

## Minutes

Present: Peter Clarke, Consultant; Board Members: Lisa Olson, Scott Harris, Jack Hoffman, Jackie Folsom, Chris Tormey, Patrick Healy; Student Board Members: Megan Walker, Isabella McCallum, Sally Weinstein, Jakob DuFresne; Administrators: Nancy Thomas, Superintendent, Mark Mooney, Twinfield Principal, Pat Knoerl, Curriculum Director, David Schilling, Cabot Principal

Consultant, Peter Clarke, reviewed the previous work of the committee, listing challenges, strengths of the schools and potential benefits of collaboration. Peter explained the requirements of Act 46 and potential monetary implications. He asked that the committee act as the Board of the "Onion River" District with campuses at Cabot and Twinfield. Peter shared a chart showing the various configurations that could be considered. He reminded the committee that Act 46 does NOT require reconfiguration of school buildings, but educational advantages could be found looking at different options.

The students were supportive of the concept of combining schools. Megan reflected on the current challenges for the younger students in Cabot, having to move in and out of the building. The Twinfield campus would work better for younger students and the Cabot campus has a better feel for older students with different buildings. Isabella discussed her desire to have more course offerings and the current challenges of having very small classes of 2 and 4 students. Jakob also shared similar challenges at Twinfield in the upper level classes. Sally talked about combining would create other opportunities both for courses and having more students with whom to learn. Challenges would be transportation. Having high school at the Cabot campus makes sense. Having more people who share interests would be very beneficial both for classes and after school activities, such as debate team.

The question was raised regarding what about students who don't participate much now?: Having a wider community and peer group could allow them to find their passion. X day has given some opportunity for students of common interest to work together. The Limes musical group is a good example of bringing the talents of both communities together to build a strong music experience. The only challenge has been in regard to scheduling.

What aspects of this proposal might be the most challenging? Both schools value sports. Could keep sports separate? Basketball is the focus for Twinfield. Other sports need more participants, such as soccer, softball, etc. It would be helpful to have levels of teams so students could play at their own level. This would be true for new sports especially. Could it be a challenge to get comfortable/bond with other group? Would happen over time. Something like the Siskin experience (all Cabot high school students and staff do a retreat at the beginning of school) could be an orientation.

Social benefits: It could be motivating to have more competition as part of the learning experience to push one another. More kids can help move out of one's own comfort zone.

3 themes regarding perceived benefits: greater critical mass for classes and peers, co-curricular, social growth opportunity with a larger group

The discussion continued regarding other options. Option 4: p-k to 6 and High School together at TUS. MS at Cabot. One benefit would mean HS can do buddies with the younger students.

Thinking about current resources, Izzie spoke to the efforts to create personalized plans to meet their own needs. Magnet school configuration of option 2 could give choices around music, etc. Use of the TUS campus could support science, etc.

Option 5 would give the opportunity to make improvements to a single campus in this way. Take down and build up new for stronger facilities, science in particular. Beneficial to have k – 8 in one location. HS in another location. Beneficial not to be in the same location. Changing location marks the transition for MS to HS, with a definitive milestone. Could create a different culture. BUT mentoring program has been good to have younger group close to high schoolers.

Public comments: Just absorbing the ideas. Peter explained the 2 exploratory committees going on with Cabot/TUS and Cabot/Twinfield. Will later discuss whether to proceed with Danville. Other comments: Glad to hear students discuss increasing peer group. Would like to have more course offerings, rather than on-line, such as French. Hoping for some combination to offer that.

The committee discussed possibilities of combinations with Danville, such as combining Cabot/TUS with Danville an additional campus. Can consider possible governance combinations that are not necessarily changing school/class configurations. Really likes the mentoring program and would want to see that be available. Peter explained the RED's and Side-by-Side options.

Next Steps: Comparing the WNESU CBA and Danville CBA. Will be working with business managers to see what the costs might be. Other savings might be found in combination of central office staffs. Time to go back to local communities for discussion. Look at : What kind of space would be needed at Cabot for possible high school or middle school and what would costs be for transportation? What would it take to get 177 HS kids on the Cabot campus? How much satellite space? We need to be sure that what we do will be improvement.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thomas, notetaker