

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SVRTSD)**

2 **Regional Governing Board Meeting Minutes: Monday, August 10, 2020, Zoom Online Meeting**

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4 **RGB members present:** Art Haytko, Leon Johnson, Jackie Kelly, Edward Letourneau, Michael Munson,
5 Kenneth Swierad, Todd Siclari, Fran Kinney, Jon Gauthier, Dane Whitman and John MacDonald at
6 10:13AM

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8 **CDC represented** by: Michael Lawler, Superintendent/Director; Rebecca Tattersall, Business Manager

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10 Audience: Bennington Banner, CAT-TV

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12 **Recorder:** Sandra Redding, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

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14 Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Michael Munson at 10:07AM. He welcomed all to this online
15 Zoom format due to current circumstances and asked for any public comments. Hearing none, the group
16 moved on to the consent agenda:

- 17 • Minutes from the June 8th, 2020 full board online meeting were unanimously approved.
- 18 • Payroll and Vendor warrants were unanimously approved with no questions
- 19 • Business Office and Treasurer's Reports were accepted as presented. E. Letourneau inquired if
20 there has been any information from the state as to additional funding or handling of budgets
21 because of the Covid crisis. Supt. Lawler indicated that the independent tech centers had not
22 been included in the original funding from the state regarding the current crisis. He hopes this will
23 be addressed and corrected when the Vermont legislature resumes session.
- 24 • There were no committee reports.
- 25 • Action Items:
 - 26 ○ Resignation of Manufacturing Instructor, Adam Cannistraci-resignation accepted with
27 regret and thanks offered to this instructor for the last four years of his stewardship of
28 this program. Cannistraci will still be available to teach Adult Education classes as
29 needed. Board requests a letter of thanks be sent and move to accept resignation was
30 unanimous. The search is underway for an instructor to continue this program. Very
31 difficult position to fill. Supt. Lawler has plans to cover vacancy till filled. M. Munson
32 asked if Lawler was aware of any other changes to staffing at this time due to current
33 crisis. Lawler indicated none were known to him presently.
 - 34 • Nomination of Culinary Instructor, Daniel Jackson-Supt. Lawler shared the information on this
35 hire and the process of interviewing for the position. Jackson is well qualified for the position and
36 offered a very interesting and tricky online response to a lesson plan presentation to the
37 interview committee. Vote was unanimous to accept nomination of Daniel Jackson as our new
38 Culinary Instructor. His classes will be taught online at this point and we do not expect the
39 restaurant to be opening any time soon.
 - 40 • Munson invited Supt. Lawler to update the board on directives from the state:
 - 41 ○ He explained the "Delegation of Authority During State Emergency Due To Covid-19
42 Pandemic" directive. This basically allows the superintendent to make day to day
43 decisions regarding our district/school as needed considering the possibility of rapidly
44 changing circumstances due to the pandemic. It was noted that our policies already
45 support this possibility as the board has complete confidence in the superintendent to
46 make these decisions. It was requested that the board be notified as soon as possible
47 as to any significant changes. The board unanimously endorses and supports this
48 directive and votes in the affirmative to stand behind Supt. Lawler.
 - 49 ○ Supt. Lawler shared that teachers/staff will return to the building on Monday, August 24,
50 2020 to establish classrooms, routines and procedures for student online participation
51 which will begin Tuesday, September 8. All will work 5 day weeks at this time. Student
52 classes will be remote for the time being. We do not expect to have students in the
53 building until October with the possibility of our year two students coming in first. With
54 procedures and protocols in place, we will hopefully begin an orderly and rolled out
55 return to school for students. Our Guidance Coordinator, Lisa Harrington Redding, has

1 been diligently working with our sending schools to create a seamless start to the school
2 year. Much time and planning has been ongoing throughout this whole current situation
3 to keep all informed and involved for the betterment of the students.

- 4 ○ Supt. Lawler described how the weekly and daily schedule might look as we go forward
5 with online learning and the eventual return to school of our students. This is still very
6 fluid as we anticipate the involvement of our teachers and staff as well as whatever
7 changes could possibly occur on the state level. Details still to be worked out include
8 transportation, lunches, social distancing and possible staggered schedules.
- 9 ○ The Bennington Police Explorers Camp was a success this year in July. SW Tech
10 participated by providing buses, (5) and drivers for the week. Total of 40 young campers.
11 All precautions were taken and protocols followed for the safety of all involved. There
12 were no classes on our campus this year due to the pandemic, but we were happy to
13 assist with the driving. The feedback received was very positive from those participating.
- 14 ○ Lawler spoke of our school rebranding to Southwest Tech. Nicole Sauer, Outreach
15 Coordinator has been working from home on this ongoing process. Vehicles have been
16 updated, signage on and around building in progress and website has some changes.
17 We will not make further changes to web address and email for a little bit as we have so
18 many other situations to adapt to as we begin this school year, but all will be
19 accomplished in the proper time.
- 20 ○ It was noted that all of our Chromebooks were returned at the end of the school year, so
21 we are prepared to move ahead with continued distance learning. Well done! Phone
22 system is being updated as required with E911 system 50% grant. Otherwise, building
23 has been very quiet with only essential staff in at staggered times.
- 24 ○ Supt. Lawler shared that we are aware that over 800 MAU students have indicated that
25 they would like to take classes with us. Add to that our other sending schools, we had
26 almost 1000 potential students available to us for this coming year. We can only seat
27 600, so this is a great problem to have in normal times. Growth is always good. State
28 regulations say that ALL students must have access to tech education should they so
29 desire. Due to the pandemic, we are aware of keeping classroom limits to 10 per session
30 with online synchronous and asynchronous learning, so this will work for us as we
31 usually have a limit of 16-20 per state regulation in tech classrooms. E. Letourneau
32 wondered if online teaching with no hands on could affect tech student's certificate
33 competencies. Lawler indicated more input from the state is needed in this area. Also,
34 J. Kelly inquired as to our financials pertaining to ongoing support of students and
35 education. Lawler stated that more information is expected from the state on this,
36 hopefully soon.

37 John MacDonald apologized for his late participation in meeting due to technical issues. No problem,
38 happens to all of us. E. Letourneau hopes all this works out as it is quite a challenge. Supt. Lawler
39 thanked the board for continued support and agreeing to the proposed schedule as it does take some
40 stress off as we prepare to begin this unusual school year.

41 Next full board is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020, online. We may need a finance committee
42 meeting before if indicated.

43 Meeting adjourned with unanimous vote at 11:07AM.