

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

July 17, 2019 at 6:30 PM at the West Bath School

Members Present: Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, Ashleigh Randall, and Mary Wallace

Members Absent: Joanne Powers

Others Present: Allison Cosgrove, Aggie Demers, & Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Keith Hinds.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds let the board know that a meeting has been scheduled with the town administrator, the chair of the board of selectmen, and Steve Bailey from MSMA to continue the discussion about the roles and responsibilities of the two board. That will be on August 12th.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 6/19/19:

Mrs. Randall made a motion to approve the minutes of 6/19/19. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

Mr. Hinds added 10.7 to new business for a discussion about Before & After-Care.

Public Comments:

None

Staff Report:

Mr. Hinds welcomed Mrs. Cosgrove to the meeting. Mrs. Cosgrove explained that her purpose of her report was to educate the board on the new state legislation requiring schools to have approved policies, provide child sexual abuse prevention and response training, and to deliver curriculum to students. She provided background on the law,

explained what it means to schools, and explained where WBS is in the process of developing curriculum and training. Mrs. Cosgrove explained the areas where the law already connects with what students are being taught in current guidance classes. Mrs. Thompson explained that parents will be notified about the law in a variety of ways. She's anticipating there will be a blurb in the parent handbook about the law, and that when a new partner or something new will be taught, parents will be notified in advance. Mrs. Randall asked if the presentation can be made available to parents as well? Mrs. Cosgrove agreed that would be productive.

Mrs. Wallace asked if the health curriculum will be amped up? Mrs. Thompson said that with an increase in specialist time, there is opportunity to fully develop a health curriculum between the PE position and Mrs. Cosgrove. Mrs. Wallace said that it would be really helpful if this was to happen at school. Mrs. Cosgrove said that this will all keep evolving. Mrs. Thompson said that in the most recent legislative update there were 4 different bills that impact guidance, and the focus on the wellness curriculum is this year's work.

Committee Reports:

1. Policy Committee – Mr. Hinds said that there are a couple new policies to review on the agenda.
2. Technology Committee – Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Wallace expressed that the website needs updates, and not all links are working.
3. Facilities Committee – Summer work continues. Rooms are in the process of being cleaned, annual inspections are on-going, Mrs. Franklin's floor has been installed. Most of the larger projects are scheduled for the week after summer school ends when children are out of the building. Mrs. Thompson said that she did not receive the grant for the stove, so an order for a new stove will be placed. Mrs. Randall asked if the school was still interested in fire extinguisher training. Mrs. Thompson responded that she was.
4. Finance Committee -
 - a. Payroll Warrants – Mr. Hinds said that payroll warrants were reviewed and signed by Mr. Hinds on 6/21 and Mr. McDaniel on 6/24. Mr. Hinds reviewed signed another payroll warrant on 7/8.
 - b. AP Warrants – Mr. Hinds stated that warrants were reviewed and signed by Mr. Hinds and Mr. McDaniel on 6/19 and 6/28. A second warrant (the first for July 1) was also signed by Mr. Hinds and Mr. McDaniel on 6/28.

Superintendent's Report

1. Audit Update- Mrs. Thompson said that in June she had reached out to the auditors to schedule potential weeks to meet with them, giving 2 full weeks in July as options, and then anytime after August 5th, but had not heard back. She said she check in again to ask about the week of August 5th, and they'll be back in touch with me when they return to office later this week.
2. Financial Report –
 - a. 18-19 Budget Report - Mrs. Thompson reported that 9.5% of the budget remains on the budget document. With the carry forward that was applied to the 19-20 budget removed, 195,387.41 remains, or 5%. While this is less than was

remaining to apply for carry forward from undesignated funds in the current year, it's close to our target number of \$200,000 for carry forward. Mrs. Thompson said that approximately \$22,000 of bills have been received that the auditors will likely apply to these, but there is also revenue that will be applied and is not accounted for in this document. Currently there is not a need to access the 5% transfer rule, as all cost centers are underspent. However, facilities and maintenance will be the one that may need have the transfer applied, depending on what funds the auditor transfers. Mrs. Thompson reported that the carryover funds were in the areas of high school tuition and special education tuition, as one child's program changed in the late winter.

