

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
ACSD Board
Board Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Middlebury Union High School Library 73 Charles Ave, Middlebury**

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; Ellen Whelan; Wuest; Ellie Romp; James Malcolm; Jamie McCallum; Jason Chance; Joanna Doria; Laura Harthan; Mary Heather Noble; Matthew Conroy; Nicole Carter; Steve Orzech; Suzanne Buck; Tricia Allen; Wendy Baker

Not In Attendance

Navah Glikman; Sophia Lawton

- A. Call to Order Upon Reaching Quorum Barb Wilson 5 min

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators, and Staff

Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications & Engagement also present remotely.

2. Motion to adopt agenda

Motion to adopt agenda.

Move: Jamie McCallum Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

- B. First Public Comment Period Barb Wilson 10 min

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.

No public comment.

- C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of October 14, 2024 Barb Wilson 5 min

Motion to approve minutes of October 14, 2024.

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Jamie McCallum Status: Passed

D. Approve ACSD Bills

James Malcolm 5 min

James Malcolm presented a summary of the ACSD bills, read by himself and Jason Chance on 10/28/24.

Payroll: \$720,910.96

Payroll: \$279,792.24

General Fund: \$1,601,752.00 (note: \$155,732 of this was for transportation, \$611,789 for Vermont Education Health Initiative, or VEHI, and \$424,822 for Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust, or VISBIT)

Motion to approve ACSD bills as presented.

Move: James Malcolm Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

E. Report of Student Representatives

Navah Glikman 5 min
Sophia Lawton

Student reps were not present.

F. Report of Superintendent

Wendy Baker

1. Action: Personnel Appointments and Resignations

5 min

Dr. Baker presented the list of personnel appointments, noting the change to Gail Leach's title and position. She explained that this change was in accordance with the FSLA compliance review -- Gail Leach has been performing the duties of an HR Director, even though her title and pay have been more of an HR Coordinator. Dr. Baker explained the differences in salary and responsibilities, particularly regarding the position's authority to implement the ACEa negotiated agreements. Her job description will be adjusted according to her new title.

Dr. Baker also confirmed that the paraprofessional position is a non-union position due to its part-time status.

Note: Laura Hartha abstained from the vote.

Motion to change Gail Leach from Human Resources Coordinator to Human Resources Director, 1.0 FTE, Non-Union No Step Placement, Effective 10/23/2024, and to appoint Abigail Session, Paraprofessional, 0.2 FTE, Non-Union No step Placement, Effective 10/24/2024.

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

- a. Change Gail Leach from Human Resources Coordinator to Human Resources Director, 1.0 FTE, Non-Union No Step Placement, Effective 10/23/2024
- b. Appoint Abigail Session, Paraprofessional, 0.2 FTE, Non-Union No step Placement, Effective 10/24/2024

2. Budget Development Update Presentation and Community Survey Results

Matthew Corrente 45 min

Matt Corrente led a presentation on the first draft of the FY26 budget. He began with a review of the FY25 budget's architecture, and used those figures to create a summary of per-enrolled pupil figures (not per equalized pupil or LTWADM) for each of ACSD's cost centers

to allow board members and ACSD stakeholders to see the District's current distribution of budget investment. This is an important part of the EDUNOMICS training that he and other ACSD administrators attended. It provides more transparency around the District's priorities w/r/t budget investment and can illuminate aspects of District work that might otherwise be washed out by large figures.

Note: Slide presentation can be viewed in the meeting recording, beginning around minute 10:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/K2kPhVxqSni8RJSz4d1DgRuZ-WpkU_4EiZwj6_binp78EDV7sqVB7y_4xJ4ewA5Y4DQm-geO8Ffm2-i.PzAR0pjgZt7HxsXV?canPlayFromShare=true&from=share_recording_detail&continueMode=true&componentName=rec-play&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fus06web.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2FeyJJiPLXmJQuzf2jdF1L0-YQSpX9ferDWAhNC6FEDRxLD7v-WviNI9ncSaKIHA2.RxVomZK9FEMQhT-w

Slides 4, 5& 6 illustrated the 10 Cost Centers in ACSD current budget, as well as the sources of funding that are used to pay for expenses, including the General Fund, Federal Grants, Medicaid/MAC, Special Funds, Food Service (state reimbursement), Education Reserve fund balance and Capital Reserve fund balance.

Slides 7-9 focused on ACSD's enrollment and the calculation of its Lowest Total Weighted Average Daily Membership (LTWADM, or student weighting factor). Of note: FY25 LTWADM is decreasing for PreK and K-5th grade students, and increasing for grades 6-8 (by 5%) and grades 9-12 (by 16%), most likely because the District's larger cohorts are now reaching high school, which receives more "weight" in the calculation. Overall LTWADM is expected to increase by roughly 4%.

Slide 10 illustrated the growth in student and healthcare expenses by cost center, with the largest impacts seen in General Education, Student Services, and Admin cost centers. These increased costs are expected to add \$2.4 million to the budget.

Slide 11 illustrated different possible ranking/configuration of board budget priorities, including spending on tax targets, strategic plan implementation, student outcomes, etc. Slides 12 & 13 provided a breakdown of ACSD costs by enrolled student (\$28,410) with 1650 students, and by LTWADM (\$16,099).

Slides 14 - 45 provided breakdowns of costs/enrolled student for primary cost center categories. Of the \$28,410 General Fund expenses per student, here are the components:

- Staff Benefits/pupil: \$5,785
- Direct Instruction K-12/pupil: \$7,423
- Support staff/pupil: \$1,160
- Direct Instruction PreK/pupil: \$292
- Direct instruction (non-personnel costs)/pupil: \$1,080
- Professional Development/pupil: \$451
- Student services/pupil (coming from General Fund): \$4,250
- Transportation/pupil: \$882
- Technology/pupil: \$734
- Facilities/pupil: \$2,389
- District Office costs/pupil (insurance/legal, admin salary & contingency funds): \$1,220 or \$1,000 without contingency funds

- Universal PreK Tuition payments/pupil: \$308
- Food service/pupil: \$258

Of note: If Student Safety or Mental Health Service were their own cost centers:

- Student Safety/pupil: \$350
- Mental Health services/pupil: \$1,616

Also of note: Teacher Salary cost per student, by School:

- Bridport: \$8098
- Cornwall: \$6473
- Mary Hogan: \$5796
- Ripton: \$8566
- Salisbury: \$8154
- Shoreham: \$7476
- Weybridge: \$7097
- MUMS: \$5510
- MUHS: \$6195

Matt Corrente was called away from the meeting for a personal matter and Dr. Baker finished the presentation. She noted the different approaches to equity-based budgeting, including EDUNOMICS & data-based analysis, use of alternative cost centers, staffing models, performance cycles, and "zero-basis" or building the budget from the ground up.

There was not a close review of Community Feedback on the FY26 budget development gathered from the October 22 meetings and online survey, but provision of the raw data for later discussion and analysis.

BOARD QUESTIONS:

Mary Heather Noble noted the continued community concern about the cost of the IB program, and that it might be beneficial to illustrate IB program costs, as well as other necessary curriculum costs if the District did not use IB. Ellen Whelan-Wuest agreed that the IB concerns are an indicator of other frustrations, and that it would be good to show what it looks like and costs to have a coordinated curriculum.

Several Board members expressed support for this method of illustrating budget expenses to help make the material more accessible to stakeholders, and to allow for closer examination of board priorities in budgeting decisions. Dr. Baker requested Board members to examine the District's Strategic Plan and ask what investments should be made or adjusted. The Board will be asked for a Financial Feasibility Target in the next meeting (e.g., does the Board wish to level service and sustain an increase in the overall budget due to increase salary & benefit expenses, or level fund and make necessary cuts to avoid increased taxes for voters?).

Re: Community Survey Results -- the admin team is working with the Finance Committee to identify themes in the responses. The hope is to identify key issues rather than specific positions so the board can engage meaningfully with how to prioritize budget resources. Laura Harthan noted several factual misconceptions in survey results and the need to public education on budget and operations. Brian Bauer mentioned specific efforts to engage more people in the conversation. Steve Orzech noted the specific need to try and engage families and stakeholder who do not have the time or resources to participate in the process -- if the Board's priority is to make sure that resources are directed to the kids who need them most,

then the Board must make a specific effort to seek out those families.

G. Report of the Chair

Barb Wilson 5 min

Barb Wilson took a moment to thank Jim Corbett of MCTV for his service to MCTV and for recording ACSD Board meetings. Jim is taking a new job in Massachusetts and will be replaced with another production coordinator. All board members wished him well.

Barb also notified Board members that the Executive Committee expects to put the VT Education Funding Report on the agenda for the next Board meeting, so encouraged everyone to read the report ahead of time.

Barb also followed up on her prior email notifying Board members of a Special Board Meeting to be held on Saturday, November 9th from 8:00 am to 11:00 am to review student performance (VTCAP) data. The meeting will be conducted in Executive Session to protect the identities of students (since some class populations are smaller than the reporting threshold). Barb emphasized the importance of attending, since the data will be informing the FY26 budget.

Barb noted that the Executive Committee will be meeting on Tues, November 29th to discuss the schedule for conducting Dr. Baker's formative and summative evaluations. She assured board members that the Executive Committee wants to make sure the process includes feedback from the full board and not just the Executive Committee. More information to come.

1. Board Meeting Location Update

The Board discussed the question of Board meeting locations, noting the technical limitations of moving board meetings to delivering reliable zoom and high quality recordings. Barb suggesting maintaining the current meeting location at the MUHS library, and having Board members sign up for engagement opportunities at individual school events. The Communications & Engagement committee can assist with organizing that effort.

