MINUTES

Addison Central School District
Executive Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 3, 2024, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
ACSD District Office
49 Charles Ave

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; Mary Heather Noble; Suzanne Buck; Wendy Baker

Not In Attendance

Darcie Arensmeyer

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting called to order at 4:10 p.m.

1. Introductions – Board members, Administrators and Staff

Barb Wilson, Chair
Suzanne Buck, Vice Chair
Mary Heather Noble, Secretary/Clerk

Dr. Wendy Baker, Supintendent

B. Public Comments on Agenda Items

No public comment.

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes from August 19, 2024

Motion to approve the minutes from August 19, 2024.

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

D. Executive Session: Personnel Related Issue - Personnel 1 VSA 313 (a) (3)

Entered Executive Session at 4:12 p.m.

Exited Executive Session and re-entered Open Session at 5:18 p.m.

Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter, per 1 VSA Section 313 (a) 3.

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

E. Committee Discussion

1. Board Voicemail

   Mary Heather Noble shared that last Monday 8/26 there was a voicemail from a parent of a tuitioned student who was concerned that their student was not being offered transportation to school. She shared that she forwarded the message to both Barb Wilson and Dr. Baker, and that Dr. Baker followed up with the caller. Mary Heather checked the board voicemail messages again on Monday 9/2, and shared that there have been no further messages.

2. Policy C30 and D6 Strategy Discussion

   Barb Wilson asked the Committee about the best way to introduce this agenda item to prompt an effective conversation regarding next steps the Board should take to address the immediate issues concerning class sizes at ACSD's small schools, especially Ripton. Dr. Baker needs policy-provided remedies to be able to ensure appropriate class environments.

   Committee members recommended introducing the topic as a follow-up to the issues presented during the June 24, 2024 report on class sizes per Policy D6 (Courtney Krahn's presentation) -- and that the Executive Committee believes the Board needs to take action to address the deficiencies in options available to District Office. The options proposed at the June 24th board meeting included:

   - Having the Policy Committee focus on Policies D6 -- Class Sizes and C-30 -- School Residence to see how they can be modified to provide the Superintendent with some tangible Board-sanctioned options when class sizes in schools no longer meet minimum criteria;

   - Creating an Ad-Hoc Committee to do this work, allowing the Policy Committee to continue on its regular policy review priorities; or

   - Having the Facilities Committee return to the work of determining the best school configuration for the District's students.

   Given the work recently placed upon the Facilities Committee, to identify "shovel-ready" improvement plans for Middlebury facilities in support of the AOE's pre-approval process and Act 72 requirements, all agreed that the work should either go to the Policy Committee or an Ad Hoc Committee.

   Dr. Baker emphasized the importance of grounding the work in the District's Mission: "To provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students." The hope would be for the Board to agree on educational quality parameters that must be met to achieve this mission, and if those parameters can't be met, the Board's policies provide a number of options for the Superintendent to use to maintain the proper classroom environments. Some of those options might include the ability to move students to temporarily blend grades of different schools, move attendance boundaries for District schools, etc.

   There was some discussion about the long-term implications of this work, and whether it should be done by the Policy Committee or an Ad Hoc Committee specifically charged with

researching this issue. Committee members brought up similar circumstances in Roxbury, VT and Windham, VT and the political nature of the issue, especially given recent history with Ripton.

Dr. Baker advocated for having the Policy Committee conduct the research for this work, noting that they have increased their meeting schedule in anticipation of this task. They are also comprised of members with very different perspectives on the issue, so the conversation should be balanced. Mary Heather expressed concern about the ability of the committee to move swiftly enough, and to work well enough together on the matter, given the rigidity of several perspectives. Dr. Baker also expressed concerns about having an Ad-Hoc Committee approach this immediate concern from too-high of a perspective. The work of the Policy Committee would inform the broader facilities and long-term school configuration planning while granting the Superintendent the ability to provide remedies to the class size problems right now. She again expressed the urgency of the matter, noting the discontent among a number of Ripton families and the pressures that Ripton's staff are feeling.

The Committee will add this item to the agenda for the September 9th Board meeting and press the Board to take action toward charging a committee with researching and recommending options to update the policies.

3. Introduction of B22 Complaints About Personnel

Barb Wilson shared that Dr. Baker had suggested the Board consider adopting a policy like VSBA's recommended policy B22 Complaints Against District Employees, to establish a procedure for everyone (staff, parents, etc) to follow if they every had a concern or complaint against any ACSD personnel, including the Superintendent.

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial for the Policy Committee to take on, but perhaps after its work on Policies D6 and C30. The item will be considered for an agenda at a later meeting.

4. Superintendent Evaluation Process Document Draft

Dr. Baker provided a quick overview of the draft Superintendent Evaluation Process that she created from the models shared during the Board's 8/13/24 training. She called attention to the following items:

- The ISLLC professional standards contain some language regarding cultural competence and other recent additions to leadership skills. Dr. Baker did not yet incorporate those standards into her draft, but wanted to bring them to the Committee's attention as items that could/should be incorporated in the future (as into other ACSD leadership evaluations).

- Dr. Baker favors "Needs Attention" as one of the 5 spectrum ratings rather than "Needs Improvement" as it more honestly captures the likelihood that a Superintendent needs work on something that may not yet have been attended to.

- Dr. Baker has shared her draft with ACSD leaders, and has incorporated heavy language about how the Superintendent is leading the Executive Team.

- Feedback before the Board re-org in March 2024 is best practice. Dr. Baker suggests using the structure of the indicators as a staff feedback tool for 360 evaluations.

5. Sept 9th Agenda Creation

Barb Wilson shared the draft of the agenda for the 9/9/24 Board meeting. Items were added to provide an update on concerns around the K-1-2 class size and configuration at Ripton Elementary School, as well as a follow-up on the Policy D6 -- Class Size issue introduced at the June 24, 2024 board meeting. There will be considerable time provided for these two agenda items.

Dr. Baker asked the Executive Committee what information they wanted her to provide for the staff appointments and resignations portion of her Superintendent Report. Should it include step information details? The Committee members expressed ambivalence--additional details are welcome but not necessary. Board members are welcome to ask for additional information about initial placement locations, etc. Mary Heather Noble suggested the interest seems rooted in people wanting to know where resources are being directed w/r/t school size and student need.

6. Practice of Recording Committee Meetings

   Dr. Baker explained that the administrative position to support Student Services had been filled, but that the candidate decided at the last minute to accept a position with the PAHCC instead. This means that Darcie Arensmyer is continuing to do two jobs with significant workload -- so Dr. Baker is seeking the Board's understanding that Darcie does not have the bandwidth to record and post committee meeting recordings. Regular Board meetings will be recorded as required, but it takes significant time and effort to manage recordings for all committees. The Executive Committee agreed; Barb Wilson will provide this update to the full Board on Monday 9/9/24.

   Dr. Baker also explained that there is a pending transition with Boardpaq, since the software company was recently purchased. As a result, Darcie is focusing posting/materials prep online and by sending packets to Board members, rather than continuing to upload all materials into Boardpaq. They will keep the Board updated on this as well.

7. Other

   Dr. Baker told the Committee that when Board members request information, her intent is to deliver the information to the full Board so that everyone is working from the same data. She also noted that if a Board member requests something outside the scope of District Office's normal work (e.g., budget calculations based on unofficial state numbers or projections), she will bring it to the Executive Committee to receive guidance on whether it is appropriate to direct staff resources toward the request.

   Suzanne Buck also noted that it is important to consider whether the information falls within the scope of the Board's role, and whether it supports Board work.

   Dr. Baker noted that some information recently requested by a Board member will be provided in upcoming Weekly Spotlights, which will ultimately inform the Equity Based Budgeting presentation that will be featured in the Superintendent Report of the 9/23/24 Board Meeting.

F. Public Comment – Any Topic

No public comment.

G. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Suzanne Buck Second: Mary Heather Noble 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.