

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
ACSD Board
Board Meeting
Monday, March 13, 2023, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm
753 Lincoln Road, Ripton 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: [Link to join Webinar](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83349261363)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83349261363>

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

ACSD Personnel present: Peter Burrows, Superintendent; Heather Crowley, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Caitlin Steele, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; Nicole Carter, Director of Equity and Student Services; Matt Corrente, Director of Finance and Operations; Emily Blistein, Director of Communications & Engagement; Will Hatch, Director of Technology; Bruce Macintire, Director of Facilities; Bjarki Sears, Principal of Salisbury Community School; Heather Raabe, Principal of Cornwall School; Jen Kravitz, Principal of Mary Hogan School; Steve McKinney, Assistant Principal of Mary Hogan School; Mike Dudek, Co-Principal of MUMS; Michaela Wisell, co-Principal of MUMS; Tracy Harrington, Principal of Ripton Elementary School; Matthew Brankman, Principal of Bridport Elementary; Laura Nugent, Director of Special Education

Eddie Fallis, Student Representative to ACSD Board also present.

B. Action: Board Reorganization - Election of Officers:

Peter Burrows opened the meeting and began the process of taking nominations for Board Chair.

1. Board Chair

Brian Bauer nominated Barb Wilson for Board Chair. Suzanne Buck nominated Mary Heather Noble. Both accepted the nominations.

Discussion:

James Malcolm made a brief statement. He served on our school boards over the past 21 years and this is the first time in his memory that we have a competition for Chair of the Board. It is a really important position, very demanding and time consuming, requiring frequent contact with the Superintendent. He knows from personal experience. Many times people have stepped up and served when no one else would do it. He is profoundly concerned about Save Our Schools and the agenda that their supported school board members have. We have two perfectly good candidates, but are very different in terms of their approach and how they came to the board. He hopes the Board will take that into consideration.

Brian Bauer responded to James Malcolm's comment, noting that the implication is that some board members have a political agenda. He doubts any serving board member does not have an agenda.

Barb Wilson spoke to her qualifications for Board Chair. She said that she was not recruited by SOS. She became involved in school board matters in 2020 because she was advocating for Shoreham families during the facilities master planning process. She in fact advocated for a 4-school model, and has not said that we have to keep all of our schools open. She wants to make sure that decisions made about school closure are based on data, and that the Board fully considers the ramifications of its decisions. She spent 35 years as a corporate manager, working to bring out the best in her team. Her understanding of the Board Chair role is to make sure that every person on the Board has a voice. It takes every one of us to make the best decisions on behalf of the students. She sees the role as a liaison between the Board and community, and believes she is a systems thinker. She is also concerned about the financial future but wants decisions to be made carefully. There is a moral imperative to reach common ground.

Mary Heather Noble welcomed new Board members and offered a brief statement of gratitude to everyone who ran for the positions. She noted that MAUSD has 4 vacant Board positions after this election, so is very grateful that the ACSD learning community has people who are willing to step forward to serve students and educators. She has served as the Chair of the Communications & Engagement Committee for the last 2 years and Board Clerk for the last year so has run and recorded a lot of meetings. Her decision to the District is evident in the work. She agrees with Barb on many matters, particularly that we have a moral imperative to come together to do this work. She would be honored to serve.

Lindsey Hescocock expressed gratitude for both candidates to Board Chair, noting that both have shown dedication to the district, volunteered and subbed in schools, and believes that both would do well to lead the Board. She does not like how everything has become one position pitted against another -- which person can help take us away from that and help us be a more effective Board. No decision is a wrong one.

Steve Orzech spoke up to say that despite Barb Wilson's claim that she was not recruited by SOS, she has contributed hundreds of dollars to support SOS candidates, and has been involved in strategy sessions with them. He alluded to a hidden agenda, and is concerned that having an SOS-affiliated person in the role would suppress conversation. He believes Mary Heather would be more fair. He noted things that Barb Wilson has done that he believes are at odds with the VSBA Code of Conduct.

Joanna Doria agrees with Lindsey that we are lucky to have two great candidates, and hopes that we can speak positively about the Board Chair candidate that we feel will lead us into the future, rather than disparage the other one. She appreciates Barb's reliance on data in her decision-making and does not believe that is political.

Jamie McCallum echoed Joanna's statement, commending Mary Heather on her work as Board Clerk. He has learned a lot from Barb, and also appreciates her insistence on decisions grounded in data.

Ellen Whelan-Wuest provided her perspective as a new Board member. She appreciated that Barb reached out to her right after her appointment, and was struck by Barb's comments about setting a different Board culture.

Peter Burrows then took votes for each candidate:

Barb Wilson: 7 Ayes

Mary Heather Noble: 6 Ayes

Barb Wilson is the new Board Chair.

2. Vice-Chair

Barb Wilson took nominations for Vice Chair:

James Malcolm nominated Suzanne Buck.

Joanna Doria nominated Jamie McCallum

Lindsey Hescock nominated Mary Heather Noble

Ellen Whelan-Wuest nominated Lindsey Hescock

Jamie McCallum withdrew his acceptance of the nomination. He was planning to nominate Lindsey. He appreciates how she has spoken up during other board meetings when it has needed to happen, and thinks that having her in more of a leadership role would be good.

Steve Orzech expressed his support for Suzanne Buck in the Vice Chair role, as she has the most leadership experience in ACSD Board and the PAHCC Board, and is also the most knowledgeable in parliamentary procedure.

James Malcolm spoke up to echo Steve Orzech's sentiments.

Ellen Whelan-Wuest said that she admires how Lindsey brings a full view to the Board's conversations and supports her.

Lindsey Hescock commended both Mary Heather and Suzanne for their Board work and commitment. She would like to see Mary Heather in a leadership role and has learned so much from Suzanne. She is honored to be considered with both of them.

An initial vote was attempted, but because of the three candidates, the Board agreed to do ballot voting. Linda Barrett counted the ballots and reported that Lindsey received the most

by one. Lindsey Hescoock in the new Vice Chair.

3. Clerk

Barb Wilson took nominations for Board Clerk.

Jason Chance nominated Mary Heather Noble. There were no other nominations. The Board vote was unanimous -- Mary Heather remains Board Clerk.

4. Appoint Truancy Officer

Barb Wilson took nominations for Truancy Officer. Suzanne Buck nominated Officer Conner Souza, ACSD's School Resource Officer to serve as the Truancy Officer. The Board vote was unanimous -- Officer Souza will remain as the Truancy Officer.

5. Appoint PAHCC Representative

Barb Wilson took nominations for ACSD Board representatives to serve on the PAHCC Board. Suzanne Buck explained that the PAHCC Board has voted to shift her to a longer-term appointment as a CCV rep, so her ACSD position on the PAHCC Board is now open.

Suzanne nominated Steve Orzech and Tricia Allen to serve as ACSD's representatives on the PAHCC Board. The Board vote was unanimous. Steve Orzech and Tricia Allen will serve on the PAHCC Board as ACSD's reps.

C. Establish Regular Board Meeting Date and Time

Barb Wilson asked the Board for a motion to establish the Board's regular meeting schedule.

James Malcom made a motion to meet every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

Suzanne Buck seconded. Tricia Allen and Ellen Whelan-Wuest both stated that 5:30 p.m. is a difficult time for them on Mondays.

Mary Heather Noble made a motion to amend James Malcolm's motion to have the regular board meeting schedule be every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Tricia Allen seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion to set the regular Board meeting schedule for every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, as 6:30 p.m.

Move: Mary Heather Noble Second: Tricia Allen Status: Passed

D. Public Comment

Kurt Broderson spoke from his role as the Director of MCTV -- He publicly thanked ACSD Student Representatives Eddie Falls and Nargis Anzali for their work to interview the ACSD Board candidates. He believes it was very helpful to the community. He also noted that the MCTV Board usually has an ACSD Board member serving on it -- this past year it has been Barb Wilson, and she may need to vacate the position to make time for her Board Chair responsibilities. He is informing the Board of the decision that needs to be made, and noted that the Board can also appoint someone who is not an active Board member to represent the ACSD on the MCTV Board.

Avery Thompson, a 6th-grader at MUMS spoke up on behalf of neurodiverse students. She has dyslexia, but this community of students also includes kids diagnosed with ADHD and autism. She wants to thank her teachers to helping to get some activities together for students like her.

They are working on starting a club at MUMS called K.I.N.D. (Knowledge Inclusion and Neuro Diversity).

E. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of February 28, 2023, March 1, 2023 and March 2, 2023

Joanna Doria made a motion to approve the minutes for the February 28, 2023 Board meeting and annual meeting. Jamie McCallum seconded. -- The motion passed and minutes are approved. Jason Chance, Tricia Allen, and Ellie Romp abstained.

Joanna Doria made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 1, 2023 Special Board Meeting. Jamie McCallum seconded. -- The motion passed and minutes are approved. Jason Chance, Tricia Allen, and Ellie Romp abstained.

Joanna Doria made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 2, 2023 Special Board Meeting. Jamie McCallum seconded. -- The motion passed and minutes are approved. Jason Chance, Tricia Allen, and Ellie Romp abstained.

F. Approve ACSD Bills

James Malcolm provided a brief explanation of the ACSD Bills portion of the agenda, and the process that is followed to review the District's bills.

Bills read on Feb 27, 2023:

General Fund: \$373,380.49

Payroll: \$888,677.14

Payroll: \$401.99

Bills read on March 13, 2023:

General Fund: \$849,750.84 (Note ~ \$430K of that is healthcare, and \$160K is for a new special ed vehicle.

Payroll: \$187.88

Payroll: 714.62

Payroll: \$831,737.23

Motion to approve and pay the ACSD Bills as presented.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Brian Bauer Status: Passed

G. Ripton School Presentation

The Ripton Elementary School students presented selected scenes from their Alice in Wonderland play.

H. Report of the Superintendent

Peter Burrows expressed gratitude to the ACSD Community for supporting the FY24 budget. He also thanked the principals for their hard work and presence at the meeting.

Peter referred Board members to the Superintendent's report in Boardpaq -- this is presented at the first board meeting of every month to give Board members a sense of what is happening in the District.

Hiring updates: MUHS Principal search should be complete in ~2 weeks; Ripton Principal search should be complete by the end of this week. The search for an Assistant Principal for MUMS has begun, and will take ~3 weeks.

1. Discussion: ACSD Student Services Presentation

Nicole Carter provided a presentation to describe ACSD's student services in the context of Multi-tiered Systems of Support. She credited the principals in the room as well as the Special Education Directors for their work in building a system to address the confluence of special education and general education. The presentation was included in the meeting materials, titled "Access, Success & Belonging: Building a System to Support All Learners" and summarizes the work that has been happening over the last two years.

Highlights:

Work Area #1 -- focused on Tier 1 (General Ed), incorporating a coordinated core curriculum (IB) with universal design for accessible delivery different learners. Universal screeners include K-5 FAST testing, 6-9 STAR testing; K-12 Panorama (for social/emotional learnings) and District-wide analysis.

Work Area #2 -- focused on Tier 2 interventions, or RTI Response to Intervention design and implementation. Much of this work has included data collection on ESTs and 504 plans, efforts to align ESTs across the district and identifying best practices for interventionists.

Work Area #3 -- Tier 3 special education. Much of this work has been focused on the understanding the rule changes with Act 173 to improve delivery of special education. Big changes to eligibility and who can provide services. IEPs will also include functional skills as well as academic skills.

Work Area #4 -- Special Education Funding. This work has been focused on preparing for the special education funding to transition from a reimbursement model to block grant model. The formula for that is the uniform base amount \$2,350/student x 3-year average enrollment (1,741 for ACSD) = \$4M. This is what ACSD can expect from Vermont IF enrollment does not decrease.

Total amount for ACSD will include \$4M block grant from State of Vermont, \$500K Federal IDEA money, and \$2.3M locally raised funding for a total of \$6.8M that can go toward Special Education.

Other data presented: 18.4% of Vermont students are identified for Special Ed. ACSD, ANWSD, and MAUSD have all identified ~15-16% of their total students as qualifying for Special Ed. (Laura Nugent explained that the state figures are likely elevated by Special Education percentages in Burlington (18-20%), Winooski (18-20%) and Rutland city (25%) -- which may be a result of students impacted by poverty and/or family trauma.

In ACSD, the 5th grade and 9th grade have the highest percentages. ACSD is also higher than national averages for students who qualify due to Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Other Health Impairment, and Specific Learning Disability.

Board Member Questions:

Joanna Doria asked for clarification on transitioning from reimbursement to the block grant model, and what is being done now. Jamie McCallum asked for additional explanation on the graphs illustrating the relative percentages of special education students identified in Addison County school districts. James Malcolm commented on the concern that the block grant model is at risk of being an unfunded mandate over time. Nicole Carter agreed -- Federal IDEA was originally supported by 40% and is now currently supported by 15%.

Barb Wilson asked how much reporting/oversight Vermont will require. Laura Nugent said there are 17 indicators that will be monitored as well as other data. Ellen Whelan-Wuest asked how the additional funds will be spent. Laura and Nicole responded that the plan is to have the most qualified teachers provide services at the earliest need -- this may also allow ACSD to provide services to students who would benefit but may not qualify. Joanna asked how Act 173 impacts the approach to Special Ed -- Nicole responded that it is designed to force school districts to respond to student need so that families don't have to wait for their students to fail before they receive services.

Mary Heather Noble asked Nicole to speak to the perceived tension/questions about compatibility between Special Education and IB -- based on surveys for the Superintendent Search process, many people have expressed concern about IB being accessible for special education students. Nicole and Caitlin both provided clarification on IB being the overall Tier 1 general education curriculum that is being modified for delivery with universal design. Students with disabilities will receive services and accommodations to access IB just as they would any other curriculum. There was some discussion about IB and special education in MUH, esp around the Diploma Program.

Peter Burrows suggested that Board members reach out to the Executive Committee if they wish to see more information on IB included on the agenda for a future board meeting.

I. Report of the Board

1. Action: Approve GMP Kitchen Project

Bruce Macintire walked the Board through the memo in the meeting materials. The Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the construction costs of the MUHS Kitchen Project is \$2,038,599. There are other soft costs associated with the project -- this is just for construction. The project has been scaled back from its original scope.

Discussion:

James Malcolm noted that this project must happen -- the kitchen is the original kitchen from the 1954 construction of the building, and was not updated when the rest of the cafeteria was updated in the 1990s.

Joanna asked if the MUHS space is used to prepare all ACSD food. Peter Burrows responded that it isn't; Mary Hogan School cafeteria is used to prepare food for some of the smaller schools.

Brian Bauer expressed appreciation for scaling the project back from the most recent \$4M price tag.

Lindsey Hescoek asked Bruce about what was removed from the project. Bruce responded that the HVAC updates have been removed, along with some of the more expensive kitchen equipment.

James Malcolm reminded the Board that the amount the Board originally approved for the project was \$2.5M -- the \$4M was due in part to increased construction costs. He also asked Bruce how students will be served when the kitchen is not operational. Bruce said the Stadium concession kitchen will be used for food prep and service will happen out of the pizza station in the MUHS cafeteria. The goal is for the project to be complete by end of summer 2023.

Jason Chance asked a question about soft cost contingencies. Suzanne asked who was selected as the general project manager. Bruce said it is Marty Spaulding with PCI.

Motion to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$2,038,599 for the MUHS Kitchen Project construction costs, and authorize BreadLoaf Corp to initiate the project.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Suzanne Buck Status: Passed

J. Other

Mary Heather Noble provided an update on the Superintendent Search. The position has been posted since the first week of March and will remain open until March 28th. Dr. Gratto with McPherson & Jacobson has prepared a list of potential interview questions that she will share with the full Board. The homework: each Board member should review the list and select their top 3 (or come up with their own questions). We will compile that list to help identify the final interview questions for superintendent candidates.

Barb Wilson suggested that we set a due date for that task: Plan on discussing during executive session at the next Board meeting on March 27th.

Mary Heather also provided the dates for the search timeline, and will follow-up with an email to the Board:

March 28 -- application window closes
April 11 -- Special Board meeting to select candidates to interview
April 18, 19, and 20 -- First Round interviews
May 2, and 4 -- Finalist interviews
Selection of new Superintendent in mid-May for July 1st start date.

Lindsey Hescoek asked about committee assignments. Barb Wilson and Suzanne Buck described the process to new Board members. Suzanne noted that the Executive Committee usually discusses assignments, so it is a group effort. Barb will send an email with further explanation and request that people send their preferences.

K. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Heather Noble, recorder

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

*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.