

Central Vermont Unified Union School District Board Meeting

Monday, February 5, 2018

6:00 pm

Brown Public Library, Northfield, VT

Agenda

1. **Roll Call** 6:00 pm
2. **Agenda Revision** 6:01 pm
3. **Public Participation** 6:02 pm

4. **Reports to the Board** 6:05 pm
 - Principals – Jamie Kinnarney and Wayne Howe (reports included in agenda packet)
 - Superintendent – Board Values-PBGRS
 - Chairperson – Budget Forum Dates
 - Committee Updates: Policy, Renaming the District, Community Outreach, Mission
 - Athletics

5. **Items for Board Action** 6:30 pm
 - **Approval of Minutes:** Regular – 01/17/2018
 - **Principal Selection**
Superintendent Bollard will present candidate Renee Badeau for board consideration to serve as principal of the Williamstown Middle High School beginning July 1, 2018. (Williamstown Shared Leader Interview Questions, Resume.)

6. **Old Business** *Receive Information* 6:50 pm
 - **Student Board Members**
Principals Parkman and Lang will share progress toward recommending student board members.

7. **New Business** 7:00 pm
 - **Merger Report Guidance** *Receive Information*
After Superintendent Bollard updates the Board on the status of some of the recommendations made by the 706 Committee, Chair Peter Evans will lead a discussion on other educational recommendations articulated in their report. Please review the attached Educational Vision for Unification in preparation for the meeting.

8. **Future Agenda Items**
 - Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements/Community Service

9. **Adjournment** 7:45 pm

Peter Evans, Chair
Central Vermont Unified Union School District

Susette L. Bollard, Superintendent, ONSU
Central Vermont Unified Union School District
Temporarily Assigned to ONSU by
Vermont State Board of Education

Next CVUUSD Meetings

-Weds Feb 21 2018 6:00pm Williamstown Middle High School
-Mon Mar 5 2018 6:00pm Brown Public Library in Northfield

Next CVSU Meeting

Weds Feb 7 2018 6:00pm
Williamstown Middle High School

**Norms of Operation
for the
Central Vermont Unified Union School Board of Directors**

Adopted 11/06/2017

As a member of my local school board, I will remember that my primary concerns must be the educational welfare of the students in my district and excellent return on investment for taxpayers. I agree to conduct myself in accordance with the following commitments. I will:

Act within the scope of my official role:

- Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well run, but not to run them
- Act only as a member of the board and not assume any individual authority when the board is not in session, unless otherwise directed by the board
- Give no directives, as an individual board member, to any school administrator or employee, publicly or privately
- Avoid making commitments that may compromise the decision-making ability of the board or administrators
- Be sensitive to what is board work and what is the work of the Superintendent.

Uphold the highest ethical standards:

- Not receive anything of value, by contract or otherwise, from the school district or supervisory union unless it is received:
 - as a result of a contract accepted after a public bid
 - in public recognition of service or achievement
 - as a board stipend reimbursement or expense allowed by law for official duties performed as a member of such board;
- Not solicit or receive directly or indirectly any gift or compensation in return for making a recommendation or casting a vote;
- Agree to recuse and remove myself from board deliberation and votes when necessary to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest;

Respect my peers, my constituents, and confidentiality considerations:

- Foster a culture of respect for all ideas and points of view.
- Voice opinions respectfully and treat with respect other board members, administrators, school staff, and members of the public;
- Maintain confidentiality of information and discussion conducted in executive session and uphold applicable laws with respect to the confidentiality of student and employee information;
- Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings insofar as possible, arriving on time and prepared by reviewing documents provided in the board packet.
- Limit use of electronics to board business or emergencies; silence cell phones.

Williamstown Elementary School

Jamie Kinnarney

Principal

Mitch Smoller

Co-Coordinator of Student Support

Michele Blanchard

PreK-12 School Home Coordinator

Phone: 802-433-6653

Fax: 802-433-6266



Williamstown Middle High School

Scott Lang

Principal

Jessica Poe

Co-Coordinator of Student Support

Derek Howard

Coordinator of Student Wellness

and Activities

Phone: 802-433-5350

Fax: 802-433-1037

Williamstown Schools

Preparing students to be lifelong learners

February, 2018

Williamstown Elementary School

CVUUSD Board Report

Goal #1: Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The ONSU will support schools in sustaining a MTSS that:

- supports responsive, differentiated instruction/intervention that is informed by student data and ongoing monitoring of student growth both in academics and social/emotional;
- supports a rigorous learning environment while helping students make connections based on interests to support multiple pathways for learning;
- supports the integration of Personal Learning Plans, Flexible Pathways and alternative programming to better meet the needs of our students.

