

MINUTES

**Addison Central School District
ACSD Board
Board Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2023, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
286 Kelly Cross Road, Salisbury 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; Caitlin Steele; Ellen Whelan-Wuest; Ellie Romp; Heather Crowley; James Malcolm; Jamie McCallum; Jason Chance; Joanna Doria; Lindsey Hescocock; Mary Heather Noble; Matthew Corrente; Nicole Carter; Peter Burrows; Steve Orzech; Suzanne Buck; Tricia Allen

Please click the link below to join the webinar: [Link to join Webinar](#)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87355215940>

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Other ACSD administration and staff present: Will Hatch, Director of Technology; Bjarki

Sears, Principal of Salisbury Community School; Jenn LaRocque, Teacher at Salisbury

Community School; Lili Foster, Learning Specialist at Salisbury Community School; Emily Blistein, Director of Communications & Engagement (remote)

Barb Wilson opened the meeting with acknowledgement of the loss of MUHS student

Rebecca Ball, and asked for a moment of silence in honor of her and her school community. 2. Public Comment None.

B. Salisbury School Presentation

Bjarki Sears welcomed the Board to the Salisbury Community School and expressed gratitude for the staff and community of the school. His experience as the new principal has been bolstered by a kind and caring community. He then introduced Jenn LaRoque and her 2nd/3rd grade students to provide a presentation on their ecosystem unit, which included a written report and diorama.

Jenn LaRocque and Lili Foster then provided a data-based presentation on the focused literacy work that they have been doing at Salisbury School to provide fortified instruction both in the general classroom and in small intervention groups. The work is based on the Orton-Gillingham method of literacy instruction, and is monitored with FAST bridge reading assessments. Highlights included:

- Data-based decision-making in instruction
- School-wide protected literacy blocks
- Repetitive, layered instruction methods, supplemented with use of decodable books- Tangible gains in literacy, even with "at-risk" readers

Questions from the Board:

Brian Bauer asked if any other schools were employing this type of methodology. Jen LaRocque said this was a kind of pilot effort that she is hoping can be expanded.

Mary Heather Noble asked if/how the methods they are using can be scaled up for use in larger classrooms. Jen said that she is currently applying them in a blended classroom of 21 students.

Jamie McCallum asked about who makes the decision about the materials (e.g. decoding books). Caitlin Steele responded that the materials were purchased district-wide, and that several teachers are planning to take training in the O-G instruction method. The 30 course is a significant time commitment for some teachers, but the instruction is powerful for many student. Ellie Romp mentioned that her son has benefited from the instruction.

Suzanne Buck commended the data collection, and that it is powerful for students to see their own progress. Ellen Whelan-Wuest asked if the data collection & monitoring was a component of the O-G training. Jen responded that it wasn't -- the data collection was actually from a partner project that she and Lili Foster completed as part of their National Board Certification process.

Steve Orzech asked about the differential literacy growth between 2nd and 3rd graders, and whether having a blended classroom made instruction more challenging. Jen noted that many of her students arrive in the classroom underprepared, whether it is a blended classroom or not, so her teaching must accommodate different levels. But the idea of grouping students by ability so they can all make gains at their skill and pace is helpful, and can help admin prioritize staffing appropriately.

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of March 27, 2023, March 31, 2023

Recommendation to approve the minutes of March 27, 2023 -- Motion made by Jason Chance, seconded by James Malcolm. Steve Orzech noted a correction to be made in reference to the negotiations committee's recent work. Motion passed with correction.

Recommendation to approve the minutes of March 31, 2023 -- Motion made by Suzanne Buck, seconded by Steve Orzech. Motion passed. Jamie McCallum abstained.

D. Approve ACSD Bills

James Malcolm reported that there were no ACSD Bills to be read.

E. Report of the Superintendent

Peter Burrows referenced the Superintendent's Report included in the meeting materials -- there are a lot of fun student enrichment event happening at the schools, between field trips and visiting artists. He then turned his attention to the tragic loss of MUHS student Rebecca Ball, and how difficult it has been for the MUHS community. He has been very moved by the way in which the ACSD community has risen up to provide support to students and teachers. There are no words to express how we feel, but we still come together to grieve, reflect on the lives we're living and how we want to live.

Peter also provided recent updates for hiring leadership positions: Zach Jerome has been hired as the MUMS Assistant Principal for FY24, and Peter is currently working to fill the Director of Teaching and Learning position that Caitlin has vacated.

Finally, Peter mentioned the recent swatting call and active shooter hoax at Middlebury College. Everyone in education is talking about this new phenomenon and working with their School Resource Officer and local police department to improve review and response to these threats. The impact of swatting calls on school communities is huge -- especially to mental health. He indicated that they will always err on the side of safety.

Brian Bauer asked about whether the district has a systematic response to these threats -- Peter confirmed that it does. Steve Orzech commented on a different

matter -- he was concerned to see the degree of confidential personal information that was included in the newspaper about Rebecca Ball, and wanted to confirm that it didn't come from ACSD. Peter confirmed such.

F. Report of the Board

1. Action: Professional Appointments

Motion to approve the professional appointments for the '23-'24 academic year as presented in the meeting materials.

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Suzanne Buck Status: Passed

2. Discussion: Superintendent Search

Mary Heather presented the Board with a draft schedule for Superintendent finalist interviews, included in the meeting materials. She thanked Emily Blistein and Heather Crowley for their assistance in planning logistics. The Board needs to decide whether the candidates should see all 9 schools, and whether the candidates should go out to dinner with a few Board members or have a catered in dinner with the full Board.

Several Board members expressed concern about the challenges of visiting all 9 schools and having it be a meaningful experience for the candidates. Some Board members felt that doing so would provide a great overview of the community. Peter Burrows weighed in with his experience, noting that most districts do not take candidates to all schools -- just a few to give a flavor of the learning community. The Board agreed to eliminate some of the schools from the itinerary. Mary Heather will draft 3 different itineraries that include a mixture of elementary schools plus MUMS and MUHS.

Board members also took a straw poll vote and determined that ordering a catered meal would be the best way to handle dinner. Board members who can attend are welcome, but not expected for the dinner portion of the day. The final interviews will be held after the meal.

3. Discussion: Robert's Rules and Board Operations

Barb Wilson reintroduced the summary of Robert's Rules of Order, and the Board's discussion of whether to adopt Robert's Rules of Order for small boards as its preferred mode of operation, or whether to use the standard Robert's Rules. This had been tabled from the last Board meeting. She invited Board members to share their thoughts after looking at the two different options. She said the Board can choose one or the other, or decide to continue operating with a hybrid method -- as long as it specifies what will be modified from the standard Rules.

Suzanne Buck offered a historical perspective -- when the ACSD Board first came together, the choice was to either follow Robert's Rules or become a governance Board. The initial Board chose Robert's Rules, and continuing to use that allows the procedure to be the same even for the Annual Meeting.

Mary Heather Noble expressed a preference for continuing the hybrid method that the Board has been using. She does not agree that the Board should loosen the rules to allow for motions to move forward without having a second, and allowing the Board Chair to vote in all matters.

Joanna Doria said she thought Vermont Statute requires school Boards to operate according to Robert's Rules. Barb clarified that Board can modify their procedures as long as they are stated.

Ellie Romp asked for clarification -- if the Board is supposed to follow Robert's Rules and is not doing so, shouldn't it adopt the procedure for small boards?

Barb noted that the Board can choose to use a hybrid and shed the formalities of Robert's Rules for large boards -- but she believes it should be written down so it can be included in an on-boarding training manual.

Brian Bauer thought the rules for small boards was more appropriate for this Board's size.

Steve Orzech questioned the appropriateness of using Robert's Rules for small boards, since the ACSD Board consists of 13 members. He also emphasized the importance of utilizing an efficient model -- the structure of the full Robert's Rules provides limits to improve efficiency. The rules for small boards can be used by Board committees. He suggested creation of an ad-hoc committee to research and provide policy language to define this board's mode of operations. Barb Wilson agreed, and suggested revisiting after the Superintendent Search is complete.

4. Discussion: Committee Updates

Barb checked to confirm that all committees have either met or are scheduled to meet. Mary Heather asked about committee chairs -- Jason Chance is chairing the Facilities Committee, and Steve Orzech is chairing the Negotiations Committee. The other committees are scheduled to meet soon and will elect their chairs soon.

Lindsey Hescocock asked a question regarding formation of a quorum for committees, and whether back and forth emails between 2 members of a 3 person committee forms a quorum. Barb confirmed that this communication is permissible only if the communication is restricted to scheduling. If committee matters are discussed, it is a meeting of the committee that should be warned.

G. Executive Session: Personnel/Negotiations Entered Executive Session at 8:09 p.m.

Exited Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 9:35 p.m.

Motion to enter Executive Session for Personnel and Negotiations.

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Suzanne Buck Status: Passed

H. Other

Motion to authorize Board Chair Barb Wilson to work with the ACSD Business Office to identify a Superintendent salary range for a draft contract.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Brian Bauer Status: Passed

I. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

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.