

UNION 28 JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 29, 2015
FINAL Minutes

Present: Scott Bastarache, Son Hui May, Sarah Dolven, John DeWitt, Kip Fonsh, Sean Woodard-McNiff, Audra Goscenski, Alan Mully, Dick Baldwin, Katie Fiander, Carla Halpern, Jessalyn Zaykoski; Dan Hayes, Chair; Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Public Guests.

(Before a quorum formed, Jennifer delivered the following presentation.)

Jennifer offered a presentation on the DESE process for Superintendent Evaluation. The evaluation cycle contains five steps: self-assessment; analysis, goal setting and plan development; implementation of the plan; formative assessment / evaluation; and summative evaluation. Jennifer walked JSC through each of these steps in turn. Teachers, JSC members and administrative staff all participate in certain of these steps. A robust rubric sets out standards for performance expectations to guide evaluators in providing feedback; Jennifer offered one example of a standard, which provides a description of the expected activities and level of proficiency.

She has already completed the self-assessment step, and JSC will participate in the second step (analysis, goal setting, and plan development) tonight. She pointed out that in the goal-setting process, her goals are in line with principal and teacher goals; this alignment ought to help ensure focused improvements at schools to support student achievement. Next, Jennifer will move on to the third step (implementation of the plan), and halfway between now and April, JSC will participate in the formative evaluation (step four). April brings the end of the first evaluation cycle; JSC will compile a summative evaluation and report then, assessing goal attainment and performance against the rubric's Standards.

Jennifer then overviewed the various responsibilities of JSC, the JSC Chair, and herself in this process, then asked for questions and comments. Dan noted that MASC has a training video that might be helpful for JSC members; he will share its URL.

(Once a quorum formed, the meeting proceeded according to the agenda.)

1. Meeting Called to Order by Dan at 7:20 P.M.

2. Public Hearings

Dan acknowledged the difficulty in finding time to attend JSC meetings, affirmed the importance of the committee's work, and thanked members for their time and participation.

3. Approval of the Minutes from September 9, 2015

Committee members offered several emendations for the minutes.

**SEAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 AS EMENDED.
DICK SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

4. Central Office Rent/Renovations/Repairs – Update

Scott reported that the Selectboard wants to work capital improvement plans into the budget for next fiscal year. Jennifer spoke to safety concerns about personnel in the office because there is no way of knowing someone has entered the building until the stairs creak at the top. Locking the door is also problematic because it requires BettyLou to go all the way downstairs to let people in. They would like a monitoring system installed as part of any improvements. Dan asked how U28 monies could be used to implement some security updates; Aaron said they were looking into where there might be money that's not encumbered by the previous year's budget. He added that some money has been spent to use Carbonite, a data backup service, to create daily off-site backups, rather than putting BettyLou into a precarious position by having her take a hard drive with backups home every day. Adam, an IT worker, has also been hired to update and standardize the other computer systems in the office.

5. Regionalization Update

Kip said that two public forums have been held, one in Leverett and one in Amherst. Forums are upcoming in Pelham and Shutesbury.

6. News/Updates from Each School and Union #28

Wendell / New Salem: John reported that Fall Fest happened in the last couple of weeks. An exciting new development is a plan to offer free lunch to all students, since it will be revenue neutral for the school; it is supported in part by a combination of state and federal funds for which the school is qualified. Additionally, the director of food services is a trained chef and makes incredible meals; staff have been using the food service more as a result, which also helps makes the food service revenue neutral. Cash handling processes are being improved and streamlined as well. Aaron added that this will be a union-wide issue. Carla added that Fall Fest was a great success and raised a lot of money, but the highlight of the day was pieing the teachers; several teachers and Principal Sullivan volunteered to let raffle-winning students throw whip cream pies in their faces. The Science Fair is coming up November 13, and there is a great deal of participation in the 100 Mile Club. Fun races are also held year-round that count toward mile totals. Jessalyn said that Johanna has been spearheading the organization of a forum on January 14 to discuss the impact of standardized testing on students, families, and teachers. Jennifer will sit on a panel as part of this forum; she added that it's timely that President Obama just said that no more than 2% of classroom time (about 3.5 days) should be spent on standardized testing. Currently, that number is close to 20 days.

Leverett: Audra reported that there was a Volunteer Day 1 October 4, with thirty volunteers showing up to do repairs and updates to the playground and buildings. Students took a field trip to Morse Hill, and teachers are working in three different PLCs as well as participating in PLCs with teachers from other schools. A former SPED room near the entrance was converted into a family room and has been getting a lot of use for dropping off or picking up kids, and also as a meeting space for the community soon; it's still getting furnished, however. Harvest Festival

October 17, PTO-sponsored Halloween Event happening tomorrow night; this hasn't happened in a few years.

Erving: Scott reported that EES will be offering free breakfast and lunch to all students starting soon. Mary Jo Maycheck, a local storyteller, has been running a show several weeks in a row; students take the stories home ahead of time to read and talk about them. Dan noted that CES offers services that might be helpful to these and other programs. Tom Smith, the computer / tech teacher, is starting an After-School Academy working with Lego Robotics; there is no format nor curriculum, but all hands-on building, coding, and debugging. Stephanie Mitchell is the new After-School Director; she wants to expand before-school programming as well.

Shutesbury: Sean reported that SES has a lot of unique and truly educational field trips, including a trip to Morse Hill, watching fish stocking, and apple picking. Dan also said that the janitor at SES fell ill recently, and people have been helping to take care of the school in his absence. Sean wondered how other schools were dealing with snow removal; timely snow removal has been a problem at SES.

