

Townshend School Board
Joint Meeting with Jamaica School Board
Townshend Elementary School
Draft Notes (Townshend – No Quorum)
Thursday, June 26th, 2014 at 7:00p.m.

Present: Dr. Steven John (Superintendent), Deborah Leggott (Townshend Principal), Laura Hazard (Jamaica Principal)

Jamaica School Board Members – Stephanie Amyot, Heather Hallenbeck, Anne Reynolds, Tom Tolbert.

Townshend School Board Members - Al Claussen, Cliff Passino (no quorum for the Townshend School Board)

Members of the Public: Christina Wright

Call to Order: Stephanie Amyot called the meeting to order at 7:10p.m.

Public & Staff Comments: No public comments.

Discussion with Townshend School Board regarding possible collaboration

a. Survey results/areas of consensus:

Surveys were filled out in the beginning of December. The results of the survey have been concluded although there are still some board members who have not been surveyed. This survey as a way to see where there was a common vision between the two school boards. The Townshend and Jamaica Boards reviewed the questionnaire question-by-question. The RED Committee Study had originally put this survey together. This acts as a good base-line that informs a better estimate of costs and relative savings.

- 1.) **What Student per Class Size Parameters should be considered when developing staff assumptions?** There was a fair amount of variation although 15 seemed to be the common denominator.
- 2.) **Shall we adhere to the 11.7 student per professional educator ration recommended by the AOE?** Most board members answered, “yes.”
- 3.) **What should the Administrative structure look like? Will the board establish a minimum administrator per teacher ratio staffing assumption?** Consensus shows that the boards would like it similar to now; one principal and one administrative assistant.

- 4.) **Will the joint boards operate a public early education program or will it contract with private providers or a combination of both?** This is a moot point now.
- 5.) **Any changes in expectations of operational support from the Superintendent's Office?** No except that costs could be slightly reduced. The Superintendent thinks that there's still two entities although a single expense account would be run. There's a separate report quarterly that says each board separate...there could be one board and one tax entity to form a union school district – the voters of the two towns would have to vote to approve this governance change. The advantage of the joint contract is that two boards can decide to give it a go or quit.
- 6.) **Shall there be an emphasis on any particular academic program; e.g. Physical Education, Art, Music, Literacy, Science, Math, Foreign Language?** There was a variety of answers. The most consistent answer was “foreign language.”
- 7.) **Shall there be an emphasis on any particular staff support program; e.g. Professional Development?** There were vague responses on this question. Professional Development is not mandated and can be cut from the budget but teachers are required to pursue it on their own in order to remain properly licensed and to complete their IPDPs. There is a mandate for mentoring.
- 8.) **Shall there be an emphasis on any particular student support program; e.g. Counseling, nursing, technology, After-School programs?** Technology and the after-school programs seemed to be the general consensus. The principals think that counseling is an important need – currently, Townshend provides counseling three days a week, and it's full. There is a need for counseling. Laura agrees with Deborah. There's an important need for technology, stem, and the after-school programs as well. There's a need for student support systems. During LAFTER, the schools were able to tutor targeted groups of students. The State requires reporting on the after-school program. The action plans for each schools include the after school programming. The Title 1 School-Wide report summaries are accessible.
- 9.) **Follow AOE State Construction Standards for new building: 140 Sq Ft per student?**
Everyone surveyed pretty much answered affirmatively to this question.
- 10.) **Should the plan include site work for future expansion? Estimated future growth?**

Most board members answered “yes” to this question but it does depend on projected numbers.
- 11.) **What type of campus facilities should be included, any assumed community use?**

Everyone surveyed thought this was a great idea although many different ideas sprouted from this question including gymnasiums, tracks, gardens, skating rinks, basketball courts, etc. The general model for a school like this would be to have a multi-purposed room. There should be separate staff rooms (lounge, office space, etc) because it's very important. A real entrance or

foyer to accommodate parents would be great. The highest common-denominator between the schools would be best.

12.) Full food service or minimal food service? Full food service.

13.) Include implications associated with program choices (i.e. operated early ed, EEE, district band, etc)? The district band now meets at the high-school. A separate music room would be beneficial. A Essential Early Ed. Coordinator office space should be warranted as it's important to have a special space for the students to be in the school setting. The administration will look at the figures both with and without this space based on long-term projections.

14.) Fuel Choice? Alternative green energy sources; also, a generator. Jamaica currently has a generator. JVS became a red-cross shelter. Steven suggested a wood-chip system because there's plenty of supplies, it's the most cost-effective, etc.

15.) What is the building use plan for each existing building – contingent upon class size and program vision? This question seemed vague; no one really answered it.

16.) What are implications of school choice provisions for building occupancy vs. merger? N/A

17.) Is there intent to retain existing buildings if used for non-school activity? (e.g. lease to WCSU or other interested parties?) The boards would need to investigate how much money each school district would owe to the State for the subsidy of their school buildings.

18.) Will we ever replace some "seat-time" credit for "demonstrated proficiency" credit? This question seemed not applicable. PLP's will be based on performance and proficiency. This question doesn't apply to this consideration.

19.) What about the options for Innovation Zones? N/A

20.) Do personal learning plans fit our vision? Multiple pathways? N/A

21.) Community Partnerships with our education system? Yes.

22.) Are we allowing for flexibility and creativity in instruction? Greater flexibility is always an advantage in creativity in instruction.

23.) Student access to personal learning devices? The consensus of surveyed members was "yes."

Potential direction for WCSU administrators to gather further information

There are a lot of areas of consensus. Where do people think we should go next with this consensus? Short discussion ensued.

Stephanie Amyot made the motion to direct the administration to gather projected costs for a new school to serve both towns with 150-200 students. Tom seconded. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion ensued re: inviting Wardsboro School Board and Windham School Board to join the discussion of collaboration. The boards will wait to until they receive projections from the administration before they extend invitations to other school districts to join the discussion.

Next Meeting Agenda for the Joint Collaboration Discussion:

Dr. John proposed to following rhetorical questions for the next meeting:

Do you have the same core values as school districts?

Are your missions the same? As evidence by the survey it seems the same.

The action plans are similar. What are their differences?

Are financial constraints the same?

The Superintendent gave a hand-out on Globalization and Economics; American Anxiety, Students to compete on a world-stage, etc.

Next Meeting Dates:

Jamaica School Board – Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 6:30p.m.

Jamaica School Board will not hold an August meeting.

Jamaica School Board – Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 6:30p.m. to conduct regular board business at Jamaica Village School.

TENTATIVE – Jamaica & Townshend Boards to meet Tuesday, September 9^h, 2014 at 7:00p.m. in the Jamaica Village School.

Approval of Pay-Orders:

Tom made the motion to approve the below pay-order. Stephanie seconded. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Pay Order #77 \$15,880.62

Discussion of items as requested by business office:

Tom made the motion to approve the tax anticipation note of \$325,000.00 with an interest rate of 1.5% from People's United Bank. Anne seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Tom made a motion to approve the Environmental Conservation Loans: rf3-122-1 and wpl-059-2 from the State DEC in the amount of \$17,000 (rf3-122-1) and \$7,586.78 (wpl-059-2). Stephanie seconded. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Agenda for Jamaica School Board:

Policy review.

Adjournment:

Stephanie made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:11p.m. Tom seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:12p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alison Hescok