

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Members Present: Keith Hinds, Alexandra Jungbluth, Joanne Powers, Ashleigh Randall, and Casandra Whorff (arrived at 6:43 PM)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, Bobbie Brewer (remotely), Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Mrs. Randall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mrs. Randall said that there were no comments from the chair.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 8/17/22

Mr. Hinds made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/17/22. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

Mrs. Randall stated that agenda item 10.1 would be moved to just after public comments.

Public Comments:

None

10.1 - Auditors Report - Bobbie Brewer

Bobbie Brewer reported that the fund balance decreased by \$13,270.39, but that is still a healthy fund balance. She suggested that the board think about adding more designated funds into the school lunch fund. She reported that there was nothing that she found within the financial audit that was unusual, and that there were no difficulties completing the audit. She suggested that Mrs. Thompson make an effort to spend down the student fund monies, but recognized that due the pandemic, much of the opportunities to spend those funds were limited. She said the board is doing a good job with their financial oversight and all looks as it should.

Ms. Powers asked why the school lunch fund might need more revenue if lunch was free. Ms. Brewer explained that in a small school there are not enough students to make up the cost of personnel and food expenses necessary to meet the budget. Mrs. Thompson replied that while lunch is provided at no cost to students, but the reimbursement does not cover the cost of the expenses, and stated that the board had actually increased their contribution by \$10,000 this year to help to offset costs.

There were no further questions from the board.

Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee - Mr. Hinds reported that the committee had not met that month, but that there were policies that carried over from the month prior that would be reviewed later in the agenda.
2. Facilities Committee - Mrs. Thompson stated that the committee had not yet met, not due to her own lack of availability.
3. Finance Committee
 - a. Payroll Warrants - Mrs. Randall said that she had signed payroll warrants on 8/29, 9/12, 9/26, 10/7
 - b. AP Warrants - Mrs. Randall reported that she had signed AP warrants on 8/31, 9/14, 10/5 and 10/19 and that Mr. Hinds had signed AP warrants on 8/31, 9/14, 10/3, 10/19

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report - Mrs. Thompson reported that with 66% of the fiscal year remaining, 82% of the budget remains, but she cautioned the board that that was a bit misleading given where they are in the year, as new year statements are just arriving and tuition had not yet been billed, but salaries are all tracking appropriately. She stated that she suspected that one area they will be under budget for based on the bills that have been received for the month of September is contracted services for special education. She said she has needed to increase speech and OT services as compared to what had been budgeted for in order to meet IEP needs. She said she would monitor this area carefully as the year progresses to be sure that we know where the funds are going to come from, in the event the cost of this line is more than the board had anticipated. There were no questions from the board.
2. District Updates -
 - a. Opening of School - Mrs. Thompson said they'd had a really busy start to the new year. She reported that teachers had spent a great deal of time before school opened returning classroom materials and furniture that had been removed during the pandemic, and ensuring classrooms were warm and welcoming.
 - b. Enrollment - She reported that enrollment has increased slightly from last year, even though the number of classrooms was reduced by one. Overall, at the K-5 level the school is up 4 students from the prior year. The resident enrollment at the K-5 level has increased by 5 students. The 6-12 enrollment is exactly even from the prior year, with 18% electing to access school choice. She said they are down in 6-12 enrollment from what we were expecting by 5 students, as these students have moved from West Bath to Bath, so there will be a little wiggle room

to account for tuition increases when the board learns what they will be in December.

- c. Routines - Mrs. Thompson reported that the building has been very busy and exciting. There's a lot of new students, particularly at the K-3 level, and for our K-2 students all of the pre-pandemic routines are brand new. She reported that they are making steady gains at establishing routines. It has been nice to be able to jump right in with some of our prior routines with the older children. 5th grade students have already had the opportunity to begin their weekly boat building lessons at the Maine Maritime Museum. They also were able to spend 4 days and 3 nights at Chewonki practicing citizen science work, team building and outdoor skills. New this year, Mrs. H. has also introduced rowing to 5th graders during their Wednesday adventure PE classes. She has partnered with Chuck Mainville and Kennebec Rowing. After first practicing safety procedures and skills on shore, we've been able to take them to practice rowing on New Meadows Lake. Kennebec Rowing is providing the support and volunteers, so there is an adult in each boat, and they are using the boats that our former 5th grade students have built at the boat shop! We anticipate being able to sneak in 2 more weeks of rowing classes before the weather becomes too cold for this particular activity. Grateful to Mrs. H. and Chuck Mainville for getting this up and running.

She reported that several classes have been out on field work, the school has had its first in-person open house since 2019, they are in the process of completing our local and state assessments so student goals can be set and progress can be monitored, fall learning expeditions/modules are underway, and classrooms have begun to welcome parent volunteers back into the classrooms. Mrs. Thompson stated they've had a professional development day, where the special education staff had the first 6 hours of safety care training - a training for supporting students with behavioral and social emotional needs, and the regular education staff worked with our EL school designer to create target trackers for our new Habits of Character, which have also unveiled. She said she was also excited to report that they've had their first post pandemic afterschool program happening on Tuesdays afternoons. Mr. Bowdish and Ms. Goulet, along with two former students who are volunteering - Seamus and Landon - are offering an after-school coding club to students in grades 4 and 5. This will continue through December when the National Hour of Code event takes place, and then the group plans to offer another round to younger children.

Mrs. Thompson reported that as part of unveiling of the new habits of character, one of which is contributing to our community, they have also begun weekly schoolwide service projects on Friday afternoons. Staff put together a variety of options from reshelving books in library, to making cards for local agencies, to writing a school paper, to landscaping for students to select where they would like to contribute. The groups are arranged vertically, in an effort to build relationships between students and staff at a variety of grade levels, especially after being isolated with COVID protocols for so long.

She stated that the school garden continues to grow and thrive under the care and

love of Mrs. Jarvis in 5th grade. While a portion of 5th graders are at the boat shop and are able to be with Ms. Goulet and Mrs. Whitney, she has been using that time to support other grade levels and teachers by incorporating garden work and learning into their classrooms. Most of our vegetables have been harvested and already served in our cafeteria this fall - sweet potatoes, beets, peas, lettuce, garlic, and onions. More tomatoes have been frozen to be made into a batch of salsa. Mrs. Jarvis organized for parent Daniel Sherwood to work with students to build cold frames for 3 of our beds, and greens have been planted in there. She said that the following day the 5th grade students will be working with 5th grade helpers to thin out the greens - this is connected with their learning expedition about how to work and play together in a community, and the kindergarten students will practice their 1:1 correspondence skills and practice observing attributes while 5th graders support them. Also the next day, 1st graders will be working with a master gardener from the LOCAL garden to learn to seed save sunflowers - harvest them, plant them next season, and begin the cycle of heirloom sunflower growing.

Mrs. Thompson said that Mrs. Jarvis had also supported the 2nd grade exploratory with a lesson where they planted seeds and learned what they need to grow, and discussed what does kindness mean to grow. 5th graders have participated in scientific soil sampling, and just got back soil test results in order to analyze and make choices for how to put the gardens to bed for the winter, as part of the fall learning expedition. Mrs. Thompson said it is truly remarkable what Mrs. Jarvis has put into action for the school as they continue to take steps forward with our community garden.

She said that "a lot is happening in our little community school, and there's much to be proud of."

- d. COVID-19 Updates - Mrs. Thompson said there have been 5 cases of COVID associated with the school, meaning that staff or students who work or learn here have had COVID since school has started. With the new protocols, those who test positive isolate for 5 days and then may return to school masked for 5 days, provided their symptoms are resolving.
- e. 1st Quarter Attendance - Mrs. Thompson shared the first quarter attendance, which runs through 9/30. She reminded the board that chronic absenteeism means that students are absent, whether excused or unexcused, for 10% of the school year.

Old Business

1. BHC - Board Member Report of September Faculty Visit

Mrs. Randall reported that she had attend a faculty meeting in September. She said that she participated in an initiative, and didn't get questions, but did get a lot of appreciation for the board. She said it was interesting to be in their staff meeting and see their ideas, and how they might apply those ideas to their classroom settings, and that it was nice to see them working in ways she's not before. Mrs. Jungbluth asked if she thought there was value in the meeting, to which Mrs. Randall said that it might be more useful for the

board to get a glimpse of what a staff meeting looks like than for the staff. Mrs. Thompson said that opportunities to meet and connect are useful, and that she felt it will be worthwhile in time.

Mrs. Whorff arrived at 6:43 PM.

2. Review of Board Policy

- a. AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
- b. ACAA - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
- c. ACAA-R - Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures
- d. ACAB - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees
- e. ACAB-R - Employee Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures
- f. GCFB - Recruiting and Hiring of Administrative Staff

Mr. Hinds suggested that the board review each of the above policies as a slate, as the change in the policies is all due to a change in the law regarding the definition of race. He explained that for the purposes of these policies, race was defined to include "traits associated with race, including hair texture, Afro hairstyles, and protective hairstyles, including braids, twists, and locs."

Mrs. Randall made a motion to approve the policies as amended. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Vote (5-0)

- g. JFABA - School Choice

Mr. Hinds said that the changes to this policy were around the language of sectarian education. With the new ruling from the Supreme Court, schools who are sectarian who meet the requirements of the Maine Department of Education can now be eligible for public tuition funds.

Mrs. Randall approved the policy as presented. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

- h. JLCC - Communicable Diseases

Mr. Hinds said that the communicable diseases policy had been updated to include isolation or quarantine rules as determined by the Maine CDC.

Mrs. Randall approved the policy as presented. Mrs. Whorff seconded the policy. Vote (5-0).

New Business

1. Personal Items
 - a. Request for Special Education Ed Tech II

Mrs. Thompson said that she would like to request approval to hire an additional

ed tech II. She said there has been a change from our anticipated special education enrollment, increasing the percentage of eligible students from 15% of enrollment to 24% of enrollment, with needs range from OHI, autism, specific learning disability, speech and language, and developmental delay. In order to meet IEP needs and maintain student safety, the school is going to require an additional educational technician to work in a self-contained setting.

Mrs. Randall approved this motion. Mr. Hinds seconded it. Vote (5-0).

Public Comments

None

Executive Session

Mr. Hinds made a motion at 6:51 PM to request to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,F. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing confidential records and pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,A. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Return to Regular Session

The board returned to regular session at 7:50 PM.

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. November 16, 2022 - WBSAU School Board of Directors Meeting @ 6 PM

Mr. Hinds commented that he wanted to take a moment to thank Mrs. Randall for her contributions to the board and school community over the past 6 years.

Adjourn

Mr. Hinds made a motion to adjourn at 7:51 PM. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson