

MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT 52

Greene, Leeds, and Turner, Maine

Minutes of the Fifth Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors 2017-2018

October 12, 2017 Leeds Central School

Members present: Elizabeth Bullard; Peter Ricker; Pamela Sirois; JoAnn Nickerson; Yuri Kowalski; Jon Woodard

Members absent: Richard Gross; Robert Allen; Carlos Gnipp

Others present: Kimberly Brandt, Superintendent of Schools; Michele Coates, Business Manager; Theresa Gillis, Assistant Superintendent; Eben Shaw, Leavitt Area High School Principal; Gail Marine, Tripp Middle School Principal; Kelly Marston, Turner Elementary School Principal; Ryan Patrie, Turner Primary School Principal; Mark McDonough, Greene Central School Principal; Kim Long, Director of Facilities/ Transportation; Dylan Chase, Facilities/ Transportation Administrative Assistant; Razell Ward, Adult Education Director; Rebekah Drysdale, Director of Special Education; Randy Swift, Director of Technology; Ryan LaRoche, Leavitt Area High School Assistant Principal/Athletic Director; Chloe Veilleux, Student Representative; District Employees; District Citizens

1. Chairperson Elizabeth Bullard called the meeting to order at 6:29 P.M. and JoAnn Nickerson led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. The Minutes of the Revised First Regular Meeting, August 11, 2016 and the Minutes of the Fourth Regular Meeting, September 28, 2017 were approved by general consent.
3. Communications:
 - 3.1 Superintendent Brandt reported the following resignations:
 - Kimberly Long, Director of Facilities/Transportation, effective December 20, 2017.
 - Lauren “Butch” Gilbert, Leavitt Area High School Special Education Ed Tech III, effective December 31, 2017.
4. Adjustment to Agenda – None.
5. Committee Reports:
 - 5.1. Finance Committee-Jon Woodard reported that the committee has not met.
 - 5.2. Plant/Transportation/Building Committee – Peter Ricker reported that the committee has not met.

- 5.3. Curriculum/Policy Committee –JoAnn Nickerson reported that the committee has not met.
- 5.4. Student Representatives Report –Chloe Veilleux reported fall sports wrapping up; hosting Latin Convention-looking for volunteers for November 3, 2017-Chloe is president of State Latin Club; students have just completed taking PSATs in preparation for SATs.
- 5.5. Tri-Town Education Association Negotiations (Teacher) – Jon Woodard reported that this will be discussed in Executive Session, Agenda Item 9.13
- 5.6. Administration Work Agreements – Peter Ricker reported that this will be discussed in Executive Session, Agenda Item 9.15.
- 5.7. Tri-Town Education Association Support Staff (ESP)-Kim Brandt shared that there will be an update in Executive Session, Agenda Item 9.11.
- 5.8. Administrator Reports: Principal Gail Marine reviewed Tripp Middle School's Improvement Plan. The school's goals remain focused on student achievement in reading, math, school culture and student attendance. Principal Marine pointed out the addition of action steps to help meet these goals. Student Targeted Growth Reports for NWEA Math and Reading will now be mailed home to parents; re-establishment of advisor/advisee time to solidify relationships between students and staff; utilize "Recovery RTI" as necessary and recognize student attendance in positive ways while communicating with parents in cases of poor attendance. Principal Marine also shared that Tripp Middle School Student Council is up and running. Some of their work includes sponsoring "spirit days" for the school community. This year's fundraiser is the selling of Subway Coupon booklets which is going very well. Members of Tripp Middle School are also working to update the lobby to create a welcoming environment.
- 5.9. Superintendent's Report--Kimberly Brandt reported out on the following.
 - Thanked Jason Breton for all of his work uploading student information for the October 1st enrollment count, which is used in determining state subsidy. Maine has moved from Infinite Campus to Synergy, so Jason has been working through glitches in this new system.
 - One of the two booster pumps at Leavitt Area High School has broken and needs to be replaced. Facilities/Transportation Director Kim Long has been working with the vendor to get the best possible price, anticipated to be about \$11,000.
 - IRC plans to begin roof work at Leeds Central School in November.
 - Business Manager Michele Coates is finalizing the contract for the roofing consultant, Jeff Radel, who will oversee the roofing project.
 - Thanks to Dave Roberts for spending part of his Columbus Day weekend working on the water at Turner Primary School.

- The state sent out a priority notice about Chapter 134, which is related to proficiency-based education and awarding a high school diploma. “The Maine DOE has made the decision to withdraw the current proposed rule and restart the rulemaking process after a brief pause for conceptual conversations. The Maine DOE remains committed to the proficiency-based diploma law and remains committed to drafting a proposed rule that supports the implementation of a diploma based on evidence of proficiency.” The rule is going to be revamped but the law remains intact. Challenges include finding a pathway for identified students and how to meet standards in all eight content areas when, for example, it is difficult to find enough foreign language teachers. The good news is that UMF is in the final stages of approval for the development of a new foreign language program that they hope to begin in the fall of 2018. Principal Shaw is part of a group who will be offering input on Chapter 134 on Friday, October 13.
- As always, it is a highlight when I visit classrooms and see students engaged in learning. I thank our educators for their excellent and dedicated work with students.

6. Public Comment – None.

7. Old Business– None

8. Consent Agenda – A motion was made by Peter Ricker, seconded by Yuri Kowalski and voted unanimously by those present to approve the following Non-Instructional appointments:

8.1. Non-Instructional Appointments:

8.1.1. Breanna Allard, Leavitt Area High School One-Act Play Advisor.

8.1.2 Hailey Chadbourne, 7th Grade Field Hockey and Cathy Marston, 8th Grade Field Hockey, Tripp Middle School.

9. New Business:

9.1. Instructional Nomination – A motion was made by Yuri Kowalski, seconded by Pam Sirois and voted unanimously by those present to approve the following instructional appointment:

9.1.1 James Remington, Turner Primary School/Turner Elementary School Art Teacher, effective start date to be determine.

9.2. A motion was made by Peter Ricker, seconded by Pam Sirois and voted unanimously by those present to approve the donation to Turner Elementary School from the Anderson Foundation.

9.3. A motion was made by Peter Ricker, seconded by Pam Sirois and voted unanimously by those present to approve an out of state field trip to Quincy

Market in Boston, Massachusetts on April 7, 2018 for Leavitt Area High School music and theater students.

- 9.4. Superintendent Brandt shared that she was contacted by the Turner Town Manager, Kurt Schaub, about the possibility of coordinating the Turner town election and the school budget validation referendum dates with the goal of improving voter turnout for both. Kurt shared that the Town of Turner and MSAD 52 would need to agree on a date in May that could not be changed after February 1 due to statutory requirements for the Town. Superintendent Brandt contacted Charlie Noonan in Greene and Joyce Pratt from Leeds. Mr. Noonan will share this information with the Greene Selectmen at their next meeting. It would be a large change for Greene to move from its normal March meeting to May because they are currently on a calendar (not fiscal) year. Joyce Pratt told Superintendent Brandt that Leeds' town meeting is generally the first Saturday in April. Chairperson Bullard opened the discussion for Board Members. Peter Ricker asked about meetings being set in terms of the budget vote. Superintendent Brandt shared that budget dates are usually set in December and that we could set them sooner. The budget vote and validation referendum occur in May. Pam Sirois remembered that last year there was a discussion at a school board meeting about moving the date to June. Board Members would like to find out what Greene and Leeds think about this proposal. Board Members present are fine with this proposal as long as all three towns are in support of this. Pam Sirois believes this move would make sense for all three towns and the Board, as the goal is to increase voter turnout. The Board will continue discussion once additional information has been obtained from Leeds and Greene. Chairperson Bullard and Superintendent Brandt noted that there would be a cost savings with this change, but it is unclear if the savings would be to the town or school district.
- 9.5. Assistant Superintendent Gillis provided an overview of assessments given to students in MSAD 52. NWEAs are given to students in grades K-10 twice a year with an option for a third session during the winter. The purpose of this computer based assessment is to identify student strengths and weaknesses; guide instruction; and monitor student progress. The data from these assessments are also used as part of the Teacher Evaluation System. eMPowerME tests are computer based and administered to students in grades 3-8 as mandated by the State of Maine. The MEA Science assessment is a paper/pencil test and is administered to grades 5, 8 and 11 as mandated by the State of Maine. Alternative Assessments are provided for students who require this level of modified assessments. At Leavitt Area High School, students practice the SAT by taking the PSAT during their sophomore or junior years. All students are required by state mandate to take the SAT during their junior year. This paper/pencil assessment takes between four and five hours to complete. Board Members asked questions related to this information and would like to be provided with the cost of the NWEAs to our district presented at a future board meeting. Assistant Superintendent Gillis also shared a comparison of Leavitt Area High School's performance on the 2016-2017 SAT and MEA Science tests

with area high schools. Board Members were appreciative of this but did note that they are looking to see how our students can demonstrate increased proficiency. Future board presentations will provide information on elementary and middle school comparisons.

- 9.6. Principal Shaw shared that Leavitt Area High School administration is approached from time to time about the possibility of adding specific athletic teams to the offerings at the high school. These individuals or organizations are also willing to pay for the cost of the program. Principal Shaw wanted the Board to know that there is a “hidden cost” in terms of the management of an athletic team. Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Ryan LaRoche is working at full capacity. Many things are involved behind the scenes of athletics such as scheduling, transportation, hiring and communications. Principal Shaw stressed that although there may not appear to be a cost, the cost in “manpower” will be prohibitive. Principal Shaw also shared that cheering, alpine skiing and boys and girls hockey would not be able to run without the help of outside organizations. Peter Ricker believes that if groups approach the administration, the requests should be considered. He also believes that the current activities, sports and events should be considered for continuation. Pam Sirois believes that feeder programs in the three towns should be considered when the district looks at what sports programs to continue. She believes these feeder programs dictate what programs can be run by MSAD 52. She would hate to see something get funded if it would dwindle down. She asked for clarity around the difference between “school clubs” and “school teams”. Ryan LaRoche noted that there are very few remaining club teams in the state. The MPA allows two or three students to join other teams; however once numbers get to a certain amount, different rules come into play. Chairperson Bullard shared that she believes that ongoing evaluation of the sports teams at LAHS is in place and Principal Shaw agreed. Assistant Principal/Athletic Director LaRoche shared information about the number of students, teams and cost for athletic teams. The information is below in this table:

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2016-2017
Amount Funded	\$198,136	\$196,219.50	\$176,400
# Total Teams	34	34	33*
# Varsity Teams	22	22	21*
#Student Athletes	463	494	476
Average \$ per pupil	\$427	\$397.20	\$370

*reduction of two golf teams; addition of one unified basketball team

Chairperson Bullard noted that during the last budget process, instructional positions were cut; she would like to continue this conversation at future Board

meetings. Yuri Kowalski asked for the participation cost per student athlete per sport. Jon Woodard appreciated hearing this now, prior to budget season. There is no specific action to be taken on this informational agenda item.

- 9.7. Principal Shaw introduced the discussion of Latin Honors at Leavitt Area High School. Over the past year, Leavitt Area High School staff have discussed graduation honors and honor roll as part of committee work. Principal Shaw will be sharing this information with the Student Council next week. The current preliminary proposal would move Graduation Honors at Leavitt Area High School to a three tiered system of Summa Cum Laude (3.8+); Magna Cum Laude (3.6-3.79) and Cum Laude: (3.0-3.59). Additionally the Honor Roll would become a three tiered system with Highest Honors (3.8+); High Honors (3.6-3.79) and Honors (3.0-3.59). Principal Shaw reported that several Maine schools are already doing this; other schools are at the same stage of development as Leavitt Area High School. Mr. Shaw wanted to provide this information now to the Board to make them aware. Superintendent Brandt noted that the change would allow students to be measured against a standard rather than others. This will be taken up by the Curriculum/Policy subcommittee in the near future.
- 9.8. Discussion of Maine School Board Association (MSBA) proposed resolutions. JoAnn Nickerson, as the alternate delegate will share the wishes of the School Board with the delegate, to the MSBA assembly, Richard Gross. The Board members present agreed to support all the proposed resolutions as they stand.
- 9.9. Business Manager Coates provided an analysis of the Transportation and Facilities Departments Organizational Structure. The timing of this analysis is due to the fact that the current director has given her resignation. As a result of these comparisons, Mrs. Coates would propose an assistant director position be added to provide necessary support to the Director of Transportation and Facilities. Peter Ricker believes that this is not the time to add an additional position. This should happen as part of the budget and the District should move forward to hire a replacement for Kim Long. Chairperson Bullard feels that it would not be a good hiring practice for the District to do this at this time and then begin discussions about changing or adding positions after a replacement has been hired. JoAnn Nickerson has a problem adding administrative levels at this time in the school year. Pam Sirois feels that this is a huge disservice for any salaried employee to be required to work 60-80 hours per week. Transportation and Facilities Administrative Assistant, Dylan Chase, shared that the Department of Education has implemented regulations that are going to require more training of employees; he worries that this will be additional work as there are nearly 70 direct reports to the Director of Transportation and Facilities. He believes that Mrs. Long has been as successful as she has been at this position because she knows the workings of the District and has a solid understanding of the processes and procedures in place. Yuri Kowalski believes that the department needs to be restructured, and that now is the time to do this -he isn't sure of what the best choice for restructure is but suggests a look at the department

holistically and see recommended set ups of the department. Superintendent Brandt believes that changes do need to be made, if not now, then soon; and that we have different staffing levels than other districts. She believes that staff is at full capacity. Superintendent Brandt would like a bit more time to look at current structure, knowing that we'll post now for current position.

- 9.10. Superintendent Brandt provided an update on Chapter 123: School Management and Leadership Centers (Regional Service Centers). At our September 28th board meeting, I told you that Chapter 123 was enacted with the biennial budget and it encourages the development of regional service centers with the goal of economizing on and maximizing educational services. There are incentives and penalties tied to school funding to encourage districts to collaborate to development these regional service centers.

Basically, if a district finds a way to collaborate to develop a regional service center, it will continue to get system administration per pupil funding. If a district doesn't find a way to collaborate to create a regional service center, it will begin to lose state subsidy. This year the per pupil amount for system administration dropped from \$235 to \$135. For 2018-19, the rate will be \$138 per student, BUT if we do not find a way to collaborate that makes sense for our students and communities, then \$46 of that \$138 per pupil will be deducted from our state subsidy, (so we would receive only \$92 per pupil, not the \$138). This would mean a substantial loss in funding for us.

In 2019-20, the rate would be \$141 per pupil, but if we have not found a way to collaborate that makes sense for our students and communities, \$94 per pupil will be deducted from our state subsidy, meaning we would receive \$47 per pupil. In 2020-21 the system administration rate will be determined by the commissioner of education and only school districts that are participating in a regional service center would be eligible for this funding at all.

So, although participation is voluntary, it is tied to school funding.

There is second part to this. When two or more districts collaborate to create a regional service center, an executive director must be hired to run that regional service center and there must be a board as well. The state will pay for 55% of the executive director's salary. Member districts must pay the remaining 45%. Basically, a regional service center is a legal entity all on its own. Its board and executive director will lead it and make decisions and the member districts lose some local control. Inter-local agreements will need to be carefully written.

There is a third part to this. Part I of the application for how districts plan to collaborate to create a regional service center is due November 30. It appears that if we apply and then it doesn't come to fruition, funding will be reduced in June. There appears to be a lack of clarity around this.

Remember, Child Development Services (CDS) has proposed that special education services for children aged 3-5 years become the responsibility of school districts as well. We do not yet know what this means in terms of funding or timeline.

Conversation at the Western Maine Superintendent Association meeting revolved around Chapter 123 and ideas about how to find a way to collaborate without it costing districts more money.

In a nutshell: If districts don't find a way to collaborate that makes sense for meeting student needs and is fiscally responsible to our communities, we begin losing state subsidy. If districts do find a way to collaborate to develop a regional service center, they are obligated to pay for the services the RSC will offer, they lose some local control and they have to pay 45% of the executive director's salary. It is difficult to imagine how a district can save money if part of an executive director's salary must be paid. It feels like we are adding another layer.

Every superintendent is searching for ways to better meet student needs and save money. That is not enough under this requirement. The regional service center requires that an executive director be hired and that there be a board who will make decisions concerning that regional service center.

I continue to explore ways to make this work. So far, I do not see a way to do this that will save money. There is a competitive \$5million FEDES grant for start-up costs, but moving forward these costs fall to the member districts and the way the law is written, according to Drummond Woodsum, it will be extremely difficult to get out of a regional service center once we are in, even if it is costing the district more money.

It always makes sense for districts to search for ways to better meet student needs and save money in the process and I will continue to search for ways to do this.

- 9.11. A motion was made by Pam Sirois and seconded by Yuri Kowalski and voted unanimously by those present to enter into an Executive Session to discuss the Tri-Town Education Association Support Staff (ESP) negotiations pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6) (D).

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:26 P.M.
The Board returned to Open Session at 9:30 P.M.

- 9.12. No action taken.

- 9.13. A motion was made by Yuri Kowalski, seconded by Jon Woodard and voted unanimously by those present to enter into an Executive Session to discuss the

Tri-Town Education Association Teachers (TTEA) negotiations pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6) (D).

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:30 P.M.
The Board returned to Open Session at 9:48 P.M.

9.14. No action taken.

9.15. A motion was made by Yuri Kowalski, seconded by Jon Woodard and voted unanimously by those present to enter into an Executive Session to discuss Administrators work agreement pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6) (D).

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:20 P.M.
The Board returned to Open Session at 9:24 P.M.

9.16. A motion was made by Peter Ricker; seconded by Yuri Kowalski and voted unanimously by those present to accept the Administrators' negotiated 3-year work agreement with a 2% overall net increase; minor language change involving insurance in 3rd year of contract (getting rid of the option for the standard plan) while grandfathering in 2 group members with past benefits for educational experience.

10. Other Business-None

11. A motion was made by Yuri Kowalski, seconded by Jon Woodard and voted unanimously by those present to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly Brandt, Secretary