

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
106 Hancock Road, Peterborough, NH 03458-1197

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

November 28, 2016

SAU Boardroom

5:30 PM

Minutes

Committee Members:

Crista Salamy - Chair, Linda Quintanilha, Bernd Foecking, Janine Lesser, Rich Cahoon

Present: Crista Salamy, Linda Quintanilha, Janine Lesser, Rich Cahoon, Bernd Foecking (5:37 p.m.), Dr. Ann Forrest, Kimberly Saunders, Richard Dunning, Myron Steere, Kristen Reilly

5:30 Approval of October 24, 2016 Minutes – 5 minutes

Janine Lesser motioned to accept the minutes of October 24, 2016. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.

5:35 Update on Assessment Framework and PACE

Dr. Forrest reported that work on the timeline is needed. A conversation with the State is needed relative to what the district's obligations would be and what support the district would receive. We want to assure that we don't want to put forth a lot of work for a less than worthy return. A clear picture from the State is needed next before a recommendation can be brought forward to the Board at the second meeting in December.

5:45 Update on Equity Audit

A document titled "Conducting an Equity Audit" was reviewed. Data collection is underway. The process will be detailed throughout the year. The data collection phase is extensive. The second phase is looking at the data and having conversations about that information. A skilled facilitator for the conversation is a strong consideration.

Rich Cahoon added that course acceptance/access into courses such as Advanced Placement (AP) should be a discussion under the equity umbrella. Discussion took place about the barriers that prevent students from participating in AP classes and how they can be overcome.

Discipline as a data point has a flip side. Those students who are not a discipline problem may suffer in a class that has students with significant discipline issues.

5:55 Update on Summer Programming at the Middle School

Dr. Forrest reported that research on summer learning and program is underway. A document titled "*Summing Up For Summer: The Challenges and Strategies*" produced by the *Harvard Family Research Project* was shared.

Clarification of what the program will look like is underway. Communication to parents will follow mid-winter. Conversations with parents of students who teachers feel would benefit from the program was recommended. Including incoming fifth grade students provides early access to the school over the summer and boosts enrollment. Project based learning experiences are important.

6:05 Multi-age/Multi-grade and Class Size

Multi-age/Multi-grade and class size discussion information has been ongoing. Policy IB- Class size was shared.

There is no research that is based on student class sizes under thirteen.

If we are going to continue to do multi-age/multi-grade, consideration for consistency is needed. Our curriculum is grade driven. It's about class size, who makes up the class, and the effectiveness of the teacher. It is difficult in the area of assessment.

Bernd Foecking shared that implementing multi-age/multi-grade at the elementary level is difficult.

The challenge that ConVal has is that we are never consistent from year to year.

Janine Lesser said that what we need is information about whether or not multi-grade works when consideration for reconfiguration takes place.

Multi-grade are not more effective than straight grades. The effort to do it effectively should be considered. If we do it ineffectively, our students will not have the same level of learning as a straight grade.

We have traditionally made decisions based on enrollment numbers.

Rich Cahoon asked for a recommendation on multi-age; are they a viable approach for this district.

Rich Cahoon said that multi-age research may achieve better results. Multi-age as a philosophy is an easier sell than multi-grade. We should figure out how to do multi-grade well since closing an elementary school is unlikely.

Kimberly Saunders reported that multi-age is typically implemented in small schools.

Four models; a financial model, status-quo model, consolidation model, and all schools stay open with a changed configuration have been suggested.

Starting all three levels of school at the same start time was suggested as an answer to transportation challenges.

Communication what the "gets" are when considering closing an elementary school is important. If the result of closing a school or schools meant that elementary would get foreign language or other opportunities, the decision for communities would be clearer.

Bernd Foecking asked where the problem is. The problem is around socio-economic status and students with disabilities.

Are we multi-grading all elementary schools or just the smaller schools?

There is a conflict between what Selectmen view as optimal and what the educational professionals see as the best for students educationally.

Dick Dunning said that we should do what we believe is best for children. If we consolidate, what do we get to offer to children and what will it cost? Where are the educational and financial benefits? We need to communicate this in our communities.

Is a straight K, grade1/2 beneficial? If not, we should not pursue. Is it worth it?

Relative to class size, does the minimum enrollment number in the recommended class size range mean anything at the high school level? Kimberly Saunders cautioned that high school scheduling is difficult. For example, in some school districts, when you schedule band, it impacts other course enrollment numbers. When band occurs during one time of the day, other class numbers are impacted. High school schedules are driven by student choice. Should we offer a class if only three students are interested? It is all about choices. VLACS is a consideration.

Greater discussion took place about the number of students in high school courses.

Competency based education was discussed.

This conversation can take place after the equity analysis.

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 19th @ 5:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok