

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
ACSD Board
Board Meeting
Monday, May 13, 2024, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection**

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION

Our vision is for all ACSD students to reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students.

In-Person Attendance

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

Remote Attendance

Jamie McCallum

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Barb Wilson 5 min

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

ACSD Admin & Staff in attendance: Tim Williams, Interim Superintendent; Matt Corrente, Director of Finance & Operations; Nicole Carter, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Equity & Student Services; Courtney Krahn, Director of Teaching & Learning; Wendy Baker, Incoming Superintendent.

Sophia Lawton, Student Rep to the ACSD Board also present.

2. Motion to Adopt Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed

B. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Barb Wilson 10 min

No public comment.

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of 4/22/2024

Barb Wilson 5 min

Note: Ellen Whelan-Wuest abstained from voting on the minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes of April 22, 2024.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

D. Approve ACSD Bills

James Malcolm 5 min

James Malcolm presented the ACSD bills that were read on April 30, 2024:

Payroll: \$930,948.60

Payroll: \$1,606.98

General Fund: \$1,093,619.08 (Health and Dental comprised ~ \$370K of this, and transportation comprised ~ \$147K of this total)

Motion to accept and approve payment of the ACSD bills as presented.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

E. Report of the Student Representative

Eddie Fallis 5 min
Sophia Lawton

Sophia Lawton reported that MUHS hosted its Prom this past weekend. Spring Fling will be coming soon, with outdoor games and an end-of-year BBQ. She also mentioned that Hope Happens Here will be hosting another event soon, with a corn hole tournament.

Mary Heather Noble mentioned the PAHCC recently honored new inductees to the National Technical Honor Society, including the Board's own Sophia Lawton. Board members applauded Sophia. Jason Chance mentioned some upcoming MUHS Girls lacrosse games, and Tricia Allen noted ACSD 5th graders will be going to Keewaydin for their outdoor education experience soon.

F. Report of the Superintendent

Tim Williams

Tim Williams presented information included in his latest weekly update, specifically MUHS's recent rankings in the State of Vermont and the U.S. News & World Report (information included in the meeting materials, on page 1 of the Superintendent's Report). Dr. Williams noted the relatively high marks that MUHS received for most ranking factors, including the college readiness index, college curriculum breadth, and state assessment performance/proficiency rankings. He credited educators in the elementary and secondary schools as well, for their role in preparing students to perform well in these indicators. One opportunity for improvement is the MUHS graduation rate, which is below desired numbers, and could boost MUHS's ranking considerably if this statistic is improved. Caitlin Steele has identified this issue as a priority and is working with MUHS staff and other admin team members on addressing it.

Dr. Williams also presented updated figures for student poverty rates by school, based on both corrected data within ACSD's reporting system and the State of Vermont's new methods of identifying students living in poverty (information included in meeting materials, on page 2 of the Superintendent's Report). He noted the significant increases to the District's estimates figures for ACSD students living in poverty--the most important impact is that most ACSD schools will now qualify for school-wide Title I funding (which allow flexibility spending funding to serve a broader number of students in need). So it should increase funding for the District.

Board Questions:

James Malcom noted the ongoing challenges with identifying students living in poverty, due to the self-reporting nature of Free & Reduced Lunch applications. He is still suspicious of the quality of the data, and is also shocked at the differences in figures from town to town. Courtney Krahn and Matt Corrente provided some explanation about the new surrogate information that the state is using to count students living in poverty, including FRL as well as participation in certain state healthcare programs, etc. This effort is continuing to be refined.

Joanna Doria asked for clarification on the school-wide Title 1 finding vs. targeted Title 1 funding, and wanted to know whether this is used for summer programming. Dr. Williams explained that current plans for summer programming is using leftover ESSER funds, but that the Board will need to determine a new funding source in the future.

Ellen Whelan-Wuest also asked for clarification on the eligibility for school-wide funding. Courtney Krahn explained that a school must have 40% of students or more identified as living at the poverty level to qualify for school-wide Title 1 funding. Under this year's numbers, only Bridport and Salisbury receive school-wide funding. Mary Hogan School receives targeted Title 1 funds that must be specifically spent on eligible students, not on school-wide programming. Ellen also asked about the impact of the IB program on MUHS's college curriculum rating. Dr. Williams explained that schools offering either AP or IB course have higher rankings in this category.

Mary Heather Noble noted the low graduation rate ranking for MUHS, underscoring the importance of offering flexible pathways to try and improve these numbers. She also asked about the overlap between the two presented tables, and whether there is any indication that kids living in poverty might be graduating in lower numbers. Courtney Krahn explained that MUHS admin is working with her to really examine this issue, to identify who the District is 'losing' before graduation, and why they are leaving. Mary Heather requested follow-up information on the findings. She also expressed discomfort with the use of percentages to compare poverty rates between schools, since some schools have very small data sets. 68% at Shoreham is not the same as 68% at Mary Hogan. She echoed James Malcolm's comment about the significant differences in poverty rates between schools -- it looks like socioeconomic segregation.

1. Personnel Actions

10 min

Dr. Williams presented the appointments, resignations, and retirements for Board approval.

Note: Laura Harthan abstained from voting.

Motion to accept and approve the following appointments, resignations, and retirements:

- a. Appoint William Chapman-Hale, Multi-Lingual Learner Teacher, 1.0 FTE, Step 8, effective 7/1/2024
- b. Appoint Carline Choudhury, School Nurse, 1.0 FTE, Step 11, effective 7/1/2024
- c. Appoint Laura Emilo, School Counselor, 1.0 FTE, Step 6, effective 7/1/2024
- d. Appoint Danielle Morris, School Nurse, 1.0 FTE, Step 5, effective 7/1/2024
- e. Appoint Ian Ross, Custodian, 1.0 FTE, Step 12, effective 5/28/2024
- f. Appoint Linda Sommers, World Language Teacher - Spanish, 1.0 FTE, Step 19, effective 7/1/2024
- g. Appoint Caroline Wood, Science Teacher, 1.0 FTE, Step 1, effective 7/1/2024
- h. Accept Resignation of Elizabeth Burrows, School Counselor, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024
- i. Accept Resignation of Emily Pottinger, Paraprofessional, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024
- j. Accept Resignation of Susan Rakowski, Speech/Language Pathologist, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024

k. Accept Resignation of Nathaniel Thompson, Special Educator, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Ellie Romp Status: Passed

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G. Report of the Chair

Barb Wilson 30 min

1. Board Governance – Board Self Evaluation Results & Discussion

Barb Wilson noted two important events for Board members to put on their calendars:

June 7th MUHS Awards Ceremony
June 8 MUHS graduation

She then reported the results of the Board's self-evaluation on the new Board Governance Rules (results included in meeting materials). 100% of board members participated in the survey. Barb explained how the Executive Committee reviewed and organized the results to help identify which rules the Board might begin working on in the upcoming year.

Board member questions:

Brian Bauer asked about the results reported for Rules 113.2.1 and 113.3.1. They do not seem to be in agreement. Wouldn't an assessment have to have happened? Barb and Mary Heather explained that the percentages are based on the number of board members who agree or disagree that the board has met the goal.

Ellen Whelan-Wuest expressed her hope for more board member agreement on self-evaluation. She asked about those rules for which the responses were more neutral, or where there was disagreement among board members -- she has lots of questions about what that means.

Barb and Mary Heather explained that this approach is just one way for the Executive Committee to identify a which rules to work on -- the easiest way seemed to be finding the

ones that most board members agreed the Board was not in compliance with and tackle those first.

Steve Orzech noted that the self-survey is basically an opinion pole, and wondered if there was a way for the Board to get a more objective perspective from an outside body.

James Malcolm agreed, noting that he found he couldn't confidently answer some of the questions.

Suzanne Buck noted that VSBA is currently working on scoring rubrics for these rules, which would help tease out whether/how well Board's are meeting the standards. It has been a very difficult process, and we are not likely to see the rubrics until mid-June.

Jason Chance wondered whether the priority rules should instead be what is most important to board members.

Barb Wilson noted that the group can follow up on this, perhaps during the Board retreat. She did not intend for the Board to decide today.

Laura Harthan also noted the varying degree of difficulty in tackling different rules. Maybe it would be best to go after the low-hanging fruit first.

Mary Heather asked Barb about her preferred timeframe for choosing which rules to work on. We will need to incorporate it into the work plan. Barb responded that her hope is to decide at the retreat, and finalize the work plan in June.

2. Retreat Planning Update

Barb Wilson and Dr. Wendy Baker provided some information about the upcoming Board retreat on June 1st. That will be Dr. Baker's first official day as the ACSD Superintendent.

Details: June 1st from 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at PAHCC. Lunch will be provided by ACSD food services (soup, salad, sandwich fixings, and dessert).

Topics:

- How the ACSD Board and Superintendent & admin team will work together
- Board training on equity-based budgeting
- Strategic plan implementation
- (if time allows) Board selection of which governance rules to tackle

Ellen Whelan-Wuest asked if there is any preparation the Board members should do beforehand. Barb Wilson suggested reviewing the Strategic Plan goals and targets. Dr. Baker also noted that the admin team will have materials to support the Board.

H. Report of the Board

5 min

Tricia Allen shared the draft Spring 2024 Board Update that the C&E Committee has prepared for distribution next week. She invited Board members to provide feedback by Friday, May 17th.

Suzanne Buck asked where the Board Update is sent/how it is distributed. Mary Heather Noble explained that over the past few years, the Board update is emailed directly to people on the ACSD's mailing list, it is posted on the website, and is included in District newsletters and Principal weekly updates. The C&E Committee has also been posting the Board's quarterly updates on Front Porch Forum. There was some discussion about other cost-effective ways to

reach stakeholders not already in ACSD's orbit. The C&E Committee has looked into forwarding updates to town offices for email distribution to their residents, but not all towns have functioning listservs. This is an ongoing effort.

Laura Harthan suggested having email sign-up sheets at all town halls during voting.

I. Public Comment - Any Topic Barb Wilson 5 min

No public comment.

J. Executive Session as per 1 VSA Section 313(a)(1) Steve Orzech 20 min

Entered Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

Exited Executive Session and re-entered Open Session at 8:20 p.m.

Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss negotiations per 1 VSA Section 313 (a) (1), and include Dr. Wendy Baker and Matt Corrente in Executive Session.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Steve Orzech Status: Passed

K. Action on ACEA Master Agreement 5 min

Barb Wilson stated that the Board is postponing taking action on the ACEA Master Agreement until the ACEA completes its ratification process.

L. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

Total Meeting Time: 1h 45m

***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.