary was \$49,955. Pirie added that she was looking forward to having him at the school. Love had a great network of staff that he already knew and was involved with outside of the school. Students connected with him quickly when he did a tour of the school. Hunsberger made a motion, seconded by O'Connor, to approve the hire. The motion passed unanimously.

Sabbatical Request: Gallagher introduced Sara Reed, a teacher at the High School for years. Gallagher noted that students in her classroom had achieved the highest AP scores in the state. Reed explained to the Board that she liked to create new classes. She was currently teaching AP human geography. She was good at taking large bits of information and reducing it to be manageable and relevant. Recently Reed had been thinking about a new course on slavery. Reed spoke of ancient history and how slavery had existed in every time and place around the world, starting about 10,000 years ago and racial slavery began about 500 years ago. In her research, Reed noted there was currently 40 million modern day slaves. The most prevalent forms were debt bondage, forced labor, child marriage, human trafficking, and domestic servitude.

Reed wanted to learn more about this to be able to teach about it. The UK, England and Scotland in particular, were doing the most work to educate the public about human trafficking and slavery. There were three universities that had centers for education of modern slavery and the abolition of modern slavery. Reed would like to spend time talking with these groups. Reed would like to introduce this course to advanced sophomores. There was a bit of a hole in the social studies curriculum for that group of students. Research papers would be incorporated in this course, which

wasn't something the school required much of. Reed's request was for a 9-week sabbatical from April 1st through June 15th.

Pirie stated the engagement level was very high in Reed's class. Reed demonstrated a love for the content that she taught. Reed was also demonstrating that learning never stopped in life. The AP Human Geo class that Reed taught was incredibly successful and students were successful because of the love of learning that Reed had. Pirie supported Reed's sabbatical request.

Reed then noted that she would also be offering parts of the curriculum free to any social studies teacher throughout Vermont.

Prescott made a motion, seconded by Sweet, to approve Sara Reed's sabbatical for April 1, 2024 through June 15, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Safety Debrief: Hunsberger made a motion, seconded by Stebbins, to enter into Executive Session. Gallagher, the Board, and school administrators were asked to remain. The motion passed unanimously. The Board went into Executive Session at 6:16 p.m. The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:33 p.m.

Orost made a motion to direct the Administration to look into having a school resource officer rotate through the elementary schools as an extra set of eyes and ears given what was happening across the nation. This would be in addition to the SRO position at the high school campus. Fagnant seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Accept FY '22 Audits: Clark noted the audits and summary notes had been sent out to Board members already. The District had received clean unqualified opinions and no reportable misstatements were noted. The LNSU fund balance was \$1.875 million. The MUUSD fund balance was \$5.441 million. The General Fund balance was \$2.3 million. Capital funds were, in total, \$1.9 million at the MUUSD. Student activities was quite healthy and the long-term debt was whittling down according to the debt plan. Hunsberger made a motion, seconded by O'Connor, to accept the FY22 audits. The motion passed unanimously.

Audit Services Bid: Clark went out to bid for audit services for FY23-FY25 and received three responses. RHR Smith & Company provided a bid of \$72,500 and Sullivan, Powers & Company provided a bid of \$99,000. Both of those bids had additional charges for single audits. Clark noted several reasons that she was recommending to the Board that RHR Smith & Company should be considered unqualified as a bidder. Kittell, Branagan & Sargent, the current auditor, provided a bid of \$108,000, \$113,000 and \$118,000 for years 1, 2 and 3. Kittell, Branagan & Sargent had no additional charges for program audits. Considering the additional cost of \$51,000 for single audits that Sullivan, Powers would charge, their fee to perform audits would increase to \$150,000.

Clark stated that based on price, qualification, and consistency, she recommended the District continue with Kittell, Branagan & Sargent. O'Connor made a motion, seconded by Fagnant, to award the three-year contract for financial audit services for Cambridge Elementary School, Lamoille North Supervisory Union and Lamoille North Modified Unified School District to Kittell, Branagan & Sargent.

Bezio noted for the record that going with a new firm was a substantial burden to the staff and was a cost that was not included in the audit fees. Lamell agreed. Lamell asked about the number of years the audit manager and managing partner had been in place and Lamell asked if a different partner could do the review this year. The motion passed unanimously.

Central Office: Gallagher noted that a group from Central Office was going to see the Addams Family tomorrow.

The class action suit that LNMUUSD had signed on to for Juul had resulted in the District receiving \$37,562 from the settlement with an additional 8.1% from another fund. Additionally, Juul would need to remove attorney fees from the District's portion of the settlement. Those funds may go towards substance use education.

Gallagher reminded the Board that she had applied for a grant with NVU to place clinicians in the schools over a period of five years. The clinicians would be paid by NVU and the District would provide them with a place to live. Gallagher was informed they had received the grant.

