

HYDE PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
HYDE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2010

Board members present: Mark Freeman, Jim Lipinski, Dan Regan, Kalee Roberts, Raven Walters.

Others: Michelle Mathias, Brian Marshall, Scott Griswold and his wife, Sue Cano, Debra Taylor (via phone.)

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Items highlighted for follow-up are shown like this.

1. Call to Order

J. Lipinski called the meeting to order at 6:31.

2. Select Board Matters – Plowing, Etc.

Scott Griswold, selectboard chair, suggested that the town report have 2 sections (one for the school board and one for the selectboard, with a divider in the middle and separate dedications for each section.

He said the town will be starting work on a rotary, which could lead to problems with traffic coming through the downtown area. Work will start in April and run through November. He will keep the school board abreast of the situation.

He suggested the school board might be able to save some money by having someone other than the town do the school's plowing. It is difficult for the town to do it, because it has to be done on overtime hours. He can help with writing the bid. K. Roberts said M. Frederick may be doing a district-wide bid. She can talk to M. Frederick and have her get back to S. Griswold.

S. Griswold suggested providing lunch at town meeting could be a good fund raising opportunity for a school group. (*S. Griswold and his wife left at 6:41.*)

3. Approve Consent Agenda (Minutes – 8/2/10, 8/7/10, 9/11/10, Principal's Report, Central Office Report – August Financials)

K. Roberts moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by M. Freeman.

J. Lipinski and K. Roberts suggested changes to Item 14 in the minutes of August 2: Change the principal compensation figure from "3.45% of 2010 salary" to "103.45% of 2010 salary" and add an explanation of the rationale for the compensation amount – that it is equivalent to the teacher's contract, including a horizontal move for a doctorate.

M. Mathias summarized highlights of the principal's report for the benefit of R. Walters, who had not seen it. Enrollment is at 249 – 4 students less than last year. There is a lot of professional development going on in Lindamood-Bell programs. Special ed, math, and reading recovery faculty and some paras are participating. She described some of the programs. HPES will be adopting the Vermont Integrated

Instruction Model, which combines Response to Intervention, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, and Differentiated Instruction. It will give us more flexibility in how we deliver early special ed intervention. We don't have to use the discrepancy model. Becoming a state-sanctioned ViiM school is a 3-year process. They give us credit for what we've already done. We are also working on co-teaching. S. Cano said everyone will probably come together for cross-SU sharing of strategies and ideas for co-teaching, probably in April. All co-teaching teams have to submit a data plan to her showing how they will assure kids are making gains. M. Mathias said HPES will be able to use co-teaching in grades 1-6. All students have been benchmarked with AIMSweb, but the scores are not nationally normed yet; that happens at the end of this month. NECAPs are starting the first week in October. There is ESS information on the HPES website.

D. Regan said he is delighted with what he reads in the principal's report. There is a lot of good work that should feed back into instructional practices. But he feels we need to develop some way of knowing how HPES graduates fare at the middle school level. He is not looking for a comparison with each other school, but just how HPES compares to the mean. K. Roberts said that's why she wants to look at last year's assessment results, so the board can have another set of eyes on it. She still doesn't know if kids who do well in math do well in English. S. Cano said she will update D. Taylor on that. S. Cano said it is only this school year that we are getting to a place where we have standardized assessments, so she thinks comparing results among schools will probably be more useful looking forward than looking back when different schools were doing different things. M. Mathias said she knows our students are not doing as well as she would like in math. She discussed ways the school is focusing on math. Textbooks don't yet support the national core standards, so she doesn't want to buy new textbooks. But there are plenty of materials to work with. It is not about curriculum. Our instruction needs to be based on what kids need, based on assessments.

R. Walters said some community members approached her about the amount of time kids spend on testing. How much time does a benchmark require for each kid? M. Mathias said each student's assessment is very short, but going through the entire class takes the teacher a long time. First graders have the most assessments (8), and each is one minute long. In the older grades, there are 3 math assessments. The longest is 8 minutes. In 2nd-6th grades, there are 2 reading assessments. One is to read 3 passages, each for a minute. Then there is a written test where students have to select the word that makes sense. R. Walters asked, so 20 minutes max for each student? M. Mathias said yes, 3 times a year. She said the Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment can take longer. Depending on how well the student reads, it can take a while to get to the place where they struggle. That is done with each child. If a child needs intervention, then they are put in progress monitoring mode and might be monitored once a week or every other week. Those assessments are just as short, and might not be in every area.

Regarding the idea mentioned in the principal's report that Marty Spaulding might work 5 hours a week for HPES on procurement, contracting, and building management, K. Roberts said the high school board disallowed a similar external contract for M. Spaulding previously. M. Mathias said M. Spaulding was approached to see if he might consult up to 5 hours a week in the morning before his other job to fill in the gap we have now. The two people we have are doing a good job at keeping the building clean, but we need some management level work. This was Marilyn Frederick's suggestion. K. Roberts suggested exploring other options.

The motion was passed.

4. *Future Meeting Schedule*

M. Freeman said during spring semester – starting in January – he will be teaching a class on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and would love it if it were possible to change the meeting day just for that semester. Some possibilities were discussed. J. Lipinski said this will be discussed further at a future meeting. We need to find out when D. Taylor will be available. M. Freeman will get more information about his schedule, to find out exactly which days classes will be held.

There will be 2 meetings in December, as well as meetings on October 18 and November 15.

5. *Act 146 and 153 Discussion*

S. Cano distributed a handout on Acts 146 and 153. (*D. Taylor joined the meeting by phone at 7:31.*) J. Lipinski said he was not planning on an in-depth conversation, just raising the issues so everyone can be better prepared to talk about them next week.

D. Taylor said we will be reviewing this next week at the full LNSU board meeting.

J. Lipinski said he feels the biggest thing we have to wrestle with is the Act 146 target – \$57K for Hyde Park. M. Mathias said the reduction is actually more than that,

because that is a reduction from current levels, but we will have inflation, pay increases, etc. D. Taylor said taking inflation into consideration, the targets call for decreases of 4-5% on average. K. Roberts said there is no leeway based on how many kids come into the district, other funding reductions, or anything else. J.

Lipinski said the \$19 million in federal money is being tossed around by everyone but state administration. M. Mathias said the state can opt to use that money to reduce general fund requirements. It is important that pressure be brought to bear that that

money be put to the use it was intended. D. Taylor noted that any decisions regarding that money will be made well after we have to report our decision on meeting the target. K. Roberts said when she was in a meeting with the commissioner last Thursday, he was clear that when they set the targets they used the best information they had, and they have no desire to revisit their formula or decision matrix.

Understanding that the reduction figure is really doubled, he is adamant he will recommend that the \$19 million go toward the \$23 million target. But he has the same timing problem we do. On December 15, before the legislature meets, he has to write a plan for how he will get to \$23 million. He is not prepared to give any more guidance than that we have the target and he has to have a plan by the required date.

D. Taylor agreed, saying the commissioner said essentially the same thing at the meeting she attended with him. Timing is creating great difficulty. We have to

respond without knowing if there will be relief in the next legislative session. We might at least have a clue by mid-November what legislators are promising. It is important to find out views of people running for open seats in our district. K. Roberts suggested it would be good to do that in a public way, maybe a radio interview with the superintendent. D. Taylor said she thinks that would be appropriate. K. Roberts said VSBA has invited the gubernatorial candidates to their annual meeting, but they haven't heard back if they will attend. She said at least 4 larger districts have said they will not try to meet the targets. There is concern over equity if some choose to do it and some don't. Districts might just be told to reduce, but it is not clear how to do that if the voters have already passed a budget. D. Taylor said what happens will depend on who is elected in November. Knowing their opinions can help us make decisions. At the state superintendents' meetings, there has been some dissatisfaction and discomfort about the state telling us what to do, but people realize there are revenue shortfalls. If a board tries to meet the target and others do not, it is possible there will be an additional hit if there is a change in the ed fund or funding formula that impacts all school districts. B. Marshall said he has heard the commissioner say he will have \$23 million less to hand out regardless of what school districts do. D. Taylor agreed that is what she has heard.

