

NORTH COUNTRY SUPERVISORY UNION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - **DRAFT**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2014

AT 6:30 P.M. -- NCSU CENTRAL OFFICE, Room A209

Present

Board Members:

Jason Brueck, Charleston	Steven L. Mason, Lowell
Rose Mary Mayhew, NCUHS	Peter Moskovites, NCUHS
Cliff Forster, Troy	Richard Cartee, NCUJHS
Katie Mientka, Brighton	Richard M. Nelson, NCUJHS
Frank Carbonneau, Coventry	

Staff:

Diane Nichols-Fleming	Leanne Desjardins
Kathleen Nolan	John Peters
John Castle	Glenn Hankinson
Liz Butterfield	

Guests:

Nicole Mace, VSBA Counsel
Randall Northrup, Corrette & Assoc.

Press:

Robin Smith, Caledonian/Orleans County Record

I. Board Chair Steve Mason called the meeting to order at 6:34, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & a query for changes to the agenda. There were none.

II. Approval of Minutes – There were no Executive Committee minutes to be approved this month.

III. Privilege of the Floor/Public Comment – There were no Public Comments.

IV. New Business

Presentation/Information:

A. Legal Updates and Questions

The Chair introduced Nicole Mace, Legal Counsel for the VSBA, who reviewed Act 153 and how it will affect the NCSU. She stated that the Act requires the effective and efficient use of resources, requiring SU's to manage and deploy services equitably, particularly SpEd. She stated that there were perceptions that HR systems were not in place to attract and retain personnel, and that the Act clarifies that the superintendent has responsibility for hiring and firing non-licensed personnel. For licensed personnel, the superintendent must nominate a single candidate for the Board to approve (or disapprove). She clarified that the Board and others can contribute to the process, but the superintendent recommends a final candidate to the Board. Nicole stated that the Superintendent can dismiss licensed employees. As for principals, the superintendent recommends a candidate, the board hires and then decides annually on renewal or non-renewal. Act 153 became effective on July 1, 2012. Board members asked Ms. Mace about the enforcement aspects of the Act, and she replied that to date there has not been much, which has resulted in a lot of frustration at many levels. The General assembly considered implementing a tax penalty if an SU

was not in compliance of hiring practices, but did not. Ms. Mace stated that the Boards only have the powers that the legislature gives them.

Transportation is now the responsibility of the SU Board. Local boards decide whether or not to offer transportation, and if it is offered, the Superintendent is responsible for implementing. NCSU has a waiver on the transportation piece of Act 153 for one year. Mr. Castle stated that he will continue to ask for a waiver unless the Board decides to unify transportation. Nicole said that additional guidance will be coming. John shared that his research shows that if NCSU aggregates transportation, it will cost more: we would need to add someone to coordinate all transportation, or contract it out universally. That's why we ask for a waiver. Mr. Castle stated that there is one other thing to consider: the principals would rather educate than deal with busing.

John stated that concerning following Act 153 for hiring non-licensed personnel, he would count on the principals for a recommendation; the HR department would vet the candidate, as they do now, and then John would hire them, if this is how the boards would like to proceed.

Peter asked how we move forward. John asked the EC members to take this to their local boards and see if they agree.

Special Education and Act 153 was the next item of discussion. Nicole shared that the deadline for compliance has been kicked out 3 times. The Act tries to address what it means to provide Special Education: SU's must provide licensed personnel and it is at the discretion of the SU whether or not to have the SU to hire the SpEd paras. New deadline is defined as "when a new agreement is negotiated", or by Aug. 2015. John stated that we will either ask for waiver or present plan in August of 2015. Many of our services are already centralized. John feels SpEd teachers should stay at school level. He stated that leveling of costs could be an advantage for the smaller schools, and that, as well as other possibilities, is worthy of consideration. Nicole stated that we are already paying attention to equity by sharing specialized services, and that we should put into the waiver or plan that we are already fulfilling some requirements.

Nicole stated that for the General Assembly, property tax is the #1 issue. She stated that the Legislature is moving toward governance consolidation, and we should prepare for it so we can we adapt down the road.

B. FY2014 Audit Process – Randall Northrup, Corrette and Assoc.

Mr. Corrette gave an overview of the audit process and stated that the NCSU Business Office does an excellent job, sharing that this is the only SU audit that he doesn't make adjustments to.

V. Superintendent's Report - Attachment A

Mr. Castle spoke about the work of the Leadership Team, sharing that they are focusing on learning and "who do we want our children to be". Jason asked about report cards and rubrics, relative to the Common Core, stating that they are hard to understand. John stated that he and the Leadership team would like to focus on outcomes first, and then look at some major work on report card practices.

John shared that he had given the Board a test at the last meeting by giving everyone his Goals, and then asking for feedback. There were no questions or comments, and John shared that he would very much like a dialogue with Board concerning his goals and any other items that board members would like to discuss.

VI. Department Reports

Information:

A. Special Education – Leanne Desjardins: Leanne shared that she has been working on SpEd budgets, that there is nothing remarkable this year, but she and Richard are looking at the paras and other ways that services could be provided, such as SpEd teachers. The Consulting Teachers are looking at the systemic impact, and how to measure and demonstrate progress.

Jason asked how we can smooth transitions when SpEd children move between schools and districts, to make it easier on everyone. Frank asked what the system is now. Leanne stated that there is good communication in-state, but it is harder when children come from out of state. We have to enroll them, even if there are no records. The family could be running from something and the previous school may not know that they were leaving. Kathy commented that it is a reflection of our society.

B. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment – Kathy Nolan stated that all is well.

C. Technology Report – John Peters: John shared that the Newport City Elementary phone system is in, and they are moving to E911. Next Monday the Central Office and the High School will begin the transfer process. John stated that he is working on E-rate for next year and looking at other schools to go to E911. We are looking at increasing capacity, per mandate, to continue to get the rates, which means we must go from copper to fiber, some of which has been done.

D. Business Operations

Action

1. September Financial Statement – Handout

Glenn reviewed and explained the Financial Report for the end of September.

Motion to approve the September Financial Statement. CARBONNEAU/BRUECK **APPROVED**

Discussion:

A. FY2016 Budget Information & Considerations - Handout

The Superintendent presented information from the Leadership Team and asked for feedback from Board members, looking at equitable assessment of SU program. Jason would like to see feedback from the Leadership Team. John said that Liz will pull the information together and distribute after the November Leadership Team meeting, as the results actually created more questions and he would like to see clarification. Frank stated that this is a good process, that discussion is good, it allows that people can be informed ahead of time, it's proactive and positive, and can help avoid the situations of the past. John stated that as for the budget process, he wants to do it the right way, not just get it done. He shared that the Admin Team is putting in a lot of time and effort in the process.

Early Education - Handouts were distributed illustrating revenues and equalized pupil counts. The superintendent stated that the Early Education issue is the, "Most compelling issue we will deal with at the SU and local level." He said that we have been pushed into this by Act 166, which makes Early Ed programming compulsory, either by public or private provider. We will receive .46 of an equalized student this year. Next year it will probably be \$3,000.00 per student. The money will follow the child to any approved program. Titles Funds (\$500,000.00) will no longer be available for center-based programs as Early Ed is now compulsory, not compensatory. This is an unfunded, unintended consequence of the law. John reported that he asked the Secretary of Ed for a waiver to give us time to regroup, but she said that a waiver is highly unlikely. John asked: should all EE be SU based? Or do we move away from center-based Early Ed and go to school based? We can use titles funds to go beyond 10 hours/week. This is a problem that could be a benefit in the long run. John feels that, for now, the SU should maintain the EEE services, as the state will probably require that in future. Newport City Elementary will be the program most impacted. John shared that the SU pays \$65,000.00/year now to rent the Early Ed space next door. John would like to see collaborative decision throughout SU. There is no way to mitigate the \$500,000.00 shortfall. A waiver is at the mercy of the Feds, and they will not give us the benefit of the doubt. John would like to hear from the Board – what is the most equitable way to go forward? He stated that we are committed to running high quality EE programs across the SU that are universally accessible. He said that the decision will have an adverse effect on property taxes. NCSU made it a priority to supply Early Ed long ago, and now we are being adversely affected because we already did what the new law is trying to accomplish. John and Glenn have asked the VSA for figures on how many districts will be similarly affected, with no results to date.

VII. VSBA Update – Frank Carbonneau reported on the regional meeting held the previous night. Frank was elected the Regional Representative and Amy Leroux of OCSU is now the Associate Representative.

Frank reported that Rebecca Holcomb’s presentation was very good, raising three questions: how can we reduce staffing, reduce disparities, and attract strong educational leaders? Frank urged Board members to pay attention to VSBA emails, that there are always items that members need to pay attention to. Glenn offered to get the power point presentations from the meeting for the boards, which Frank agreed was a good idea as there is good info for budget discussions. Steve recommended that everyone see the press release from the VSBA concerning the South Burlington teacher’s strike.

VIII. Unfinished or Other Business

Information:

A. Policy Process Update – Steve reported that the Policy Committee had a very productive meeting with Nicole Mace prior to the EC meeting and that there were good suggestions from VSBA, including how to pare down the number of policies from 180 to 50+/- . He reported that the possibility of a VSBA audit was also discussed, and may be something the Board should consider.

Action:

A. Clarification of NCSU Employment Policy Manual for Central Office Staff—Attachment B: Tabled

B. Approve the following revised policies, as recommended by the Policy Committee:

F.04 Search and Seizure - Attachment C

F.05 Interrogation or Searches of Students by Law Enforcement – Attachment D

F.49 Anti Bullying – Attachment E

All were **Tabled**.

Jason requested that “district” be replaced with “Supervisory Union” in F.49

2. Rescind the following policy, as recommended by the Policy Committee:

C.16 Private Lessons at School – Attachment F: Tabled

3. Intent to offer Early Retirement Incentive Program – Attachment G

Motion that North Country Supervisory Union does not offer the Early Retirement Incentive Program at this time. BRUECK/FORSTER **APPROVED**

IX. Date of Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items: The next meeting is an Executive Committee meeting, on Thursday, November 20, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the NCSU Central Office.

X. Executive Session was not necessary. In open session, Mr. Castle gave a quick update on Negotiations and the upcoming meetings. Jason expressed concern that he was not receiving emails concerning Negotiations meetings, and that 5:00 p.m. is too early for people who work to get to meetings. Liz promised to check with Nancy on the email issue.

XI. Adjourn: Motion to Adjourn at 8:55. MOSKOVITES/CARTEE **APPROVED**

Meetings:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	November 20	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A205
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	November 20	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	December 18	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A205
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	December 18	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209