

JAY/WESTFIELD JOINT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Monday February 10, 2015 at 6:00 P.M.
AT THE JAY/WESTFIELD SCHOOL

Board Members in attendance: Sally Rivard, Myra Alix, Loren Petzoldt, Chad Prue, Kevin Amyot

Administration/School Personnel in attendance: Kristy Ellis, Principal; Rebecca Velazquez, Recording Secretary.

I. At 6:11 pm the J/W School Board meeting was brought to order by Sally Rivard.

II. Loren Petzoldt moved to approve the Minutes of January 13, 2015. Kevin Amyot seconded the motion, and the vote carried.

III. Financial Reports:

- A. Approval of Warrants was postponed until next meeting.
- B. Approval of the Financial Report of January 2015 was postponed until next meeting.
- C. Awarding bid for Financial Audit was postponed until next meeting.
 - a. Loren Petzoldt requests that individual bid decisions be put on the agenda for both Jay and Westfield's Reorganization meetings in March.

Discussion:

The Board and Principle discussed the pros and cons of retaining Gene A Besaw & Associates as the Jay/Westfield auditing firm. The advantages would be a familiarity with the joint contract and a history of thorough work. However, they have not proven themselves to be punctual and lengthy processing times have been less than desirable. A firm with a thorough and quick reputation would be ideal.

It was agreed that all three audits (Jay, Westfield and Jay/Westfield) should be handled by one firm.

The Board agreed that they would rule out the two firms with significantly higher price points, Ron Beaulieu and Graham & Graham.

Kristy Ellis said that she had heard good things about a company from Maine, but was not 100% certain it was RHR Smith & Company, the Maine company on the list of bidders. Loren noted that a benefit to having a firm that needs to travel is that they may be more inclined to get all of the work done in a timely manner.

The Board and Principle decided to postpone a decision until they can consult the Jay/Westfield Bookkeeper, Tara Morse, who will be working most closely with the chosen firm. Tara has expressed dissatisfaction with Besaw & Associates in the past.

Before the next meeting, Loren Petzoldt requested that Kristy Ellis confirm that the RHR Smith & Company is the company from Maine she had heard good things about. Also, that there is research into who other local schools are using. He reasoned that choosing a firm already at work in the area could give the Board greater knowledge of their reputation and result in more efficiency.

V. Principal's Report
Information:

There were no questions or comments about the Principal's Report. Kristy Ellis, instead, opened the table to any questions or concerns about upcoming town meetings. She wanted all Board members to feel prepared to and supported in fielding questions about the budget and/or the Early Education Program. Kristy stressed that there may be emotion around closing the existing pre-school.

Kristy Ellis will try to be present at both town meetings.

Discussion:

The Board felt prepared and did not have any specific questions. There is a general confidence and satisfaction with the budget and pre-school plans.

Kevin Amyot will draft a letter in advance of Town Meeting day, regarding the furnace. He reported that there has been interest in a general update about the investment from some Westfield residents. He admitted that, not even a full year in, it would be difficult to define the savings. However, he can report on the great service and even heat throughout the school – both matters that were vastly improved as a result of the new furnace.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. Kristy Ellis reported on the Learning Design Council and the General Mission of the NCSU

Information:

Kristy Ellis spoke of John Castle's goals as Superintendent, calling him an educational leader not a manager. Throughout his career, during which Kristy has worked with him in different capacities, he has focused on The Four Cs: Character, Competence, Creativity and Community.

Kristy is part of John Castle's new Learning Design Council, which is comprised of around 30 educators in the SU: mostly teachers, some coaches and a few administrators. Their goal is to define the learning opportunities they want children to access in order to reach the desired outcomes.

The first step is to define those learning outcomes. Kristy shared the working list with the Board and opened the floor to any input, additions or questions. The learning outcomes were listed as ways in which an NCSU learner should be described: Confident & Persistent; Caring, Honest & Responsible; Open Minded & Independent Thinkers; Physically, Emotionally & Socially Healthy; Academically Accomplished & Technologically Skilled; Appreciative of the Visual & Performing Arts; Effective Communicators & Collaborators; Globally Aware for Equity & Contributing Citizens; Advocates for Equity & Social Justice; Respectful of the Natural World; Innovative Problem Solvers.

Discussion:

Loren Petzoldt offered "life-long learners" as another Learning Outcome.

Sally Rivard was concerned that a trait like confidence or persistence would be difficult to assess in a student. She wondered to which degree children would need to meet each outcome to be considered a success. There was general discussion about children who have strong suits in one area, but possibly not another and how that would be looked at in regards to reaching desired outcomes. Sally wanted to know if these Learning Outcomes were goals or "die on the hill" benchmarks.

Kristy Ellis stressed that John Castle's vision does not include rigid assessment and that it is his belief that the greatest qualities are not always quantifiable. His goal is to offer an education that is more engaged, more active and has more opportunities to fit more students' individual needs. He would rather encourage and help develop children's interests and strong points than educate strictly toward the state's Common Core assessments.

