

AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Governance Team

ACTION ITEM: Will the State Board of Education approve the request of the **FRANKLIN CENTRAL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT** to change its name officially to the **MAPLE RUN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT** and will it certify this name change to the Secretary of State?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education approve the request of the Franklin Central Unified School District to change its name officially to the Maple Run Unified School District; and

That the State Board of Education certify this name change to the Secretary of State.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. § 706c and § 164

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: On January 19, 2016, the State Board of Education approved the Franklin Central Supervisory Union Study Committee's proposal to create a unified union school district that would be known *temporarily* as the "Franklin Central Unified School District." The Study Committee explained that it intended the board of the new unified district to select a *final, official* name from among those to be submitted by the community.

The voters of all identified districts approved the proposal on March 1, 2016.

Pursuant to Title 16, chapter 11, before the new unified union school district was authorized to conduct its organizational meeting and swear in its new board members, the Secretary of Education first was required to record a certificate with the Secretary of State that designated the new entity as a unified union school district and that identified the new district by name. As a result, the Secretary of State recorded the existence of the new district under the temporary name "Franklin Central Unified School District."

Shortly thereafter the new unified union school district held its organizational meeting during which the members of the new unified board were sworn in and assumed office. At its first meeting, the new unified board voted to change the name of the district to the "Maple Run Unified School District" based upon ideas received from the community.

Title 16, chapter 11 does not provide a process by which a unified union school district can formally change its officially recorded name. Although the Secretary of State's Office did not object to the concept of a name change, it was also unable to identify a statutory procedure in Title 17 or elsewhere that would be appropriate to this particular situation.

Review of the Agency's files of union school districts created in the 1960s reveals at least one instance in which, at the request of an existing union high school district, the State Board approved an official name change from "UHSD #___" to an unrelated name ("the ___ UHSD") and certified the name change to the Secretary of State.

The Agency supports the Franklin Central Unified School District's request that the State Board of Education approve a formal name change to the "Maple Run Unified School District" and certify this change to the Secretary of State.

POLICY and COST IMPLICATIONS: This request raises no policy or cost implications.

STAFF AVAILABLE: Donna Russo-Savage,
Principal Assistant to the Secretary, School Governance

LYNN, LYNN, BLACKMAN & MANITSKY, P.C.

September 12, 2016

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL

Vermont Agency of Education
State Board of Education
219 North Main Street, Suite 402
Barre, VT 05641

Re: *Name Change for Franklin Central Unified School District*

Dear State Board Members:

Our firm represents the Franklin Central Unified School District. In its Articles of Agreement, the District indicated that its name is temporary. Pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706g, Secretary Holcomb certified the District with the temporary name.

At its May 31, 2016 meeting, of the new Unified Board of Directors voted to change the name of the district to the **Maple Run Unified School District**. See attached minutes. The District now needs to complete the steps to change its legal name.

After consultation with AOE, we understand that the State Board can approve a request to change a district's name and certify the name to the Secretary of State. Apparently, the State Board did this at least one other time in the 1960's, when it approved the name change of a union high school district identified by number (UHSD # ___) to an unrelated name (the _____ UHSD).

Accordingly, the Franklin Central Unified School District requests that the State Board approve its name change to the Maple Run Unified School District and certify the name change to the Secretary of State.

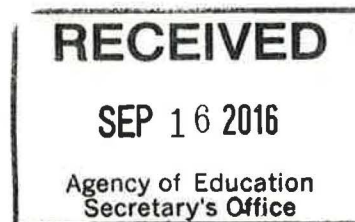
Please let me know if you have questions or concerns. Thank you.

Sincerely,

LYNN, LYNN, BLACKMAN & MANITSKY, P.C.



Sean M. Toohey, Esq.
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Enclosure

cc. Brenda Comstock, Executive Assistant, Maple Run Unified School District
Donna Russo-Savage, AOE

1 **UNIFIED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

2 **May 31, 2016**

3 **6:30 p.m. or immediately following the Unified Board Organization Meeting - BFA Library**

4 **Board Members Present:** Steven LaRosa, Nina Hunsicker, Nilda Gonnella-French, Al Corey, Michael
5 Malone, James Farr, Mike L'Esperance, Jack McCarthy, Denise Smith.

6 **Not Present:** Martha Casavant-Ries

7 **Others:** Kevin Dirth, Julie Regimbal, Martha Gagner, Jesse Byers, Kathy Finck, Michelle Monroe, Leeann
8 Wright, Preston Randall, Chris Mosca, Shannon Warden, Geoff Lyons, Caroline Zac, Jeff Morrill, Jason
9 Therrien.

10 1. **Call to Order Kevin Dirth called the meeting to order at 7:42**

11 2. **Pledge of Allegiance** was done at the preceding meeting.

12 3. **Board Reorganization**

13 A. Chair – Superintendent Dirth asked for nominations from the floor for candidates
14 for Chair.

15 Al Corey nominated James Farr.

16 **Al Corey made a motion to close nominations and asked that one ballot be cast for James Farr; second**
17 **by Michael Malone. The motion carried unanimously.**

18 B. Vice Chair

19 Al Corey nominated Michael Malone for Vice Chair.

20 **Al moved to close nominations and asked the acting secretary cast one ballot for Michael Malone;**
21 **second by Michael L'Esperance. The motion carried unanimously.**

22 C. Other Appointments and Designation – Kevin explained that Collins Perley Board
23 Rep. represents the Board on the Collins Perley Board and acts as conduit.

24 Nilda Gonnella French nominated Al Corey.

25 **Nilda moved to close nominations and asked the acting secretary cast one ballot for Al Corey; second by**
26 **Michael Malone. The motion carried unanimously.**

27

28 **Michael Malone made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign teacher contracts and the Vice-chair to**
29 **sign in the Chair's absence; to authorize Principal's, Business Manager and Superintendent to sign other**
30 **contracts and award bids less than \$25,000; to name the Principals and SRO Officers Truancy Officers;**
31 **to assign the St. Albans Messenger the designated newspaper; to set the regular meetings to be the**
32 **first and third Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.; to name Brenda Comstock the minute taker with responsibility**
33 **of getting them to Central Office; that agendas will be posted at all schools, City and Town Clerks offices**
34 **and Collins Perley; and that the procedures for handling Directors Orders will be that the Central Office**
35 **prepares and reviews the warrants twice a month; a quorum of the Board members reviews and signs;**
36 **Central Office prepares checks, Treasurer signs and Central Office mails them; second by Nilda**
37 **Gonnella-French. The motion carried unanimously.**

38

39 D. Code of Ethics – Kevin Dirth circulated the VSBA's Code of Ethics for School Board
40 Members for Director signatures.

41

42 **Regular Business Meeting Begins**

43

44 4. **Approval of Agenda** - There were no changes requested.

45 5. **Visitors** – No visitors requested to speak.

- 46 6. **New Business**
47 E. School Choice Franklin North East – Kevin Dirth explained the draft agreement.
48 There was input from the Board that five years was too long. Chair Farr asked for
49 the Board’s approval to begin talks with Franklin Northeast, that there is some
50 interest but more information is needed. A new proposal would be brought to the
51 Board if they pass their vote.

52 **Al Corey made a motion to authorize the Chair and Superintendent to enter into discussions with**
53 **Franklin Northeast; second by Mike L’Esperance. The motion carried unanimously.**
54

- 55 F. Set Regular Meeting Dates – Meeting dates were set for the first and third
56 Wednesday beginning June 15. One meeting will be business, at the Central Office,
57 one will rotate among schools (including Northwest Tech Center) to provide Board
58 members the opportunity to get to know the schools.
59 G. Committee Structure – It was determined that most of the work will be done by the
60 full Board, but at the next meeting to appoint members to the negotiations
61 committee.
62 H. Name Change – the Names from the contest were reviewed and there was
63 discussion among the Board and visitors. It was understood that the Agency of
64 Education wanted to have Unified or Union included in the official name. Once
65 determined which they needed, it would be added to tonight’s selection.

66 **Michael Malone made a motion to name the new school district Maple Run School**
67 **District; second by Denise Smith. The motion carried 7 yea, 2 nay. Nilda Gonnella-French**
68 **and Al voted nay.**
69

- 70 I. Convocation August 26 - Kevin Dirth shared that the theme is Unity, and asked that
71 folks please make every effort to attend.

72 7. **Other Business**

- 73 8. **Agenda Items for Future Meeting** - negotiations committee, plan/strategy/timeline for the
74 year, retreat, training, policies, inter-district transfer procedure, set criteria. Consider having
75 five of the early meetings held at a different school to get up to speed on each school quicker,
76 then starting the rotation at Central Office, could hollow request.

- 77 9. **Potential Executive Session** none needed.

- 78 10. **Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.**

79 Respectfully Submitted
80 Brenda Comstock

