

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire
CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Strategic Plan Committee
SAU Office/Boardroom

Thursday, May 10, 2018
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

School Board Committee Members:

- Pierce Rigrod, Chair
- Richard Dunning
- Bernd Foecking
- Kristen Reilly
- Janine Lesser
- Jim Fredrickson

Present: Bernd Foecking, Jim Fredrickson, Kristen Reilly, Pierce Rigrod-Chair, Myron Steere, Rich Cahoon, Stephan Morrissey, Kimberly Saunders, Ann Forrest (7: 11), John Jordan

Pierce Rigrod called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2018,

Bernd Foecking moved to accept the minutes of April 12, 2018. Kristen Reilly seconded. Pierce Rigrod abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.

Kimberly asked if the membership is accurate on this agenda. Kimberly will check on committee membership.

2. Revisit Purpose and Process for Models – Pierce Rigrod

This is the focus point for the Strategic Plan. We need to find a model that meets our vision and supports our district. We've discussed the models and agreed to bring one to the Board for a vote, before we need to draft a warrant or something else.

We have communities that want a better educational model and communities that want a reduced budget. We have about five months to come up with a recommendation and vote by the Board; we have two models in hand and hope to bring forward at least one more. We need to continue to refine what we have. What are the options for a consolidation model? Pierce Rigrod wants to be sure we continue to use the Plan as we move forward.

3. Goal 3 – Revisions – Kimberly Saunders

3.1.2 We are exploring multi-grade/multi-age. The Superintendent suggests, as we're behind schedule, to align with 3.1.5 (organizational structure) change the completion date to 6-30-21. "Decision has been made regarding the implementation of multi-grade/multi-age" – update of content. It could be that the implementation is pushed beyond the Plan. If we're going to implement, the decision should be made by Oct. 2020, in order to get into the budget.

3.1.3 Multi-age/Multi-grade: The Superintendent would like to have a policy in place before we begin work on the budget in relation to multi-age/multi-grade. There is no policy for the Board to decide on; however, it would

need to be adopted before the end date of 12/30/18. Pierce Rigrod wonders if there is any existing policy elsewhere in the state. Myron Steere indicated parents are also seeking clarification for this. Bernd Foecking asked about the philosophy of never combining 2nd/3rd grades, how would we prevent that? We would have overlapping grade progressions. However, our present grade-2 curriculum is not comparable in learning levels. We should have this policy by September 30th at the latest.

3.3.2: We have not shared the results throughout the communities. What is the plan for this to move forward? Kimberly Saunders is concerned that if we're moving back from January, we need a model (with feedback) soon. Conceptual models: is the public involved in this before we identify an implementation plan? The devil is in the details. Does the Board want to push through the conceptual models or involve the communities in the discussions?

Myron Steere asked about the number of communities to visit. Pierce Rigrod spoke of the Model Study Committee and its lack of success/support. Jim Fredrickson asked if Ms. Saunders has a particular model in mind, one that she feels is the way we need to move towards. Does this mean, a model has the stamp of Administration? Kimberly Saunders has mixed feelings about this. It can be done. She would like to stand between the educators and community and mediate. Bernd Foecking feels we need to move away from the financial piece of this whole thing and present only what is best for ConVal/Students and move forward with that model.

Rich Cahoon stated that handling the politics and taking the public heat is the role of the School Board and not Administration. He feels strongly that we would be putting a lot on Administration. Bernd Foecking does not want to put the onus on Administration. We have the feedback from Administration -- there are delivery problems with the existing model. It is not "educationally optimal". The public will ask logistical questions.

We have two models, with both educational and financial breakdown. Ms. Saunders is not trying to dodge a bullet, but the other thing the Board could do is say each existing model goes too far, so we're looking from something in the middle, as another option. Rich Cahoon does not want to go back to the public with another conceptual model, as he feels they are not understood. Bernd Foecking wants to be able to ensure communities that the model will not hurt their children.

The implementation model has to spell it out for parents. How long will the model be viable? We will have to put forth a strong warrant, in order to change the Articles. Trust is an issue. To say we're not going to reduce the budget; that would build trust (Rich Cahoon).

The Board does not have the authority to open and close schools as they see fit. We will draft a 3rd model that is optimal for both education and finances. A much more detailed model; but do we then do we take it to the communities?

Pierce Rigrod would like to share the model with communities, but does not have a strong preference. He is OK with going straight to the Board with the 3rd model. It would be more straight forward to have the Board vote on it...to say "Here is what the Administration came up with as charged.", then there can be a Board discussion. What about feasibility? The political realities have to enter into this at some point.

We need to come to a consensus: go straight to implementation with public meetings, or do a road show with the conceptual models (multiple)? Bernd Foecking suggests using one model, presenting more than one causes confusion.

Jim Fredrickson indicated that we need to get across to our communities the need to do this. Have we communicated this enough? Kristen Reilly would also like to go with the public (Board meetings/support). No roadshow.

Stephan Morrissey stressed the feasibility importance. The Board needs to decide by mid-June to choose the model.

The Ledger indicated they would run a special edition of the one model; we would produce it but they would run it. Our date for this policy and implementation plan – end of Sept/October and we move forward to talk to the parents/public.

Is there a renovation piece? Yes, depending on our decision. Put implementation plan on the Board agenda. New proposal based on not a rejection of the models but a combination of the two existing plans.

Pierce Rigrod moved that by August 1, 2018, the SAU will bring forward an implementation outline. Bernd Foecking motioned; seconded by Kristen Reilly. Motion moved. Unanimous.

(Does it need to come back to this committee?) Kimberly Saunders wants to talk with Administration to see for feedback.)

4. Financials for the Consolidation Model and Other Key Questions - Kimberly Saunders (handout)

Ms. Saunders distributed the Consolidation Model and Estimates document. This could be an appendix to the models and we can use it for reference. Ms. Saunders discussed what she used to come up with the handout. This is the most conservative it could be.

Bernd Foecking asked about the number of staff in each school. He thought the number seemed high. Presently, we could absorb both DCS and TES into PES without adding any educators. Rich Cahoon thinks these staffing numbers looks more realistic.

Kristen Reilly asked if senior teachers might be moved to other schools. Yes.

5. Criteria for model consideration – Monkey Survey

Ms. Saunders would love feedback on the categories, and feels now, with the new endeavor, this has become even more important. Please provide feedback with the Board on Tuesday, May 15 @ the Board meeting. These questions came from the CTQ's. She will send questions and clarification on the questions. We can organize our thoughts on what is most important. Does the survey tool allow to prioritize responses? Group in different categories (instructions).

We can bring the results to the last June Board meeting to show how this committee prioritized things.

6. Other Models (Including Voluntary Closures, not requiring District vote)

Rich Cahoon received feedback and would like to incorporate that to present to the Board. He feels it's independent of whether we go to a consolidation plan or not. Pierce Rigrod asked are we doing this in parallel. Yes.

In the Articles, we are required to review them every three years. We don't have a mechanism for towns to decide whether to close a school, regardless of how people feel it should be done. We can remove some language and insert new language (revamp). Are we keeping this separate of the implementation process? Yes, that is what Rich Cahoon would prefer. It's related to a consolidation model.

Rich Cahoon will bring comments to this committee at the next meeting. He could bring it to the Board for presentation and then to the Retreat for discussion.

7. Site Visits to Schools with Multi-Age –

After some discussion, it was decided to visit two different sites to look at how they handle Multi-age. The Devens Charter School (Francis W. Parker Charter School): May 29, from 8:20 – 2:20, charge of \$120 per person, which includes breakfast and lunch.

Chelsea Vt. No charge. Mark Blunt, wants no more than a team of 3. 1/2, 3, 4, 5. Should we send the same three to both places?

May 29: Devens Charter visit will include Bernd Foecking, Stephan Morrissey, and Ann Forrest (8:20 – 2:20) Kimberly Saunders, Pierce Rigrod, Rich Cahoon, & Myron Steere will visit the Chelsea Vermont school.

8. Updated Plan by June 18th

The message is the plan has been updated, with some questions. The Board will receive the changes.

9. Other

Kristen Reilly motioned to adjourn at 7:37. Bernd Foecking seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Hills