

MINUTES

Essex North SU/SAU 7 Governance Study Meeting

Thursday, January 26, 2012

6:00 PM, Pittsburg School Auditorium – Pittsburg, NH

Steering Committee Attendees: John Facloner, Colebrook Board; Greg Placy, Colebrook Board; Megan Prehemo, Pittsburg Board; Bob Ormsbee, Pittsburg Board; Dan Wells, Columbia Board; Carrie Rancourt, Clarksville Board; Katie Collins, Stewartstown Board; Kim Sweatt, Canaan Board; Steve Thibault, Norton Board; Jennifer Turner, Lemington Board; Angela Flanagan, Canaan Board; Board attendees: Eldonna Brooks, Colebrook Board; Tanya Young, Pittsburg; Staff attendees: Chris Masson, ENSU Superintendent; Bob Mills, SAU 7 Superintendent; Cheryl Covill, SAU 7 Business Manager; Debbie Lynch, Canaan School Principal; Mary Jolles, Colebrook Elementary School Principal; Joanne Melanson, Colebrook Academy Principal; Bruce Scally, Pittsburg School Principal; Others: Wayne Gersen, VSBA Consultant; roughly 40 members of the public.

1. The meeting convened at 6:00 PM. VSBA Consultant Wayne Gersen presented a Powerpoint presentation outlining: his findings on the educational programs and the condition of the facilities based on his initial visits to the schools over the past week: the underlying assumptions that were the basis of five viable alternatives for the steering committee's consideration, and an overview of the five viable alternatives. *(copy attached)*
2. In reviewing the underlying assumptions that served as the basis for generating the viable alternatives, the Steering Committee agreed that the following elements should be the basis for generating alternatives:
 - The retention of a school facility in each town.
 - The need to limit the costs of renovating or expanding any facility
 - Decommissioning Colebrook Academy by shifting some K-8 students from Colebrook Elementary School to another location or school.
 - Allowing secondary students to attend either Canaan School or Colebrook Academy, which would be relocated to the Colebrook Elementary facility.
3. John Falconer suggested the Steering Committee begin narrowing the scope of the alternatives under consideration by organizing schools based on a pre-K-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade level structure. Following a lengthy discussion on the merits of including 6th grade with the middle school, the Steering Committee members consented with this proposal with the understanding that it was not an irreversible decision but rather a means of narrowing alternatives.
4. The Steering Committee was also interested in pursuing an alternative proposed by a member of the audience whereby all high school students would attend Canaan School by shifting some Canaan students to Stewartstown and Pittsburg.
5. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2012 at 6:00 PM at the Stewartstown School. A tour of the school will be available at 5:30 PM.