Union #28: Jennifer reported that she has been busy preparing her self-assessment and Entry Plan, which she shared with JSC. This includes survey data from parents, which is being collated by Adam. There is an anonymous leadership assessment survey to be conducted in December on several points of professional behavior. She has also created some documents to help the Principals understand the evaluation cycle. She has been working through various exercises with her Leadership Team on what's working and what's not so far; the feedback has been good so far. Some feedback requested a little more "organic" meeting format, and Jennifer responded with an ad-hoc agenda-building exercise that was well received. There was a wonderful union-wide Professional Development Day at which Aaron was a big hit. She attended all the lockdown drills that occurred and was impressed with which the level of finesse that all students and staff carried out the drills, and public safety officers on site were equally impressed. On the horizon is MCAS 2.0, but she hopes it will not be a mishmash of PARCC and MCAS; the state needs to be very thoughtful about how it assesses kids. As we start to think of budget, she would like JSC to think about one issue in particular: there is one employee all the schools share, a SPED provider, whose salary could vary widely according to need, and she would like JSC to consider making the position a U28 position, equally supported by the schools.

Dan asked about Prudence Marsh's change of title to Director of Student Support; Jennifer responded that all students require some kind of support, and they would like to bear that in mind and make that clear by expanding the scope of Prudence's position to include all student support, and to tailor that support to the individual needs in each school. The Principals are supportive of this. Dan asked about how meetings are going; Jennifer said they meet weekly and share information on what they're doing and how things are going. Dan offered praise for how all of these efforts were contributing to building a stronger sense of community.

John asked if Jennifer had any big concerns now that she has been in the job for a few months. She said no; the teaching she sees is above and beyond what she's seen in a lot of other districts. Dan brought up the need to write letters to legislators to make our voices heard on the issues our schools face; CES, for example, has collected a great deal of data that can be used to inform

legislators about the conditions out here, and Dan has contacted Sen. Rosenberg's office to make him aware of its availability. It is very important to collect more data and information, and to share this with our representatives; positions can emerge from this data. Jennifer affirmed that sharing our points of view helps us stand out, and can influence political decisions. Dan added that he has heard calling or writing legislators can get them to actually read legislation carefully before voting on it, which seems to be a somewhat uncommon occurrence. He said that attending MAST meetings as the U28 representative also gives us a voice because he is able to influence, comment on, and vote on resolutions. Sarah responded that Steve Kulik and Stan Rosenberg were very caring and responsive individuals; they will always make time for their constituents.

7. Policy Review: None.

8. DESE Superintendent Evaluation Presentation

Jennifer distributed copies of her goals for JSC review. After they read through them, Jennifer took questions and comments from the committee. Dan said that a lot of the goals focused on her having a great deal of contact with students; she responded that we're all here for the students, and she enjoys developing relationships with the students by visiting the schools. JSC members asked several clarifying questions. Alan said he was impressed by the document. Kip brought up the larger issue of getting families involved in town meetings and school committee meetings; how could we work to better engage families? At the same time, we feel their pain (their lack of time to really be able to engage with the school). Is it possible to go door to door to help connect families? Aaron said having people on a rotating basis might be possible, while Scott added that partnering up with other organizations that provide services at home might work. On the other hand, families might perceive that as intrusive, as a kind of social work. Aaron concluded by saying this sounds like an outreach position, and that they can start to think about what that might look like.

John expressed concern over not having enough time to review the goals thoroughly, and Dan responded that it was important to adopt the process because of the short time before the end of the year; there will be the opportunity to give feedback to Jennifer about her chosen goals. Kip asked about artifacts required by the process; Jennifer said she tells her teachers 8-12 artifacts that capture both goals and standards, and that she has already started collecting hers. Sarah asked whether artifacts could be made available electronically, perhaps through Google Docs. Jennifer said she might be able to digitize and distribute some artifacts, but would prefer to present all the artifacts to JSC for evaluation.

JSC made clear they would like the Summative Evaluation ready by March for the April evaluation.

CARLA MOVED TO ADOPT THE SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION PROCESS AS PRESENTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT. SON HUI SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

9. Superintendent Goals

Kip commented that the goals are very ambitious for the first year, and he wishes Jennifer well in achieving them. He added that he feels family engagement is very important and should be given more play here, but he recognizes the plan is already ambitious enough; he would like this to be part of future plans. Jennifer said that what's on the goals is only one piece, and that goals could be shifted around.

KIP MOVED THAT STANDARD 3D-1 BE MOVED TO THE HIGH-PRIORITY AREA. CARLA SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

John commented that it might be too much to take on classroom observation goals as well; Jennifer said she appreciated that JSC is thinking about how much she is taking on, but that she would probably do that anyway, and might as well get credit for it. The focus of that goal is rather supporting principals in offering and following up on constructive feedback. Audra added that it would be helpful to create a timeline for achievement of some goals, such as school visits. Jennifer noted that and John responded that JSC ought to give the Superintendent some latitude in any such timeline.

JSC members commented on the apparent complexity of the process and also appreciated that it aligns with Principal and teacher goals.

CARLA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT'S GOALS AS PRESENTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT. SON HUI SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

10. Future Items to Discuss:

JSC discussed potential future topics of discussion; engaging the community is a high priority and seems deserving of a more detailed exploration. Audra noted that since the school budget is such a large part of the town budget, it is important to get townspeople into the school to see what we do. Dan responded that public schools tend not to engage in as much marketing, promotion, or outreach as charter schools; we could certainly do more in this regard, including using social media.

- a. Engaging families and communities / promoting the public schools
- b. Next Meeting Date: January

11. Adjournment

CARLA MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 9:20. SARAH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.