AGENDA

Addison Central School District
Policy Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
49 Charles Avenue
Middlebury VT
05753

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION
Our vision is for all ACSD students to reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

OUR MISSION
Our mission is to provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students.

Please click the link below to join the webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88318643875

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum
   1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff
B. Public Comment - Agenda Items
C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of 9-24-24
D. Committee Discussion:
   1. Policy: C30 School Residence
   2. Policy: D6 Class Size
   3. Policy: D4 Title 1 Comparability
E. Public Comment - Any Topic
F. Adjournment

*Public Comment Guidelines:
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MINUTES

Addison Central School District
Policy Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
ACSD District Office
49 Charles Avenue

ACSD District Vision and Mission

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A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum

Jamie called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

   Jamie McCallum, Ellen Whelan-Wuest, Wendy Baker, Steve Orzech, Laura Harthan in attendance.

B. Public Comment - Agenda Items

Tim O'Leary of Ripton offered public comment, and explained he would submit a longer comment in writing. His focus is on the commitment ACSD made to provide PreK to all students in the district when the district voted to consolidate in 2016, and the ways Tim sees ACSD as being out of compliance with that commitment in C30. There are several articles of agreement, including the warned articles that were warned and put in front of voters and the articles that were reported into the district's charter. Tim believes that C30 is out of compliance with the article that was warned and voted on by the voters, and that the board cannot violate that article which included language asserting that PreK would be provided to all students in the district. Tim submitted a longer letter outlining these concerns and details, via email to committee members.

Wendy responded that she will be in touch to connect with Tim to talk more about how the district does make opportunities for PreK available for all students, and to learn more about his thoughts.

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of 9-10-2024

Move: Laura Harthan Second: Steve Orzech Status: Passed

D. Committee Discussion:

1. Policy C30: School Residence
2. Policy D4: Title I Comparability
3. Policy D6: Class Size

Jamie explained that he warned all of these policies in case we talk about all of them, since they are part of the larger discussions the committee is having. He reminded everyone that Wendy offered to bring more information related to C30 and the other policies as well.

Wendy recapped that at the end of our last meeting, we agreed to revisit the topic of how the elements of a high quality classroom or educational outcomes came to pass. Wendy shared a print out from Courtney that explains where things are related to our current structure and educational outcomes. Wendy explained that John Castle is the executive director of the rural education collaborative in the Northeast Kingdom, and she reached out to him to talk more about issues related to John Castle. Jamie joined Wendy in that conversation as well.

Wendy explained the structure and coding of the sheet she distributed to the committee, which highlight how students can miss whole units of study depending on the bubbles on enrollment in different schools, and the combined classes that happen as a result of enrollment fluctuations.

Wendy explained that discussions about who is grouped into what classes are based more on what teachers are comfortable teaching, and social dynamics between students. The scenarios depicted on this paper show the challenges we face at every school, even Cornwall, except Mary Hogan. John Castle pointed out four areas of thought related to thinking about rural schools:
1- Educational outcomes
2- Financial feasibility
3- Operational stability
4- Community identity

What we are talking about in our work is educational outcomes. There have been a lot of conversations about financial feasibility and community identity, and Wendy explained that the strategic plan compels central office/the district to advance educational outcomes. Wendy explained that whatever this committee and the board does, we need to make sure that everyone has the educational outcomes we've identified wanting for students, including access to the guaranteed and viable curriculum.

Jamie asked for an explanation of what schools A and B represent, and Wendy explained that they represent actual situations at two schools in the district. Whatever we decide to do for class sizes next year, we have to engage with what to do with multi-grades combined. Some schools, independent schools, may say that there is no problem with that. But the challenge for public schools is around the measurement of students across and by grades.

Steve asked how IB feels about the fact that we are not offering all of their units. We do have a reauthorization coming up, but more important is that these represent standards that are science and social studies, as well as related to math instruction.

If teaching the red, i.e. 4th grade units, there are six units in that sequence that are social studies and science (with a certain number that are in math). You're either doing the whole

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thing, or you're doing a whole different unit (another color) and that is your path for the year. So this shows that there are some kids who never get certain paths or units. This makes it particularly difficult for kids from difficult socioeconomic backgrounds because they need to move from one unit to the next, to add onto at every stage. If you don't do that, or if you skip around, it affects lower socioeconomic kids more. This is having an impact that we can't overcome with teacher training, even with more staff, paras, etc.

Ellen asked places where these paths were made that maybe weren't compelled by numbers of students. Wendy explained that sometimes cohorts are determined by social dynamics that need to be made to ensure kids are in good learning environments and cohorts. The district administration has not been involved as much in those decisions, other than checking on compliance with D6 and asking about curriculum.

Jamie asked how we evaluate in 5th grade to make sure kids have met the standard? Wendy explained that what we will do this year is giving kids end-of-unit assessments of the grade they are in. So if you're in 4th grade and you have been learning the 5th grade unit, you will still get the 4th grade end of unit assessment. This will be a new practice, and relate to math particularly to hold ourselves accountable to making sure kids can do what the assessments say they should be able to do within their grade.

Wendy explained that 50% of our kids are not achieving our standard in literacy or math, and sometimes as many as 30% of kids are in the red level, not even in the ballpark. Socioeconomics does play a role in that and is relieved in one of our schools, but it's not that in one school things are going right, this is across the board.

Steve asked if we have correlation information beyond socioeconomic status that might point to other factors that might contribute to kids not meeting grade standards? Wendy emphasized that there are kids who excel who are from challenging socioeconomic backgrounds. But also, our assessment across all the schools is that no one- with the exception of Weybridge- is doing well. What Christina Johnson will tell you in Weybridge, is that she saw math results she didn't like and she was able to put in strategies to fix that. They've also had a very predictable curricular path for a long time. Mary Hogan out performs all of the smaller schools put together. Wendy is interested in seeing the degree to which MHS is able to respond in different ways, how do they put growth pieces in place. Intentional improvement strategies will not get you very far in smaller schools.

What would make a difference for kids would be if the paths are easier to follow, if either there are single grades or if there is consistency in the configurations so that the curriculum is consistent. Another component to this is the teacher part, where if you have a classroom teacher where, depending on fluctuations in the configurations, you may have kids who have the same teacher for half of their elementary school experience. That may work if the relationship is good, but it can be difficult if it isn't.

Steve observed that looking over the list of priorities, and that Wendy's focus is on educational outcomes, and some people have prioritized community identity over even educational outcomes. Wendy said that has been a big part of the conversations in Ripton. Their belief is that the kids are growing up to be good humans and they are gaining literacy and math and science skills, and that trading some academic performance for the benefit of the social boost that comes from a small school environment and what that means to a kid.

When we look at C30 or D6, we have to determine if we're okay if multi-grades exist. There is research to say that it's fine. To what degree should multi-grades exist? What does substantial compliance mean with class size? What do we do if we don't achieve it?

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Jamie pointed out that John Castle explained that most districts of our size and configuration have had some kind of school choice, which we haven't had. And sometimes you can achieve the consistency you need not by moving 30 kids, but by moving 4 kids. When Jamie thinks about C30 it gets bigger, but our task is to give the board some guidance, to give a couple of different options.
Steve is more interested in resetting boundaries. He's against choice because choice favors people who have the means to execute on choice.

Jamie explained he's not in favor of anything inequitable. Ellen offered there are options for thinking about boundaries and choices that aren't a free for all. Wendy said it's pivotal to outline transportation zones and considerations. Who do you provide transportation for?

Ellen confirmed that Wendy and administrative leadership looked at grade standard scores and saw that we are not where we want to be, and then looked at factors that might help explain that. And now, we see that a key factor is the inconsistency in the class configurations and the instructional units that students access as a result of those fluctuating enrollments and class configurations.

Ellen said that she believes we shouldn't rely on strict geographic boundaries as our sole definition of where people go to school anymore because without some level of flexibility, we'll face similar situations in the future. Wendy pointed out that if we redraw boundaries outside of town lines, then we will be deprioritizing the community identity piece. Ellen and Jamie said in some places the community identity may be more tied to the school community than the town identity. In some places it's both. It depends.

Wendy said that "in Weybridge we want to open a STEM magnet program" – that could take some time to pivot to that. It might not be possible until we alter policies to allow for more flexibility and figure out how to achieve a stable configuration. This is something that Burlington did.

A process for moving forward, including what to prioritize:
Guidance on an emergency move, if something happened that required a school to temporarily close.
Question of how people are assigned to schools- choice vs. catchment zone.
Idea of creating magnet or specialty schools.
Providing PreK across all schools.

