

**Mount Ascutney Board
Draft Minutes
July 13, 2020**

Present: Elizabeth Burrows, Nancy Pedrick, Kris Garnjost, Bill Yates, Amy McMullen, Beth Carter, Dave Baker, Angie Ladeau, Jenifer Aldrich, Katie Ahern, Amanda Yates, Pietro Lynn, Katy Savage

Meeting called to order at 6:35 PM.

Changes/Additions: Adding Executive Session First, Minutes of June 25.

Executive Session:

Elizabeth Burrows asked for a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of Title 1, Section 313. Nancy Pedrick moved; seconded by Amy McMullen; motion passed. Entered into executive session at 6:36 PM.

Elizabeth Burrows asked for a motion to exit executive session and return to public session at 6:35 PM.. Nancy Pedrick moved; seconded by Kris Garnjost; motion passed.

Announcements:

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned Census participation in both towns is behind. The education system receives grants and towns do as well and dependent on census participation. Amy McMullen feels the board could send out something encouraging people to participate in the census and the benefits to the community.

The Board met with Principal Tiffany Reilly last Monday and no decisions made.

Public Participation: None

Discussion Items:

Community Process:

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned people of high quality backgrounds volunteered for the task force but we are not ready to pursue anything at this time. Lisa Ryan, who does this type of practice, felt if there was a desire to have a forum and address racism holistically, she would do that. Amy McMullen mentioned the need to deal with the current situation and having conversation with the principal is the first thing. The next thing is with our community and broadening the conversation. Do not feel we need anyone else joining in our conversations with the Principal. Elizabeth Burrows stated she did not mean to imply that anything would happen before that. Talking about broadly speaking if wanted to do something and what the process would look like and if wanted to come up with a statement of commitment from the board. Kris Garnjost agrees that this conversation, as about all conversations around the country, is one should be having and planned to have before circumstances changed. The immediate issue should be handled

and then have a broader conversation. Amy McMullen suggested a committee of three board members. Kris Garnjost feels board members should decide who they want to be the person running it. Dave Baker feels should pull SU and district conversations together. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned this conversation would be as district to create context of what was happening and policy at SU level. The three members interested are: Elizabeth Burrows, Kris Garnjost and Amy McMullen.

Reopening Task Force/Reopening School:

Elizabeth Burrows asked if the administration has given thought how to approach the budget. Dave Baker mentioned has given thought to it and several pieces need to settle first. One is how to close out FY20. In FY 21 now and what need to sort out is the money coming in from COVID relief money. Making purchases on what the Task force recommends as need thermometers, PPE's; staffing increases, and additional transportation. By August Ed Connors can give us some details. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned at the VSBA meeting there will be a statement where we are. Elizabeth asked for an explanation on the management of Windsor Schools and who allocated at this time. Dave Baker mentioned with the principal on paid leave Colleen DeSchamp and Kate Ryan are participating in the opening of school. Dave mentioned himself and Angie Aladeau are also involved in the management of the school at this time. As activities are whole school the day-to-day management will be more critical.

The Task Force is working on the opening of schools with the union presidents and administrators. We need to pay attention to the master agreement as asking teachers to do a job they have not done in the past. The committee also consists of Jim Taft, Building and Grounds, Food Service Coordinator, and two outside people from Mt. Ascutney Hospital. Everyone is fully invested in why to bring kids back to school. The Agency of Education has said it will reopen public schools. The safety and well being of all students and feeding them is important. We need to create the detail. Guidelines from the CDC and AOE are strong on recommendations but not detail. Dave mentioned he has walked through buildings and all have rooms to put kids in confined spaces and not interconnect. The group feels it can cluster kids in smaller groups and work on some direct teaching and some integrated work. There will be designated spaces for outdoor activities. We are still trying to learn ways students can interact and come together for certain activities for physical activity and exploration. Food service is non-congregational, custodians sanitize school three times a day, and six times for certain areas; such as, restrooms. Students will be in session five days a week for consistency but might be a shortened day. There will still be some remote work.

