

**NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, May 2, 2024**  
**Swift River School – 7:00 p.m. FINAL MINUTES**

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

- o FY25 Budget – Discussion and Vote on the Final Adoption of the Budget
  - Only one change since the preliminary budget
    - o E&D is usually \$50,000. Will be swapped with rural aid \$50,000
    - o The rate is set by the census
    - o 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
  - o 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
  - o Most t-shirt design submissions
  - o DCR has changed policies and will not provide rangers for the water tables in the future

#### G. Committee Reports

##### o Report from Mahar Representatives

- Student representative reported the electronic pass system is working well
- Junior ROTC and a shooting class (air rifles) discussion
  - o Many people commented in favor of the program taking place
  - o Instills confidence and responsibility
  - o Could develop leadership
  - o Many activities students engage in involve risk
  - o 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
  - o If students have social difficulties, is it good for them to be around guns and associate confidence with shooting
  - o 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
  - o Could get choice in students
  - o The shooting program would be a class
  - o 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

o Collaborative for Education Services - no update

o 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

o Budget and Personnel – none at this time

o Joint Supervisory

· Next Meeting – May 20, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.

No report

#### H. May Items

o 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
  - Beth moves to take the first vote on EBCFA, ECA, GCF; Kate seconds - passes unanimously
    - Question about face coverings
      - We follow the DESE policies; MASC has not changed anything
- Final Vote on:
  - AC – Nondis crimination 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:

- o GBA-1 – Harassment Policy
- o GCFA – Step Placement Policy
- o 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

o Next Meeting Date – June 6, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

o New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – June 6, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.

o Wendell Annual Town Meeting – Saturday, June 8, 2024 - 10:00 a.m.

o New Salem Annual Town Meeting – Monday, June 17, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

I. Approval of Minutes:

o 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