

MINUTES

**Addison Central School District
ACSD Board
Board Meeting
Monday, March 27, 2023, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection**

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION

All students will reach their full academic potential and be prepared for success as engaged citizens.

OUR MISSION

To provide an innovative, rigorous, and supportive educational community that inspires a passion for learning and cultivates empathy and responsibility.

In Attendance

Barbara Wilson; Brian Bauer; Ellen Whelan-Wuest; Ellie Romp; James Malcolm; Jamie McCallum; Jason Chance; Joanna Doria; Lindsey Hescocock; Mary Heather Noble; Steve Orzech; Suzanne Buck; Tricia Allen

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. Barb Wilson read the ACSD Vision aloud and asked everyone to share their earliest school memory during introductions.

After public comment, Barb Wilson also pointed out the Summary of Roberts Rules of Order document included in the meeting materials. She proposed adopting the Small Board version (for Boards of 12 or so members) instead of the Full Board version, as the official parliamentary procedures for full boards are more formal.

James Malcolm stated that he does not feel that Board meetings are disordered. It's important for all members to understand how the different Roberts Rules formats work, but does not want to see the group become fractured by an overly rigid procedure.

Barb explained that per state statute, the Board needs to declare how it will operate, and is supposed to follow Roberts Rules.

Joanna Doria said that her understanding was that the Board has been operating as a small Board, so it would be good to clarify that officially.

Barb asked for a motion. Joanna made the motion to adopt Roberts Rules for small Boards. Brian Bauer seconded. The voting began but Suzanne Buck and Mary Heather Noble called for Point of Order, noting that opportunity for discussion had not been provided. Barb opened the table for discussion.

Jamie McCallum asked what would change if we adopted the Roberts Rules for small boards procedure. Barb explained that it is less structured, motions would not required seconding, etc. Jason Chance asked about the difference between the procedures with respect to the Board Chair voting -- in Roberts Rules for regular boards, the Board Chair does not vote unless it would change the outcome of the vote. In small Boards, the Board Chair may vote at any time.

Lindsey Hescoek, Steve Orzech, and Mary Heather Noble all expressed wanting more time to consider the change before voting. Brian noted that one of the differences is that Suzanne Buck noted that the Board has been using a sort of hybrid between the two -- the formality of seconding motions, but not following requirements of standing to address the Board. If the Board is to formally decide between one or the other, they should have time to make an educated decision.

Steve Orzech made a motion to table the issue. Mary Heather seconded. All voted in favor of tabling the issue.

Barb asked for a motion to relax the requirement to stand for addressing the Board. Steve Orzech seconded. All voted in favor.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Others present:

Peter Burrows, Superintendent; Matt Corrente, Director of Finance and Operations; Nicole Carter, Director of Equity and Student Services; Caitlin Steele, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning and new MUHS Principal; Jen Kravitz, Mary Hogan School Principal; Heather Crowley, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Will Hatch, Director of Technology; Megan Cheresnick, new Principal for Ripton Elementary School. Bruce Macintire, Director of Facilities (remote).

2. Public Comment

Karen Morris, XC and Track coach at MUMS gave a statement requesting that the Board and Administration consider adding an Athletic Director position to the middle school. She and her husband have been coaching at MUMS for 14 years, and have recently experienced some challenges with the administrative turnover at MUMS. The Vice Principal has traditionally been the person who provides administrative support for the after school sports (scheduling, busing, etc.), and with every recent change in that position comes challenges to bring the new person up to speed on team needs, parent communication, etc. She acknowledged that there are many other higher priority challenges at the school, but believes that the after school sport programming would thrive if there was a position devoted to supporting it. She suggested Shelley Harrison, currently an administrative assistant at MUMS -- she had previously done much of the work before being moved from the MUMS front office.

Hugh McLaughlin of Middlebury spoke up in support of Karen Morris's comment, and noted that others have also suggested Shelley Harrison as the best person to organize and support MUMS after school sports programming.

B. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of March 13, 2023

Tricia Allen noted typo-s in Section J, Other: The months should be "May."

Ellen Whelan-Wuest noted the corrected last name for "Avery Causton" in the Public Comments is "Thompson."

Jason Chance asked about the vote totals for the Vice Chair vote, and if those can be added. Barb Wilson explained that Jason had asked her about the vote totals, since the Charter requires Vice Chair to be determined by the majority of the Board vote, and there were 3 candidates. Barb reached out the Linda Barrett, who had counted the votes for Vice Chair on March 13th -- Linda confirmed that the vote tallies were as follows: Lindsey Hescocock - 7, Suzanne Buck - 6, and Mary Heather Noble - 0. Jason asked if the minutes could be corrected to reflect that information.

