

## MINUTES



**Addison Central School District  
ACSD Board  
Board Meeting  
Monday, June 10, 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 Attendance**

Barbara Wilson; Brian Bauer; Courtney Krahn; Eddie Fallis; Ellen Whelan-Wuest; James Malcolm; Jamie McCallum; Jason Chance; Joanna Doria; Mary Heather Noble; Matthew Corrente; Nicole Carter; Sophia Lawton; Steve Orzech; Suzanne Buck; Tricia Allen; Wendy Baker

### **Not In Attendance**

Darcie Arensmeyer; Ellie Romp; Laura Harthan

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

5 min

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

##### 1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

ACSD Staff members 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

Student Reps Eddie Fallis and Sophia Lawton also present.

##### 2. Motion to Adopt Agenda

Original motion: Suzanne Buck made a motion to adopt the agenda. Jason Chance seconded.

Barb Wilson made a motion to amend the agenda to include ACSD Bills. James Malcolm seconded. There was no discussion. Barb Wilson called the vote and the amendment unanimously passed.

Jamie McCallum made a motion to amend the agenda to add a discussion about Policy A-

21. Ellen Whelan-Wuest seconded. There was some initial confusion about the reason for this change, and concern about discussing a policy change that had not been warned, but Jamie McCallum clarified that he merely wanted to report on a discussion that the Policy Committee had had about their recent review of Policy A21. Barb Wilson called the vote and the amended unanimously passed.

The original motion to adopt the agenda (as amended) was also unanimously passed.

Motion to adopt the agenda as amended.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

B. Public Comment on Agenda Items 10 min

Mary Slosar of Weybridge took the opportunity to comment on the newly added agenda item Policy A21 regarding public participation in Board meetings. She hopes the Board will consider displaying or posting the agenda during the meeting so that community members know whether their comment is related to an agenda item.

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of 5-28-2024, Board Meeting and 6-1-2-24 Board Retreat. 5 min

After Board minutes were passed, James Malcolm reported on the ACSD Bills, which were read by himself and Jason Chance on June 3, 2024.

General Fund: \$832,434.68 (Note: ~\$532K of this is health and dental)  
Payroll: \$988,551.78

James Malcom made a motion to approve payment of the ACSD Bills as presented. Jason Chance seconded. There was no further discussion, and the motion was unanimously passed.

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2024 Board meeting and the June 1, 2024 Board Retreat.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Jamie McCallum Status: Passed

D. Report of the Student Representatives Eddie Fallis Sophia Lawton 5 min

Student Rep Sophia Lawton reported recent events and activities at MUHS:

Boys Lacrosse and Boys Baseball both have reached the State Semifinals and have games this week. Track & Field placed 6th overall in the State. MUHS had the final assembly parade and awards ceremony. PAHCC also hosted its graduation for program "finishers." MUHS Peer Leaders welcomed 8th graders last week for Move-Up Day, and there was also an IB Diploma & DP Certificate celebration to honor those students.

Student Rep Eddie Fallis also noted that last week was Senior week, which included lots of MUHS traditions like the Senior Raft Race and BBQ at Lake Dunmore. Graduation was on Saturday--Eddie thanked Board members who attended. He mentioned that principal Caitlin Steele is currently seeking a new student rep to replace him as this is his last meeting. He thanked Board members for the opportunity.

James Malcom thanked Eddie for his service and also noted the important symbolism of the final assembly parade: that education is the most important thing in our community, making State Rte. 7 stop to accommodate the annual bridge ceremony. He noted the importance of passing and celebrating future graduating classes as part of the process.

Mary Heather Noble thanked Eddie for his service and also thanked Dr. Baker for her thoughtful remarks during the graduation ceremony. Steve Orzech noted the significant change in the number of Board members who attended graduation this year, compared to years past, and thanked everyone who came. Dr. Baker noted that ACSD staff also responded to Board member support at the event. Suzanne Buck offered additional thanks to Eddie Fallis for his service.

E. Report of the Superintendent

Wendy Baker 15 min

Dr. Wendy Baker provided some feedback from her first official week as the ACSD Superintendent. She has spent lots of time in ACSD schools and with preparations for the graduation ceremony. She then provided some additional information on two elements of her first weekly summary:

1. Hiring/Vacancies -- Dr. Baker reported that this is the time of year when people leave positions and the District hires new people. She noted that the activity appears to fall within normal fluctuations, with the exception of a few positions. The District currently has 25 vacancies, many of which are in the process of being filled, but the 5 Speech & Language Pathology (SLP) and 4 school counselor positions are causing the leadership team to think about creative solutions to provide those services to students if they are not able to fill them by the end of summer. She will keep the Board updated on this issue. She also noted that there will be coordination between filling vacancies in schools with newly hired principals.

Jason Chance asked if the District is able to train or guide some existing employees into important vacancies to ensure provision of services. Dr. Baker said yes, this is an important part of creative problem solving that will need to occur. Steve Orzech noted the particular challenge around hiring SLPs, there have been vacancies in those positions as long as he has been in education.

2. Professional Development Planning -- Dr. Baker provided a table to illustrate the total amount of teacher training and professional development that needs to be fit into an academic year so that Board members can see how teacher training requirements accumulate across the District's workforce.

Mandatory trainings: 5.5 hours

Professional Activities/Protected Prep: 22.5 hours required per contract

Integrating learning methods/policy into practice (team meetings, etc.): 13-18 hours

Other professional development: 43 hours

Jason Chance asked Dr. Baker about how the District is responding to the specific concerns that Mary Hogan teachers presented to the Board a few months ago -- how are they making sure teachers serving incoming Kindergartners and rising 1st graders are adequately supported?

Nicole Carter responded that she has been working closely with Courtney Krahn, Meg Baker, and Jen Kravitz to offer summer play groups and other programming to provide educators with earlier opportunities to meet students and families before class placements are made. They are also working to collect data from PreK programs to identify students with higher needs early so the classrooms are equipped to support them before they arrive.

1. Personnel Items

Accept the appointments, resignations, and retirements of ACSD staff as presented in the agenda.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

- a. Appoint Hilary Collier, Academic Interventionist, 1.0 FTE, effective 7/1/2024
- b. Accept Resignation of Matthew Alford, Paraprofessional, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024
- c. Accept Resignation of Ashleigh Capek-Disorda, Paraprofessional, 1.0 FTE, effective 5/15/2024
- d. Accept Resignation of Marc Dudsak, Math Teacher, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024
- e. Accept Resignation of Madeline Fuller, Paraprofessional, 1.0 FTE, effective 6/30/2024

F. Report of the Chair

Barb Wilson 30 min

1. Next Year's Meeting Schedule (August 2024-June 2025)

Barb Wilson asked Board members about their preferences around scheduling Board meetings that fall during school vacation weeks, and whether meetings at ACSD schools should resume.

Board members decided to keep Nov 25, 2024 meeting; move December 23rd meeting to Dec 16th; keep Feb 24th meeting; and move May 26th meeting to May 27th.

Re: meeting locations -- Board members shared their preferences and expressed their concerns about the quality of meeting recordings in some elementary schools.

Pros of holding meetings at all 9 ACSD schools: Board members see all schools, community members have opportunity to participate in person without having to drive to Middlebury, demonstrates that Board members serve all communities and values all member communities. Important engagement opportunity without much more planning/time commitment.

Cons of holding meetings at all 9 ACSD schools: poor quality of recordings due to technology limitations, could be harder for MUHS student reps to get there, additional presentation time for Board meetings, which may not be related to current Board work.

The majority of Board members favored returning to holding one of the bimonthly meetings at ACSD schools. Some ideas to address concerns included:

- holding the meetings in smaller spaces so the sound quality/ability of Board members to hear one another is not compromised;
- creating specific parameters around school presentations so the information serves larger strategic plan deliverables;
- adjusting the agenda to allow school presentations to occur before Board work;
- holding informal "coffee & cookies" gathering prior to Board meeting to allow for engagement;
- placing time limits on school presentations, formatting for consistency.

Dr. Baker assured the Board that the leadership team will make this happen so meetings at ACSD schools can resume starting in September.

2. Committee Meeting Agendas and Warnings

Barb Wilson reminded Board members that Committee meeting agendas, meeting materials, and minutes should be consistently provided to Darcie Arensmeyer so she can warn meetings and post minutes in accordance with Open Meeting Law. Mary Heather Noble

noted that supporting the Board's administrative needs is not Darcie's full time job, so Board members should take care to have their materials organized to make her work easier. Dr. Baker and Darcie will be creating a template to streamline the process for Committee Chairs.

James Malcolm asked if Heather Crowley's position will be replaced. Dr Baker confirmed this, so that there will be ample administrative capability for Board and Central Office needs.

### 3. Summary S.55 Legislations Impact to Open Meeting Law

Barb Wilson shared the recently passed S-55 legislation around Open Meeting Law requirements for school boards, starting July 1, 2024. In summary:

ACSD must post the procedure for filing an Open Meeting Law complaint. Barb suggests using the VSBA suggested language and having Emily Blistein post on the ACSD website.

Full school board meetings need to be recorded and must be held in a physical location (unless there is an emergency, then a virtual meeting may be permitted as long as the public has access).

Committee meetings do not need to need to be held in a physical location as long as the public can access it. Committee meetings do not need to be recorded, but may be. See meeting materials.

### 4. Retreat Follow-up Items

#### a. AOE Rules Prioritization and Selection

Barb Wilson reminded Board members about the 4-5 AOE rules that the collective group identified as priorities, and asked whether the group wanted to tackle all of them or just select a few.

Tricia Allen recalled that the Board was still waiting for the VSBA's rubrics for some of the rules, to help inform whether it would be reasonable to take on more than 1 or 2. Barb Wilson agreed to postpone the discussion until the rubrics have been shared.

#### b. Superintendent Goal Setting & Evaluation Process Discussion

Barb Wilson shared that she has reached out to Judy Sclair-Stein with McPherson & Jacobson to finish Phase 5 of the Superintendent Search Process, which is setting goals and establishing the evaluations process. She also gave Judy a copy of the process that the ACSD Board has used to conduct prior Superintendent Evaluations.

Barb mentioned that Judy will be in Middlebury on August 14th and 15th to do some follow-up work with the PAHCC, so we could consider doing the work during that time. Or the Board can also schedule a different in-person (or virtual) meeting to complete this work.

Jason Chance asked whether there was any interest in establishing a standing Superintendent Evaluation Committee consisting of more than just the Executive Committee. Barb Wilson noted that this would require a policy change.

James Malcolm and Suzanne Buck provided some perspective on how evaluations were conducted in the past. There was some discussion about whether to create a dedicated committee for this work. Steve Orzech suggested waiting on that decision until the Board established a process for the evaluation. Joanna specifically called attention to the

language of Policy A-3 and the Executive Committee's role in the evaluations. The language seems a little off with respect to full board participation and transparency.

## G. Report of Board

15 min

### 1. Policy Discussion

#### a. C9 - Local Wellness Policy

Jamie McCallum presented the draft Policy C9 -- Local Wellness Policy, and explained the history around the policy. ACSD currently has an earlier version of C9 "Comprehensive Wellness." The changes are highlighted in red.

Jason Chance asked the significance of bolded vs unbolded font. Suzanne Buck explained how some of the bolded language is grounded in the Federal Child Nutrition Act.

Brian Bauer asked about the second paragraph, which requires any revisions to the goals, procedures, or programs related to this policy to be done in consultation with a wellness committee consisting of parents, students, PE/wellness professionals, and special educators. Has this been done?

Suzanne Buck explained that the original policy was, and that the policy that ACSD developed was then used as the basis for the State's new required policy. Mary Heather Noble recalled that Caitlin Steele has been working with ACSD staff in these areas on this policy revision and asked if that was true. Jamie confirmed that Laura Nugent had been leading the group on this effort. Joanna Doria suggested that the time Laura had to lead this collective review might not have been enough -- there was some confusion about whether representatives from all the listed perspectives had been included. Parents were included, but some of them were also Board members or staff. Dr. Baker indicated that she could pull some people together in August to review the proposed revisions.

There was some additional discussion about the Policy Committee's workload and what this delay might mean for it. Mary Heather asked if there was a deadline for this policy update. It is just a regular 3-year policy review. Jamie McCallum indicated that the Committee would put this on hold until August.

#### b. A20 - Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution

Jamie McCallum presented the draft Policy A-20, and explained that it would replace outdated Policy A-8. Proposed changes are in bold.

Joanna Doria noted that if Policy A-8 will indeed be replaced, the Board should consider maintaining A-8's language around enabling 3 Board members to petition the Board Chair/Executive Committee to have an agenda item added to the agenda.

Jamie McCallum asked about the bolded paragraph from A-8, relating to the development of a work plan for the Board. Mary Heather Noble and Barb Wilson both supported the idea.

Ellen Whelan-Wuest commented on maintaining the language from A-8 regarding the requirement that minutes shall follow Roberts Rules of Order.

Jamie said he could incorporate the changes, but asked about the process from there -- should it return to the Policy Committee, or come directly back to the Board? There was agreement that the revisions would be added and warned for another Board discussion.

Jamie then brought up the Policy Committee's recent review of Policy A-21 and whether it might need revision to address some of the recent concerns around the format/structure of public comment period in board meetings. They determined that the policy is fine -- it does not prescribe HOW public comment opportunity must be provided, merely that it is a required element of Board meetings. The Committee recommends that this particular issue can be addressed in the draft Procedure Document that the Communications & Engagement Committee had started in 2021/22.

Tricia Allen confirmed that this is something the C&E Committee is working on. Since Joanna Doria serves on both committees, she has been asked to review the draft procedure document to reflect the current A-21 policy, and will be working with both committees to refine it. There was some discussion around Roberts Rules of Order and the parameters around public comment, with continued concern around balancing the need to preserve Board meetings as Board work time and the need to provide equitable access/opportunity for public comment.

#### H. Public Comment - Any Topic

10 min

Mary Slosar of Weybridge offered her perspective on the following items:

Shortage of SLPs and School Counselors. She is concerned about staff retention. She knows of a SLP who went to Vergennes, so it is not like people are leaving Vermont. What is the Board doing to keep people happy here?

Re: Visiting schools. She reminded the Board of what Bjarki Sears said a few months ago: Think about why you are there. If Board members want to see school in action, they should come during the day. If the point is to connect with parents/community, evening meetings at schools should be considered. She also suggested having Board members attend Friends of Schools parent group meetings.

Re: Committee procedures. There is a lot of variety in how minutes are recorded, and recordings should remain indefinitely available.

Re: Wellness Policy. Recess is currently being withheld and denied (in whole or in part) for some students for their behavior. This is happening in schools.

She also appreciates Brian Bauer's point about the participation of non-Board members in the review and revision of the Wellness Policy. She noted that a lot of policies not to community engagement but that it is not practiced. She would like the Board to consider: establishment of an advisory council to institutionalize parent/community input.

#### I. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Jason Chance Second: Jamie McCallum Status: Passed

Total Meeting Time: 1h 35m

**\*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.