

Middletown Springs School District Board of School Directors (Regular) Meeting

Date: November 12, 2015 Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Middletown Springs Elementary School

Note: Pre-K Public Forum from 7:00–7:30PM

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Present: Clarence Haynes (Chair), Meredith Morgan (Vice-Chair), Sarah Haley (Clerk), Christopher Smid and Jennelle Carr (Members). Also present: Joan Paustian (Supt.), Louis Milazzo (Business Mgr.), Rick Beal (Principal) and Susan Rosso (Recording Secretary). Public Present: None

1. Call to Order **(Action)**

Clarence Haynes called the meeting to order at 6:05PM.

2. Changes, Deletions, Additions to the Agenda:

- Supt. Paustian states that we need to add two policies/procedures from July: D-6R (Substitutes Procedure) and D-12 (Harassment of Employees).
- Mr. Milazzo asked that the Board cover the '16-'17 Budget earlier in the meeting.
- Chris Smid would like to add "Act 46" under Old Business for general discussion.
- Clarence Haynes states that we need to add "Approve Action Plan" under Other Lawful Business.

3. Consent Agenda: **(Action)**

- i. Approval of Minutes: September 28, 2015 (Regular) & October 8, 2015 (Regular) and October 26 & October 29 (Special)

Jennelle Carr moved to approve the minutes of Sept. 28, 2015 and Oct. 8, 2015 (Regular), Sarah Haley seconded; motion carried 5-0.

Clarence Haynes moved to approve the minutes of October 26 and October 29 (Special), Chris Smid seconded; motion carried 5-0.

ii. Superintendent's Report

Supt. Paustian distributed a copy of last year's MSES enrollment and staff FTE versus this year's enrollment and staff FTE. The input for the Act 46 Community Forum has been sent to the consultants for review. All administrators were trained by Attorney Heather Lynn on the Hazing, Harassment & Bullying Policy supplied by the AOE. The policy has to be published and followed exactly as prescribed by the State of VT. All administrators worked on November 11 to discuss and review the rubric on Teacher Supervision & Evaluation. Dr. Paustian distributed a budget comparison for the SU; she noted that these budgets have not yet been finalized. Both the SU and MSES budgets are down at this point. A question was asked about paying for cell phones for some of the administrators at C.O. Supt. Paustian explained that these phones are used for school business only and this was not one of the expenses that was cut. Most of the savings in the SU budget are due to the Occupational Therapist position being cut from a 1.0 to a 0.6 position. Approximately \$10,000 in cuts were made to SU expense lines such as supplies, fees, etc. upon the request of the Finance Committee. Dr. Paustian also distributed a handout for all of the SU schools listing the number of teachers, specialists, instructional assistants, counselor, nurse, etc. and student-to-teacher and student-to-adult ratio.

➤ **At 7:00 PM, the Pre-K Public Forum was opened—no public currently present.**

iii. Principal's Report

Principal Beal shared the results of the Science NECAPs from last year. The results were not as good as hoped for. As a school, we continue to struggle in the area of "inquiry." This will be an area of focus in the new Action Plan. Rick Beal and Bernie Peatman have been talking with teachers about how they can share student work and use a rubric to determine where the students are and where they need to go. What needs to happen with scaffolding the skills? Students will participate in whole school writing prompts

(argument) in December and May. K-3 MAPS testing has just been completed. Grades 4-6 were completed earlier in the year. Mr. Beal is working with Mr. Peatman on how to use the data. There is an RIT score for each grade level; this benchmark changes three times per year. Right now, all classes are meeting the benchmarks (Common Core based). Dr. Paustian feels this data is extremely important because it is consistent and available right away. Our sixth graders are collaborating with Tinmouth School sixth graders at Smokey House; working hands-on with water testing. This project is an example of utilizing science inquiry. This year, we have enough students to have four Odyssey of the Mind teams. We need another coach. Regarding the water project, additional paperwork is being completed for the state; loan funds should be coming through soon. Our Red Ribbon Week photo was chosen as one of eight schools to potentially win \$1,000 and an I-Pad. Mr. Beal wants to express his gratitude to the MS Fire Dept. for being at the Halloween Parade to keep the students safe and for coming to the school for Fire Safety Day. Mr. Beal distributed the new MSES Action Plan. The long term goals are: in Math; working with the new "Math in Focus" program. Indicators of progress will be the MAPS data. In Writing, we will be using the all school writing prompt twice per year. Indicator: the scoring rubric. In Reading—use of the Houghton-Mifflin "Journeys" reading program. We want to work more on "cold" reading. The students look for words they don't know and try to decipher them using the clues in the copy surrounding the words. Indicator: MAPS data. The Science goal: developing projects and hands-on learning opportunities to strengthen inquiry skills. Indicators will be: Science NECAP scores and the number of inquiry projects done. Mr. Beal would like to schedule an Open House/Student Showcase for the Afterschool Program (ASP) to share student work and involve parents in the program. Supt. Paustian stated that there is Title I grant money left from last year that needs to be spent or returned. The SU has applied to use some of these funds to support the Homework Club portion of ASP at MSES three days per week. We need to await a decision as to whether this expense will be approved. Discussion ensued about potentially having a Science Fair/STEAM Fair. Re: Health & Wellness, we've added PBIS to promote a positive school climate. Dr. Paustian recommends that the Board approve the Action Plan. Meredith Morgan asked about the absence of both the school sign and the street sign from the bottom of the hill. This makes it hard for people to find the school. It is believed that Barby Carr has the school sign; she was going to refurbish this for us. Jennelle Carr will check on this. We'll also need to check with the town about the "Schoolhouse Road" sign. Long Trail Electrical will be here to check/replace some exterior lights.

➤ **At 7:15PM, the Pre-K Public Forum remains open—no public currently present.**

iv. Update on Financial Statements

Louis Milazzo shared information on electricity usage for MSES over the past seven years. The trend line is heading in a positive direction for our school. Mr. Milazzo also distributed the variance analysis; comparing the budgeted amounts versus actual expenses for this year. Currently, Mr. Milazzo anticipates a surplus of approximately \$135,000. Reasons include a reduction of 1.5 IA positions, teacher staffing changes, and reduced secondary special education costs. These figures may change if new students move in. We also have four tuition students attending MSES resulting in additional revenue.

The FY '17 Budget (#7A) was reviewed with Mr. Milazzo at this time. The updated budget (Draft #2) was distributed. Still pending are four revenue items and one expense category on page 5 (Vocational Tuition). Mr. Milazzo does not have this information yet. Total expenses are down. Revenue projections were discussed. Discussion took place about next year's budget and how it may be impacted by Act 46. Mr. Haynes shared that he and Dr. Paustian viewed a PowerPoint presentation that really helped to demonstrate how a budget could be level-funded and still result in a tax increase because of a loss in students and/or revenue. This information would be useful to share at our community budget information meeting this winter. The potential for expenses related to Act 46 was brought up; nothing is known at this time. Expenses for building maintenance were also discussed; siding on the new section of the building needs repair and paint. The Board thanked Mr. Milazzo for his input. Mr. Milazzo left the meeting at 7:20PM due to a time commitment.

Chris Smid moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Meredith Morgan seconded; motion carried 5-0.

4. Approve Warrants: **(Action- read into the minutes as officially approved)**

- a. Warrant #250 in the amount of \$29,066.44 dated 10/14/15

Chris Smid moved to approve Warrant #250 in the amount of \$29,066.44 dated 10/14/15, Sarah Haley seconded; motion carried 5-0.

5. General Public Comments (**Listen & Defer Action to Future Meeting**)
None

6. Old Business: (**Itemize Subjects for Deliberation & Possible Action**)
a. Act 46

Chris Smid would like to see board level direct communication with Danby/Mt. Tabor/Sunderland to let them know that we are here and are structured similarly to their school districts. Dr. Paustian suggested that a meeting be offered. Meredith Morgan feels that geography should be a consideration in forming partnerships so that staff resources can still be shared. Clarence Haynes stated that there a lot of study committees out there working with consultants. Mr. Haynes noted that representation on the study committee needs to be based on population; these may become unwieldy. Mr. Haynes agrees that Mr. Smid's idea is a good one and that a letter should be sent to Danby/Mt. Tabor/Sunderland Boards and SU that we would like to meet with them to explore possibilities. Mr. Haynes would like Supt. Paustian to produce the letter; perhaps Dorset could be a central meeting location. Supt. Paustian will find dates that work with Dan French (Supt.) and let the Board know when it is scheduled.

➤ **At 7:30PM, the Pre-K Public Forum was closed—no public attended.**

7. New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action):

a. FY17 Draft Budget (*Covered earlier under "Update on Financial Statements"*)

b. Identify/Establish Pre-School Region (action following forum)

Supt. Paustian stated that we are required by the AOE to do two things: conduct a survey of parents with children ages birth to 5 and: set a region for Pre-K. 36 surveys were mailed out; 7 were completed and returned (we had hoped for a higher participation rate). Location, convenience, and a "love of the Pre-K teacher" were cited by parents as reasons to have their children attend MSES for their Pre-K experience. Vermont law provides that if we do *not* establish a region, we must pay \$3,000 (for a minimum of 10 hours per week) per student for parents to send their child to any licensed Pre-K program. Clarence Haynes moved to set the town of Middletown Springs as the Pre-K region for a three-year period, Sarah Haley seconded; motion carried 5-0.

c. 20-day plan report (Oct.)

Previously covered under "Principal's Report."

d. 20-day plan (new)

Mr. Beal will share the results of the All-School Writing Prompt.

e. Bullying, Harassment, Hazing Toolkit

Dr. Paustian conducted training on Bullying, Harassment & Hazing with all five board members. She noted that there is now one policy which was developed by the State. The Board must adopt the model policy and must follow the Policy. The Board must ensure that copies of the Bullying, Harassment & Hazing policy are distributed annually in/with the Student-Parent Handbook. Information must be shared annually regarding student misbehavior and violations in age-appropriate language for the students. The Board must ensure that information is shared; the Board must not violate FERPA. Faculty and staff must also receive this information prior to the start of fall sports; the Board must work with administrators to ensure that this is done. The Board must confirm that a plan for appropriate instruction for students is taking place and that the school is working to create a safe environment. The Board annually will designate employees to receive Bullying, Harassment & Hazing complaints and will announce/publish the names of these designees. The Board must conduct appeal hearings if an appeal is sought; any person determined to have engaged in Hazing, Harassment & Bullying may appeal the decision directly to the School Board. The Board would have to meet and work with the Supt. and review the guidance memorandum to conduct a board-level review. They need to respond and announce the

findings of the appeal. Appeal meetings must take place promptly; in no case longer than 30 days from the request date. Legal advice may be sought by the Board. Appeals must be handled in Executive Session. Parents may see information prior to the appeal, but all information related to any other student will be redacted. Arguments can be presented. The Board will deliberate out of the presence of the parties; the Board Chair shall arrange to share the decision in writing to both parties.

f. Upward Bound Credits

N/A (only applies to PHS)

8. Policies **(for Approval)**:

- a. G-11 Responsible Computer, Network & Internet Use
- b. F-28 Federal Child Nutrition Act Wellness
- c. F-25 Student Attendance
- d. D-6R Substitute Procedure
- e. D-12 Harassment of Employees

Above policies were reviewed by the Board. The substitute policy reflects a change in the rate of pay as previously discussed.

Sarah Haley moved to approve Policies G-11, F-28, F-25, D-12, and Procedure D-6R (as listed above). Jennelle Carr seconded; motion carried 5-0.

9. Action on Personnel Contracts: **(Action, if applicable)**

None

10. Set Next Regular Board Meeting: **(Action)** (Anticipated, December 10, 2015 at 6 PM at MSES)
The next regular MSD board meeting will take place on Thursday, Dec. 10, 2015 at 6PM at MSES.

11. Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313 (1-9) (a) (b) **(Discussion & Possible Action)** (as warranted).
None

12. Other Lawful Business **(Information Gathering Only)**

- a. Approve Action Plan

Chris Smid moved to approve the MSES Action Plan as presented by Rick Beal, Jennelle Carr seconded; motion carried 5-0.

b. Clarence Haynes shared with board members that that National School Board Association Convention is in Boston from April 8-11, 2016; if anyone is interested in attending. Also, beginning on January 1, the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) will roll out a new, more user-friendly website.

13. Adjournment **(Action)**

Chris Smid moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50PM, Sarah Haley seconded; motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Rosso