

Meeting of the  
Lamoille North Supervisory Union and  
Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District Board  
Minutes of Meeting  
September 9, 2024

Board members Present: Johnson: Katie Audette, Allen Audette, Monica Stearns, Kyle Hill; Waterville: Bart Bezio; Belvidere: Stephanie Sweet; Cambridge: Nancy Guyette, Mark Stebbins, Denise Webster, Susan Prescott; Eden: Jeff Hunsberger, David Whitcomb; Hyde Park: Tina Lowe, Phillip Kiely, Lisa Jones  
Board members Absent: Johnson: Mark Nielsen; Cambridge: Amy Listenik, Jan Sander; Hyde Park: Patti Hayford

Administrators Present: Cole Hayes, Jennifer Hulse, Deborah Clark, Bethann Pirie, Rene Thibault, Catherine Gallagher, Jermey Scannell, Blake Nemeth, Paula Beattie, Dylan Laflam, Jan Epstein, Erik Remmers, Mary Anderson, David Manning, Chris Hennessey, Diane Rielly, Betzi Goodman, Mary Anderson

Others Present: Community Members

Minute Taker: Savannah Droney

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment: K. Audette called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The agenda was amended to include LNSU Literacy Assessment and Action planning. Bezio made the motion to approve the addendum to the agenda seconded by Stebbins. The motion passed unanimously. A. Audette made the motion to approve the minutes from July 8<sup>th</sup> and August 12<sup>th</sup> board meetings, and personnel meetings from July 23, July 28, and August 16, 2024, seconded by Hunsberger. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: No public comment

Board Orders: Bezio recommended to approve the board orders. Stebbins made a motion to approve the board orders, seconded by Jones. Motion passed unanimously.

Bezio gave legislative updates and let everyone know to watch for the Governor's letter in preparation for the upcoming budget season. Bezio presented a slide: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 District Quality Standards take effect. The Agency of Education (AOE) is developing a rubric (1 to 4 scoring) that will be used in District's Annual Self-Assessment. AOE reps stated that year of implementation is "expectation settings". This is not an expectation of proficient in Year 1. The VSBA Annual Business meeting will be held virtually on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. The meeting will be preceded by a webinar on VSBA Proposed Resolutions on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The VSBA/VSA Annual Conference will be held on October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> at Lake Morey, VT.

Heating Fuel Bids: Laflam sent four bid requests out and advertised in local papers. He received two bids, one from Fred's with fuel oil at \$3.019, and propane at \$1.66. The other bid was from Suburban with fuel oil at \$3.148 and propane at \$1.60. Laflam recommends moving forward with the Fred's bid as the majority of the buildings use more fuel oil. Hunsberger made the motion to accept Fred's bid, seconded by Bezio. Bezio asked if fuel oil could be bought from one company and propane from another. Laflam said we would need to bid it that way. These prices are cheaper this year than paid last year. Motion passed unanimously.

Literacy assessment and action planning: Deborah Clark spoke on behalf of Kimberly Hunt. The bid was sent out to two vendors, and Sterns did not submit a bid. Partnership for Literacy and Learning has the most robust basis for helping schools and districts strengthen their practice to improve student outcomes for all students. Clark is recommending to accept the sole bid for Partnership for Literacy and Learning for \$53,650. Hunsberger made the motion to accept the sole bid for Partnership for Literacy and Learning for \$53,650, seconded by Jones. Gallagher explained the literacy program. Motion passed unanimously.

Artificial Intelligence in Schools: Gallagher explained the VT School Board Association and their legal team will be making an AI policy. The board will not be developing a policy and will be using the VTSBA policy. AI is growing, and there is a need to start discussing. Thibault gave an AI power point presentation discussing Artificial Intelligence. There are great opportunities for students such as personalized content and review, aiding creativity, tutoring, critical thinking. There will need to be clear boundaries set for students. It is important to stay up to date with the growing technology. Problems with AI are lack of personalization, bias and discrimination, dependence on technology, data privacy and security. Hayes said at the conference there was discussion if schools should speed up the AI discussion and get moving or wait and see what happens. At the beginning of the conference the group said wait, but towards the end of the meeting, get moving as the students are already using AI.

Public Engagement & Communication: Gallagher mentioned cellphone use in schools. There have been other colleagues that have banned cellphones and it has not been received well. Currently at the high school there are no cellphones in the high school. They are watching this and evaluating if phones should be banned. Infinite campus has been set up. Hayes mentioned there are seven non-English-speaking families around our community. They are working on better ways to upgrade the websites, and create accessibility.

Subcommittees: Gallagher explained the subcommittees and the responsibilities they have. The subcommittees are Finance & Capital Committee, Curriculum Committee, Safety/Social-Emotional Wellness Committee which are standing monthly committees. Each administrator will choose which committee that would like to join. There are two occasional committees, Personnel Committee and Board Negotiations. The Board Negotiations are for teacher negotiations this year. The board was given index cards to choose the committee they would like to join.

Board Goals for the 2024-2025 school year: Gallagher drafted goals for the board based on what we stand for; equity, access and opportunity. The goals are Budget Development and Operations, Communication and Community and Engagement, Governance and Professional Development, Academic Rigor. Goals should be somewhat dynamic. Handout was given out and should be reviewed to act on at the next meeting.

Appoint Authorized Representatives for both LNSU and LNMUUSD for the VEHI/VSBIT Annual meeting: Clark stated the VEHI/VSBIT annual meeting is at the same time as the VSBA conference. Clark is looking for an LNSU motion to appoint an authorized representative to attend the VEHI/VSBIT Annual meeting. Bezio said he would be a representative but suggest a proxy. Hunsberger made the motion to appoint proxy representative to attend the VEHI/VSBIT Annual meeting, seconded by Bezio. Motion passed unanimously. LNSMUUSD needs a motion to appoint an authorized representative to attend the VEHI/VSBIT Annual meeting, Hunsberger made the motion, seconded by Sweet. Motion passed unanimously.

Central office updates: Gallagher reminded anyone that is substituting in the school if there is a discussion on pay, you need to exclude yourself. Gallagher believes this is going to be a tough budget season. Some of the leading costs are personnel, facilities, health care, and collective bargaining. Healthcare costs and insurance is out of the board's hands, but is expensive. On October 28, 2024, there will be the first community forum regarding safety. There will be fire trucks, police, attorney general, child care, and the nutrition team will be cooking hot dogs and burgers. There will be a presentation followed by a discussion. This week a community survey is going out to help get information out to the community. In October, staff and student surveys will be going out.

#### Principal/Director Updates:

Jan Epstein: PreK students are now in the building, students and teachers are adjusting well. State troopers were at the school last week, the students really enjoyed that. Changed the grandparent lunch day to family lunch day so any family members can attend.

Mary Anderson: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wellness Festival will take place at Jeffersonville farmers market on September 19, 2024, from 5:30 to 7:30 if anyone wants to attend. There will be live music. The school garden is in full bloom. Enrollment is down, the student enrollment has dipped below 300 students. Mary suggests housing is part of the issue.

Chris Hennessey: Setting the tone of building culture and community in the school. Chris is trying to get into the hallways more. There was a buzz that the hallways were busy and having a presence in the hallways has seemed to quiet the hallways down. This is also a great way to interact and get to know students.

Betzi Goodman: Positive team work is how they started the year. New folks are feeling supported. Older students are helping younger students throughout the day.

Bethann Pirie: This is the best start yet. In the high school, they are asking students to put cellphones away; they are not banning cellphones, just setting boundaries. Safety is number one - see something say something.

Diane Rielly: When speaking to a group, she has asked students and teachers to stand up and make eye contact with the group. This is being done by students and teachers and it has had positive outcomes.

David Manning: This year Johnson is trying something new with strategies to support positive behavior for students. Office referrals last year at this time were 63, which is seven/day. This year with the new strategies that have been put in place, there are 31 office referrals which is just under 3½/day. Data shows moving in the right direction. Going to track the data all year.

Erik Remmers: Student enrollment is at 160 students and that is the highest it has been in over a decade. Engineering program is up and running. New forestry teacher is doing a great job.

Other business/adjourn: Sweet thanked Gallagher for her support for the principals. Hunsberger said athletics are off to a great start. Adjourn 7:24pm