H. Report of the Board

15 min

1. Community & Engagement Committee

Tricia Allen

Tricia Allen thanks those board members who participated in the District Office's budget outreach meetings on October 22nd. She reported that the C&E Committee was working with Emily Blistein to establish a "Who Do I Contact" page on the website to allow visitors to identify the people/contact info for their questions. The C&E Committee has requested a full Board email and is working on a procedure for how to handle incoming questions. Right now it is set to forward inquiries to the full board. More on that later. The C&E Committee is also hoping to have the student reps assist in developing a plan to involve elementary and middle school students with the board.

2. Facilities Committee

Jason Chance

Jason Chance reported that the Facilities Committee met on 10/16/24 and reviewed a request for proposals for Phase I Part I of the VT Capital Improvement preapproval process (for Middlebury schools). He also noted that the committee has received 2 easement requests from Maple Broadband for ACSD-owned property in Middlebury and Ripton. They will be bringing those to the full board after their review. He anticipates needing community engagement around the Ripton easement request since the infrastructure may be significant.

3. Finance Committee

James Malcolm

No additional information reported.

4. Policy Committee

Jamie McCallum

Jamie McCallum reported that the Policy is continuing to review and investigate possible changes to Policies C30 and D6. He said that the Committee would seek guidance from the Executive Committee re: the deadline for this work so the policies are updated in time for class configuration planning in Feb.

5. Negotiations

Steve Orzech

Steve Orzech reported that the committee received the final copy of the support staff agreement. Once signed, the Committee's work will be essentially on pause.

6. Addison Central SEPAC Update

Joanna Doria
Suzanne Buck

Joanna Doria reported that the SEPAC has 2 upcoming events: Annual meeting on Tuesday 10/29/24 from 6-7:30 pm and a Special Education 101 presentation on Tuesday 11/12/24 from 6-7:30 pm. Both events will be held in the MUHS library and will also be live-streamed.

7. Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center Update

Steve Orzech
Tricia Allen

Steve Orzech reported that the Career Center completed its Federal audit for FY24. They are desperate for transportation and luckily received a grant for \$80K to purchase 2 vans. They are experiencing the same budget pressures as ACSD. ACSD can expect to see a presentation from their Superintendent in December 2024.

8. VSBA Regional Update

Suzanne Buck

Suzanne Buck provided an overview of the VSBA and VSA joint conference. Roughly 100 board members attended and they are hoping to grow that number.

9. Middlebury Community TV Update

Barb Wilson

Barb Wilson noted that there hasn't been any news about MCTV except for Jim Corbett's departure.

10. Parks and Recreation Update

Mary Heather Noble

Mary Heather Noble noted that the Parks & Rec Board hasn't met, but that she is wondering about the status of the lease agreement between ACSD and Parks & Rec for the fields by Mary Hogan School. This issue came to mind when she was at Shoreham School and learned that the Shoreham Selectboard has a lease with the original Shoreham School Board for land that is now owned by ACSD. Mary Heather said that she would follow up on these issues.

I. Second Public Comment Period

Barb Wilson 10 min

Mary Slosar of Weybridge offered the following comments:

- She would like to see what the District is doing in its budget to address staffing shortages and retain teachers, as well as invest in Universal Design in its classrooms. She would also like to see how the District is engaging with families and community members who are less-likely to participate in standard engagement opportunities. This requires a plan with intention and specific effort.

- She has a request of the administration in how it characterizes the student service cost center. It is often stated that only 42% of student services cost center is covered by Federal funds, which

she believes creates a dangerous narrative about special education being an unfunded mandate. She would like to see a less negative narrative around this.

- Re: mental health needs: she wants to remind the District that mental health services are not just connected to special education.

- She also wants to remind the Board about the difference between what is budgeted vs. what is actually happening in schools.

- Re: IB -- the complaints about IB are an indicator of a bigger thing and broader impacts to kids and families, not just the financial. What else is being sacrificed? What other Professional Development opportunities are lost due to the required IB training? What about AP coursework? What are the broader impacts?

J. Executive Session: Board member conduct per 1 VSA Section 313 (a)(3) Barb Wilson 15 min

Entered Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. Exited Executive Session and re-entered Open Session at 9:05 p.m.

Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss board member conduct per 1 VSA Section 313 (a) (3).

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

K. Board Meeting Reflection Period 5 min

1. Individual Board Member Reflection (Meeting Assessment) Tricia Allen

Tricia Allen shared that she felt the board did a great job of following Board norms, listening, operating in a colloquial atmosphere, and acting as a cohesive board.

2. Other Board Member Reflections

Brian Bauer noted that many people may not understand why ACSD has adopted the IB program -- he reminded everyone that the District was very disorganized with respect to curriculum between its different buildings, and that the prior Superintendent worked very hard to create a structure whereby students from different schools were learning the same concepts and skills. This is a necessary thing. There are only 2 places in VT that have IB: ACSD and the Long Trail School in Manchester, VT.

Ellie Romp shared that she is uncomfortable with the current configuration of tables and seating for board meetings. She does not think Board members should have their backs to the audience, and hopes this can be changed. Dr. Baker said she would ask facilities to find a solution that still allows board members to see the TV screen and zoom participants.

L. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Brian Bauer Second: Jason Chance Status: Passed

Total Meeting Time: 2h 10m

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