We have completed our winter data team meeting analysis of individual goals and rate of growth. We have held additional meetings to process problem solve students that aren't demonstrating predicted rate of growth. These discussions have led to changes in intervention plans and/or approaches to universal instruction.

I'm proud to report that our social/emotional system continues to function effectively. This has resulted in a steady decrease in time spent responding to misbehavior; and therefore, time students have spent missing instruction. We currently average less than 1.5 office discipline referrals (ODRs) per day. That includes the entire school day, including our ONWARD after school program and transportation to and from school. To provide context, we averaged over 7.25 ODRs per day during the 2012-2013 school year. The growth can be observed/felt both qualitatively and quantitatively. It has also increased my ability in providing proactive coaching/support for faculty/staff.

Goal #2: Goal 2- Proficiency Based Learning

ONSU will support the development and implementation of a PreK-12 conceptual Framework and Core Principles for Proficiency Based Learning to our comprehensive MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) including:

- Habits & Traits/ Transferable Skills
- Graduation Proficiencies (Content Area Standards)
- Performance Indicators
- Learning Intentions
- Assessments
- Reporting system to reflect proficiency based learning

We are currently working toward the realization of student led conferences for students in grades 4/5. I'll be working with homeroom teachers from both grades prior to February vacation to adopt a protocol. This protocol will be piloted over the March conference window; information will be gathered from all stakeholders including students and revisions will occur over the summer. The focus will be on our students' ability to connect areas of strength and growth as communicated and measured via the ONSU performance indicators. It will also require analysis and planning of a student's Capstone Project. The goal will be to better ensure that students understand their own learning/achievement, and to provide them with the foundational skills required to build an authentic personalized learning plan upon arriving at the Northern Campus.

Respect ❖ Responsibility ❖ Recognition

We are Respectful ❖ We are Responsible ❖ We are Safe ❖ We are Learners

Williamstown Elementary School

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Williamstown Schools

Preparing students to be lifelong learners

We will be putting an added focus in the area of literacy throughout the month of February. This will include a parent seminar and book giveaway sponsored in partnership with the Children's Literacy Foundation (CLiF), a Read Across America Day Celebration in partnership with Norwich University, and an artist in residency with author, Michael Caduto. These all promise to be delightful events, and will assist us in continuing the momentum that was gained last school year during our CLiF Year of the Book. I'm especially excited by the artist in residency planned for the week of February 19th. It will also continue our efforts and momentum specific to the creation/implementation of interdisciplinary units of study.

Goal #3: High Quality Professional Performance

Our expectations for professional performance will include:

- *a culture of excellence*
- *high expectations*
- *focus on continuous improvement.*

We will be meeting as a school based leadership team in March to analyze school-wide performance data. The results of this analysis will be used to inform action tasks in the newly revised Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). We've been very successful over the past five years in leveraging the CIP as our roadmap for success. I look forward to this important work and the next steps in our journey of becoming a school of excellence.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Kinnarney

Principal

Respect ❖ Responsibility ❖ Recognition
We are Respectful ❖ We are Responsible ❖ We are Safe ❖ We are Learners

**NORTHFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL'S REPORT
FEBRUARY 2017**

GOAL: 1 Educators will provide high-quality instruction in every classroom through rigorous curriculum aligned with State Standards.

- *Provide professional development time for educators to design and implement a pilot curriculum aligned to State Standards across all disciplines.*
- *Provide professional development time for educators to design and implement PK-12 vertical and horizontal alignment of units to PBGRs and PIs.*

The redeployed teaching staff is assisting with reading instruction in a classroom in need of support. Staff expectations for instruction are detailed in the faculty handbook. The required method includes teacher read aloud and shared reading, whole group explicit instruction, small group work, independent work and word study. In the lower elementary grades, an Orton Gillingham trainer from the Stern Center came in for two days, to critique practice and offer recommendations.

Students have just completed the Winter 2017-2018 internal schoolwide assessments through the NWEA-MAP testing system. The teachers reported that many of the students grew in their proficiency. This is an exciting moment at NES. NWEA-MAP are similar in format and scope to Vermont's SBAC test. Teachers are increasingly comfortable administering the assessment and the tracking the results. Teachers are noting gaps in their curriculum and plan to address these gaps in their curriculum work later.

One component of this year's school improvement plan is to highlight academic achievement. Upper-grade classes are celebrating individual student growth in scores. One teacher noted a change in culture around testing in the building, remarking that they saw its utility for their own practice that they had not seen before.

GOAL: 3 Educators will provide supports and resources that promote positive social responsibility.

- *Expand the implementation of PBIS & MTSS and the development of a continuum of supports in each school and across the Supervisory Union.*
- *Promote student, parent and teacher opportunities to support positive academic and social/emotional outcomes.*
- *Increase opportunities for students to learn in the community through personalized learning plans and flexible pathway.*

Data from the Opportunity Room has shown that students who have Check-In and Check-Out as a support show a decrease in concerning behaviors. During a recent review of student behavioral data, student behavior often mirrors changing home circumstances. To help a small number of students to attend and focus, a limited number of behaviors were identified as high priority. Staff provides feedback on this short list to the student every hour. This intense focus results in the number of aberrant behaviors at school decreasing. Check-Ins and Checks-Outs occur in a variety of settings and with a variety of staff. Oversight of the plan, consistency in monitoring and a good relationship with the student is essential. Experts from Washington County Mental Health are consulted helped to develop strategies to support identified students and their families.

Our discipline system is in some ways a parenting system, while the students are here at school. Students are held accountable for their behavior and school staff then helps students to process or repair the damage. Students come away with a lesson and plans for next time.

The third annual Penguin Plunge Dance was held on Friday, January 27th in the NES gymnasium. Less of a dance and more fun-filled events. Children in grades three, four and five had fun while raising money to support Special Olympics. NES hosts the district's Unified Sports team, which provides alternate activities for students.

The Northfield Promise Community is a group seeking to erect play structures in Northfield with the aim of increasing kindergarten readiness. Members of the group worked with NES Bridges Afterschool students and Kindergarten staff to brainstorm ideas for the playground that will facilitate early language development, social skills, and motor skills. The playground is expected to be completed at the end of this school year. Present plans call for structures behind the Brown Public Library and a larger structure in Northfield Falls.

Central Vermont Unified Union School District Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 17, 2018
6:00 pm
Williamstown Middle High School

Minutes – Draft

1. **Roll Call**

Meeting called to order at 6:08 pm.

Board Members Present: Peter Evans (Chair), Rams Schneider (Vice Chair), Amanda Mills-Brown (Clerk), Horace Duke, Christina Motyka (6:12 pm), Mike Bailey, Marie Abare (7:08 pm)

Administration Present: Superintendent Susette Bollard, Superintendent Laurie Gossens (6:25 pm)

Others Present: Principal Jamie Kinnarney, Michaela Martin, Ben Robbins, Judy Knapp, Mike Macijeski, Principal Ryan Parkman, Principal Wayne Howe (6:40 pm)

2. **Public Participation**

Mike Bailey presented a letter from Eric Howard; Judy Knapp shared her opinion on the Family Consumer Science/Tech Ed.

3. **Reports to the Board**

- **Superintendent**

- Superintendent Bollard announced corrected graduation rate for 2017 is 90% +. 5 years ago, the graduation rate was 65%.

- **Chairperson**

- **Committee Updates:** Policy, Renaming the School District, Community Outreach, Mission
There are close to 100 responses on the Renaming the School District online survey.

- **Athletics**

4. **Items for Board Action**

- **Approval of Minutes 01/03/2018**

- Motion made by Mike Bailey and seconded by Rama Schneider to approve minutes as presented. Motion unanimously carries.

