

SAU #39 Board

Thursday, January 21st, 2021

Meeting Minutes- Approved 02 18 2021

Attendees:

Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business Administrator, Anna Parrill- Principal CW, Dr. Kim Sarfte - Principal MVVS, Dr. Bethany Bernasconi- Principal AMS, Mike Berry- Principal SHS, and Roger Preston- Director of Facilities.

Amherst School Board: Chair- Elizabeth Kuzsma, Vice Chair- Tom Gauthier, Secretary- Ellen Gruzdien, Terri Behm and Josh Conklin.

Mont Vernon Village School Board: Chair- Sarah Lawrence, Vice Chair- Peter Eckhoff, Jessica Hinckley and Stephen O'Keefe.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Chair- Pim Grondstra, Vice Chair- Amy Facey, Secretary- Stephanie Grund, Steve Coughlan, George Torres, John Glover and Laura Taylor.

Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

Public: Stephanie Wales, 89 A Seaverns Bridge Road, Amherst, Shannon Gascoyne, 5 Parker Farm Lane, Amherst NH, Amy Littlefield, 21 Pine Top Road, Amherst NH, and Michael Campo, Plodzik and Sanderson, P.A. Concord NH.

I. SAU #39 Chair Opening

Mr. Stephen O'Keefe, Chair of the SAU #39 School Board, called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

Today, we will be conducting a school board meeting of the SAU #39 Board.

Before we get started, I'll read through a checklist to ensure that the meeting that we are holding is in compliance with the Right-to-Know Law.

As chairperson of the SAU #39 Board, I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order Number #12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 and its extensions, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.

In accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that:

1. We are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possible by video and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic

meeting. All members of the committee and selected legislative staff have the ability to communicate contemporaneously in this meeting through this platform. And the public has access to contemporaneously watch and or listen to the meeting on Zoom and via phone by following the directions and links provided on our website: www.sau39.org.

1. We have provided public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting.
 1. We are providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anyone has a problem, please email awallace@sau39.org.
 1. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.
 1. Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.
 1. Finally, let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence please also state where they are and if anyone else is in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- home and alone, Gauthier- Home and alone, Behm- Home and alone, Gruzdien- Home and alone, Conklin- Home and alone, Grondstra- Home and alone, Facey- Work and alone, Coughlan- Home and alone, Taylor- Home and alone, Torres- Home and alone, Grund- Home and alone, Glover- Car and alone, Lawrence- Home and alone, Eckhoff- home and alone, O'Keefe- Home and alone, Hinckley- Car and alone, St. Denis- Not Present.

I. Non-Public Session I of II

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91 A:3 II (a) (b) and (c) at 6:07 PM. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes, and Hinckley- Yes.

Other persons present during non-public session:

Adam Steel - Superintendent, Anna Parrill – Principal Clark/Wilkins, Bethany Bernasconi - AMS, Christine Landwehrle – Asst. Superintendent, Meg Beauchamp – Director of Student Services, Michele Croteau – Business Administrator.

Description of matters discussed, and final decisions made: Staffing

Ms. Jessica Hinckley left the meeting at 6:35pm.

II. Public Session

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to exit non-public session at 6:44PM. Mr. Gauthier seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes.

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to seal the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eckhoff. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Motion passes because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would...

- Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board
- Render a proposed action ineffective
- Pertains to preparation or carrying out of actions regarding terrorism

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes.

III. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, noted that they are working on a document that updates their Covid status levels, however, it did not make it into the report.

Mr. O’Keefe mentioned that the information in the packet is available on the www.SAU39.org website. Look under “School Boards” then “SAU 39 Board Agendas”.

Ms. Kuzsma inquired about the expectations about vaccines and if it will be required or not.

Mr. Steel replied that they will follow the guidance of the NH DHHS.

Ms. Grund asked about the daily Covid Screening assessment.

Mr. Steel replied that it is for the students that are coming into school buildings.

Ms. Taylor asked why did the school open in status “orange”.

Mr. Steel replied that in his opinion it was the right decision to make given what had been a ramp up of cases in December. In addition, the cases have been higher and are now on the decline.

Ms. Taylor inquired when is the next assessment to change the color.

Mr. Steel replied the latest that they will make a determination is at the end of the segment which ends when they go into the February vacation. They are having another School Safety Team meeting next Thursday and he will have that discussion with that group then and two weeks thereafter.

Ms. Lawrence asked about the start times for next year.

Mr. Steel replied that the Board made the decision and then in February the individual boards will hear from their Building Principals. At which case, any one board or all of the Boards could keep things status quo. It will be figured out in February.

Ms. Kuzsma mentioned that she had asked in November if it was possible for remote student lunches to be picked up at their most local school. She was asking for an update.

Ms. Croteau noted that she will look into it and follow up.

Ms. Grund asked about the Souhegan School Board Meeting for February.

Mr. Steel replied that he will work with Chairman Grondstra.

Ms. Grund inquired about the winter sports.

Mr. Steel replied that Ms. Kelli Braley, SHS Athletic Director, has done a remarkable job developing a set of protocols and procedures for their sports and he is paying close attention. They are being cautious, making sure no problem arises and will react quickly if they have to.

Ms. Facey added that there is a Souhegan Board Meeting on February 15th at 5:30.

Mr. Steel replied, 6:00PM.

The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

IV. Public Comment I of II

Mr. O'Keefe mentioned that the public attendees can use the "raise your hand" feature.

Ms. Stephanie Wales, 89A Seaverns Bridge Road, Amherst NH, commented that the positivity rate includes all age groups. Near 80% of that are people over 60 years of age. After looking at the Dashboard there are 5 cases in the entire district. She works in a school out of State and it has been great. Seeing the difference in the two towns is incredibly shocking. Stop the fear mongering. They can do more in person and more with sports.

Ms. Shannon Gascoyne, 5 Parker Farm Lane, Amherst NH, mentioned that she has seen the reframing of the start time issue for or against the start times and finds it misleading. In reviewing prior year board minutes, April 2018 a community poll of parents showed that 45% who responded were in favor. Those against were concerned about sports. This will not be universally be favored on either side. She is looking forward to hearing the plans at the February meetings. She quoted the American Association of Pediatrics and thanked the Board for their time.

Ms. Julie Smiley, 20 Holly Hill Drive, Amherst NH added that she is also in support for the later school start times. Sleep deprivation is attributed to a whole list of physical, psychological and educational problems including, depression and anxiety and educational issues. Change can be difficult to conceive of but coming from Europe it is absolutely possible. They cannot afford not to change the school start time.

Ms. Amy Littlefield, 21 Pine Top Road, Amherst NH, commented that she feels strongly about the start time. She added that the start times are early. In speaking with people in the community she is concerned with the dismissal time. The younger middle school students still want to play outside and have activities outside of school.

The Board thanked Ms. Wales, Ms. Gascoyne, Ms. Smiley, and Ms. Littlefield.

Mr. O'Keefe closed Public Comment

V. Board Chair Reports

Mr. Pim Grondstra, Chair of the Souhegan Cooperative Board, added that they have been doing a lot of work over the FY 22 budget and two warrant articles, Capital Maintenance Plan and the Turf Field Replacement. They have moved them forward to the Deliberative Session/ Ballot.

The Board thanked Mr. Grondstra.

Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma, Chair of the Amherst School Board, remarked that they had their Public Hearing last week and then the meeting on Tuesday. They are sending forward their budget which includes a request for laptops and two positions at AMS. Without those positions they are looking at class sizes of 27 for some classes.

They have decided to remove the bond with the commitment to move full steam ahead for next year. They are all in support of the bond, however, thought it was not the right time. The Board will be carving out time in their February meeting to work on communication and education so that more people are knowledgeable.

The Board thanked Ms. Kuzsma.

Ms. Sarah Lawrence, Chair of the Mont Vernon School Board, commented that they are also working on their budget and had their public hearing. They have three warrant articles on the ballot, the MVEA CBA, ASD/MVSD Tuition agreement and Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. They enjoy hearing from their Principal, and it is a highlight for the Board and the community.

The Board thanked Ms. Lawrence.

VI. Board Committee Updates

Ms. Kuzsma added that she had reviewed JFAC and asked Mr. Gauthier if he had any other comments.

Mr. Gauthier had no comments.

Mr. O'Keefe noted that the NHSBA conference is this Saturday in Concord, NH.

Ms. Lawrence added that there is an NHSBA Delegate Assembly and there are resolutions that were presented in the packet.

Ms. Facey mentioned that she is one of the Vice Presidents, but Ms. Taylor is a Delegate for Souhegan.

Ms. Kuzsma remarked that the plan is to move forward this year with the policy season. They will be releasing the policies they will review. The Policy Committee will be meeting over the summer.

VII. Consent Agenda

Ms. Facey motioned to accept the consent agenda items 1. Nov 19th , 2020 Draft Minutes, 2. Unanticipated Revenue \$ 419,142.05, 3. SAU Gov. Letter SAU 2020, 4. SAU Annual Financial Report, 5. Nov. 2020 Treasurer's Report, 6. Dec. 2020 Treasurer's Report, 7. Enrollment 20-21 Remote and In-person, 8. Enrollment 20-21 Grade and School Grade and School 9. SAU Dec. Facilities Update, 10. Second Reading Policies Mr. Grondstra seconded the motion.

Ms. Taylor pulled the #1. Draft Minutes 11 19 2020 and the #10 Second Reading Policies.

Ms. Grund inquired about the Governance Letter and if there were any comments from the Auditor.

Mr. Michael Campo, Plodzik and Sanderson, PA Concord NH. replied that he completed the audit. Everything is going well. He is pleased to see the policies and he can go into greater detail.

Ms. Grund inquired if there is anything that needs further attention.

Mr. Campo applauded the SAU for having a technically skilled staff.

Mr. Coughlan added that he would like to pull the draft minutes and the second reading policies.

Mr. Glover noted that he has questions on the policies.

Mr. Grund remarked that the Unanticipated Revenue seems large and asked if that was typical.

Mr. O'Keefe added that it is divided pretty significantly.

Ms. Croteau replied was a return for a reduction in their costs so there is a rebate.

Mr. Steel mentioned that he is on the Board of Directors for Healthtrust. Our utilization from Feb till now showed a remarkable decrease which needs to be returned.

Mr. Coughlan added that the number in years can be high or low.

Ms. Croteau mentioned that it gets apportioned out.

Ms. Facey modified her motion to pull items #1 Nov 19th 2020 Draft Minutes and #10 Second Reading Policies and include 2. Unanticipated Revenue \$ 419,142.05, 3. SAU Gov. Letter SAU 2020, 4. SAU Annual Financial Report, 5. Nov. 2020 Treasurer's Report, 6. Dec. 2020 Treasurer's Report, 7. Enrollment 20-21 Remote and In-person, 8. Enrollment 20-21 Grade and School Grade and School and 9. SAU Dec. Facilities Update. Mr. Grondstra seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, O’Keefe- Yes, and Hinckley- Yes.

Mr. O’Keefe went to item #1 11 19 2020 Draft Minutes.

Ms. Taylor noted that there was a typo with the MOU and the draft minutes were confusing starting with line 475.

Mr. O’Keefe asked Ms. Taylor about the lines she is referring to.

Ms. Taylor replied line 568. It needs significant attention. She takes very seriously that she voted against it and is voting with the Souhegan student body.

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to table the #1. 11 19 2020 Draft Minutes. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Mr. O’Keefe asked for discussion.

There was no discussion.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- No, O’Keefe- Yes, and Hinckley- Yes.

Mr. O’Keefe went to #10. Second Reading Policies.

Ms. Taylor would like to pull GCEB- Administrative Staff Recruiting and GBGA- Staff Health.

Mr. Steel noted that they are in the Agenda Packet, pages 144 and 145.

Mr. Coughlan pulled DID and CBI as they are already approved and do not need to move through the process further.

Mr. O’Keefe noted that they will pull GCEB and GBGA.

