

NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, May 2, 2024

Swift River School – 7:00 p.m.

Attending: Carla Halpern, Barbara Doyle, Nancy Slator, Steven Blinder, Kate Woodward, Beth Erviti, Anna Wetherby (minutes), members; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Lindsay Rodriguez, Director of Curriculum (via Google Meets)

Teachers: Shelley Sylverster, Jill Putala, Rachel Vittelo

Public: Shannon Cleveland (incoming superintendent)

A. Call Meeting to Order 7:14

B. Public Hearing - none

C. Warrants – Record in minutes with numbers

Union 28 AP

2824	4/12/2024	\$850.29
2825	5/1/2024	\$770.67

NSW AP

4068	4/12/2024	\$3,984.00
4069	4/12/2024	\$4,404.68
4070	4/12/2024	\$6,657.87
4071	5/1/2024	\$475.29
4072	5/1/2024	\$16,239.71

NSW Payroll

421	4/11/2024	\$94,040.23
422	4/25/2024	\$94,601.19

U28 Payroll

821	4/11/2024	\$29,822.16
822	4/25/2024	\$29,352.77

Monthly Deductions

8210	4/11/2024	\$103,497.01
8220	4/25/2024	\$103,518.08

- The grant money from New Salem Academy will be on the June 6th meeting

D. Superintendent's Report - no report

E. Director of Finance and Operations Report

- FY25 Budget – Discussion and Vote on the Final Adoption of the Budget
- Only one change since the preliminary budget
 - E&D is usually \$50,000. Will be swapped with rural aid \$50,000
 - The rate is set by the census
 - Swift River still qualifies for free lunch
- Beth moves to approve the budget, Steve seconds; passes unanimously
- Thank you, Caitlin!

F. Principal's Report

- Current enrollment 138, project FY 25 enrollment 127
- Will look at adding more school choice seats in June for classes with low enrollment
- Next week is the teacher and nurse appreciation week
- The talent show is Friday at 1:30
- Spring concert May 23 with fundraiser Spaghetti dinner
- Color run and pancake breakfast - made over \$800
- Finished 3rd and 4th MCAS
- Spirit week next week and screen-free week
 - Neuman planned many exciting activities for the week
- June 18, 10 am graduation and last day of school
- Field Day June 10th or 11th
- Boston for 6th on June 6th
- June 14 at Launch Space will host a 6th grade open house for pottery
- Rabbit Run May 25th at 10 am to raise money for Nature's Classroom and Backpack Buddies
 - Most t-shirt design submissions
 - DCR has changed policies and will not provide rangers for the water tables in the future

G. Committee Reports

- Report from Mahar Representatives
 - Student representative reported the electronic pass system is working well
 - Junior ROTC and a shooting class (air rifles) discussion
 - Many people commented in favor of the program taking place
 - Instills confidence and responsibility
 - Could develop leadership
 - Many activities students engage in involve risk
 - Not a recruiting tool or a feeder to the military
 - Concern when recruiters attend low-income schools
 - Asked for data on the medium income of the communities where the ROTC goes
 - If students have social difficulties, is it good for them to be around guns and associate confidence with shooting
 - Pressure to conform to military appearance
 - If students are competing and not a part of the class, their scores could be lowered due to the appearance of the student
 - Could get choice in students
 - The shooting program would be a class
 - Did not vote on the matter
 - Audit with no negative findings
 - Deaf and hard of hearing program and CAPS program- Ayer/Shirley district would like to

- combine as they have a CAPS program
 - Food costs are increasing
 - From the Orange school committee
 - Building outdoor classrooms
 - Pollinator meadow
- Collaborative for Education Services - no update
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees
 - May 6th - day on the hill, different sections
 - Funding and advocacy to adjust the Chapter 70 inflection index to 4%
 - Funding for Rural district
 - Supporting Native families in Massachusetts
 - Open meeting law review - expand the preparations to interview superintendent candidates
 - Vocational school enrollment
 - Hoyaloke is looking to exit the state oversight
- Budget and Personnel – none at this time
- Joint Supervisory
 - Next Meeting – May 20, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
 - No report

H. May Items

- BRYT program MOA – Discussion and Vote
 - Bridging resilient youth in transition
 - Students needing tier 3 (highest need students); SELI specific, but benefits all students
 - It will not cost the school as it is fully grant-funded
 - Will supply materials such as flexible seating and all professional development
 - After the vote, there will be two meetings to look at supports in Tier 1 and 2 and where BRYT will fit with Tier 3
 - After the grant ends, what will the transition steps be?
 - Swift River potentially has the right place staffing-wise to continue the program
 - Year 1 = 100% covered
 - Slowly puts the cost on the school after
 - What is the cost after the first year?
 - It depends on the planning and will be better understood after the planning meeting
 - There may be a fee for professional services from BRYT
 - Range of \$6-13,000 per year
 - Small schools in a district have shared the cost in the past
 - BRYT wants to make this work for Erving and Swift River
 - If, after the planning phase, it is decided that this program is not feasible, it is fine, and there will be no cost to the school
 - Will the work to enact the program be added to someone's existing workload?
 - The academic coordinator already acts in the role that would align with BRYT
 - The question is there a person who can take on the mental health load and be the 'wrap-around' person
 - Erving has agreed to their MOA and has moved into scheduling the planning

- meetings
 - Is the vote just a show of support for conducting the planning?
 - Yes
 - Steve moves to support Lindsay and do the mapping to see what the program can entail and arrange planning meetings with no financial commitment; Barbara seconds; passes unanimously
- Petty Cash reimbursement (prior year) – Discussion and Vote
 - Log spans two fiscal years and needs school committee support
 - Funds used for lawn equipment, tractor gas and oil, and a bear whistle
 - Beth moves to approve the reimbursement for petty cash disbursement of \$87.84; Steve seconds - passed unanimously
- UniBank/UniPay Account – Discussion and Possible Vote
 - New payment system for preschool, after-school, and CNC donations to be available online
 - Beth moves to allow Swift River School to set up a Unibank account; Barbara seconds - passes unanimously
 - Discussion
 - the fees will be paid by the family
 - Will all donations be accepted through the account?
 - Will need exploring
 - Can teachers pay for lunch through the account
 - Unsure
 - Can people still pay with checks?
 - Yes
- Policy Update and Review:
 - First Reading on:
 - GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity
 - HA – Negotiation Goals
 - HB – Negotiations Legal Status
 - Second Reading, First Vote on:
 - EBCFA – Face Coverings
 - ECA – Buildings and Grounds Security
 - GCF – Professional Staff Hiring
 - GBEB – Staff Conduct - removed from vote by the chair

Beth moves to take a first vote on EBCFA, ECA, GCF in one vote; Kate seconds - passes unanimously

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 - Question about face coverings
 - We follow the DESE policies; MASC has not changed anything
- Final Vote on:
 - AC – Nondiscrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation
 - BGC – Policy Revision and Review
 - EB – Safety Program
 - EEAJ – Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds

Beth moves to take policies in one vote; Steve seconds - passes unanimously

Beth moves to take the final vote; Kate seconds - passes unanimously

- Who is paying for the signage?
 - We already have the sign

First Vote on Deletion of Policy:

- GBA-1 – Harassment Policy
- GCFA – Step Placement Policy
- GCKA – Policy on Adjustment to Teaching Assignment

Beth moves to vote on the three policies in one vote; Kate seconds - passes unanimously

Beth moves to take the first vote to delete the policies; Kate seconds - passes unanimously

Why delete GBA - has been made redundant

- Next Meeting Date – June 6, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.
- New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – June 6, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
- Wendell Annual Town Meeting – Saturday, June 8, 2024 - 10:00 a.m.
- New Salem Annual Town Meeting – Monday, June 17, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

I. Approval of Minutes:

- April 4, 2024

Beth moves to approve the minutes; Steve seconds - passes unanimously

J. Adjournment

Beth moves to adjourn; Barbara seconds - meetings adjourned 8:19