

## Pre-K – 8 Withdrawal Study Committee Notes

7-10-2024

Present: Jo Cowgill, Stan Hutchings, Chas Street, Steve Varone, Diana Petrie

Absent: Jean Kobeski, Tom Ronning

Guest: Wes Vickers

The meeting commenced at 6:37 pm.

Diana handed out two documents. One document was from the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity (CLEE) entitled "Tuning Protocol". This document presented a process for evaluating and fine tuning presentations, exhibitions, design projects, assessment systems and other proposals and was suggested as a way of evaluating the final product of our committee work. The second document was a rough draft of this committee's results and report to the selectboard.

Wes talked about his experience over the last forty years of trying to improve the education available to students in Walpole most recently with the Walpole Site Based Committee. Wes's most important question to be answered is :“1 Are we better off and are our kids better off with local control?”

For pre k thru 8 education

For high school education

2 Are we better off financially. In the High School: 18,000 per year in Keene versus 25k for Fall Mountain.

3 Would our educational system have more harmony and less fighting separate from SAU 60.. Example Westmoreland town meeting took only one hour. People do not want to serve on the school board because the atmosphere is toxic. Talked about the difficulty of getting the Safety Meeting recommendations executed.

4 How can we overcome the tremendous resentment that Charlestown has against Walpole. It is like a bad marriage.

Wes recommended talking to Sam Jacobs and Marty Mahonney and Becky Todd(acted as the lawyer when Surry withdrew from Monadnock). He also told about not being able to improve things that were paid for due to lack of school board permission. Wes had a few more illustrative

anecdotes but wound up recommending becoming part of SAU 29. Chesterfield although smaller is very much like Walpole.

The committee then reviewed the draft report document. Some suggestions were made. Steve suggested a sentence, "Every dollar raised in Walpole will be spent in Walpole."

Our current condition is that we are a five town cooperative single school district within SAU 60.

Our recommended goal would be to have financial and programmatic control of Pre-K thru 8 and local choice for high school attendance if we need to tuition our High School students.

Our task from the selectboard is to list advantages and disadvantages to remain the same and for the various options for gaining local control.

We had a broadranging discussion of possible next steps after our response to the selectboard.

Misty Bushee has responded to Stan's facilities information request asking for more detail.

Jean (via proxy)suggested talking to the Walpole Board person but the consensus was that it might be very uncomfortable for that person.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Next meeting planned for July 17,2024 6:30 pm Town hall