

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, September 28, 2017
7:00 p.m.
SAU #1

Minutes

Present: John Jordan, Ed Juengst, Gail Cromwell, Henry Kunhardt, John Robertson, Gale Gable, Bernd Foecking, Myron Steere, Rich Cahoon, Kimberly Saunders

John Jordan called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Accept Minutes of May 25, 2017

Gail Cromwell moved to accept the minutes of May 25, 2017. John Robertson second. Pierce Rigrod abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.

Why did the number of science labs go from seven (7) labs to four (4)? Justification in part, as well as cost considerations. A lab was originally requested for each teacher. Population is going down. It was a process to determine four. Rich Cahoon said that the numbers justify five labs.

Ed Juengst asked about doing the project in two phases. In addition, there is an ADA issue. Mr. Juengst said that if there is enough money to do the work without pursuing a bond that is the way that it should be done that way.

2. Superintendent's Presentation: Demographic Overview of the Conval Student Body and the Importance of Early Intervention.

Kimberly Saunders reported that she met with John Jordan and Ed Juengst to look for ways to understand the structure of the schools better. One of the topics that kept coming up was the demographics of the district. The importance of early intervention was a topic as well. The enrollment on October 1, 2007 was 2,960, of which the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) eligibility was 18.4%. Enrollment on October 1, 2016 was 2,188 with a Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility of 30.6%. Peterborough is near 50%; others are as high as 60% eligible. A family of four has to make \$45,570 or less to qualify for FRL. We have people who don't quite qualify. We also have a population who are in the ballpark of this figure who don't qualify. This is a large change. We are seeing students come to school hungry. We have a program, "End 68 Hours of Hunger", which works to feed students between the end of school on Friday to when they return on Monday morning. These families struggle to find quality childcare before or after school. These students typically come to us with less preschool. They are often not read to as frequently. They come to us one to two years behind other students.

A study of children using a well-established norm referenced testing system, NWEA, looked at where students came in at to school in terms of "grade level". Students who come to us a year below grade level, or more. Following the trajectory of these students resulted in that a student who comes in two years behind takes until at least 7th grade to catch up. If we get a student who comes in behind, up to grade level by grade three is the goal.

The Rand Study of Preschool in New Hampshire looked at the consequences of children's success in school when they come in behind. Federal funding falls short with the ability to reach all students. Early childhood programs benefit student's success in school. A return of \$2 for every dollar invested and nearly \$4 for every dollar of cost if the program targets children living in poverty.

Gail Cromwell asked how many students come in below grade level. Kimberly said that she could get that data at each grade level if needed.

John Jordan asked if anything is done about providing books to families who do not have many books in the household. Kimberly said that due to HIPPA, we no longer provide books to newborn babies at the local hospital. Books are available to take home from the library.

John asked if this is the basis for proposing universal preschool. Kimberly said that the models proposed for reconfiguration or consolidation incorporate a universal preschool. Kimberly shared information on our current preschools in district.

Ed Juengst asked about identifying students at the preschool level. It was confirmed that challenges can be identified early on.

It is important to know that we have to educate children ages 3 to 21 if they are identified. This is part of that process.

Ed Juengst asked about discipline. Is it directly related? Kimberly said that they call it "pro-social behavior". Programs have been implemented to work with students who struggle with basic self-control.

How do our demographics vary? Demographics reflect that we are seeing a greater segregation than ever before. Those with higher income levels tend to live in the same areas and go to school together. The same holds true for lower income families.

Has private schooling and homeschooling increased? Kimberly reported that private school has almost entirely become affluent with the exception of religious based. Homeschooling in New Hampshire is difficult to get information; parents only have to report once of their intent to homeschool.

Discussion took place about the quality of jobs that have left the district over the years; Mallard, EMS, Brookstone, etc.

Kimberly offered school tours in coming months when the children are in them.

John asked for dates to be proposed and the SAU will organize.

3. Strategic Plan- Preliminary information on options for reconfiguration and consolidation

John Jordan reported two proposals; one is to retain all elementary schools and restructure curriculum in a very creative way. It recognizes different levels of learning. This could be an attractive model. The second model was to keep two elementary schools open.

Kimberly encouraged everyone to read the introduction; these are conceptual models to start the conversation. Administrators developed ConVal based on certain parameters. How could we leverage the strengths that we have and what could we expand? What other things could we be offering? Based on the information done, these two models rose above. This was a development of a concept to move forward the Strategic Plan around Goal #3.

John Jordan said that a lot has happened.

Ed Juengst said that he was impressed with both presentations on the two models. He said that there are ways that perhaps, these models could work together. He advised those present to read the information shared tonight. It is a dramatic proposal and will alarm at first. Benefits are pointed out for consideration.

John Jordan said that these are educational models. The effects of this on our communities needs consideration. How is the structure of our communities in relation to our schools?

This is just one piece of the entire puzzle.

Gail Cromwell said that the need for early child education is not unique to ConVal. Kimberly said that the Rand Study findings address a tiered approach; not just universal preschool. It might include home visiting from nurses. In New Hampshire, a one year program is advised. There are so few families with children in some towns. Everyone pays for education through taxes. It is hard to overcome the cost perception.

What do the trends in NH look like in terms of universal preschool? As long as the State is allowed to continue to pit its senior citizens against its youngest citizens there will be a problem. It is about whether you view education as a community good or an individual benefit. Concord is putting a lot on local communities; they need to figure out how education is going to be funded.

The funding formula discussion was found that it was preferred to keep it the same at 50%/50%.

Pierce Rigrod said that the timeline for completing the concepts of the two models must be realistic. Towns should be aware of this discussion. It should be clear that this is going to be difficult; everything becomes about the budget. The board decided to look first at the reconfiguration model.

4. Other

What is in mind for next meeting? Discuss the models.

Next meeting is October 26th at 7:00 p.m.

The budget timeline will be shared at the next meeting.

Science lab proposal presentation at next meeting.

Gail Cromwell motioned to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. Ed Juengst second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok