

**NORTH COUNTRY SUPERVISORY UNION**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**THURSDAY, April 16, 2015**  
**AT 6:30 P.M. @ NCSU CENTRAL OFFICE**

**PRESENT**

***BOARD MEMBERS:***

Tim Bronson, Derby  
Peter Moscovites, NCUHS  
Mary Ellen Prairie, Newport City  
Rose Mary Mayhew, NCUHS  
Lincoln Petell, Holland  
Scott Boskind, NCUJHS  
Katie Mientka, Brighton  
Steve Mason, Lowell  
Pat Austin, Charleston  
Richard Cartee, NCUJHS

***STAFF:***

John Castle, NCSU Superintendent  
Kathy Nolan, NCSU Director of Curriculum  
Glenn Hankinson, NCSU Director of Finance  
Leanne Desjardins, NCSU Director of Special Education  
John Peters, NCSU Director of Technology  
Diane Nichols-Fleming, NCSU Early Childhood Program  
Liz Butterfield, NCSU Executive Asst. to the Superintendent

I. The meeting was called to order at 6:34 by Chair Steve Mason, who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and called for Agenda changes. Personnel items for New Business were added, as well as Negotiations and Personnel items for an anticipated Executive Session.

II. The minutes of the Annual Meeting were distributed for review and clarification and will be approved at the Full Board meeting in December. *Attachment A*

**III. Superintendent's & Central Office Reports – Attachment B**

Superintendent Castle briefly reviewed his report and talked about Personal Learning.

Special Education Director Leanne Desjardins reminded board members that the IDEA B budget will be in the May board packets, and must be addressed and recorded in the minutes of the May board meetings. She invited board members to call or email her with questions, and offered to come to local board meetings, if desired.

**IV. Business Operations & Finance Report**

**A. March Financial Statement – Handout C**

Finance Director Glenn Hankinson stated that he had no new information to share, that revenues and expenses are both lagging behind, and that he anticipates a positive fund balance in all but grants. Motion to approve the Financial Report. **CARBONNEAU/MAYHEW APPROVED**

**Information:**

**A. Bookkeeping & Human Resources Staffing:** John Castle shared with the EC that a staff member in the Business and Finance Department is retiring. The position was posted and Amy Brasseur will be moving back to book-keeping from the HR Department, though she will continue to manage the food service piece that she picked up while in HR, a responsibility that has grown substantially. A .5 FTE HR position has been posted, with the possibility of additional time during busier seasons, such as contracts, etc. John and Glenn both feel that there is good capacity in Finance and HR, and Glenn tweaks the equilibrium as necessary. There is the possibility that the SU may save some money by going with a .5 HR position. Frank asked how much of the food service requirements mandated by state are paid for by state, to which Glenn answered, "None." He pointed out that Amy had volunteered early on to take on the responsibility and then more and more has been added by the state.

## **V. VSBA & Legislative Update:**

Frank Carbonneau shared that Nicole Mace of the VSBA was flabbergasted when passage of H176(?), the bill that would limit teacher strikes, failed to pass. Concerning H361, Frank reported that the cap has gone away. He shared that the Senate is working on “kinder, gentler” consolidation wording.

John stated that the VSA and VSBA have been sending homogenized messages, and that the Senate Ed committee is all over the map. A few members were taken to the Governor’s office, resulting in consolidation not being mandated but highly encouraged and incentivized. An SU’s budget vote would be on each district’s budget. John pointed out that because it would be difficult to pass a budget that way, it would push SU’s into consolidation. It will make SUs that don’t consolidate look like the bad guys. Peter took exception with the VSBA’s position on bargaining, saying it has nothing to do with consolidation.

Scott stated his concern that the message is being sent that schools are having fiscal issues because of the high salaries of teachers and administrators. He asked, “How do you attract talented teachers and administrators?” They are highly scrutinized, doing an intense job, and Scott feels that should also be represented as part of the discussion.

Pat commented that the state is missing the point: one size does not fit all. We in the NEK spend less per pupil than most schools in Vermont. Those who spend more can easily consolidate, but it will cost us much more to consolidate.

Peter feels there is a loss of a lot of real information, and we should call on the VSBA to be more fair with the information they disseminate.

Frank stated that he shares the frustration with toned down rhetoric and hidden intentions. He feels that our Legislative Forum is somewhat a waste of time if the Ed Committee is not there. He feels that our reps don’t have much influence on committees that they are not on, but they are there for the vote. Scott commented that all of our representatives voted nay appropriately.

John wondered where all the money is coming from to push for consolidation. Scott described the process as destroying a quilt to make a blanket of one color and texture. Peter described it as an act of desperation and feels that if it does pass, it will fail of its own weight.

John shared that our request for a SpEd consolidation waiver was quickly denied and stated that there is language in the legislation to penalize SUs that don’t merge SpEd, imposing a 5cent tax penalty. He said that Glenn has penned a letter that dispels a lot of the myths of SpEd consolidation. Our SU is 347 times the size of the smallest single district. We spend more money “moving kids around”. John said that we need to find a way to attach the consolidation movement to Peter Shumlin, as he is not popular and it would go down, but he won’t come right out and say this is his idea. John feels that we need to influence those outside of the NEK. Scott agreed, saying there are small enclaves throughout the state that feel as we do, and we should work with them.

John stated that not currently having a negotiated agreement gives us latitude for complying with the SpEd consolidation statute, which goes into effect for FY16. Once we do have a negotiated agreement, because we have issued contracts, compliance requirements would go into effect in FY17. We have to prove that not consolidating is MORE efficient - not as efficient, but more efficient. We may have to work with the union on language that would go into effect at some point. The State is saying, do it or you don’t get the money. Our master agreement does not currently speak to “right of assignment”. Seniority would be challenging, creating a new seniority queue, and we would still assign the principal to be the supervisor of the SpEd teachers in their building, unless we add capacity at the Central Office, which adds more bureaucracy, and could be more costly at the SU level. Leanne stated that, “we would still have the human piece, we would look at where SpEd teachers live, and have face to face meetings to decide who fits where.”

The direction given to John by the Executive Committee concerning SpEd consolidation is to wait for Negotiations to be completed and then look at it again.

## VI. New Business

A. **Administrative Contracts** were budgeted for a 2.5% increase, which John supports.

SU Support Staff contracts were budgeted for an aggregate increase, a direct dollar amount distributed to Support Staff. There was no action necessary, as the increases were approved in the SU budget.

### B. Wild Branch Solutions PowerSchool Support

John Peters, Director of Technology, requested that the EC approve a one-year extension for Wild Branch Solutions PowerSchool support at \$49,748.60, which would be the second of two 1-year extensions. Mr. Peters shared that Perry Brunelle, from Wild Branch, brings a lot of experience and insight to the SU. Perry has also been helping with the InfoSnap implementation, and works 2.5 days per week on NCSU items.

**Motion** to extend the Wild Branch Solutions PowerSchool support contract for one year at \$49,748.60

CARBONNEAU/AUSTIN **APPROVED**

## VII. Unfinished Business

### A. Early Childhood Program Para Educator Reduction in Force

1. Leanne Desjardins and Diane Nichols Fleming explained the Early Childhood Program Para Educator Reduction in Force request, necessitated by the disbanding of the NCSU center-based program. Those RIFed may be rehired at the local level, based on the needs of the students. EEE paras will be retained as SU employees. **Motion** to RIF four paras, each 1.0 FTE, and to reduce one position from 37 to 30 hours per week. PETELL/CARBONNEAU **APPROVED**

2. Leanne and Diane also shared that **Anita Allen** had a non-renewable contract and had to resign, but is available to fill in if needed.

3. **ELL Reduction:** Leanne explained that the English Language Learner population is unpredictable, and there are no students at this time, just some paperwork that must be completed annually, and that the ELL teacher she suggested that her position be reduced. If any English Language Learners come into the SU we are required to, and will, hire an ELL teacher.

B. **Special Education Waiver – Attachment D.** John requested that this be discussed later in the meeting, with Negotiations.

### C. Draft Revised By-Laws – Attachment E

1. **Page 6, Article 13: Adoption of an amendment requires a majority of the board:** John asked for clarification: does this mean a majority of the entire board or of those assembled? Those present agreed that past practice has been a majority of those assembled, which John is comfortable with. To make the clarification in the bylaws, John asked if the EC would like to warn a Full Board meeting for May or wait until the scheduled Full Board meeting in September. It was agreed to put the clarification on the September agenda.