Mary Heather Noble stated that she could not correct the minutes of March 13th to include that information because it was not presented during that meeting, but that the minutes for today's meeting (March 27th) would reflect this information.

Motion to approve the minutes of March 13, 2023, as corrected.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Ellie Romp Status: Passed

C. Approve ACSD Bills

James Malcolm reported that he and Jason Chance had reviewed the bills, and presented the following:

Payroll: \$929,597.08

Payroll: \$759.40

Payroll: \$506.34

McGilton Fund: \$648.00 (for Rikert Nordic Skiing)

General Fund: \$1,030, 356.70 (which includes ~ \$450K in Health & Dental, as we'll as Transportation costs and reimbursements for universal Pre-K).

James Malcolm also noted the tight turnaround between when warrants are presented and when the Treasurer cuts the checks, so the Finance Committee has limited time to review the bills. He commended the administrative team on their preparation & assistance in the review process. Suzanne Buck offered to help read bills if needed.

Motion to approve and pay the ACSD bills as presented.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Suzanne Buck Status: Passed

D. Report of the Superintendent

15 min

Peter Burrows provided some quick updates about education legislation that is moving forward in the State Senate/House of Reps crossover. The VT Superintendent's Association and VT Principal's Association are always watching this, to keep an eye on legislation that will impact school budget and operations. These are the ones that are still active:

- Continuation of Universal School Meals. This will likely pass and is currently being drawn from the Education Fund. This would significantly impact ACSD budget.
- Funding of Private Schools with Public Money. All public education-affiliated organizations are advocating for the removal of public funding toward private schools. Ruth Hardy is very involved in this effort.
- Pre-K. There was contemplation of providing pre'K for all 4 year olds, but it has turned into

another study of the issue. The current program only provides funding to cover 10 hours per week, and is universally distributed, which means some families are getting what they need (and other families with means are getting a benefit they don't need).

- School Construction Aid. The state has paused the PCB study because they do not have a plan for funding remediation if/when contaminants are found. They have already earmarked a significant portion of funds for Burlington School District and there's not enough left for the rest of the state. There is a Legislative Task Force to look into the funding.

E. Report of the Board

1. Professional Appointments

Peter Burrows reported the professional appointments for the 2023-24 academic year, referencing the list in the meeting materials.

Ellie Romp, Jason Chance, Barb Wilson, Mary Heather Noble, and Lindsey Hescoock all asked clarifying questions about certain appointments. Steve Orzech asked when teacher contracts are due back. Peter reported that they will go out around April 15th, and are due back around May 15th, though some will wait until June 1st to sign and return.

Motion to accept the list of 2023-24 Professional Appointments as presented.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: James Malcolm Status: Passed

2. Action: Approve Recommended Principal Candidates

Peter Burrows presented the recommended candidates to appoint to the Ripton Elementary School and MUHS principal positions.

Ripton Elementary School Principal: The hiring committee recommends Megan Cheresnick, who is currently serving as an interventionist at Bridport School. Nicole Carter reported that she had all the right experience and qualities: experience as a classroom teacher, literacy interventionist, and administrator. Megan made a brief statement. Joanna Doria commented on a thoughtful thorough process. Lindsey Hescoock asked if this was a FTE position -- it is 0.6 FTE principal and 0.4 FTE interventionist.

Joanna Doria made a motion to approve appointment of Megan Cheresnick for the Ripton Principal position. Jamie McCallum seconded. All voted in favor.

MUHS Principal: The hiring committee recommends Caitlin Steele, who has been serving as the interim principal from her post as the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. Peter Burrows spoke about Caitlin's experience, passion, commitment and intelligence -- she will do great things at MUHS. Caitlin made a brief statement, noting her commitment to her current work as Assistant Superintendent as well as her excitement for the Principal position. She is excited about working directly with teachers and students again.

Jason Chance made a motion to approve appointment of Caitlin Steele to the MUHS Principal position. Suzanne Buck seconded. All voted in favor. Several Board members spoke in favor of the process and the result.

Mary Heather Noble asked about the timeline/process for filling Caitlin's position. Peter Burrows answered that the position has been posted immediately and that he will form a small group to help him. Lindsey Hescoock asked who decides on that position -- will it be an Assistant Superintendent or a Director. It will be a Director of Teaching and Learning, and

Peter makes the recommendation.

3. Discussion: Committee Assignments 5 min

Barb Wilson reminded Board members to reach out to her with any questions or concerns about committee assignments. She has also asked Heather Crowley to post draft minutes for Board and Committee meeting minutes on the website within 5 days of the meetings.

