

Marlboro School Board Meeting
Approved Minutes
Monday, September 8, 2014 @ 6pm

Attending: Jen Carr– Chair, Wayne Kermenski– Clerk, Will Brooke deBock,– Vice Chair, Francie Marbury – Principal, Steven John – Superintendent, Ellen Martyn – Kindergarten Teacher, Members of the public: Michael DeMatteis, Judy Robinson, Bruce Cole, Heather Sperling, Haley Elisha, Lauren Roster, Saint Rosner, Trevor Wentworth, Polly Moryl

The meeting was called to order by Jen at 6:05 pm.

Ellen updates full day kindergarten and afternoon curriculum. She is using a curriculum called forest kindergarten where kindergarteners learn by observing and interacting with the forest. She will be taking students outside every afternoon all year long.

Ellen Martyn departed at 6:30

Members of the public arrived at 6:30: Judy Robinson, Bruce Cole, Heather Sperling, Haley Elisha, Lauren Roster, Saint Rosner, Trevor Wentworth, Polly Moryl

Open session for community feedback on issues relevant to the School Board. The following comments and concerns are identified below.

- Citizens shared the history of the poetry program at Marlboro Elementary.
- They feel strongly about the importance of the artist in program and believe it reaches out to students who may struggle in other areas, but do well in the arts programs.
- Citizens expressed the importance of the poetry program as it challenges and allows students to look inward and express their thoughts.
- Citizens value the program throughout their student's education at Marlboro.
- What will take the place of the poetry program at the higher grades?
- School Board Members appreciate hearing from the community in order to help us make the best discussions for the school.
- Jen explained what the school board is responsible for. Budget, Policy, Contracts, representing the community, neutral mediator, but the board does not manage the principal, personnel decisions or curriculum.
- It was a joint decision by the principal and teachers not to have the poetry program for 5-8 grades.
- It was not a budget discussion. The funding is not changed, just the time in which the program will be held.
- Their classroom teachers will still teach poetry to students in grades 5-8.
- It is important to not let programs that are important to us slip away. Marlboro values artist in residence.
- Transparency around decisions that are valuable to our community.

Community members departed at 7:45: Judy Robinson, Bruce Cole, Heather Sperling, Haley Elisha, Lauren Roster, Saint Rosner, Trevor Wentworth, Polly Moryl, Michael DeMatteis

Jen made a motion to accept the minutes from June 2nd meeting with appropriate changes. Wayne seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jen made a motion to accept July 7th minutes with appropriate changes. Will second the motion. Motion passed.

Jen made a motion to accept July 11th minutes with appropriate changes. Will second the motion. Motion passed.

Mail:

- Letter from Ann Gengarely was read.
- Read the letter from the Windham Southwest Supervisory Union and rejected their proposal to a tuition agreement between Marlboro and Twin Valley School District.

Confirm procedures for compliance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

Salary scale progress update - Meeting will be held Wednesday 9/10/14 between Jen and teachers.

Principal's Report attached.

Forgiveness for the loan from the Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation in the amount of 17,923.19 for a water purification system previously installed.

Jen signed the agreement of \$8200 for the audit done by Mudgett Jenet Krogh-Wisner. They have done the Marlboro audit in the past.

The board would like to commend the staff for a smooth and great start to the year!

Superintendent's Report attached.

Movement has been made on the teacher evaluation process.

Common chart of accounts for school budgets within the Supervisory Union in order to make budgeting at the WCSU level more efficient.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayne Kermenski

Upcoming Meetings & Important Dates

- VSBA Windham/Windsor Regional Meeting – September 17, 5pm @ Springfield High School
(For more information or to register to attend visit <http://www.vtvsba.org/regional.html>)
- WCSU Full Board Retreat – September 24, 5-9pm at the Hermitage Inn
- Regular MES Board Meeting – Monday, October 6, 6pm
- MES Community Meeting – October 20th at 7:00 pm
- Regular MES Board Meeting – Monday, November 3, 6pm

Our Guiding Principles: Students will be at the center of our decision-making. We will keep to the agenda. The chair will estimate the amount of time necessary for each item and act as timekeeper during the meeting. Every voice is heard as discussion goes back and forth. Decisions will not be made hastily. We will ask ourselves, "What other information do we need in order to make a thoughtful decision?" Decisions/discussion will be recapped before moving on to a new item. Items requiring action will be identified and we will note who is responsible for each action item. Follow through will occur before the next meeting. We will use email judiciously to communicate between meetings.

Implementation Guidelines: Meetings will be held on the first Monday of each month with the fourth Monday kept in reserve, if an additional meeting is needed. The chair will send out the agenda the Thursday before the meeting. The meetings will start at 6pm and go no later than 9pm.

Marlboro School Board

Monday, September 8, 2014

Principal's Report

Student Learning/Professional Learning

CIP/AYP - As a result of not making AYP last year, we will be developing a Continuous Improvement Plan with the assistance of Kendra, Rickerby, a School Effectiveness Coordinator from the AOE. This plan must be in by Nov 6. Rachel, Pam, and Rochelle are on the committee to develop this and we will be meeting regularly with Kendra. I anticipate this being a useful process as she feels that we can use it to develop ways to better report the results of our performance assessments.

Full day Kindergarten - Ellen has five kindergartners and is implementing a full day program, which includes daily time outside. She will share her experience thus far and the rationale for "Forest Kindergarten".

Summer Professional Learning - In addition to several teachers taking classes, two groups worked together on curriculum development. Judy and Erica met over three days to for literacy planning to strengthen the 1st-3rd grade continuum. Rochelle, Tim, and Rachel met for two days to work on integration of technology into the Junior High curriculum. These days were paid out of the "principal directed" part of the Continuing Education line item.

Student Learning at the start of school - Here are scenes from my visits to classrooms the first two weeks of school:

Ellen's students arriving for their first day of kindergarten and immediately beginning an exploration of their "forest classroom" where they will spend every afternoon.

Judy's class going on a book hunt to get to know the classroom library and where to find a "just right" book.

Erica's students marching in from the garden loaded with zucchini.

Pam's class working in their Engineering Room and designing and building towers.

David's students headed off to Woodford State Park for canoeing, hiking, and an overnight of community building.

The Junior High preparing physics based games for us all to play at the Marlboro Fair.

Gail's youngest Spanish class figuring out what "azul" means by playing a game of elimination.

Sue's Art students learning about foreground and background in the process of creating a mural.

The new Junior High students thrilling to their first guitar lesson with Charlene.

John's PE students playing a hilarious game of noodle tag on the soccer field.

Mr H leading Kindergarten in yoga as they settle in for their rest time.

Christine and Erik reading with students as they get back in the swing after the long summer break.

David and Michael meeting with students and making music from day one.

Taste Test - As part of the Marlboro Food Project and with the support of staff from Farm to School (Food Connects), Erica's class conducted taste tests of tomatoes, the Harvest of the Month, in every classroom.

Parent Nights are taking place in every classroom.

Policy or Regulation Implementation

Building and Grounds

The new garden is producing its first harvest with hard work from Erica's class.

No big projects were undertaken over the summer, but it's clear that the building will require some major work in the near future. We will convene the new Building Committee in early October.

Finance/Accounting

End of year actuals for FY2014

Adjusted projections for FY2015

Enrollment/Staffing

Student enrollment as of 9/8/14 79

Staffing - Ailliea Carle joins us as a Behavior Interventionist in kindergarten. We have contracted with HCRS for her services.

Informational items:

Date for Community Meeting?

*Marlboro Realms of Learning
Communication
Problem Solving
Personal Development
Civic and Social Responsibility
Knowledge*

Superintendent's Report for August – September 2014

Student /Staff Learning

1. All our WCSU Principals joined me for an extended planning retreat August 16-18 in Grafton. Abby, Bud, Matt, and Tom contributed their expertise to our discussions and study. Alison, Deb M., and Claire met with us on the last morning to inform the team of changes in their areas of responsibility. FYI, I emailed the agenda for this retreat to all board members on the 15th.
2. Rosemary FitzSimons and Bill Anton delivered two very fine speeches on August 5th, when they were honored by the VPA as Vermont's Elementary School Principals of the year (2014). Emily Long represented the WCSU Board at the presentations and two former colleagues, Frank Rucker and Bruce Garrow (2001 honoree) brought congratulations as well.
3. At the VPA Conference, we learned about how principals can prepare to support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in mathematics and language arts this year. This will require a shift in what we look for as we observe instruction and student learning in our schools. We should see much more open- ended questioning by teachers and considerably more discussion, argumentation, debate to verify answers and solutions given by students. In all, it's a much more engaged and dynamic student centered approach to teaching and learning.
4. All licensed employees in our eight schools met at L&G on Aug. 25th for the WCSU Welcome Back 2014 in-service. I highlighted the importance of good teaching as the foundation of our democracy and called attention to our continuing initiatives to support professional learning to improve instruction. No individual teacher can meet the needs of every child, but a team of teachers and support staff can.

Policy and Regulation

1. See last month's report for issues that still pertain.
2. We have adopted an administrative procedure across the WCSU to improve the air quality in our parking areas near school buildings. This follows up on a recent VT Statute, but seeks a safer standard for our students arriving and departing every school day. We require everyone to turn off their motor vehicles when standing still for any time on the school's campus.
3. Windham is exploring the feasibility of provided hot lunches in cooperation with Abbey Food Service at Leland and Gray. L&G's kitchen already provides meals for Wardsboro. If Windham makes this change it means that every student in the WCSU will have access to the federally subsidized food nutrition program.
4. The Townshend Selectboard is improving the Town's right-of-way across the L&G campus to access parking in the back of the Town Hall for their employees. The Townshend Road Crew is now excavating and adding gravel to this right-of-way behind the Dutton Gym. Access will necessarily be limited by the administration to ensure student safety.
5. Jamaica and Townshend school boards will meet jointly on Sept. 9th at 7 P.M. at JVS to review financial projections and estimates re: building a new elementary school to serve both towns. Bud has consulted with the AOE and will report on the latest developments in school finance that pertain. Cost estimates will be provided based on prior board discussion.

Finance/Accounting/Operations

1. Bud DeBonis submitted the AOE's "statistical reports" as required on Aug. 17. Bud and I want to thank Laurie, Randy, Deb M., Debbie W., Carolyn, and Teri for ensuring the accuracy of these reports. Marlboro submitted their statistics independently, but I authorized all eleven separate reports by signature.
2. Reminder: The Sullivan and Powers team will be in our office for the weeks of September 22 and October 6 to audit the accounts of Windham Central SU, Jamaica, Leland and Gray UHSD #34, NewBrook (Brookline and Newfane), Townshend, Wardsboro, and Windham. This annual professional audit continues to be required by law for all Vermont school districts regardless of size.
3. Chris Pratt, WSWSU Superintendent, and I met to explore the possibility of jointly contracting for operations in our respective central offices. There appears to be considerable potential for improving operational efficiency. We have directed our staff members to meet in pairs to make recommendations to us in September. These recommendations may pertain to implementation of our FY15 budgets, but more likely inform our planning for FY16 and beyond. Pairs are meeting to discuss the possibilities for special education, technology/information systems, human resources, and finance/grants management.

Enrollment/Staffing

1. We welcome fifteen new staff to our schools this fall.
2. We are very pleased to welcome Betty Young to the WCSU Team. Betty serves on a one-year contract as the WCSU's Mathematics Coach. She will be working directly with teachers in their classrooms and after school to support professional learning to improve our teaching of mathematics K-12. This coaching is funded by the Consolidated Federal Grant and made possible by an unexpected increased allocation for the WCSU this year.
3. As of today student enrollments for each school: Dover 101, Jamaica 65, L&G 345, Marlboro 81, NewBrook 125, Townshend 82, Wardsboro 60, and Windham 15. Leland and Gray and NewBrook have declined some, while the others remain pretty stable.

Informational Items

1. The WCSU Board's Annual Planning Retreat is at the Hermitage in Dover on Wednesday, September 24 at 5:00 P.M. This dinner meeting is a good chance to learn about other school boards in the WCSU and set the stage for our budget planning this fall. Please mark your calendars and make every effort to attend.
2. VSBA Southeast Vermont Regional Meeting will be Sept. 17 at Springfield H.S., 303 South Street in Springfield VT from 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

8/26/14 - sbj