Everyone discussed the complications of providing PreK across the county, and what it might mean for the district to operate a full PreK program.

E. Public Comment - Any Topic

F. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned

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Addison Central School District

Policy: **School Residence**
File Code: **C30**
Warned: **June 8, 2017**
Adopted: **June 19, 2017**

Policy
PK-12 students are assigned to schools based on the attendance area in which their parent(s) and/or legal guardian reside(s). The attendance areas are established with the premise that the assigned schools provide equal educational opportunities for students in the communities they serve. Attendance areas for Addison Central School District are town borders, and correspond to town elementary schools:

Town of Bridport: Bridport Central School
Town of Cornwall: Bingham Memorial Elementary School
Town of Middlebury: Mary Hogan Elementary School
Town of Ripton: Ripton Elementary School
Town of Salisbury: Salisbury Community School
Town of Shoreham: Shoreham Elementary School
Town of Weybridge: Weybridge Elementary School

Students who live in towns whose elementary school has a pre-Kindergarten program have first priority to enroll in their school of residence pre-Kindergarten program. If space allows, pre-Kindergarten slots will be opened annually at ACSD schools with pre-Kindergarten programs for students in Addison Central School District from towns in which their local schools do not provide a pre-Kindergarten program.

Students whose residence changes within the District boundaries after January 15 may continue in the school serving the former residence until the end of the school year. The parent/guardian will be responsible for providing transportation for his/her student changing attendance areas for reasons other than those provided by law.

The Board acknowledges that circumstances may arise that result in a need to transfer a student to a school outside of his/her designated attendance area. All intra-district transfers shall be evaluated based upon documented circumstances which may include the following:

1. The student is a victim of a violent criminal offense in or on the resident school grounds;
2. Continuing enrollment in the student's current school for the remainder of the school year, given a change of the parent/guardian official residence;
3. Significant family and/or student circumstances of an educational, medical, financial, or personal nature which would be relieved by a change in attendance status;
4. A request is made to enroll a student in a school prior to the parent/guardian moving into that school's attendance area with documentation showing the move will occur within two months of the start of the school year or the date of the transfer submission, whichever is later;

Decisions regarding a student transfer shall be made by the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the student's parent(s)/guardian, and relevant education and social service professionals. The decision by the Superintendent is final and not subject to appeal.

Procedure outlines application and enrollment criteria.

Addison Central School District

Policy: **Class Size**
File Code: **D6**
Warned: **November 8, 2016**
Adopted: **November 21, 2016**
Warned: **November 18, 2022**
Amended: **November 28, 2022**

Policy
It is the intent of the Board to comply with Sections 15 and 16 of Act 153 of 2010 requiring superintendents to work with school boards to develop policy guidelines for minimum and optimal average class sizes in regular and technical education classes. Class size guidelines will be used to inform annual decisions related to staffing and program offerings.

Implementation
1. The superintendent or his or her designee shall, in consultation with building principals, develop supervisory union wide class minimum, maximum and optimum average class size guidelines that take into account the instructional needs of specific elementary grade intervals and required and elective courses at the secondary level.

2. Class size guidelines in the supervisory union may vary as necessary to reflect differences among school districts due to geography and other factors, such as school size and programmatic needs.

3. The guidelines shall also ensure compliance with state or federal requirements related to matters such as student-teacher ratios, special education, technical education and English Language Learners.

4. The superintendent shall report to the Board at least annually on the implementation of this policy, and shall include in his or her report information related to the use of the guidelines in determining actual class sizes and program offerings in the schools within the supervisory union.

5. This policy shall be posted on the Addison Central School District website and forwarded to the Secretary of Education.

Addison Central School District

Policy: **Title I Comparability**

File Code: **D4**

Warned: **January 6, 2017**

Adopted: **January 17, 2017**

If a school in the *Addison Central School District* becomes eligible to receive Title I funds, the school shall provide comparable services, staffing levels, curriculum materials, and instructional supplies for Title I eligible and non-Title I eligible schools. The district shall use local and state funds to ensure equivalence among schools in staffing and the provision of curricular materials and instructional supplies. Students in all schools shall be eligible for comparable programs and supplemental supports. The district shall utilize district-wide salary schedules for professional and non-professional staff.

The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for compliance with this policy and shall maintain records that are updated biennially documenting the district's compliance with this policy.