

JAY/WESTFIELD JOINT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday October 11, 2016 at 6:00 P.M.  
AT THE JAY/WESTFIELD SCHOOL

Board members in attendance: Sally Rivard, Kevin Amyot, Kristy Pillsbury, Jeff Morse, Janellen Parker-Goodwin, Nicole Dunn (Chad Prue's replacement-in-waiting)

Administration/School Personnel in attendance: Kristy Ellis, Principal; John Castle, Superintendent; Tara Morse, Bookkeeper; Gerardo Ortiz, Teacher; Zander Johannson and Haydan Arkley, Students; Paul LeGrand, Custodian; Rebecca Velazquez, Recording Secretary

Citizens in attendance: Mark Simon and Kirk Patch, Simon Operation Services; Sam Ruggiano, Ruggiano's Engineering; Katherine Sims, candidate for Vermont House of Representatives and founder of Green Mountain Farm-to-School

I. At 6:00 pm the J/W School Board meeting was brought to order by Sally Rivard.

II. Presentation

A. Teacher Gerardo Ortiz was joined by students Zander and Hayden for a Bridges Presentation, which showed the Board how elements of Common Core aligned and exemplified the rigorous investigations of Number Corner and Spiral Review. Students explained their Ah Ha! Moments and described their thinking around fractions and calculating volume. The Board members congratulated all three on their hard week and were grateful for the chance to get an insight into the learning process.

III. Public Comments, Communications with Parents/Staff/Citizens

A. Katherine Sims made her case for election to the Vermont House of Representatives. After giving her background and motivation for running, she shared her personal experiences starting Green Mountain Farm-to-School at the Jay/Westfield school nearly a decade ago and asked what concerns the Board Members currently have about education legislation and local issues in general. School consolidation and the opiate crisis' impact on children's needs were the main concerns voiced. Katherine promised to be a strong voice for the community in Montpelier, if elected. She stayed on for a good portion of the Board meeting.

IV. Unfinished Business/New Business

**Information/Discussion:**

A. Water Testing Review

Marc Simon and Kirk Patch from Simon Operating System and Sam Ruggiano of Ruggiano's Engineering analyzed the summer water testing data and gave their recommendations.

1. There seemed to be a correlation between power outages and hot hits. Marc surmised that when the pipeline is depressurized, chloroform is able to build up. A generator would ensure the pipeline stays pressurized at all times. Paul LeGrand noted that a generator would also ensure the pipes never freeze.

Katherine Sims recommended looking into a USDA Facilities Grant for a generator. Kristy Ellis took note.

2. Sam Ruggiano could not guarantee that a UV filtration system would work and felt that the location of the well, so near to an agricultural field and the river, makes it vulnerable to contamination.

3. Marc recommended continued chlorination with low residuals.

a. Paul LeGrand expressed concern about the effectiveness of chlorine that has been sitting too long. Marc will provide a hydrometer so that Paul can test the potency of the chlorine.

b. Kristy expressed concern about the current chlorinator. It has not been working perfectly. She and Paul felt that if long-term chlorination is the plan, they would need a more effective chlorinator. The Board agreed that replacement was necessary.

c. Marc and Sam agreed that the water level in the well is consistently higher than it needs to be. The system was designed for 150 students, when the school first opened. There are currently 80. They both recommended a new float system, to keep the water levels lower and make chlorination more efficient. The Board asked Sam and Marc to provide quotes for their recommended float systems.

**Action:**

A. Jeff Morse made a motion to replace the chlorinator and get quotes for a float system. Kristy Pillsbury seconded. Vote carried.

V. Jeff Morse moved to approve the Minutes of September 13, 2016. Kevin Amyot seconded the motion, and the vote carried.

VI. Financial Reports:

**Actions:**

A. Kristy Pillsbury motioned to approve the September 2016 Financial Statement. Kevin Amyot seconded and it carried.

B. Orders were reviewed and signed. General Fund check numbers began with #3493 and ended with #3615. Hot Lunch checks ranged from #129 – 133.

VII. Principal's Report:

**Information/Discussion:**

A. Facilities

1. The grease trap needs to be replaced. Paul LeGrand explained that it should really be done as soon as possible and would take two days. Replacement will involve cutting concrete, venting and troubleshooting any unknowns involved with opening up a 20 year old grease trap. Paul obtained a quote from Rondeau's Plumbing and Heating for grease interceptor replacement, including the necessary permitting: \$4995. The Board said that it need not go out to bid and deferred to Paul.

2. Kristy Ellis joined the Board in thanking Paul for his work on the new cafeteria table installation.

B. Demographics

1. Kristy Ellis presented the Board with current student enrollment numbers. There are a total of 80 students, 49 from Jay and 29 from Westfield, 1 state-placed and 1 tuitioned Preschooler. Special Ed numbers have gone up again, after

dropping steadily since the 2012/13 school year. Kristy foresees this number continuing to rise. Free & Reduced numbers are still rising, as are the Direct Certification numbers.

#### C. Special Education

1. Kristy Ellis, as expressed at last Board meeting, has been advocating for more professional Special Ed time from Central Office. As a result, Jay/Westfield has received an increase in allocation from 1.5 FTE to 2 FTE. Kristy is very pleased that this increase can come from their current SWP, Jennifer Smith, whom she called “an amazing educator.”

In order for this transition to happen, the school must release Jennifer from her .5 SWP contract so that Central Office can hire her full time. This means that a replacement .5 SWP will also need to be hired. Kristy Ellis has placed an ad for this position and noted to the Board that if the new SWP comes in at a lower rate, they could potentially afford more hours.

2. Kristy reported that Jay/Westfield has been selected to participate in the VTMTSS pilot, which studies the RTI model for identifying students with specific learning disabilities. The school was chosen in recognition of its innovative approach to Special Education. They will be focusing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, the group with the most current need. The focus of the study is to improve identification of students with SLDs and develop a tiered approach to helping those individuals.

#### D. School Wide Plan

1. Kristy Ellis presented materials on the School Wide Plan. She would like the Board to have some time to really look them over. Therefore, an action to approve the School Wide Plan was tabled for the next meeting.

#### **Actions:**

A. Jeff Morse motioned to accept Rondeau’s bid for a grease interceptor replacement. Kevin Amyot seconded and the motion carried.

B. Kristy Pillsbury motioned to release Jennifer Smith from her .5 SWP contract. Jeff Morse seconded and the vote carried.

C. Janellen Parker-Goodwin made a motion for Kristy Ellis to hire a replacement .5 SWP. Kevin Amyot seconded and the vote carried.

### VIII. Superintendent’s Report

#### **Information/Discussion:**

##### A. Act 46 Update

1. John Castle reported on the continued effort to work within the rules of Act 46. Central Office will have to submit a plan to the State Board of Education by November 2017 that makes the case for remaining a Supervisory Union, as opposed to going with the “preferred plan” of consolidation. The SU will also have to prove to the State that there was a “rigorous process” in seeing what the public wants.

John would like Boards to reach out to the community, to explain the law and the goals of it, to identify other goals and see how they can be achieved. He would rather it not be a ‘this-or-that’ approach, but rather a true conversation. John commended Kevin Amyot for reaching out to the Westfield community in unique and effective ways – approaching people at the Recycling Center, for example, instead of just holding a forum and hoping people show up. He did commend the Board on, what he felt, was the best forum in the SU last year.

John would like to decide upon a direction by March 2017, so that there is enough time before the deadline of November 2017. He admitted that there may be

large revisions to Act 46 when the new legislative session is opened, but it is impossible to know which way those changes would go.

**B. Education Quality Standards**

1. John Castle explained that the statewide Education Quality Standards range from having a comprehensive assessment system to having PE twice a week. The Standards make sense and are healthy rules to ensure schools are providing adequate services. However, it is just not possible for every school, especially small rural ones, to meet every single Standard. As a result, the State would now like for schools to file waivers for the Standards they cannot currently meet.

Jay/Westfield Elementary will have to file two waivers. One will address not having a licensed school nurse. Jay/Westfield is one of 7 schools John could name in the direct vicinity who have not been able to fill that position. The school's waiver will ask permission to have an LPN with oversight, instead. John wanted to make clear that this was not to be construed as rural schools not being able to find nurses, but rather a contractual impediment. There are local nurses, they just would not choose to work for so much less than what they could make at a hospital.

The second waiver addresses not having a library/media specialist. Jay/Westfield made a decision to decentralize their research materials from a school library to the classrooms. That way, the students have more access at all time. To address the need for children to see how a library works, the school can organize field trips to local libraries. John Castle personally signs off on all assurances that these Standards are being met.

**Action:**

A. Kristy Pillsbury motioned to submit waivers to the State to not have a licensed school nurse or a library/media specialist. Janellen Parker-Goodwin seconded and it carried.

**IX. Unfinished/New Business (cont'd):**

**Information/Discussion:**

A. The Board welcomed Janellen Parker-Goodwin and Niki Dunn (who will only officially become a Westfield representative when Chad Prue's resignation is filed). Sally Rivard opened up a general discussion about how important the local Board is to the school. She noted that so much attention has been placed on the State and SU levels of governance in light of Act 46, but that the heart of Jay/Westfield has always been the Board and its members. Kristy Ellis expressed gratitude for the Board's continued support and Sally responded with thanks of her own, on the Board's behalf, for Kristy. She commended her on being an "out of the box thinker," which fit right in with the "out of the box thinking Board."

The Board members discussed their backgrounds, reasons for involvement and general thoughts about the school and community. Sally observed that the six current members brought perspective and insight from the worlds of parenting, teaching, nursing, daycare providing, transportation and building and services maintenance.

There was a cursory discussion of the different SU committees and where new members may fit in. Reorganization of committee representatives will take place next meeting.

B. Awarding of the Lawn Care Service Bid must be tabled for the next meeting as the bids don't close until November 8<sup>th</sup>.

C. John Castle explained that the Board could send their own representative to

the VEHI and VSBIT Board meetings or approve proxies. He wanted to make clear that there was a legal opportunity to formally opt in and out and that most Boards choose to allow a proxy to make decision on their behalf.

X. Other Business

**Actions:**

A. Kevin Amyot motioned to designate a VEHI Proxy. Jeff Morse seconded and it carried.

B. Kevin Amyot motioned to designate a VSBIT Proxy. Kristy Pillsbury seconded and it carried.

XI. Agenda Items/Date for Next Board Meeting

A. **November 15 at 6:30pm** was chosen as the next Board Meeting date and time.

B. Agenda Items will include:

- a. Board Reorganization
- b. Review of float system cost estimates
- c. Mini budget history and walk through
- d. Approval of School Wide Plan
- e. Awarding of Lawn Care Service Bid

VIII. Adjourn : Jeff Morse moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:43pm. Vote carried.

<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	Oct. 27	5:30 pm.	NCSU A213
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	Oct. 27	6:30 pm	NCSU A209
Jay/Westfield Board	Tuesday	<b>Nov. 15</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	Jay/Westfield School

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Velazquez  
\Recording Secretary