Gallagher stated that May 8th was the date of the next Board meeting. On that same evening, LNSU and Healthy Lamoille Valley would also be cohosting a town hall about the risks of vaping. This was based on requests from families. Food and child care would be provided, with Healthy Lamoille Valley paying for the food. Registration was open and encouraged so they could have an accurate count for the food. Additionally, Healthy Lamoille Valley was putting together an opioid task force which Gallagher was now a part of.

Clark outlined the estimated timeline for a bond vote on the Cricket Hill Project. On Monday, Gallagher, Clark, and Laflam would be meeting with the architects to review project concepts. Clark would like to hold a special Board meeting on May 15th to discuss the concept and design of the project. Hopefully the Board could approve the project then. In June and July outreach and community feedback could take place. On August 7th she would hope the Board could review, approve and warn the bond vote. Informational meetings could take place in August with the last informational meeting taking place on September 11th or 18th with the hope of a bond vote on September 19th. After a 30-day period, the architects, engineers, and designers would build an RFP to go out to bid no later than November.

Principal/Director Updates:

High School: Pirie stated that the possibility of getting more clinicians into the school and holding community forums on substance use was very exciting to her. Pirie had recently attended a training on substance use and learned a lot. She felt empowered to help educate students and families and to keep building momentum around substance use and providing supports for students. Pirie had received grant money to support substance use prevention. They were running small groups with two clinicians who see students who are either at risk or have used substances. Pirie was informed Lamoille Union would be able to receive this grant again next year. Pirie then discussed staffing changes.

Several student representatives informed the Board that the school store was very successful, with sales going up every week. Spring sports had begun. The Student Council teamed up with Johnson Works and helped run the Easter egg hunt. There was a great turnout and it was a great community event. On April 14th the dance company would be going to Lyndon Institute to perform in the spring dance recital. Also, that day some members of the Student Council were going to the State House to attend a climate change protest. The choir class would be singing at the Lanpher Library in May.

Johnson: Manning reported they had STEM night at the school, with a large turnout of parents and family members. The school also had a family movie night which was well received. There was an energetic parent group that was planning these events.

Eden Central School: Goodman stated the school had held their Family Fun Day, with 100 participants. In addition to this being a fun event, these events were helpful in bringing parents together. They were able to be in the annex now and it was wonderful to have music and art in a classroom, as well as having intervention rooms. Goodman thanked Laflam for his efforts. They had interviewed a person for a special education position and some of the student council members had given the applicant a tour.

Belvidere/Waterville: Epstein informed the Board that the school had received a chamber performance from a group that had been at Spruce Peak. The musicians interacted with the students and it was educational and well received. The music teacher was trying to coordinate another visit in May from performers from the VSO.

Hyde Park: Reilly said that over the last few years the school had been working very closely with Spruce Peak. They had offered some beautiful events. The experience at Spruce Peak was phenomenal. They had recently taken Pre-K 3- and 4-year olds to a show. It was just the right length and the students were engaged. They would also be attending Cross That River, a multimedia show, and the entire school would be attending Berklee Indian Ensemble. Being able to expose students to high level culture and art was wonderful.

Middle School: Maurice stated the 7th grade students would also be attending Cross That River. Maurice encouraged people to come to see the set design, costuming and amazing students in The Addams Family. She then informed the Board of two students who had won awards in the National Snowboarding or Skiing Competition.

GMTCC: Remmers noted that GMTCC's structures and roles were a little different even in the context of current technical education in Vermont. It was unique in that it was only one of six schools in the state that were full day, full year. Students gain all of their college credits and certifications in one year, rather than two years of half day programming. The students then returned to high school, moved on to a career, or college. The year would build with classroom instruction, safety, and labs until they came to this time of year. In the meantime, the teachers were also going through skill acquisition this year. They had been doing a book study on Teach Like a Champion. This was all culminating now and they were seeing incredible success at the Tech Center.

This was the time of year where the students were taking their licensure exams and clinical tests. College classes were wrapping up now. In addition, there were three major state level contests where there were demonstrations of the physical knowledge of the material. The first contest was held by the Future Business Leaders of America, the second contest was held by the Health Occupations Students of America, and last week's contest was SkillsUSA. These contests provided the opportunity to show what the students could do.

Remmers then provided the Board with a rundown of the results of these contests, with a large number of GMTCC students receiving first and second place awards. In some contests, GMTCC swept entire categories. He was incredibly proud of the students and teachers at the Tech Center. (Please see attached listing of award recipients).

Other Business: Hunsberger stated students from chorus and band participated in the District Concert Series two weeks ago.

Adjourn: The Board adjourned at 7:19 p.m.