There was general discussion about the success of the Career Center and mentoring programs and the desire to open those channels up to all students, not just ones that do not fit the traditional school model.

Kristy Ellis noted John's belief that knowledge itself is easily accessible and at students' literal fingertips, thanks to the internet. This means that knowledge itself isn't the goal of education anymore, but rather teaching students how to really take in and utilize knowledge.

Sally Rivard questioned how all of this would affect the state assessments. Kristy Ellis noted that current assessments were not that strong as it is, with only about 30% of 11th graders being successful in math. So, there could be no harm in trying a different approach.

Chad Prue and Kristy Ellis noted that the students coming out of Jay/Westfield Elementary were the most successful and advanced math students at the High School level. She believes that the Jay/Westfield teachers have the most to do with this and would like more support for them moving forward.

B. Sally Rivard reported on the recent Board Chairs Meeting she attended at Central Office.

Information:

Sally Rivard went into more detail about the SU's Policy audit and the current push to change many policies into procedures. A procedural matter that was discussed at the Board Chairs meeting concerned paraprofessionals, bus drivers and substitute teachers. John Castle would like parity in pay for those positions across the Supervisory Union. He feels that salary difference incentivize works to move around between schools or refuse work at certain schools. This would most affect the Jay/Westfield school in regard to substitutes. Kristy Ellis felt that it is not the salary, but rather the location that most defines the job a substitute teacher decides to take.

The Board Chairs Meeting also focused on state legislation in regards to the hold harmless provision and the small schools grant. The latter will result in around a \$40,000 loss for Jay/Westfield school, which is a much smaller hit than other schools but a significant one nonetheless. The hold harmless provision will work on a 2 year average and will be of great concern moving forward. The Board is depending on the pre-school program to help bring enrollment up after the expected drop over the next few years. Loren Petzoldt quoted an adage that defined 80 students as the minimum for efficiency.

Kristy Ellis stressed that the Board really needs to look at the projected enrollment drop in the next three years and begin to plan pro-actively. She would like to invite John Castle to a future meeting specifically to discuss the matter of handling declining enrollment. As a Board, it will be important to define a vision for the school and allocate finances toward the programs that support that vision.

VIII. New Business:

Action:

- A. Kevin Amyot motioned to grant the NCSU Executive Board the authority to approve Master Agreements for telecommunications services on behalf of Jay/Westfield Elementary School. Myra Alix seconded the motion and the vote carried.

Discussion:

The Board agreed that a larger NCSU group contract is more beneficial. Kristy Ellis added that being able to contact the NCSU directly for support with phone issues is helpful.

IX. Other Business

Action:

- A. Kevin Amyot motioned to approve the First Reading of Policies:
 - A.01 Policy Development, Dissemination and Administration
 - D.10 Public Complaints about Personnel
 - G.11 Responsible Computer, Network and Internet UseChad Prue seconded the motion and the vote carried.
- B. Loren Petzoldt motioned to approve the Rescission of Policies:
 - A.02 Policy Adoption
 - A.03 Policy Dissemination Administration and Review
 - F.47 Portable Electronic Communication DevicesMyra Alix seconded the motion and the vote carried.

Discussion:

The Board was very disappointed to find that the changes they were being asked to approve had not been highlighted, as the Board has requested. Sally Rivard reported that at the Board Chairs get together at Central Office, she was pointedly told that it is the job of the Board's Policy representative to attend the NCSU Policy Committee meetings and report back the changes to their fellow board members.

Sally Rivard questioned why language rescinding the former polices was not simply included in the new policies, therefore necessitating two motions. Loren Petzoldt concurred that such language is common practice.

X. Agenda Items/Date for Next Board Meeting

- A. The Board acknowledged that Chad Prue's Board membership will be up for vote in next month's Reorganization meeting. Chad confirmed that he would like to keep his position.
- B. The Board confirmed Tuesday, March 10 as the date of their next Board Meeting. The agenda for this meeting had Monday, March 9 listed in error.
 - a. Sally Rivard relayed John Castle's expressed interest in being able to attend more than one Board meeting in an evening. He has requested that there be an effort to schedule meetings on the same date as another nearby Board meeting. The Board will take this into consideration, but will most likely stick to the already agreed upon practice of scheduling meetings on Tuesdays.

XI. No Executive Session was needed.

XII. Adjourn : Kevin Amyot motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:41. Myra Alix seconded the motion. Vote carried.

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
SS Negotiations	Thursday	February 19	3:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	February 19	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A213
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	February 19	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
Jay Annual Meeting	Tuesday	March 3	10:00 a.m.	Jay/Westfield School
Westfield Annual Meeting	Tuesday	March 3	10:00 a.m.	Westfield Comm Center
Teacher Negotiations	Wednesday	March 4	4:00 p.m.	NCUHS Library
Jay/Westfield Board	Tuesday	March 10	6:00 p.m.	Jay/Westfield School
Jay School Board	Tuesday	March 10	6:00 p.m.	Jay/Westfield School
Westfield School Board	Tuesday	March 10	6:00 p.m.	Jay/Westfield School

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Velazquez
Recording Secretary