

NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 THURSDAY, March 2, 2023, 7 PM
 REMOTE MEETING- Via GOOGLE MEET
 FINAL MINUTES

Attending: Carla Halpern, [Kate Woodward](#), Steven Blinder, [Barbara Doyle](#), [Beth Erviti](#). Elizabeth Devlin, Mandy Blackbird, Miriam Warner, members; Jen Culkeen, Superintendent; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations; Corrina Wcislo, Director of Student Support Services

Teachers: Jennylou Powers, Samatha Marsh, Gosia Spooner, Jamie Lefebvre

A. Meeting called to order at 7:04

B. Public Hearings

- None

C. Warrants – Record in minutes with numbers

Accounts Payable:

2818	2/9/2023	\$2,691.63
2819	2/27/2023	\$536.50

4039	2/9/2023	\$8,773.55
4040	2/9/2023	\$763.90
4041	2/9/2023	\$47,240.96
4042	2/27/2023	\$2,060.68
4043	2/27/2023	\$63,654.12

Payroll:

417	2/16/2023	\$85,313.80
418	3/2/2023	\$86,654.14

817	2/16/2023	\$28,028.75
818	3/2/2023	\$27,563.02

8170	2/16/2023	\$94,814.72
8172	2/21/2023	\$47,818.32
8180	3/2/2023	4,881.73

D. Superintendent’s Report

- Each district will work on Student Opportunity Act plans
 - Evidence-based data on filling gaps
 - UDL, cohesion between support personnel, Tier 2 and 3 instruction, literacy and early literacy, engaging all families in early literacy
- Gathering data from MCAS and local assessment
- Report on evidence-based information, how funding is being used
- Aaron Saunders (Wendell and New Salem rep) - visited with people from the state to address the PFAS issue
 - All attendees were impressed with the school and location and are willing to help
- Literacy programs and development walk-throughs with the leadership team
 - Student engagement during literacy

E. Director of Finance and Operations Report

- Has applied for Safer schools initiative grant
- Lower Pioneer Valley Education Cooperative has applied for heating fuel for next year
- Monitoring the budget
 - Changes in personnel and the contracts
- End of year audit engagement letter requested
- Overpayment Wendell 15,462, New Salem 20,104 for the windows and doors projects
 - The refunds will be coming soon

F. Principal's Report

- Had MCBA Rosanne Perry author visited - thank Tina Newman
- Benchmark assessments
- MCAS schedule developing
 - Only testing one class a day
 - Online testing is faster than paper tests
- Hot Chocolate fest
 - Very successful and thanks the volunteers and the fire departments
 - Raised over 1000 for nature's classroom
- Candybar bingo on March 17th
- The letter campaign has raised over 1000 from local businesses
 - Students included a personal letter
- Literacy work has been very productive
- DEP has accepted the PFAS plan
 - On track for summer installation
- The last day of school is currently June 26
 - Will not make decisions unless the final four days are used

G. Committee Reports

- Report from Mahar Representatives
 - Fiscal 24 budget presented
 - No vote yet
- Collaborative for Education Services
 - No meeting yet
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees
 - 2023 legislative priorities shared with the committee
 - <https://www.masc.org/2023-masc-legislative-priorities/>
- Joint Supervisory – Next Meeting – March 20, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.

H. March Items

- Amend the minutes for the November 3, 2022, NSW School Committee meeting
 - Will be an item to vote on in the next meeting:
 - “School Improvement Plan: Mandy asked about DIBELS and how SRS’s reading programs are aligned to the Science of Reading. Principal Kelly Sullivan shared SRS’s current curricular programs and how current professional development taking place will inform next steps. Elizabeth suggested considering the research and work of Nell Duke from UMichigan on the Active View of Reading. Duke’s work includes Executive Functioning, engagement, and cultural identity in her paradigm. Duke is cited on DESE’s website. (Note: Not a program)”

o FY24 NSW Draft Budget - Review and Preliminary Adoption Vote

- Will talk with towns in the next few weeks; not a lot of changes
 - \$166,855 admin costs [increase from enrollment on U28 side]
 - Instruction 8.7% increase to 2,133,425
 - Other school services increase by 3.8% increase
- Can we use overspent money from windows and doors to boost the transportation debt
 - The money is coming back to the towns, not to the school committee
- Plant operations 23.2% increase
 - Spent a lot more on fuel than budgeted
 - Electricity rates have gone up
- Fixed charges 4.7% increase
 - Health insurance increase
- Fixed assets - a slight increase
- Programs to other schools
 - \$137,004 increase
 - Not until the second fiscal year is the money reimbursed
 - The circuit breaker is reimbursed after the first year
 - They need to receive the claims from all districts and see what can be reimbursed
 - 49,000 threshold for this year - anything over this can be claimed for circuit breaker
- Question on operations line 85
 - 33% increase - is this enough in the budget if the increase across the state is 55%?
 - The anticipated increase has not been as high as expected and lower electric use in summer impacts the overall expense
- Specialized programs within the district
 - This is something that is being actively explored
 - Takes a lot of planning and what programs could be sustained at Swift River
- Increase in total use of funding
 - There are preliminary numbers for Chapter 70 funding
 - E&D was not appropriated in FY 23
 - E&D 50,000 for FY24
 - School choice line will be decreased now there is E&D
 - New Salem increased by 22.39%
 - Special ed tuition and transportation
 - Wendell's 16.23% increase
 - shift in population over five years
- What type of contingency plans for such large budget increases?
 - Will have to look at personnel, knowing that cuts to personnel would be devastating
- Is there an urgency for voting tonight?
 - The vote needs to be in place before the Finance committee meetings

- Public Hearings happen in April and are usually a preliminarily adopted budget by the school committee
 - Question on the past five-year increases to the towns
 - Information will come on that
 - The Finance committee meeting is on March 20th at 7 pm
 - It would not make sense to go to the Finance Committee meeting without a preliminary vote
 - Currently, 150,000 is in the budget for next year from school-choice
 - Seeing a decrease in school choice by 20,000 less for FY24
 - Currently - 22 school-choice students
 - We have to pay for students attending TECCA and charter schools
 - Request for student enrolment for the next meeting
 - Increase of Chapter 70 (proposed) \$912,492 [approx. 160,000 increase]
 - Beth moves to accept the preliminary budget as presented; Barbara seconds - vote taken by roll; passes unanimously
- 2023 Swift River Community Action Award Recipient –
- Nominees discussed
 - Vote will occur next month
- Vote on Identification of School Choice Seats
- Do we have school-choice seats
 - At this time, there may be seats in Kindergarten, but the registration process is not complete
 - Classrooms are full, and many students have moved in
 - Being cautious about overfilling classrooms
 - Currently, 16-21 students per class, with several students with IEPs and ones undergoing evaluations
 - In April - will vote on if we will be a school of choice
- Policy Update and Review:
- First Reading on:
- DJE – Procurement Requirements
 - DK-1 – Regional School District Payment Procedures
 - KCD – Public Gifts to the School
- Second Reading, First Vote on:
- ACAB – Sexual Harassment Policy
 - DBJ-1 – Regional School District Budget Transfer Authority
 - DGA-1 – Regional School District Authorized Signatures
 - DH-1 – Regional District bonded Employees and Officers
 - DI – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
 - DIE-1 – Regional School District Audits
 - DJ – Purchasing
- Beth moves to vote on policies ACAB, DBJ-1,DGA-1, DH-1, DI, DIE-1, DJ in one vote;

Mandy seconds - vote taken by roll - passes unanimously

Anna moves to take the first vote on policies ACAB, DBJ-1,DGA-1, DH-1, DI, DIE-1, DJ;

Beth seconds - vote taken by roll, passes unanimously

Final Vote on:

o JEB – Entrance Age

Paragraph 3, line 6, delete period

Beth moves to approve with amendment, Kate seconds, vote taken by roll, passes unanimously

with the amendment

o AC – Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

Paragraph 2, line 5, change comma to a period, page 2, add period after bullet at top of page paragraph 3, line 3, space after school

Beth moves to approve as amended, Kate seconds - vote taken by roll, passes unanimously with the amendment

o JICK – Harassment of Students

Paragraph 1, line 6 delete underscore

Beth moves to approve as amended; Barbara seconds - vote taken by roll, passes unanimously with the amendment

o DD – Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects

o DBC – Budget Deadlines

o DBD – Budget Planning

o DBG-1 – Regional School Budget Adoption Procedures

Anna moves to vote on policies DD, DBC, DBD in one vote; Beth seconds - vote taken by roll passes unanimously

Anna moves to take final vote on policies DD, DBC, DBD; Beth seconds, vote taken by roll - passes unanimously

I. Future Business

o Next Meeting Date – April 6, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

o New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – April 6, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

In-person meeting

J. Approval of Minutes:

● February 2, 2023

o Steve moves to approve minutes from February 2, 2023; Beth seconds, a vote taken by roll - minutes approved unanimously

K. Adjournment

● Elizabeth moves to adjourn; Barbara seconds meeting adjourned at 8:19