J. Lipinski said there is not quite the same urgency about voluntary mergers. By December 1, we have to talk about the possibility of forming a regional educational district. D. Taylor said we have to warn a conversation at the SU level that discusses the possibility. But not until 2012 do we need to decide whether to do a formal study. She thinks that is important to clarify. K. Roberts said there is no clarity about what the process would be if Wolcott wanted to join Lamoille North or if Hyde Park wanted to join with Morrisville. There is no clarity about how we would get out of Lamoille North to go to Lamoille South. D. Taylor said an LU board member expressed the hope that any interest in forming a RED would be unanimous among LNSU districts. But we don't know districts' interests yet. J. Lipinski said the voluntary budget reduction target will be a bigger discussion for next week. K. Roberts said there is a podcast on the VSBA website that walks through the issues and possibilities. D. Taylor agreed it is a good one. She said there are other publications about Acts 146 and 153, including a memo from central office. She can send out copies if anyone wants them.

S. Cano reviewed the new duties of SU's and superintendents which are required by Act 153. Most are already in place. K. Roberts said people have expressed some concerns about implications around the hiring process. She said SU's can't own buses, so we may not actually get any savings by having the SU manage transportation. They can provide it by the process we are already using, but then it is just a billback game. M. Mathias said the question of how special ed services are provided is not just about money. It is important for case managers to get to know kids and teachers, as they do when they work for one school. She is concerned that the level of disparity will grow with Challenges for Change. Cuts will have an impact, and that will affect outcomes.

6. 9/11/10 Community Meeting Follow-Up

R. Walters said she thought J. Lengel did a good job of facilitating our discussion and getting the community to speak up, and the historical presentation helped open up people's minds, but she was dissatisfied with the "day in a life" presentation. K. Roberts agreed; she said she has seen a much better, more fleshed-out "day in a life." J. Lipinski agreed that the one J. Lengel showed the teachers was better. D. Regan said the lack of coherence in the "day in a life" slide show also struck him, but he thinks we should be grateful that it was not overly compelling, because then it might have stuck in our minds in a too-rigid manner as the vision we must follow. J. Lipinski said he thinks that's why the Lengels picked that one – it didn't raise the bar so high.

R. Walters asked about the next step. M. Mathias said her understanding is that at the next meeting – proposed for Oct. 18 – they are looking for vignettes. Then we will brainstorm through those and figure out how they work together. K. Roberts said asked, where do we get the kids' and the teachers' visions and vignettes? She asked, how do we get everyone involved between now and the next meeting? M. Mathias said open house is this week. We could put together a table, and maybe loop footage from the presentation. She said she would like to invite faculty to participate, rather than mandate it. She wants people involved who believe in the process of visioning. K. Roberts agreed, but said she is concerned about what process will be used to solicit ideas from kids. J. Lipinski said we need someone to spearhead this and make sure that people will have vignettes ready. M. Freeman asked how polished the vignettes should be. J. Lipinski said just a typed out paragraph. R. Walters asked if we will be getting cohesiveness. M. Mathias said she thinks we will start off with a larger number of vignettes, then the group will examine them and make a cohesive story, probably in another meeting after that. D. Regan said he was struck by the relative coherence of ideas mentioned at the meeting. Two elements seemed to loom large – critical thinking and creativity and imagination (kids producing something of their own.) Those ideas seemed to play out in experiential learning activities that made the school boundaries more porous. J. Lipinski said he didn't hear any mutually exclusive ideas. K. Roberts said the big gap she saw was between NECAPs and Common Core and the ideas people were talking about. J. Lipinski said he thinks we need to worry first about getting as many vignettes as possible, then trust the process.

M. Freeman asked, can we get an article in the paper about the meeting and when it will air on TV, and how people can provide their feedback? M. Mathias said we could create an email address specifically for this input. M. Freeman said some will want to hand it in on paper. J. Lipinski said tomorrow he can put up a blog that can be linked to off the HPES page, where people can see other people's ideas and post their own. M. Freeman suggested the town clerk, library and school for physical locations where people could deliver input. M. Mathias said there is no reason not to put a press release in the Burlington Free Press.

It was agreed to go with Oct. 18 as the next meeting date. K. Roberts suggested maybe M. Mathias could talk about the process at the next staff meeting and suggest

teachers could have their students work on vignettes. We could have a short film of one grade working on their vignette. M. Freeman and R. Walters said they liked that idea. B. Marshall said he envisions an iterative process where we would create vignettes, then step back and ask what is happening in the larger community and state that will impact our vision, then go at it again. One thing he keeps coming back to is that everything is predicated on the assumption that the decline in enrollment will continue, but there is research and anecdotal evidence showing that it won't. We need to come back to reality. K. Roberts said we need to vision what we want reality to be. K. Roberts asked if M. Mathias could encourage staff to have kids work on vignettes. M. Mathias said she could see having them do it after NECAPS. M. Freeman asked, what kind of video equipment do we have that could be rolling while the kids work? M. Mathias said they just got a couple of video cameras. GMATV will let us have a camera here. D. Regan said he is glad we're moving in this direction. He thinks it is important to ask the kids about their vision. J. Lipinski said he thinks adults will register what the kids wrote.

K. Roberts mentioned having child care and food for Oct. 18. It was suggested that the 6th grade or another grade could provide food as a fundraiser. K. Roberts suggested the board contribute \$200 toward providing the food, to ensure that the effort will be worthwhile for the class. Others agreed that would be a good idea.

7. Follow-up on Non-Resident Policy

S. Cano will ask D. Taylor to provide a status update for the next meeting on legal review of the non-resident policy.

8. Maintenance

M. Mathias said they are looking at replacing the compressor for the walk-in cooler, but she doesn't have a quote yet. K. Roberts suggested it might be possible to find a used one.

9. Adopt Core Values/Work on Core Purpose

J. Lipinski said the board came up with core values at the last retreat, but didn't formalize them. (B. Marshall left at 8:46.) J. Lipinski read the list of core values: Excellence, Integrity, Individuals Matter, Creativity & Innovation, Civic Engagement, Supportive Environment (Physical and Social), Evidence Driven. At the retreat, the board agreed to work on a purpose statement at the next regular board meeting. R. Walters said she would want to wordsmith and polish the core values before adopting them. J. Lipinski asked, how do we move this forward? K. Roberts thinks the board is more or less agreed except for one word. How do these play into our decision making? Where is the evidence all these things have been considered? She feels we often look at single solutions to very broad questions. Where is the process to make sure the values were considered? S. Cano wondered if what K. Roberts is saying goes into the core purpose. K. Roberts said the values should be what we bring to the process when we make decisions. J. Lipinski said they haven't been formalized before. K. Roberts said we had other guiding principles. M. Mathias said people had different ideas about those. D. Regan said he has some of the same problem with these values. He thinks integrity is one he may have a different understanding about than some people. K. Roberts said she thinks it is important that we agree on definitions. J. Lipinski said he thinks it is better to bat them around and

end up with something we are all clear on than to adopt them now. It was agreed to meet on November 8 for another retreat to discuss these further. S. Cano said she would have to check whether D. Taylor would be available. J. Lipinski said D. Taylor was there for the first retreat; this one is just fine-tuning. He thinks it can be done in a couple of hours at an evening meeting.

K. Roberts asked about the LNSU executive committee's discussion on values. J. Lipinski said it went all over the place. When the committee discussed how to move forward, he suggested going back to each board and letting them work it over. At the end, we might have to do something like a conference committee. All will come up with a pretty close list. Everyone has to go back to their boards, then the executive committee can decide on their values. K. Roberts said her concern is that individual boards may have their own ideas about the meaning of certain words.

10. Future Agenda

The Nov. 8 meeting will be in the HPES library at 6:30. The Oct. 18 meeting will probably start at 5:30 and run until 8:00, with dinner and daycare provided.

R. Walters asked to have the public communications committee's work on the agenda for next time.

11. Executive Session – Student Matter

K. Roberts moved to enter executive session to discuss a student matter, inviting administration to remain, R. Walters seconded, and the motion was passed at 9:17.

Prior to entering executive session S. Cano commented that Hyde Park had been awarded funds from the extra-extraordinary cost fund by the VT DOE. This amount will offset prior year anticipated deficit and Hyde Park should have a 2009-2010 deficit of under \$1,000.00.

The board then entered the executive session. The board consented out of executive session at 9:40.

M. Freeman moved to approve tuition and excess costs to send a student to Johnson Elementary School if needed, seconded by J. Lipinski, and the motion was passed

D. Regan commented on the quality and beauty of the HPES concert performed at HP Home Days. He suggested that the group might perform the Vermont State Song at the opening of the town meeting. This idea was endorsed by all present.

12. Adjourn

J. Lipinski moved to adjourn, seconded by R. Walters, the motion passed and the board adjourned at 9:45.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

Items highlighted for follow-up:

But he [D. Regan] feels we need to develop some way of knowing how HPES graduates fare at the middle school level. He is not looking for a comparison with each other school, but just how HPES compares to the mean.

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