Mr. Glover mentioned that there are a number of policies that have an NHSBA note and have the categories listed below.

Ms. Kuzsma replied that it gets removed when they get posted to the SAU website.

Mr. O’Keefe replied that it is for their benefit.

Mr. Glover noted that the MOU is included with the previous Superintendent’s name.

Ms. Kuzsma added that it is linked with Policy KLG.

Mr. Coughlan added that it is informational.

Ms. Facey added that they should remove the names and leave the titles.

Ms. Facey motioned to approve the remaining polices with the exception of GCEB, GBGA, DID and CBI. Ms. Kuzsma seconded the motion. (15-0)

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, O’Keefe- Yes, and Hinckley- Yes. Motion passed.

- GCEB- Administrative Staff Recruiting

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to approve GCEB- Administrative Staff Recruiting. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion.

Mr. O’Keefe asked for discussion.

Ms. Taylor replied that it gives more power to the Superintendent than State Law.

Ms. Grund mentioned that this is a long-lasting policy and she would like to reword the policy.

Mr. Glover added that the previous language has been removed and he does not understand why that is a problem that needed to be fixed.

Mr. O’Keefe remarked that this policy has been fully vetted by the Policy Committee. He is in full support of the policy.

Ms. Behm added that she is trying to understand.

Ms. Kuzsma mentioned that he is letting them know about the process beforehand and allows for flexibility within the committees and the process.

Ms. Grund remarked that there is nothing in the process that says that they can object to his process.

Ms. Taylor mentioned that Superintendent Steel has been Superintendent for 3 years. There has been a lot of personnel changes and what would prevent it from happening again.

Mr. Conklin replied that they do hold power the candidates are nominated, and they can reject them. They can also decide who is the Superintendent. This brings a better balance.

Mr. Glover added that he appreciates Mr. Conklin’s comments although time is of the essence. The previous policy required the Board to participate in the beginning of the process not at the end. For that reason, he is opposed. A good Superintendent will involve the board in a leadership search, it is not about Superintendent Steel. He believes that they can find language that is amenable to the Superintendent and the Board to correct that and bring back the engagement from the beginning.

Ms. Gruzdien asked for clarification.

Ms. Kuzsma replied that this policy does not require Superintendent Steel to have any specific individuals involved in the process. He will come to them and then explain his process.

Ms. Gruzdien confirmed that it is case by case.

Ms. Kuzsma replied, yes.

Ms. Lawrence added that she just looked at the policies that were posted on the SAU website. Amherst adopted it as written, in November, MV, as written in October, and Souhegan with amendments in November. She suggested that they look at the Souhegan version to see if it would be amenable.

Mr. Coughlan noted that he is reviewing the Souhegan version now.

Ms. Facey commented on Mr. Glover's previous comments. The Superintendent does inform them from the beginning.

Mr. Glover replied that the new policy requires a notification.

Ms. Behm mentioned that they need to be cautious.

Mr. Coughlan added that all three districts have adopted this policy.

Roll call on GCEB: Lawrence- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Facey- Yes, Torres- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Taylor- No, Grund- No, and Glover- No, (12-3) motion passes.

- GBGA- Staff Health

Mr. O'Keefe motioned to pass GBGA- Staff Health, as written. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Keefe asked for discussion.

Ms. Taylor added that she had mentioned her concerns before she does not feel that the mental health assessment is within the law.

Ms. Behm inquired if this was vetted with the Policy Committee.

Ms. Kuzsma replied that this policy was written by legal counsel.

Roll call on GBGA: Lawrence- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Facey- Yes, Torres- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Taylor- No, Grund- No, and Glover- No, (12-3) motion passes.

VIII. Principals Reports

Ms. Behm thanked CW Principal Ms. Anna Parrill for the pictures. She inquired about the Social Emotional resources after the recent community tragedies.

Principal Parrill replied that they have met with the teachers and provided them with scripts and extra resources. They have incredible social workers and they touch base with the staff and students.

Dr. Kim Sarfde, MVVS Principal, added that they have a School Counselor and a School Psychologist that are wonderful. There were individuals from the other schools have stepped in and they formed a crisis team for their school. The MVVS PTA provided lunch for the staff and

they really needed that and appreciated that. There was a local flower shop that also provided flowers for the staff.

Mr. O'Keefe asked Dr. Bethany Bernasconi, Principal of AMS, about teacher assessments and if they are meeting the requirements of the CBA.

Ms. Christine Landwehrle, Assistant Superintendent, added that they have made adjustments this year and have been focusing on the non-tenured teachers.

Principal Bernasconi added that they are continuing to provide coaching sessions and feedback to all of their teachers.

Ms. Behm asked about the ornaments on the Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C.

Principal Bernasconi replied that they got notified that from the DOE and Ms. Marsha McCaffery.

Ms. Behm emphasized that the teachers have been on her mind and knows how deeply they care about the students. She is happy to hear that the supports are in place.

Principal Bernasconi added that they have an exceptional mental health team and it underscores the relationship.

Mr. O'Keefe asked for questions for SHS Principal, Mr. Mike Berry.

Ms. Grund added that there are a few things that she is frustrated over. She inquired about the total enrollment and believes that it is wrong. She noted that the outcomes should be brought up for discussion at their school board meeting.

Principal Berry responded that at the last board meeting the board asked him to amend the objectives and initiatives so that they more closely aligned to the Strategic Vision of the SAU 39 and the school board. He thought he was responding the way that the board wanted.

Ms. Grund mentioned that she would love to have him present this to the school board.

Ms. Taylor echoed Ms. Grund. A lot of the content should be discussed at the board level. She would like to have more information and discussion.

Mr. Grondstra added that it might be too soon to get this on the agenda for the following Monday.

Ms. Gruzdien commented that she would like to open up or table the discussion of bringing the Principals Reports back to the individual boards. She noted the late hour and that the Principals should have left the meeting sooner.

She respectfully asked the board to consider how they are talking to people with kindness and tone.

Mr. O'Keefe responded that it was to streamline the meeting and give other members of the SAU information about other districts. Discussions about curriculum, or anything deeper should be at the individual board level.

Ms. Gruzdien inquired if they can get a report in the packet and then have the Principals come to the individual board meetings. She finds this a little less personal.

Mr. Steel commented that the Principal's Reports take a great amount of time and go with their leadership principle of transparency and openness to the community and the school board. To be clear, the Principals are not required to come to any board meeting, and it is at his discretion. If questions are not able to be presented to them in a timely manner and with acknowledgement of the amount of work, it takes to produce these reports, they are simply not going to come to board meetings. He emphasized his sentiments with all due respect.

To Ms. Gruzdien's point, the principals have been up from very early in the morning to run schools on their behalf and in his name. If anyone has any questions, he will be happy to field them on their behalf. He is disheartened to hear the rhetoric displayed to Principal Berry tonight.

Mr. Glover added that he respects the Principal's Reports and they are hugely valuable. He is pleased to have exposure to other districts, and it is a unique opportunity to share that. He suggested that they come earlier in the agenda. They are all here for the same goal. He suggested that they find a way to adjust that in the agenda.

Ms. Facey added that she believes what happened was that the board had requested Principal Berry do some mapping on the outputs. She is excited that they have a Principal that wants to do that work. She noted her appreciation and reminded the board that they are all on the same team.

Mr. O'Keefe noted that the focus was on the content of the Principal's Report.

Ms. Taylor added that the Principal's Report is excellent, and they need to have a discussion on the details.

Ms. Grund apologized for her tone and appreciates everything that Principal Berry is doing.

Mr. Glover added that they all want the best from the system. He applauded each of the Principals.

Mr. Eckhoff commented that they hire and pay Superintendent Steel to manage the business as a school district. It is his job to manage the staff and people top down. He encouraged the board to reach out to Superintendent Steel for questions for the Principals. He wants the best thing for the kids as well.

Ms. Lawrence inquired about the Book Club at the MVVS.

Principal Sarfde added that she is happy to offer this to the students. For the 5th and 6th grade, they will be reading a book on WW II, for the 3rd grade the book *Pie* by Ms. Sarah Weeks and 4th grade TBA. She has not decided for the 4th grade but it is in the works.

Ms. Lawrence thanked Principal Sarfde. She added her appreciation.

The Board thanked the Principals.

IX. NWEA Results and Update

Ms. Landwehrle noted that she was asked to put together a quick report about what they are doing in response to NWEA scores. The norms are done every few years and they did not adjust them for Covid. One of the first more important things is that they did this summer was deep curriculum work. They pulled all of their teachers together for deep professional development and to help determine what were the priority standards for that school year. They would not want to teach half of third grade and then half of 4th grade.

The other thing is to look at how can they provide supports in a safe way. In each school they were able to do it in a slightly different way and she has given that information in her report. Additionally, they were able to roll over their Title I funding due to Covid. They are looking at expanding their Title I program.

Mr. O’Keefe asked for questions for Ms. Landwehrle.

Mr. Glover inquired about the PD and if they are seeing the benefits in the classroom.

Ms. Landwehrle replied that she is working more with the teachers at their grade level. It is a challenging year, their remote students only have so much screen time that they can possibly do. They want to ensure that they deliver education in thoughtful, careful ways and making the progress that they want to while balancing the screen time.

With the in-person instruction, there are some challenges. Teachers aren’t always used to being the Interventionists to provide that Intervention support, but they have been making pretty big shifts. With the support of their colleagues, Instructional Coaches and Building Leadership, they have been seeing a lot of positive changes.

Mr. O’Keefe questioned if there was additional funding for transportation for students that were not able to attend due to transportation situation.

Mr. Glover mentioned that they do not teach to the test. Some of the results make him rethink that and he does not know where the hang up is.

Ms. Taylor inquired about the scores on the progress reports.

Ms. Landwehrle replied that they are two different things. They are an important indicator, but it is one indicator.

Ms. Taylor added that she would be disappointed to see the NWEA scores that low as a parent and there was no indication on a progress report.

The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

X. Correspondence- Policy BHE- School Board Use of Email

From: Stephanie Grund <sgrund@sau39.org>

Subject: Re: Happy New Year and meeting process update

Date: January 15, 2021 at 11:45:23 AM EST

To: Stephen O'Keefe <sokeefe@sau39.org>, Pim Grondstra <pgrondstra@sau39.org>, Amy Facey <afacey@sau39.org>, Laura Taylor <ltaylor@sau39.org>, John Glover <jglover@sau39.org>, George Torres <GTorres@sau39.org>, Steve Coughlan <scoughlan@sau39.org>

So, I am very concerned about this new procedure.

First, the times put on the agenda are arbitrarily assigned by somebody who decided the length. This could be used to limit discussion on a topic. For 17 members to be given, potentially, 10 minutes to ask additional questions is absolutely the wrong way to ensure a topic is given it's fair chance to be heard and reviewed by all members.

Second, I can appreciate being asked to ask questions in advance of a presentation, but I don't think we can be asked to think of all angles of a presentation before it is given. If all 17 members submitted all of their questions in advance, I think it's a bit unfair to the presenter to review all of them two days before a meeting. Also, I think the public should understand that we are thinking critically about topics.

Third, if a presenter doesn't have an answer, it's still public information. I'm concerned that if there is information that someone is not comfortable addressing in public, the answer would, conveniently, be sent through email. What if this answer is sent after the meeting and it addresses an important fact?

What happens when a board member has more than one or two questions. I understand there is a way to suspend the rules, us why should this control be in place

Meetings are long because there is a lot to talk about. We still haven't talked about Empower, grading and reporting issues, math curriculum....the strategic vision documents presented to the school board a few years ago should be revisited and addressed as to what has taken place and what changes are occurring now or in the next year or two. A few of us were surprised by information provided by the Souhegan principal to our board chair about changes to curriculum areas and graduation requirements. We shouldn't be surprised when preparing a budget presentation. Limiting discussion by the number of minutes causes a stifling of communication.

If meetings are running long because of the amount of discussion required, perhaps we need more than one meeting?

Thank you,

Stephanie

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 1:02 PM Stephen O'Keefe <sokeefe@sau39.org> wrote:

Good afternoon and Happy New Year.

I hope this email finds you well and rested after the long holiday season.

I also wanted to share a quick update for the process of our meetings going forward. After receiving feedback from several members of our board, I have worked with my fellow board chairs to develop a new framework for our sessions together. Please review them in advance of our next board meeting.

Beginning in December, our meeting agendas were changed to more accurately provide time frames for topics of discussions. This change allowed you and your fellow board members to better gauge how long our meetings will or should last. To keep the meeting flow on schedule, I kindly ask that all Board members review board packets in advance and provide written questions/feedback prior to scheduled meetings.

All written questions and feedback should be directed to each applicable board chair no later than 2 business days prior to a scheduled board meeting. The applicable board chair shall then forward all questions and feedback to the presenter who will then make every effort to provide responses to board questions during their presentation. Presenters may find it necessary to respond in writing to board member questions due to time constraints. Those responses will be provided to the superintendent who will then forward to the appropriate board member (s)

New procedures for meeting discussions:

After a presentation has been completed, and the issue does not require a vote, the board chair will open the floor for additional questions and comments from board members. The board chair shall keep the floor open for the remaining time of the listed agenda item or 10 mins (whichever is greater). Each board member will be allocated 2 questions/comment periods during the open floor time but may only ask one of those questions at a time if other board members are waiting their turn to speak. Board members may share (or yield) question allotments with other board members should they wish to do so, however it will restrict the remaining questions for the lending board member during the open active discussion.

The board chair will remind members of the remaining time available during each discussion and provide a 2 min warning prior to the expiration of the time allotted for the agenda item.

Should the topic or issue require a vote, the board chair will solicit a motion in the affirmative to pass the issue at hand. Once seconded, the board chair will open the topic for discussion using the same process as listed above.

Should board members wish to suspend any of the above rules, they may make a motion to suspend that must be properly seconded and pertain to the individual topic at hand.

A motion to suspend must pass by simple majority of the attending board members. Once that specific topic is completed, floor rules shall be automatically reinstated for the next agenda item.

Although these rules are new to us, we believe they will allow for a more structured and efficient meeting flow in this virtual meeting environment. If you have any questions, please free to email your board chair directly.

As we start a new calendar year, I want to personally thank you for your continued dedication and service to the children of our two communities. Public service is often a thankless, difficult job that shows rewards in ways that are often difficult to quantify.

Your time and effort do make a difference and for that I thank you.

Warm Regards,

*Stephen O'Keefe
Mont Vernon School Board
Chair, Consolidated SAU School Board"*

XI. Public Comment II of II

Ms. Stephanie Wales, 89A Seaverns Bridge Road, commented that when the process is started for hiring, there should be a call to the NH DOE. That is very important to the safety of their students. Second, the public elects school board members because they want them to ask the hard questions. The tone is subjective, and it is disappointing to hear the bickering.

She asked Ms. Landwehrle if the NWEA report was available to the public.

Mr. O'Keefe replied that it is listed in the Agenda Packet at www.sau39.org

Ms. Amy Littlefield, 21 Pine Top Road, Amherst NH, thanked the Board for their time and enthusiasm for the students.

The Board thanked Ms. Wales and Ms. Littlefield.

XII. Non-Public Session II of II

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to enter into Non- Public Session RSA 91 A:3 II (b) at 8:50. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes, and Hinckley- Yes. Motion passed.

Other persons present during nonpublic session:

Mr. Adam Steel, Superintendent

Description of matters discussed, and final decisions made. Note: Any votes taken must be recorded "in such a manner that the vote of each member is ascertained and recorded":

Retirements

XIII. Public Session II of II

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to exit Non-Public Session at 8:58PM. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion was unanimous, motion passed.

Ms. Kuzsma motioned to seal the minutes. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Motion passes because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would...

- Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board
- Render a proposed action ineffective
- Pertains to preparation or carrying out of actions regarding terrorism

Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, and O'Keefe- Yes. Motion passed.