Elizabeth Burrows requested that when send information out on the plan should simultaneously provide a way for people to ask questions. Dave Baker mentioned one of the questions coming up is what if I do not want to send my child back to school will there be enough teachers to handle remote groups, We feel there is a way to access technology for this to happen. Access to the classroom would be through Google Hangout. Amy McMullen feels it would be easier if the community asked questions and receive answers as they would be more likely to move forward in a positive direction and not have social media take over.

Portrait of Graduate:

Angie Ladeau mentioned had a planning meeting at the end of June and started the writing process. There is a team of people involved in the process consisting of community members, paras, teachers, and parents. Portrait is a big idea and watch as to how bring to specific actions. We are meeting Thursday on goals. Dave Baker mentioned the portrait work started last fall and competencies did provide a preliminary foundation for interdisciplinary work teachers are doing for the return to school. Angie Ladeau mentioned the consultant stated can live with competencies for now and at the end of the year develop more. Important ones are: integrity, communication, and critical thinking.

Exploratory Team:

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned the Exploratory Team Meeting had no facilitator and discussed goals of the group. Conversations were around the structure of today's life. Discussed grade banding and opportunities. Dave Baker mentioned Jan Willey is still expressing interest in facilitating the group. Dave suggested himself and Elizabeth meet with Jan Willey virtually at first and then bring the group together.

End of Year Report: Jenifer Aldrich

Elizabeth Burrows has questions from the March 16 to end of year report.

- What would you change? Jenifer mentioned the first thing should have done together was get things together with perspective and support for parents. We were not there and if slowed down would have created a better sense of balance. In general, relying on teacher leaders and staff knowing teacher representatives.
- What do you see as collective systems and insurmountable obstacles. Jenifer felt getting kids to the table, getting access, kids not engaging for good reasons, and reaching out to parents. When stressed, we are not at our best.
- Beth Carter asked if there is something in the Upper Valley like a network on how other schools handled things and what was best practice. Jenifer stated we were one of the leaders in best practices. Angie Ladeau mentioned Jenifer and Christine Bourne attended the VPA weekly gatherings.
- Any positive elements that surprised you and hidden benefits to teacher practices. Jenifer felt the largest benefit was the teachers' experience of how some kids given a different approach took off and did a nice job using things not practiced during school day and some kids found a subject they loved that normally did not. Surprise was how much parents needed support.
- What disappointed you? Jenifer mentioned the lack of engagement with some staff as did not have a clear balance of expectations.
- Did you feel supported? Jenifer mentioned yes as staff supported through the process and could virtually meet with colleagues around the state to share dialogue. Also met with staff more often. Did not feel we had everything we needed to make it really successful.

- What other supports needed went unaddressed? Jenifer mentioned need to take a look at how support kids and version of accountability to make kids grow and move forward. Disappointed in myself around specials. We failed to seek focus on what is valuable and essential. Getting closer with interdisciplinary learning and need to rethink schedule and priorities and kids engaged in the process with these skills. Parents want children to succeed and need better resources to help support them.
- Did you accomplish all you set out to do with professional development? Angie Ladeau feels feedback from staff was positive. We will not always be meeting everyone's needs. Staff was excited about the interdisciplinary unit. There are a lot of questions on what in person instruction will look like. We will develop plans to our best ability and figure out together. Hope the staff felt encouraged and supported. Dave had talked about this model and self contained group. For content specialists, this was a big departure from how it has always been done. Teachers care about content and students and can learn from each other. Dave Baker mentioned Katie Ahern controlled the reins for special education and special education teachers worked very hard during remote sessions. Propose that Katie give an update where are with special education finances, general morale, and staffing. Parents will be wondering what will happen to certain services as IEP goals have to be met.

Consent Agenda:

Elizabeth Burrows asked for a motion to approve the principal report and previous minutes. Of June 8, 25, July 1 and 6. Amy McMullen moved; seconded by Nancy Pedrick; motion passed. Kris Garnjost abstained from June 8 minutes.

Old Business: Elizabeth Burrows asked if anyone at Windsor School to coordinate the student participation so do not lose sight of this. Dave Baker will follow up.

Agenda: August 10

School Reopening

Community Process

Financials

Special Education Update

Collaborative Problem Solving

Adjournment:

Elizabeth Burrows asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Pedrick moved; seconded by Kris Garnjost; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tessier, Board Secretary