

Unapproved Minutes

District Elementary Enrollment Committee
Monday, December 20, 2004
4:00 p.m.
Sandwich Central School Library

Members present: Peter Miller, Juli Hird, Jeanne Chute, Steve Kelley, Betsy Paine, Richard Hanson, Phil McCormack, John Hansen

Public Present: Jon Martin, Cathy Crockford, Jeanne Ryer

Meeting called to order at 4:15 p.m.

Public Input: None

Review of Minutes of 12/13/04: No changes

Response to Interim Report: Dr. McCormack shared information about the interim report to the School Board with the committee. It seemed that the Board wanted this committee to look at the issue comprehensively, yet not let it drag on. Mr. Hanson noted that perhaps the feelings on the Board were mixed about whether the committee should offer a short-term solution and continue working on the issue. Mr. Hanson noted that the Board Chair is extremely pleased with the work of the committee. The Enrollment Committee was in consensus that the group needed to come up with two solutions – a short term and long term solution.

The committee continued its work on pros and cons on cluster six, withdrawal from the Cooperative District. There was discussion about how much money would be saved if SCS were closed. If it costs \$900,000 to operate the school, why would only \$600,000 be saved if the school were closed? Additional busing costs would be about \$150,000. Costs for 1:1 aides, extra teachers, basic books and supplies make up much of the rest of the difference.

Amending Agreement to just grades 7-12

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Autonomy for Sandwich	Negative impact on I-L Coop. District
Creation of another District	Creation of another District – impact on SAU
Opportunity for Sandwich to create a true community school	Does not adequately address how to deal with declining enrollment
Impact on tax rate (Meredith and Center Harbor tax rates would decrease)	Impact on tax rate (Sandwich tax rate would increase over \$2.00 per thousand)
Ability to create a magnet school, other innovative programming	Possible divisiveness

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Ms. Paine spoke about being consistent across the categories of options. Impact on tax rate mentioned in the scenario above applies to other options.

There was discussion about State Adequacy Grants. It was noted that Meredith receives State Adequacy Money in excess of what is raised in Meredith. Both Sandwich and Center Harbor are so-called "Donor Towns".

Complete Withdrawal from Cooperative District (Sandwich would become its own K-12 school District. High school students would be tuitioned to area high schools)

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Possible financial savings for Sandwich	Legal fees
Choice of different high schools (Sandwich residents could make arrangements with multiple high schools in region)	Security for high school students (and grades 7 and 8). Dependent on will and capacity of other school districts
Autonomy / governance	Fragmentation of high school community
	Difficulty to place special education students and transport them
	Loss of relationship "divorce"

There was discussion about being at the mercy of the receiving school.

Close the School

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Cost savings for District	Travel time for kids on buses and parents
	Loss of community cornerstone
	Disassociation w/ existing ILE school
	Dissatisfaction with school experience
	Distance
	Increased pressure on ILES resources, i.e. class size at ILES
	Loss of staff at both ILES and SCS
	Legacy of bitterness

Public input: Ms. Ryer encouraged the committee to consider the time factor of amending the agreement to withdraw K-6. Also, why would the funding formula not change in the withdrawal scenario? Dr. McCormack noted that the committee thought that a change in the formula would result in legal challenges. Finally, Ms. Ryer encouraged the committee to consider bringing grades 7 and 8 back to Sandwich, but only if there were ways to build cross-school activities prior to high school.

Mr. Martin noticed in the last couple of meetings much talk about political and financial expedience, but wished to hear more about pedagogical concerns for students. First and foremost we are an educational institution.

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Plus/Delta: Mr. Miller noted that it sounds like we will be thinking short and long term solutions. This relieves some anxiety. Ms. Hird is looking forward to the next meeting but feeling as though we will have quite a large charge for the next meeting. Ms. Chute commented that the different clusters were beginning to come together, but is concerned that she doesn't truly understand all of the ramifications of each option. Dr. Kelley is anxious to cut out and pare down those things that we won't consider feasible. Ms. Paine thanked Mr. Hansen for the amount of work he did running financial numbers. She also noted being anxious about the short amount of time remaining. Mr. Hanson is concerned also about time, but anxiety is being slightly relieved if we can offer an acceptable short-term solution. He noted however, perhaps we should focus more on a short-term solution at the next meeting so the Board has something in hand. Mr. Hansen thanked Mr. Martin for his work on financial figures last week that made him think about things differently.

Next meeting is Wednesday, January 5, 2004 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m at Inter-Lakes Elementary School in Meredith.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Hansen