

**Green Mountain Unified School District
Board Minutes**

Tuesday, October 18, 2018
CTES Multipurpose Room
6:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER:

Board: Joseph Fromberger, Fred Marin, Jeff Hance, Deb Brown, Marilyn Mahusky, Kate Lamphere, Kathy Muther, Michael Studin, Rick Alexander

Staff: Meg Powden, Deb Beaupre, Lauren Fierman, Cheryl Hammond, Katherine Fogg, Jim Spaulding

Student Representatives:

Public: Wayne Wheelock

Ms. Mahusky called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVE AGENDA:

Ms. Muther **moved** to approve the agenda with the addition of executive session pertaining to negotiations and discussion of a resignation and the removal of the preschool discussion. Mr. Marin seconded and the motion to approve the agenda as amended carried with no opposition.

III. APPROVE MINUTES:

A. September 18, 2018 Regular Meeting

Mr. Marin **moved** to approve the minutes. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

B. September 27, 2018 Special Meeting

Mr. Fromberger **moved** to approve the minutes correcting Dufresne Henry to Dufresne Group. Mr. Marin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Public Comments

None.

B. Board Comments

Mr. Studin reminded the board about the discussion at the last meeting about trying to find information about the Abbey Group for food service. Ms. Mahusky noted that today she was at the VSBA meeting today and met with the Abbey Group vendors at the conference. She will circulate the information among the board members. Ms. Hammond noted that they did bid on the LMH food service contract so she does have the per-plate pricing. She thought that the per-plate price would be down a little because there are more students in the GMUSD than in the LMHUUSD. Ms. Muther noted that food service personnel is part of the support staff negotiations, so they couldn't eliminate the positions without negotiating that into the contract. Ms. Powden noted that the contract recognizes the food service employees and if they were going to choose to go with another provider, they will have to know before negotiations begin for the next contract. Ms. Muther noted that the next negotiations will be 2 years out. Ms. Mahusky requested that the Abbey Group information be shared with the board. Ms. Fogg noted that when

she was at Mill River and they changed to the Abbey Group, the Abbey Group absorbed those employees.

Ms. Mahusky encouraged the board to pay attention to the VSBA information and noted that many of the webinars are very helpful. She noted that they also have an annual conference and they are very informative. The keynote speaker this year spoke about equity and diversity. There was also a short film on ethnicity and diversity in VT schools.

C. Student Representatives

The student reps were not available. There was discussion about getting students from Cavendish to attend the Cavendish meetings.

V. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION:

Ms. Beaupre shared a presentation about reading education through the grade levels. She explained that the teachers in CTES make a lot of their curriculum decisions around data. She noted that they piloted their math curriculum (Everyday Math) several years ago. She noted that the curriculum continues to use the same language and that helps the students remember the lesson. She explained that they wanted to find a program for reading instruction that was similar. They wanted a program that aligned with the common core, used grammar and usage mechanics. She explained that the program asks students to read complex text from a range of genres. They then use Close Reading and text based evidence. It helps kids be very deliberate about what they are reading. She noted that the students are reading in music. She explained that as the students get older, they are getting deeper into the reading, including characters and the story. She explained how the students cite evidence of their analysis. She explained that the first graders are writing realistic fiction using the skills learned in the curriculum. She explained some of the work that the students in each of the grades are doing, illustrating the curriculum alignment. She highlighted the “me to me”, “eye to eye” book group discussions. She reported on the third grade out loud reading, shared reading, the reading/writing connection, independent reading and sharing the reading skills across disciplines.

Ms. Beaupre also discussed the reading assessment and noted that the students are getting targeted instruction since students are grouped by similar abilities.

VI. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORT:

A. Superintendent Report

Ms. Powden shared information with the board about the Core Instructional Practices that the administrative team developed during the administration retreat last spring. She noted that this will help the staff focus on consistent practices regarding proficiency based education. The staff is at the beginning stages of using the practices. She explained that the teacher introduces a topic and sets the expectations and short term goals for the students. She discussed the transferrable skills (essential skills and dispositions) that the students are expected to develop in each of the various content areas. The teachers are intentionally planning their modules while keeping the essential skills development in mind. Ms. Lamphere questioned how the instructional practices will be aligned with the teacher evaluation. Ms. Powden noted that they are currently using the Danielson evaluation process and they haven't merged the two yet. Ms. Fierman gave some examples about how they can link the Danielson feedback model with the instructional practices. The principals will be working on revising their evaluation instrument to align the two.

Ms. Mahusky questioned how the instructional practices will be tied into the curriculum software and whose job it is to ensure the fidelity of that merge. Ms. Powden noted that that is part of her next month's report, explaining how the practices will be evaluated. There was discussion about how the instructional practices are evaluated with the teachers and then also with the students.

B. Principal Reports

The principals distributed their individual reports to the board. Ms. Fierman noted that the principals are doing professional development connected with the instructional practices and have had some work during in-service with the staff on them. She explained that part of the pd is the teachers looking at the outcomes and working to figure out how best to do it for themselves and seeking those resources.

Mr. Fromberger commended the three principals for their reports. He felt that they are very useful and informative. Ms. Beaupre reported that she is building a social media presence including Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. She uses Twitter to highlight the curricular issues. She showed some of the pictures that have been posted on Facebook and Instagram to highlight some of the things that are going on. There was discussion about reconvening the publicity committee. Social media is a great way to show the schools in a positive light. There was also discussion about Ms. Moeykens posting a lot of information on the website as well. Ms. Fogg reported that they are proud of their merit award—they are in their 3rd year of PBIS and next year will be an exemplar school. She also reported that CAES is working to increase their outdoor education program, including collaborating with LES, having teachers attend workshops, etc.

C. Facility Update

Mr. Spaulding reported that there is water to the boiler room at CAES. They have passed the pressure test and are waiting on the E.coli test. Before they plumb it to the school rooms, they want to complete this test. He put it out to bid and ARC is the only company that was willing to bid. He asked the board to consider giving them the bid so they can move forward. The boiler room is currently empty. The boilers are hopefully due to arrive by 10/29. He noted that it is an issue with the lead time. They are prepping all of the things they can prep. The electrical work is being done. He explained that they thought they needed to rewire seven electrical panels but it is only 3 or 4 now. He explained that the two rooms that were damaged have been completed and are ready for him to put the rooms back together. The bid from ARC is for \$5700 to make the connection from the main line to the boiler room. This expense will be covered by the insurance. There was discussion about Mr. Spaulding sharing the information with VSBIT.

Mr. Studin **moved** to approve the ARC bid for \$5770 as discussed. Mr. Alexander seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Spaulding noted that once the boilers are in, the water should already have been completed and the E.coli results should be in tomorrow. He also noted that they will need at least one boiler installed before they plumb the building to maintain at least 50 degrees so the pipes don't freeze. They will need to be wired into a 3 phase generator if that's the case.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Policies, 3rd Read/Approval

Mr. Marin reminded the board that the policies have been discussed previously. He highlighted the additional language added into the volunteer policy that states that volunteers will be supervised when they are with children. With the supervision, they don't need the higher level of background check and fingerprints. Ms. Lamphere noted her concern with the volunteers taking students out on winter sports without supervision. There was discussion about that being dangerous. There was also discussion about who will pick up the cost for the volunteers to get checked. There are several volunteers and the cost is \$37 per person. Ms. Lamphere noted that she may be hypervigilant due to her work in child protection services. She noted that the internet

sex abuse registry has a lot of holes. Ms. Mahusky questioned if there are other policies in other school districts that they could model.

Mr. Fromberger noted that he understands the concern, but thought that the policy committee had looked at other options and came up with this language. There was a question about having the police department do some of the checks to meet the needs in this area. Mr. Wheelock noted that the policy committee wanted the board to make the decision. Ms. Mahusky suggested having the policy committee seek out other policies as a model. Ms. Fogg noted that they could just do the volunteers for the ski program. There was discussion about the teacher appreciation program where parents are in the classrooms with students and on field trips for small groups. Ms. Beaupre questioned the free sex offender registry. Ms. Lamphere noted that that isn't comprehensive because that registry only lists if they have been convicted of a crime, but not if they have been substantiated by DCF. Ms. Mahusky asked for a clear understanding of the current practice and the comparison with other schools for this issue. They should also know the totals of the volunteers.

Mr. Marin suggested that they vote on this policy as it stands with the strict supervision language and continue this conversation so they are covered by a policy. There was discussion about the school district not having a current volunteer policy, but operating under the former school policies. The consensus was to not approve policy D7 at this time.

Mr. Marin **moved** to approve the policies as presented (except for policy D7). Mr. Alexander seconded and the motion carried unanimously. [nullified later under section VIII, subsection A]

Policy D7 will be added to the next agenda.

B. Committee Updates

Ms. Mahusky questioned if they were going to get a committee list with names. The board discussed the changes to the committees. Ms. Powden will bring that report next month.

Ms. Mahusky reported that the teacher negotiations committee has been meeting. They are doing small group bargaining. She noted that it has been effective in the past, but it is not as effective this year, but she anticipates that they will be making some more decisions next week about the format of the bargaining.

The support staff negotiations will be discussed in executive session.

The vision committee met recently, but there wasn't a quorum, so the two people present joined the LMH committee. Ms. Powden noted that the committee decided to come together to form one committee—Innovations in Learning and will focus on equity. They will be setting their norms and following some protocols. They are also looking for teacher representation. The administrators are working on recruiting. Ms. Lamphere questioned how the committee turned away from the innovative education and focused on equity. Ms. Powden noted that the vision committee was focus on how to develop the budget. This committee will work on equity and also create innovations in learning that will help develop the forward thinking. The committee will meet the first Tuesday of every month. Ms. Fogg noted that the committee has not lost sight of the vision and the innovations, but the beginning meetings are focused on developing the process of the committee.

Ms. Mahusky noted that they have 2 new districts and one supervisory union, so they have to set goals that benefit all of the children. The administration has been working toward that for many

years and with this new governance structure, they are poised to do that. She noted that having an innovations committee that represents all of the students is a great thing, but felt it was frustrating that the GMUSD board was not represented properly while many decisions were made at this first meeting. Ms. Beaupre reported that the committee was looking at what the old group did and what the new group will do. They created the purpose of the committee and then discussed what each of the schools were doing in their schools and how they found out what the other schools are doing. They were looking at different innovations, but then looking at them through the lens of equity. She felt that the conversation at the meeting was focused on excellence, but making sure that it is done well for all of the schools. There was discussion about the school board setting the vision with community, student and teacher input. The meetings are held on the first Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. and will alternate between LES and CTES.

C. Transition Funds

Ms. Powden noted that last month she handed out the legal opinion from Mr. Leopold that indicated that GMUSD needs to share the transition funds with LMHUUSD.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Policies- First Read

The first read policies in the packet were actually the 3rd read policies and there are no other policies in the packet. Mr. Marin withdrew his earlier motion regarding the policies. Mr. Alexander withdrew his second to that motion and the motion was nullified.

B. Recommendation for Hire

Ms. Powden shared information about Christine Keklak as the recommended teacher for the math interventionist position. Ms. Fogg reported on her education history including her master's degree as well as her teaching history. She explained that she has great recommendations and is very energetic and focused. She also has a history of working with children who need intervention.

Ms. Lamphere **moved** to hire Ms. Keklak pending Ms. Powden's interview and approval. Ms. Brown seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Studin requested to have the resume information ahead of the meeting so they have a chance to review the information.

C. Education Travel Proposal

Discussion was tabled until Ms. Schultz could be present

D. Snow Bid Removal

Ms. Hammond reported that snow bids were due this afternoon and they only received one bid. The bid is for an annual contract for \$13,500 for GMUHS and \$6000 for CAES. Then there would be another \$120/hour for loaders to remove snow. The bid was in the paper for three weeks. Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Parah felt they could find a lower cost from somewhere else. There was discussion about how the snow removal is done in Cavendish. The town is supposed to do a loop around the building, but that hasn't been consistent so the custodian brings his own snow blower. There was discussion about asking the town of Chester for help at GMUHS and CAES. There was also discussion about the other schools not being able to use the GMUHS machines at the other schools. Mr. Parah and Mr. Spaulding will look into other sources and reach out to some companies directly. There was discussion about the companies that have declined. There was discussion about the custodian needing to use a school device, not his own personal. There was discussion about using Severy Brothers to see if they will do the snow removal at CTES.

E. Transportation Bids

Ms. Hammond reported that they received 5 bids, but they were all enough different that they need to do a complete analysis to see what the SD's remaining costs will be after each of the bid specs are considered. Mr. Fromberger and Ms. Hammond will be scheduling a committee meeting soon.

F. Current Year Financials

Ms. Hammond noted that they are very early in the year so there isn't much to report at this time. She discussed the capital funds in each of the schools and that leaves about \$20,000-\$25,000 that would have to come out of the general fund. There was discussion about how they will get those funds from the budget.

G. Current Fund Balance Report

Ms. Hammond reported that there was a deficit of almost \$142,000. They have committee about \$27,000 that they didn't have to the next year's budget. That means they will have to start the budget process accounting for the deficit. She reported on the budget items that had a negative impact—health care recapture, title I positions, subs over the budget and the CTES heating system. She explained that for the current year, they had planned to use surplus funds, but there aren't those funds available right now. There was discussion about not having the ADM until December. She explained that the \$142,000 will have to be accounted for in the FY20 budget, but the \$27,000 planned for the current year will need to be accounted for in the FY21 budget if they use it all this year.

H. FY20 Budget/Setting Committee meetings

There was discussion about starting the budgets with the basic needs and then expand on the budget based on the board's vision. Ms. Mahusky suggested that the administration can plan for their wants and what they need to move forward and then see how that impacts the budget. Ms. Mahusky, Mr. Studin, Mr. Fromberger, Ms. Brown and Mr. Marin are on the budget committee. There was discussion about having community members on the committee, such as Ms. Fleming and Mr. King. Ms. Lamphere suggested asking Ms. Stowell. Jeannie Wade (Chester) volunteered to be on the committee. The committee will meet on November 15 at 5p.m. in Chester, likely at GMUHS.

I. Revising the Vision

The board discussed this a little during the committee conversations. Ms. Mahusky encouraged the board to continue to think about setting the vision and direction for the schools and set goals for the students. She noted that the TRSU board had a conversation with Susan Holson of the VSBA about her help to develop a vision statement. She suggested that all three boards could work together to develop a vision that works for all of the students. The IIL committee is one way to help that move forward. Now that the districts are established, this is a good time to begin that process, especially since the staff and administration are collaborating together.

J. Resignation

Ms. Powden reported that they have received a letter of resignation from Beth Randolph who just started as one of the nurses and she has felt that it isn't a good match. There was discussion about getting feedback to prevent problems in the future.

Mr. Marin **moved** to accept her resignation with regret. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The board thanked her and wished her well.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A. §313(a)(3)Negotiations and personnel issue

After making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage, Ms. Lamphere **moved** to enter executive session to discuss negotiations and personnel at 8:12 p.m. inviting Ms. Powden and Ms. Hammond with the understanding that any action taken must be done in open session. Mr. Alexander seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The board returned from executive session at 8:32 p.m. No action taken.

X. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on November 15 at CAES. If CAES is not available, the meeting will be at GMUHS. There is a school safety conference in Burlington at November 13. Mr. Ripley, Ms. Fogg and Ms. Fierman will be attending. Mr. Studin will be serving on a panel during the conference. Ms. Mahusky noted that Ms. Johnson had asked for board input on the Chester Town Plan. She will circulate it with the board and they can provide feedback. Ms. Powden will have Ms. Moeykens put it in a google doc so the board and administration can edit it and provide feedback.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Lamphere **moved** to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. Ms. Brown seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Recording Secretary