Steve Orzech told the Board that the Negotiations Committee has met already and is looking to open the support staff contract to provide higher salaries to stay competitive with the market for this season -- ACSD is behind both MAUSD and ANWSD for teacher pay. More to come later.

4. Discussion: Board Training 10 min

Barb Wilson reported that she has been working with Peter Burrows to schedule a Board Training in April or early May. They have contacted VSBA, but the person who did the training is no longer with them. They have another person who is available (Elaine, who the Board considered using to assist with the Superintendent Search process). Barb said that they will work to propose some dates, and that we will have another retreat/training in August with the new Superintendent.

Peter Burrows distributed copies of "The Governance Core: School Boards, Superintendents, and Schools Working Together." Barb said that the training would cover content from the Introduction, Chapter 1, "Moral Imperative and the Governance Core" and Chapter 6, "Governance Culture." Mary Heather Noble also suggested adding Board Norms. Suzanne Buck suggested scheduling the training for a Saturday, so that Board members can be fully focused. Mary Heather agreed. Ellen Whelan-Wuest asked about the expected duration, and Ellie Romp requested that dates be established asap. Jamie McCallum and Lindsey Hescocock requested to avoid scheduling on a weekend.

5. Action: Bank Account Resolution and Invoice Payment Authorization 5 min

Matt Corrented presented the memo requesting authorization for bank and invoice payment authorization -- this is an annual requirement to authorize the Finance department to do its work on the Board's behalf.

Motion to approve the Bank Account Resolution and Invoice Payment Authorization as corrected to reflect current school names.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed

6. Action: McGilton Fund Disbursement 5 min

Jen Kravitz provided a brief summary of the McGilton Fund for new Board members, and presented the current request for distribution of \$7,500 for enrichment activities for Mary Hogan School students.

James Malcolm asked about the equity issue of continuing to allocate endowment funds to select elementary schools in our unified state. There was some discussion on how the district might reconcile inequities in funding for enrichment activities. Jen Kravitz suggested that the Board/Admin identify the enrichment that it would like all students to experience, and determine how to fund equitably with operational budget, parent group funding, and/endowment funding as needed.

Motion to approve the McGilton Fund Disbursement request as presented.

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Lindsey Hescoock Status: Passed

7. Discussion: Superintendent Search Update

30 min

Mary Heather Noble provided an update on the Superintendent Search process, and outlined to-do items for the Board:

The application window closes March 28th at midnight. We only have 5 applications so far, but many people apply last-minute. McPherson & Jacobson will send initial candidate videos by April 6, so we can elect those we want to interview on April 11th.

1. The Board needs to decide whether to view initial candidate videos as a group or individually.
2. The Board needs to determine how to identify key stakeholders to participate in the finalist interview process.
3. The Board needs to finalize its list of interview questions -- to be done during executive session.

Highlights from the discussion:

Several Board members spoke in favor of watching candidate videos as a group, and watching them individually. Given the number of applicants, the Board may have time to review candidate videos at the special Board meeting on April 11th. Mary Heather will circle back on this after checking in with the consultant on March 29th.

The Board will use the same general stakeholder categories as were used for the initial stakeholder forums to identify preferred qualifications: Parents, Students, Teachers & Staff, Administrators, and Community. The plan is to make sure that participants from each group are able to commit to both finalist interviews and will ask the same questions of finalists. The goal is to allow the stakeholder groups to identify their own participants and ask their own questions -- they will be given 45-mins to an hour.

Mary Heather, Barb, and/or Emily Blistein will reach out to the school principals to solicit a few parents from each school community, being sure to request that special education parents are included. They will also reach out to the teacher and staff union reps to request a few teachers and staff to meet and ask questions of the finalists. And they will ask the high school principal to find a diverse group of students who can also commit to meeting all the finalists. Administrators will likely self-select to participate in the process, and perhaps have lunch with finalists. The Board would also like to have a community zoom in the evening, where candidates can provide a very brief introduction and take questions from participants.

a. Executive Session: Superintendent Hiring 1 VSA 313 (a) (3)

30 min

Entered Executive Session at 9:05 p.m.

Left Executive Session and re-entered Open Session at 9:43 p.m.

Mary Heather Noble will consolidate the Board's selected and edited interview questions and send them to the group prior to submitting to Dr. Gratto.

Motion to enter Executive Session for personnel interviewing/hiring planning.

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Joanna Doria Status: Passed

F. Other

None.

G. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Heather Noble, Recorder

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Jamie McCallum Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed

Total Meeting Time: 1h 40m

***Public Comment Guidelines:**

Public comments are encouraged and welcome at each regular board meeting during the period designated for public comment. Comments are limited to three minutes per person. Citizens will be called to make their statement by the board chair. Public comments regarding personnel, students or legal matters will not be heard by the Board.