2. **Jay/Westfield:** John pointed out that Jay/Westfield is not an operating district. Jay is an operating district and Westfield is an operating district. The two districts are in a joint contract, operating one school. Under that interpretation of the bylaws, Jay and Westfield should each district have the same representation on the Full board and the Executive Committee as any other operating board. John reported that at the Jay/Westfield board meeting, the board was in favor of changing the bylaws so they have more representation, which also means more people who can attend Executive Committee and Full Board meetings. It was pointed out that there are 2 issues involved if the change is made: the necessity of having a higher number of representatives present for a quorum, and it gives more power to what was traditionally considered one group. If changed, a quorum would be 14/27 for the Full Board, and 8/14 for the Executive Committee. Though attendance through Skype is possible, John would recommend only accommodating if there was a true conflict, not as a regular practice.

**Motion** to recommend to the Full Board that Jay and Westfield be recognized as individual operating districts, each having 2 Full Board members and 1 alternate, and that the bylaws reflect this.

CARBONNEAU/CARTEE **APPROVED**

#### **D. Agenda Additions**

1. **Neuro Development Specialist** to assist Kathryn Whitaker: Leanne explained that this is a .5 FTE position. The candidate that she and Diane Nichols-Fleming would like to hire is already an NCSU ECP teacher, and would be .5 Neuro Development Specialist and .5 EEE teacher. Leanne has offered the position to Shelly Lanou, pending board approval. Shelly has been with NCSU in different capacities for 12 years. In response to a question, Leanne stated that there are 30+ students in the SU with autism, plus others with developmental disorders. The position is paid out of IDEA B funds.

**Motion** to hire Shelly Lanou as a .5 Neuro Development Specialist per the salary schedule.

CARTEE/CARBONNEAU **APPROVED**

2. **Speech Language Pathologist:** Leanne told the Executive Committee that she would like to hire Ashley Bryant, who grew up in Holland and is an NCUHS graduate, as an SLP, at Master's, with no experience, per the salary schedule (which she believes would be around \$42-43,000.00). **Motion** to hire Ashley Bryant as a 1.0 FTE SLP, as per the salary schedule. MOSKOVITES/CARBONNEAU **APPROVED**

#### **VIII. Other Business**

A. **Motion** to adopt Policy F.2 Limited English Proficiency Students\* (*Attachment P-F.2*)

CARBONNEAU/MAYHEW **APPROVED**

B. **Motion** to adopt Policy G.12 Title 1 Comparability Policy\* (*Attachment P-G.12*)

CARBONNEAU/MAYHEW **APPROVED**

C. **Motion** to approve rescission of NCSU B.1 Board Member Orientation and Education\*

(*Attachment P-B.1*) AUSTIN/MAYHEW **APPROVED**

D. **Motion** to approve rescission of NCSU B.2 Board Goal-Setting & Evaluation\*

(*Attachment P-B.2*) MAYHEW/CARBONNEAU **APPROVED**

#### **IX. Date of Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items**

John requested that the date of the next EC meeting be changed to the fourth Thursday in May, as there are NCSU teachers being honored at the VT VSA Conference on May 21st, and he would like to be there in support.

**Motion** to change the date of the May NCSU Executive Committee to May 28<sup>th</sup>.

AUSTIN/MAYHEW **APPROVED**

#### **X. Executive Session**

**Motion** to enter Executive Session at 8:18 p.m. to discuss Negotiations, Personnel and the Superintendent Evaluation. CARBONNEAU/MAYHEW

The chair exited executive session at 8:28. There was no action taken.

XI. **Motion** to Adjourn at 8:30. CARTEE/MAYHEW **APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Butterfield  
Recording Secretary

*\* To view marked-up copies of the policies and/or new policies being considered, please use this link: [Policies Being Reviewed](http://www2.ncsuvt.org/ncsu-full-board/policies-being-reviewed) or go to: <http://www2.ncsuvt.org/ncsu-full-board/policies-being-reviewed>. You may need to hover your mouse over the link and use Control + click*

<b><u>Meetings:</u></b>	<b><u>Day</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	May 28	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A213
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	May 28	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209