- b. 19-20 Budget Report - Mrs. Thompson reported that with 95.83% of the year remaining, 96.23% of the budget remains.

3. District Updates

- a. Summer Update - Mrs. Thompson reported that the first few weeks of summer had been busy and productive with state and federal reporting, getting contracts in place, and rolling everything forward into the new year. Mrs. Thompson stated that in addition, there's a lot of legislative changes to stay on top of, and that board members may have noticed that the the most recent legislative update contained 28 bills that impact public schools. She listed a variety of items that will impact West Bath, including changes in how to address dangerous behaviors, evaluation practices, probationary status for teachers, change in rules around school counselor's time, the mandate that a comprehensive school counseling program be delivered, changes in immunization rules, changes in lead and radon testing, changes in attendance in truancy laws, requirements that schools provide instruction in mental health, adoption of Next Gen science standards and social studies standards updates, changes in ruling around electronic smoking devices, and school nutrition changes/food shaming. Mrs. Thompson stated that several of the board's policies will need to be updated to reflect these recent changes. She also reported that the district will be impacted by the \$40,000 base salary change. She said that the current teacher contract meets the "ramp up" rules, but it will impact the next round of negotiations.
- b. Summer STEM - Mrs. Thompson reported that Summer STEM is half-way through the program year and reports are that it's been great. The prior day was the group's trip to Boston to the aquarium. Mrs. Franklin wanted to be sure that Mrs. Thompson thanked the board again for their support in allowing them to travel out of state. She reminded the board that the Celebration of Learning is scheduled for August 1st at 10:30 AM.
- c. Special Education/Nutrition Review - Mrs. Thompson said that she had enclosed in your board packet letters from the Department of Education that both the district's School Nutrition Review and the Special Education Review have been completed without any further findings.

Mrs. Randall asked if there was a considerable amount of school lunch debt. Mrs. Thompson said there is about \$3,000 in unpaid lunch debt currently. Mrs. Thompson said that she has reached out to every family with debt, but some

families are simply not able to pay their bills, and payment plans have been developed. Mrs. Randall asked if there is a trend to having more unpaid bills, and whether the board should consider increasing the amount of funds designated for food service in the next budget. Mrs. Thompson said that it had not been increased in three years, while costs continue to rise, and the carryover for this year is lower than it has been in the past. She said to offset that, she made the decision before books were closed to transfer kitchen maintenance out of the food service account and into building maintenance, which is why that line had increased, and she would support the board's recommendation to increase the line in the next budget.

Mrs. Wallace asked about ways that families are communicated with about their balance, as when balances get large it can be more challenging to pay them. Mrs. Thompson agreed with her and said that they had increased communication and sent balance letters every two weeks, and in the last month of school had sent balance letters with students, in the mail, and in report cards. She also said that she had emailed or called parents with balances in the last week of June to follow up and to set up payment plans. She reported the best way for parents to monitor lunch accounts is on My School Bucks. My School Bucks will send an email whenever a student has a balance of less than \$10 remaining.

New Business

1. First Reading of Board Policies

a. First Reading of JLFA - Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response

Mr. McDaniel introduced the policy. He said that it is the draft MSMA policy and meets all of the criteria that Mrs. Cosgrove had just presented to meet state law. There were no questions from the board.

b. First Reading of BEB – Board Member Use of Social Media

c. Mr. McDaniel provided an overview of the policy and explained its intent. Mr. Hinds said that this policy was driven by MSMA and helps boards to circumnavigate some difficult situations.

2. Annual Discussion of the Plan of Expenditures for Federal Funds

Mrs. Thompson provided the board with a handout with an overview of a plan of Federal Expenses, and explained that she is required by law to share a plan of expenditures before applying for funds. She walked the board through the plan and expenditures, and asked the board if they would like any changes made. There were none.

3. Pay Averaging Law

Mrs. Thompson said in September a law goes into effect that all hourly employees may choose to average their pay. Because this is already offered to educational technicians by contract, the only other group this would apply to is food service staff. The board will be required to offer pay averaging for the upcoming school year.

Mr. Hinds said that it would make sense to be consistent with what is already being

offered to ed techs. Mr. Hinds made a motion to offer the opportunity for hourly employees to take 26 pays. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

4. Attendance Report

Mrs. Thompson said consistent with board policy, she was reporting on end of year attendance in regards to truancy and chronic absenteeism. She stated that end of the year 5 students were listed as chronically absent, which means that they missed 10% of their school year. She reported that two of those students were absent due to health reasons and another due to a family trip, and no further action is necessary. Two other students were also truant, and while the school had worked through truancy procedures, further follow-up in the new school year will be necessary. She reported that this is fewer students than were chronically absent in the year prior. She also explained two legislative updates that will impact attendance in the coming year and that more support for families may be needed.

5. Personnel Item(s)

a. Nomination of Jennifer Mitchell - 0.2 FTE School Nurse

Mrs. Wallace made a motion to approve the nomination. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

b. Nomination of Megan Fuller - 0.4 FTE Gifted and Talented Position

Mrs. Wallace made a motion to approve the nomination. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

c. Resignation of Elizabeth Detwiler - 1.0 Educational Ed Tech II

Mr. Hinds shared the resignation of Elizabeth Detwiler and wished her well.

6. Before/After School Care

Mrs. Thompson shared that the YMCA had informed the school that they would no longer be offering before and after care because they had been struggling to find staff. Throughout the summer Mrs. Thompson said that she had been in conversations with the Y to find out if there was any way to make child care happen, and they said they needed a commitment of 13 children for before and after care to be able to offer it. Mrs. Thompson said that she struggled to ask parents to commit to a program that the Y was not able to commit to. She said she had planned to put out an RFP asking for other community agencies to apply to bring their program to the school, but that in writing that, she recognized the unintended consequences of liability, coverage, and oversight that it opens the school up to. She asked the board for their feedback on how to proceed, saying that parents are asking for resources for care, but there are limited options in West Bath. Mrs. Wallace asked about timing of coverage. Mrs. Thompson said that the Y has been covering from 6:30-start of school, and end of school to 5:30. She said that she also had talked to the Y about their plan of centralizing all programs at the Bath Y, but that decision would not be made until the last week of August, and has the added challenge of transportation. Mrs. Wallace asked if staff members could provide it? Mrs. Thompson said that she has put that out to staff, but there's not interest, and there's the added concern of how to cover staff if they are not able to be there. Mrs. Randall asked how many students were in the program at the end of the year, to which Mrs. Thompson responded that there were 6 regularly.

Mr. Hinds said that the board needs to decide if they are going to create something or bring someone in. He said that he feels that while he would love to offer a program for parents, it could not add cost to the school. Mrs. Wallace said that if the board could figure out a way to make it work, that would be great, but if there's not enough families who are interested in it there's not a lot that can be done. Mrs. Randall said that there's not enough lead time to make a decision for the upcoming year, and that the board should pause and reassess for next year. Mrs. Thompson said that she would reengage the board in the conversation in January.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion expressing that the board would not offer before and after school care for the 19-20 school year based out of the school. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Public Comments

1. Mrs. Demers stated that this year the community crew really struggled with our finances. Currently crew supports the 3rd grade swim program, but they have voted that it is a school program year over year and the town should pay for it. She said that this will be the last year of the community crew funding the swim program and the board should consider it in their school budget for next year if they wish to have it continue.
2. Mrs. Demers asked to have the information about the Celebration of Learning repeated.
3. Mrs. Randall said that as the board has gone through the agenda, there have been so many instances that there has been reference to a policy change or curriculum change, and she heard repeatedly that the school already has the change in place. She wished to thank you Mrs. Thompson and the staff for being on top of details as they emerge so they are not emergencies to the school and district.

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. Wednesday, August 21st at 6:30 PM – West Bath School Board of Directors Meeting

Adjourn

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 7:42 PM. Mrs. Wallace seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson