

## MINUTES



**Addison Central School District  
ACSD Board  
Board Retreat  
Saturday, June 1, 2024, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm  
Room A-208  
Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center  
51 Charles Avenue  
Middlebury, VT 05753**

### *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 Attendance**

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

#### A. A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum

Meeting started at 9:30 a.m.

Motion to relax use of Roberts Rules for the duration of the Board Retreat.

Move: Jason Chance Second: Joanna Doria Status: Passed

#### 1. Introductions

ACSD Staff present:

Wendy Baker, Superintendent

Nicole Carter, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Equity & Student Services

Courtney Krahn, Director of Teaching & Learning

Matt Corrente, Director of Finance & Operations

Emily Blistein, Director of Communications & Engagement

#### B. Retreat Topics

#### 1. Our Work Together with New Superintendent and Central Office Leadership Team

Dr. Baker opened the discussion with a review of the general roles & responsibilities of the Board (governance) and the Office of the Superintendent (operations). She provided a structural description of her approach to decision-making, which includes 4 pillars:

1. Financial Responsibility

2. Organizational Integrity
3. Human Centric Design
4. Excellence

She also provided an Equity Framework for Operational Decision-making, which includes the concept Organizational Justice (i.e., how fair the organization is in its operations) -- consisting of:

- Distributive Justice (Fairness in the distribution of organizational resources)
- Procedural Justice (Fairness in the organization's procedures)
- Interpersonal Justice (Fair & respectful treatment within the organization)
- Informational Justice (Fair amount & timelines of shared information)

Dr. Baker also discussed the Human-Centered Design for the basis of an organizational culture, which places people at the center and promotes solutions that are built to suit human needs and are designed through empathy. This approach prioritizes the following:

- Being people-centered (how do people experience the organization)
- Addressing the right challenge
- Thinking of the Systems/Big-picture repercussions
- Attempting small and simple solutions for iterative change that is evaluated along the way

## 2. Equity Based Budgeting

Matt Corrente and Nicole Carter provided a presentation on their research into Equity-Based Budgeting, which included a literature review of Equity-based budgeting from other government agencies and other K-12 school systems.

Nicole provided a brief history of the approach to building budgets, with present day efforts incorporating multiple elements, including a historical data line approach, efficiency-based performance budgeting, efficiency & efficacy-based program budgeting, and output-outcome-based budgeting that focuses on 1) outcomes, 2) how to achieve outcomes, and 3) reflection/evaluation to assess whether outcomes were achieved with the resource allocation that was used.

Equity-based budgeting takes the complex budget approach even further, by defining Equity, incorporating the definition into the desired outcomes, identifying budget mechanisms to achieve the desired equity outcomes, and then developing an equity-based budget to support that effort. All of this is done with public engagement and transparency (a public feedback loop before, during, and after decision-making). Nicole then walked the group through a number of specific examples, taken from municipal government and other public school systems.

Matt Corrente provided a overview of a process that ACSD could use to take steps toward equity-based budgeting, including:

- Determining the baseline conditions (mental health and SEL, at-risk students, physical health, and academic success)
- Completing the budget migration initiatives to put all student services into one cost center and align spending with documented student need.
- Building the culture of flexible sharing of resources based on collective student need across the district rather than building-based allocation of student service resources

Matt provided an overview of ACSD's funding sources for student services and how those

dollars are spent, as well as things within the ACSD Toolbox to move toward a more equity-based approach to budgeting, including:

- alternative methods of budget development, based on outcomes, programmatic goals, and data
- weighting distribution of resources based on student need (as is already done at the state level, but continuing to direct allocated funds toward intended uses)
- targeting new funding sources

Dr. Baker proposed having her team create a few mock FY25 budget varieties to illustrate how such an approach could work, using the numbers from the already-approved FY25 budget. This will help the Board and administration contemplate how current budget structure could be modified to deliver more equitable results.

### 3. Strategic Plan Implementation Team Feedback

Emily Blistein provided an overview of work that has already begun/is currently being done in support of the Board's 3 Strategic Plan Goals (<https://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/strategic-plan>) and associated targets (e.g., Where are our ACSD energies currently going?). The list was generated from a staff survey (~110 of 450 responded) and is not intended to be all-inclusive.

Board members reviewed the summaries of activities/efforts being done in support of each Goal and provided some feedback about additional efforts that could/should be elevated. Dr. Baker indicated that this is an initial step and that the team still has work to do around organizing and prioritizing the work. Her focus is on cultivating Belonging as a broad theme to support all of the Board's goals -- some of the discussion points/needs included:

- Building data-gathering and analysis capacity, and making sure that this work is not isolated to positions that are currently vacant;
- Continuing anti-bias training for other ACSD staff;
- Culture & community-building efforts that focus on adults (staff & caregivers) as well as students;
- Expanding equity-based budgeting/decision-making;
- Improving communication and evaluation of communication & engagement to 1) explain what is being done to support Board Goals, and 2) asking if the efforts are landing with staff, students, families and other stakeholders.

The presentation wrapped up with discussion about Governance-focused things the Board can do to support this work (e.g., Communication & Engagement, Equity-based policy review, and additional policy development in support of the District's definition of success).

Dr. Baker stated that the Board should count on the Administration to take the lead on the Operational elements of moving the Strategic Plan forward, including Equity-based budgeting & resource allocation, strengthening collaborative capacity with other ACSD community partners, developing and analyzing student performance measures, and supporting the Board in its communications.

### 4. Considerations for Next Steps in Board Governance work in support of Strategic Plan and

## new AOE Rules Adoption

Barb Wilson provided updated results from a recent Board survey to rank/select the AOE Board Governance Rules to incorporate into the year's work plan. Based on the results, there is broad Board member support to focus on:

113.3.2 The Board ensures its annual budget aligns with its states priorities and provides an equitable distribution of resources to help meet the needs and goals of every student.

113.1.2 At least annually, the Board sets measurable goals and regularly reviews the progress toward these goals.

113.1.3 At least annually, the Board monitors student academic progress and wellness.

113.2.2 The Board annually reviews whether and/or how its action and contributions have impacted the school system's success in meeting goals.

Suzanne Buck noted that the VSBA will be developing rubrics for each of the goals -- she will share them with Board members as soon as they are available, and that will determine how many of the above rules get fully incorporated into this year's work plan.

### 5. 2024/2025 Board Training Topics and Scheduling

Barb Wilson solicited ideas from Board members for additional ongoing training for the year. Ideas shared included:

- Additional anti-bias training
- Training about Education Funding in Vermont
- Training/assistance on conducting a quality Superintendent Evaluation

### 6. 2024/2025 Work Plan

Other ideas to incorporate into future agendas/work plan:

- Procedure/ethics around visiting schools as Board members
- The need for an advisory group to help the Superintendent navigate emergency situations (e.g., the Executive Committee plus a few other knowledgeable/always available members)
- Connecting the School Board with member town activities and plans that may affect ACSD. Attending Select Board meetings?
- Partnering with the Rural Council of Economic Development
- Investigating how best to collect/analyze/present data to support equity-based decision-making when school populations are very small

## C. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Jason Chance Second: Barbara Wilson 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.