

Grand Isle Supervisory Union  
**South Hero School District**  
School Board Regular Meeting  
**Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021**, at 6 p.m.  
Location: Via Google Meet  
meet.google.com/jcn-guaz-snh  
Join by phone (US) +1 513-666-7379 PIN: 476 044 895#

## **MINUTES**

### **Call to Order**

1. Call to order at 6:03 p.m. (B. Chutter)

Introductions. In attendance:

- Board members: Tim Maxham, Bob Chutter, Erin Morse, Nathaniel Kouns
- Staff: Susan McKelvie, Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Julie Pidgeon, Megan Grube
- Audience: Buddy Meilleur (LCATV), Carol Sepkoski (South Hero), Mary Jane Wirsing (South Hero), Richard Monterosso (South Hero), Annie Brabazon (South Hero), Karin Ames (South Hero), Guy Maguire (Burlington, representing South Hero Land Trust), Reina Warren (South Hero), Haeli Warren (South Hero), William Warren (South Hero), Rich Goggin (South Hero), Priscilla Tobey (South Hero), Karen Browning (South Hero)

2. Adjustment of Agenda

-Add under Superintendent's Report: staff update.

3. Public Comments

None at this time.

4. Consent Agenda (Action)

- A. Approve minutes from Dec. 17, 2020 and Jan. 7, 2021. T. Maxham made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular Dec. 17, 2020, meeting and the minutes for the special meeting on Jan. 7, 2021 N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote unanimously.

5. Reports

- A. Financial (R. Gess) (Action). R. Gess said nearly all tuition invoices have arrived; he may receive one bill from a private school. He says South Hero will not exceed the expenditure budget based on tuition and spending trends. R. Gess updated the board on Covid reimbursement funding. He updated the board on the FY20 audit. It is in progress; GISU has responded to all requests for information from Sullivan & Powers. Regarding free and reduced lunches, there is a decrease in applications from 23 to 17. This is a

trend in the other schools as well. T. Maxham asked R. Gess about page 58 special education salaries. Gess said those are salaries for special education paraeducators that are budgeted at the local level. The special education teachers are budgeted at the supervisory union. Maxham asked about page 8 line 180 & 186 regarding plant improvements. S. McKelvie said she anticipated more expenditures as the school is halfway through the year. Maxham asked about line items that relate to Covid-related expenses. Gess explained the accounting process for Covid relief funding and noted the expenses are coded with new line item numbers to track Covid expenditures.

T. Maxham made a motion that the board received and reviewed the budget-to-actuals report 14046 dated Jan. 15, 2021. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

- B. Superintendent's (M. Clark): Clark reported 3 cases of Covid in GISU schools and none at Folsom. To the best of his knowledge, there has not been transmission in the school. The district participated in Covid surveillance testing, and 95 people participated. There were 0 cases of Covid in that round. There were a small number of people in the GISU who were eligible for a Covid vaccine based on their status, and the district submitted those names. B. Chutter expressed appreciation to parents and the community for their help in keeping the school safe. He also thanked the superintendent for the continued outreach. The superintendent informed the board that Hilarie Mitchell, the part-time custodian, is resigning and has given her two-week notice. The school has accepted the resignation. S. McKelvie said the hiring process will begin.
- C. Principal's (S. McKelvie): S. McKelvie expressed her appreciation to the staff and South Hero community for vigilance about Covid safety as the school reaches its halfway point. She noted the staff submitted classroom data as part of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process. The board will review the principal's report and bring questions to the next meeting.

#### Board Business

6. (C29) District Equity Policy. (B. Chutter) (first reading). B. Chutter invited comments from those attending the meeting. Rich Monterosso suggested a change to the end of the policy to include transition to secondary education along with college, career and life. Karin Ames shared about a trip she took to the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Ala., and reflected on the importance of this policy and future work with staff and students to educate about racism and equity. Reina Warren shared that this policy is the same policy in Essex-Westford, and she supports this move. Mary Jane Wirsing, a retired educator, expressed support for the policy and especially for its socio-economic component. Annie Brabazon, a former district employee, shared about a class she took on anti-racism initiatives in South Burlington and spoke to the importance of a comprehensive policy to shine light on areas in the GISU that do not promote equity. Monterosso shared that the Equal Justice Initiative calendar reports an historic injustice for each day of the year. B. Chutter asked M. Clark how the policy would translate to education in the schools. M. Clark said he will be sharing the district's work at the upcoming GISU Board

meeting. Every principal will be attending a Courageous Conversation training Jan. 28. Their intention is for a team to develop a detailed plan for professional development and curriculum for next year. Chutter asked the superintendent for a more detailed update once the plan is developed. M. Grube said the equity policy will be part of the comprehensive needs assessment. Guy Maguire, a representative of the South Hero Land Trust, offered support and said the policy is in line with the Land Trust's work in the community and with the school.

7. Approval of Bills for Payment. B. Chutter asked a question about the \$4,000 monthly bill for Cambridge Solar and what it was for. R. Gess said the bill is part of a negotiated settlement with the company, and the board is receiving rebates for the solar power from Cambridge. B. Chutter made a motion to pay the bills in Batch #7034 totaling \$434,325.44. E. Morse seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

8. Budget Approval (B. Chutter) (Action): M. Clark and R. Gess noted the equalized pupil number has improved, resulting in lower spending per pupil, and the budget total is unchanged. T. Maxham made a motion to approve a \$3,997,900 budget for fiscal year 21-22. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

9. Budget Warning (B. Chutter) (Action).

Under Act 48, the board needs to move all Town Meeting items to Australian ballot. The board reviewed the warning and Articles 1-4. E. Morse said the time for the annual meeting on Thursday, Feb. 25, was incorrect and needs to be changed to 6 p.m.

E. Morse made a motion to approve the warning with the time change for the annual meeting to 6 p.m. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote. T. Maxham reminded board members to go to the Town Offices to sign the warning.

10. Audit engagement letter process (R. Gess) (Discussion): B. Chutter suggests in the future the South Hero board use the common engagement letter of the GISU Board to hire the auditors, and the board continue to receive a presentation of the completed audit.

11. Approve FY22 Announced Tuition Rate (R. Gess) (Action): By law, the town is required to report its tuition rate based on budget and expenses. R. Gess announced the tuition rate for FY22 will be \$15,666. B. Chutter moved that the board approve a tuition rate of \$15,666 for the school year 2021-22. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

12. Budget presentation review (B. Chutter) (Discussion): The superintendent referred the board to two documents the GISU has prepared to inform the community about the budget. The first document is a mailing to residents. The board reviewed the flyer. Clark is communicating with school/town clerk Janet Yates to add information on how to vote. Clark confirmed the cost is about \$300-\$400. The board discussed briefly the presentation for the informational meeting. The board will spend more time on the presentation at its next meeting. E. Morse asked the board to consider what academic information should be included. She noted the information shared last year is not available this year. B. Chutter suggested adding information about the

capital fund. Chutter asked the administration to offer information (data, anecdotal) about the academic work and progress of the school for the annual presentation.

13. Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Continuous Improvement Plan process and timeline (M. Grube) (Discussion). M. Grube shared a presentation with the board: [SH CNA Process Presentation](#). In her presentation, she explained how the school and district review data to determine goals that meet the Educational Quality Standards. The Continuous Improvement Plan results in goals that determine future professional development and spending priorities.

14. (F22) Electronic Communications Use and Retention (B. Chutter) (first reading). The board reviewed the policy.

15. (F23) Capitalization of Assets (B. Chutter) (first reading). The board discussed and reviewed the policy.

16. (D20) Curriculum Development & Coordination (B. Chutter) (first reading). The board discussed the policy. Clark noted the policy makes it clear the curriculum is developed by the Supervisory Union.

17. Family tuition waiver petition: S. McKelvie said a family is moving to South Hero and closing on their home in South Hero on Feb. 16. They have requested that their children start in 7th grade and 2nd grade at Folsom before that date. The family is living in employer-provided housing in the Burlington area until the closing. The family would like to start on Feb. 1. The district has communicated it needs proof of residence on Feb. 17 or the family will need to pay tuition or enroll in Burlington. Chutter clarified the family has provided evidence of a purchase and sale contract. The superintendent noted he is informing the board of his and Principal McKelvie's plan to allow the students to start before closing unless board members express a concern. Board members had none. Chutter welcomed the family to South Hero.

18. Other

T. Maxham asked M. Clark if he had read an article in *The Islander* regarding a lawsuit over paying tuition to a private religious high school. Clark cited legal counsel in declining to discuss the issue at this point.

### **Closure**

19. Setting the next agenda

Feb. 18, 2021:

--Second reading of policies

--Finalize presentation for informational Town Meeting. Board requested an updated presentation slideshow before the Feb. 18 meeting so all members can review the information. The board is interested in more photos of the school in action.

20. Adjourn

The board adjourned at 7:52 PM on a voice vote. N. Kouns made a motion to adjourn. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

At this writing, we are just about at the halfway point of the 20-21 school year. What a year it's been so far. With the uniqueness of returning to the school year in a hybrid model behind us, and our K-4 students in a 4-day week, we are in a steady learning routine and into the heart of the most effective learning period of the school year. While the governor has dangled the possibility of having all students return to in-person instruction after April vacation, we have no details or a plan or guidance coming down to schools at this point. If that happens, it will be yet another change, another rethinking of safety protocols, another new schedule we will have to redo, and another huge adjustment for staff. The key word this year has been flexibility and staff have risen to every change in the wind with professionalism and grace. We have already started the discussion in-house of what we will need to plan for in order to bring all students back into the building 5 days a week. We will be prepared should that become a reality.

#### Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction

- We have started the process of the state mandated Comprehensive Needs Assessment that will lead to our annual Continuous Improvement Plan. Teachers are currently gathering data at individual grade or content team levels, analyzing it, and offering their insights and recommendations. The next step will be for our Leadership Team to unpack this data and teachers' recommendations to determine priorities and change ideas for the first draft of our CIP Plan. This team will also determine if and what additional input is needed from other school staff, parents, and students. Once that plan is drafted, it will go back to staff for any additional input and then brought to the board. The AOE provides a structured process and timeline to carry out this work and we rely on Megan Grube as a guide and resource throughout.
- It is expected that Vermont will be administering the SBAC assessments and the NGSS Science Assessment this spring (hence the push to have students in-person). These assessments are tied to federal accountability, which is tied to federal funding. Last spring, the feds waived the assessment requirement. There is no indication they will be waiving that requirement this year, although perhaps the new administration may choose to do so. The VT AOE could apply for a waiver, but they have not done so.
- As noted in my most recent data report, the schools of the GISU are continuing to develop a common proficiency based report card. Teachers of all grades and content meet bi-weekly with Megan Grube to continue this process. Next steps include community outreach to share this new reporting process to parents before the March trimester concludes, and soliciting feedback from parents after they experience the March report card. The work this year will lay a foundation, but this reporting tool will continue to be developed through the rest of this school year and over the summer. The intention is to provide clear information to parents regarding their child's progress using specific learning targets based on Common Core Standards. As you have seen, it's very different from the traditional A-B-C report card and will require some support for parents

to understand. This is work that is happening across the state as schools move to proficiency-based instruction and assessment.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- Just before the holiday break, the governor allowed sports practices and squad play to resume in middle and high schools, with safety protocols in place. No intramural sports are permitted at this time. We were ready for that announcement, and immediately after break we started a middle school fitness/basketball clinic for students on their in-person days. Special thanks to Alison Perry and Andrew Riegler for organizing and coaching this opportunity for our students. We will continue the clinic up to February break and possibly for a couple of weeks thereafter.
- Ms. Kauffeld spent her holiday break designing a percussion curriculum for band students so that she could continue to develop their music skills and knowledge until we can resume wind instruments. So our band students are back to work expanding their musical abilities! Thank you Ms. Kauffeld.
- We are also discussing how we might do a theater experience with students later in the spring, while still meeting safety protocols. This would be a scaled down version of the major productions we are used to, and we would not be able to do a live in-person performance, but knowing Ms. Kauffeld, she will figure out a way for the students to offer a final product to the community.

Typically, this time of year includes our ski program and other winter focused field trips like ice skating or visits to the Flynn. While our students are missing those activities, we thank these staff members for building in these other activities to try to provide some high preference, fun social experiences for middle school students.

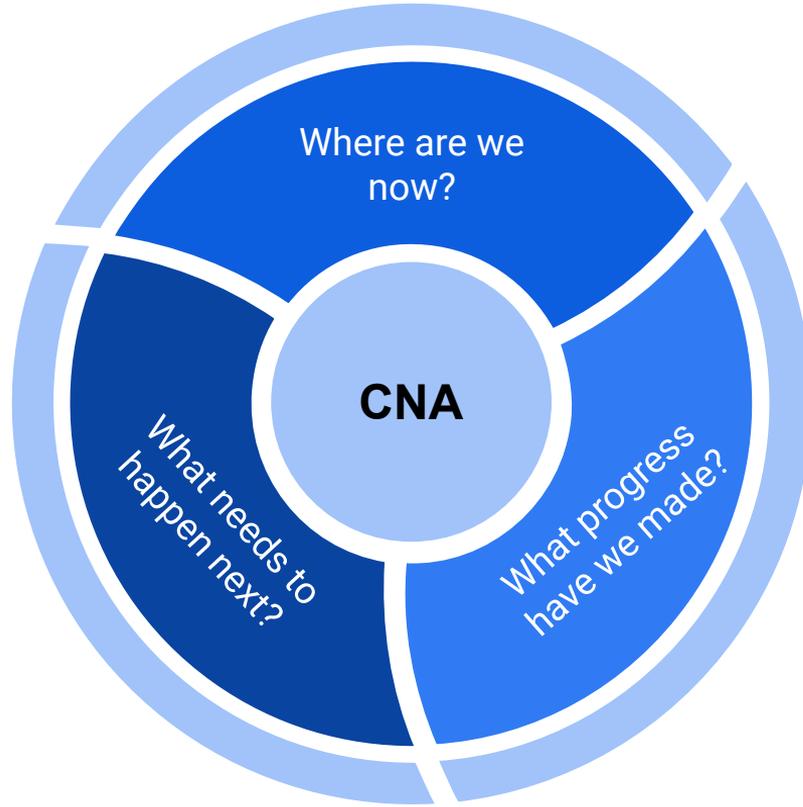
### **Miscellaneous**

- We continue to have new students enroll or return from home schooling as the year goes on. As of February 1st we expect to be at 144 students, up from 130 last year. Only one student will remain in homeschooling. While most of those are in the middle level, we do have several new elementary students who have moved to the area from places such as DC, Oregon and Colorado. I have sent out an email to parents of all GI 7th grade parents to inquire about their intentions for next year, and I am communicating with the school counselor there to try to get a sense of what their current 6th graders may do.
- The new blower for the furnace seems to have finally worked out its kinks and is humming along nicely.
- We continue to await results from our latest water tests. The samples were re-submitted in early December. The lab also processes Covid tests, so we expect there may be some delay as long as we continue in the current surge of increased Covid cases.

# Comprehensive Needs Assessment

2020-2021 Process and Timeline





Where are we  
now?

**CNA**

What needs to  
happen next?

What progress  
have we made?

## Education Quality Standards (EQS)

The educational opportunities provided to all of Vermont's public school students. EQS implementation is measured across five domains, each composed of multiple data points, or indicators:



### Academic Proficiency

How well do our schools provide students with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge to be career and college ready?



### Personalization

How well do our schools provide students with authentic engagement and opportunities to shape their own learning?



### Safe, Healthy Schools

How well do our schools provide environments where students feel healthy, safe, and supported in achieving their goals?



### High Quality Staffing

How well do our schools employ educators who are well trained and qualified to meet the needs of all student?



### Investment Priorities

How well do our schools provide quality experiences at a price that the community believes is appropriate?

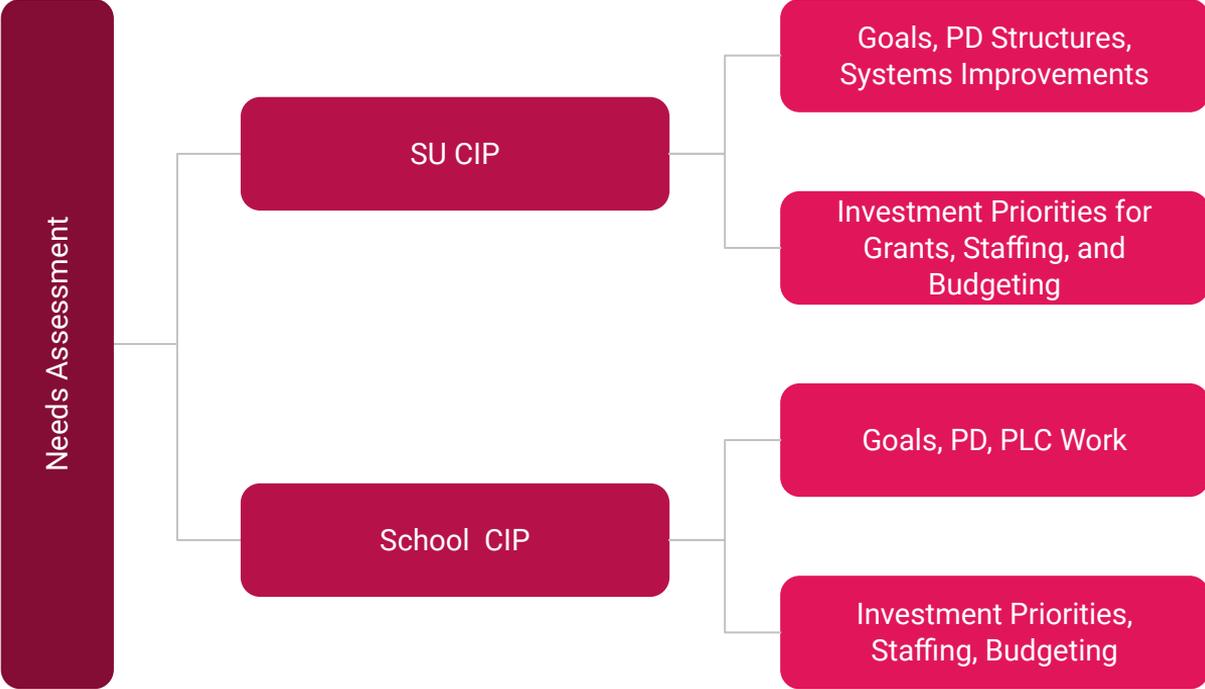
# Main CNA Components:

## Preparing for Collaborative Inquiry



## Identifying Priority Problems of Practice





# General Timeline

