

Approved 8.21.14

**Hamilton Wenham Regional School District Committee
July 31, 2014
Minutes of Retreat**

Call to order: Bill Wilson called the meeting to order at 8pm at the 1640 Hart House in Ipswich, MA.

Present: Bill Wilson (Chair), Sheila MacDonald, Deborah Evans, Larry Swartz, Barbara Lawrence, Bill Dery, Jeanise Bertrand, Stacey Metternick

Also Present: Dr. Micheal Harvey, Superintendent

Absent: Roger Kuebel

Bill Wilson discussed objectives of the meeting. It was agreed that we would review progress on SC Goals from 2013-2014 and brainstorm goals for 2014-2015.

Roundtable discussion followed. The following ideas were shared:

- If we continue to meet twice a month, there is no need for subcommittee reports at every meeting
- Policy process was discussed and noted progress last year. Student policies to be priority for this year. Determination of policies to be reviewed should be guided by Superintendent. Requested that Superintendent report procedures in place behind policies.
- MCAS/PARCC dialogue was noted as productive discussion with community input. Committee education on common core noted as positive. Structure change at high school was noted as a process that needed improvement.
- In transition of new school committee members, it was noted that we should find a better way to avoid draining time from administrative team.
- Guidelines for school committee members suggested as a priority. Noted importance of delineation of questions/inquiries to SC chair vs. Superintendent. Procedure manual as a tool kit for new SC members in process. Idea of SC mentor discussed.
- Communication to SC members noted as need for improvement; connected to SC members suggested. MASCO superintendent "readout" mentioned.
- Ground rules for decorum at a meeting suggested.
- Master Plan. Noted frustration with SMMA and need to finalize end product. Ongoing task to develop ideas in the plan.
- Communication noted as a weakness and need. Need to better communicate what we do well.
- Budgetary "strides" noted. It was suggested that there is a need to further reduce budget discussion to executive summary. Others wanted more detail

and transparency since budget is major responsibility. Discussed fiduciary duty and responsibility for how budget is created.

- Some would like more detail on bids on summer projects.
- Suggestion to pick an educational topic to be covered each month at a SC meeting.
- Objective is to have good content at every meeting and gain full participation from SC members and community.
- Discussed how to incorporate more public comment at meetings.
- Discussed reinstatement of finance subcommittee for specific issues. Some did not want to delegate this to a subcommittee, others thought this was a good idea if we don't rehash all the details at the full committee meeting.
- Discussed need to review class size policy.
- Discussed "go forward" budgetary increases and expectations.
- Discussed need to continue to encourage Leadership Team to come up with big ideas.
- Discussed need to communicate what the district added for the coming year: full day K and Mandarin in 6th grade noted.

Actions:

1. Email 2 ideas of goals for 2014-2015 to Bill Wilson.
2. Superintendent evaluation materials coming tomorrow. Return to Bill by 8/11. Vice Chair (Sheila MacDonald) will consolidate.

Next meeting: August 21, 2014

Vote to Adjourn. B. Dery made a motion that the HW Regional School Committee
Vote to Adjourn. Sheila MacDonald seconded the motion. The Motion Passed 8-0-1.

Documents Used at this meeting: 2014-2015 School Committee Meeting Calendar
and Agenda Items by Michael Harvey.

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah Evans
HWRSC Secretary