5. **FY19 Budget**

- **Special Articles**

- **Emergency Generator for Williamstown Elementary School**

- Motion made by Sophia Bennett and seconded by Maria Abare to borrow \$75,000 to be paid back in 5 equal installments for the purpose of purchasing an emergency generator for Williamstown Elementary School. Motion carries.

- **Establish a Capital Fund with annual contributions**

- Motion made by Mike Bailey and Seconded by Horace Duke that the voters be asked to fund \$40,000 for Capital Improvements in a Separate Article. Motion carries.

- **Final FY19 Budget Proposal**

- Motion made by Rama Schneider and seconded by Mike Bailey to approve a budget proposal for the CVUUSD for FY19 of \$17,352,047. Motion carries unanimously.

6. **Future Agenda Items**

No new items added.

7. **Adjournment**

Motion made by Mike Bailey to adjourn meeting at 8:07 pm. Motion carries.

Williamstown Shared Leader
Interview Questions
January 2018

Introductions- Michaela	Evidence/Comments/Questions
There is a mission to create a PreK-12 collaborative leadership model. Why are you interested in this style leadership, and what attributes would you bring to the model? Jamie	
2. What does instructional leadership mean to you? Please provide examples how that aligns to the vision of collaborative leadership models. Linda	
3. What is an instructional leader's role in creating and sustaining a positive and supportive school climate for all stakeholders? Bryce	
4. What is your initial response to the following statement? "The principalship can often be synonymous with that of a social worker" Michele	

	Evidence/Comments/Questions
5. A key component to the "Blue Devil Way" is fostering and supporting student voice. How would you go about ensuring that this continues? Hannah	
6. Interpersonal and organizational skills are critical for any successful leader. Can you discuss which areas you consider a strength, and which areas may need support/coaching? Steve	

7. We are in the midst of authentic change in regards to proficiency based learning. Please provide an overview of your priorities as they relate to Act 77 (proficiency based graduation requirements, flexible pathways, personalized learning plans). Peter	
8. Besides student engagement, what evidence would you gather when observing high quality instruction? Linda	
	Evidence/Comments/Questions
9. Please describe your current use of data, and how you would prioritize the use of data in order to improve instruction/learning. Michaela	
10. Williamstown schools believe in a distributive leadership model to support continuous improvement. What experience have you had with this type of model when leading change initiatives? Krystal	
11. How have you been successful in engaging the parents and community in student's educational experiences in a positive way? How would you go about doing this in Williamstown? Michele	
12. Describe a recent change initiative you have lead that was successful and one that was challenging. What did you learn from both experiences? Hannah	

13. How can we foster your strengths while supporting your needs? Melanie	
	Evidence/Comments/Questions
14. How do you manage stress? Devin	
15. Why should we choose you as our leader? Kate	
16. Do you have any questions for us? Jamie	

Renee Badeau

Education

Saint Michael's College

Colchester, Vermont

Advanced Certificate

Major: School Leadership Endorsement

GPA: 4.000

Attended August 2012 to July 2014

Degree conferred July 2014

Saint Michael's College

Colchester, Vermont

Master of Arts in Teaching

Major: Teaching English as a Second Language

GPA: 3.933

Attended June 2003 to May 2010

Degree conferred May 2010

Vermont Police Academy

Pittsford, Vermont

Vocational/Occupational Degree

Major: Full Time Law Enforcement

Attended August 2007 to December 2007

Degree conferred December 2007

Saint Michael's College

Colchester, Vermont

Bachelor of Arts

Major: Spanish, **Minor:** Secondary Education and Art

GPA: 3.568

Attended August 1998 to May 2002

Degree conferred May 2002

Universitat de Barcelona

Barcelona, Spain

Bachelor of Arts

Major: Study Abroad while attending Saint Michael's

Attended September 2000 to December 2000

Degree conferred December 2000

Spaulding High School

Barre, Vermont

Attended August 1994 to June 1998

Degree conferred June 1998

Experience

Harwood Union Middle and High School

Jul 2015 - Present

Director of Student Management
Moretown, Vermont

This position is an administrative position that includes a variety of tasks, including teacher coaching, preventative education for students and staff, and addressing behavioral incidents. The position requires I work closely with the Student Support team to assist students who are struggling. The position involves teacher supervision at both the middle school and the high school level. The past two years, it has also evolved into the middle school administrator, where I oversee all events in the middle school, work to develop the middle school teachers as a team, and am the point of first contact for parents and students. I work with the teachers, guidance and the Coordinated School Health team to develop social and emotional skills with the middle school students and support them individually when they are struggling. The position also involves being a member of the administrative team to collaborate on district wide initiatives and to address the managerial components of daily activities. I am also a member of the Leadership Team, which is comprised of teachers, administrators and students. The purpose of this group is to support school wide initiatives and support the transition to proficiency based grading and reporting.

Reason for leaving: I have enjoyed my time at Harwood and had the benefit of having two very strong administrative leaders as my mentors. At this time, I am interested in moving to a principal position, as I have moved into a place in my career where I would like to work at a bigger picture level and be able to help systems move forward.

Supervisor: Lisa Atwood (802-882-1100)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Waits River Valley School

Aug 2010 - Jun 2015

Spanish Teacher
East Corinth, VT

Teach Spanish to students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade. Responsibilities include: classroom management, curriculum development, student assessment, integration with other subjects, teach Middle School math intervention, assist with kindergarten literacy

Reason for leaving: Pursue career in administration.

Supervisor: Carlotta Perantoni (802-439-5534)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Barre City Police Department

Jul 2007 - Aug 2010

Patrol Officer
15 Fourth Street

Responsibilities include: respond to emergency situations, assist citizens, apprehend criminals, write affidavits and reports, testify in court, de-escalate volatile situations, train new officers in the field

Reason for leaving: I want to return to teaching. After being gone for three years, I have found I miss it and feel that is the career I should be in.

Supervisor: Sergeant Mark Stupik (802-476-6613)

Experience Type: Other, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Vermont Adult Learning

Sep 2009 - Dec 2009

ESL student teacher

Colchester, VT

Taught adults English from a variety of countries, including Egypt, Russia, Iraq, Argentina, as well as multiple African countries. Responsibilities included lesson planning, classroom management, evaluations, creating all materials and teaching.

Reason for leaving: Student teaching was for the Fall semester for my Master's degree.

Supervisor: Louis Giancola/Sheena Macpherson (846-7245/654-2355)

Experience Type: Student Teaching, Part-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Spaulding High School

Aug 2002 - Jun 2007

Spanish Teacher

Barre, VT

Taught Spanish I-III to a variety of language learners. Responsibilities included classroom management, lesson planning, designing units, creating materials, evaluations, committee work, parent/teacher communication.

Reason for leaving: Reductions in the budget led to the termination of my position

Supervisor: David Buzzi (802-476-4811)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Professional Summary

- Licensed as a Principal for grades PreK-12 by the Vermont Agency of Education
- Licensed as a Modern Language Teacher in Spanish Language for grades PreK-12 by the Vermont Agency of Education
- Participant in Vermont School Leadership Program, class of 2018
- Oversee Extended Learning Opportunities
- Mentor for A World of Difference
- Middle School Team Leader
- EST/504 Coordinator
- KLT (Keeping Learning on Track) teacher leader
- Common Core teacher leader
- Head of Scheduling Committee
- Wellness Leader
- New teacher mentor
- Representative for contract negotiations
- Member of EST team: 2011-2012
- Jazzercise Instructor certified
- Member of the Attendance Review Board for 3 years
- Member of the Scheduling Committee for 3 years
- Member of the Emergency Crisis Response Team at Spaulding High School
- Class advisor for the class of 2006
- New teacher mentor for 2005-2006 school year
- Mentor to student teacher for 2006-2007 school year
- Member of the Graduation Requirements committee
- Led a trip to France and Spain with another colleague during the 2004-2005 school year

- Led a trip to Spain during the 2006-2007 school year

Interests

Aerobics, skating, baking, travel, watching sports

PART A: AN EDUCATIONAL VISION FOR UNIFICATION

Introductory Note:

A fundamental understanding inherent in this report is that any new unified board will seek to implement key provisions of the Committee's findings/vision to insure the realization of these principles and to keep faith with expressed wishes of voters who voted for unification based on the vision expressed in this report.

VISION STATEMENT:

"A unified school district that promotes excellence in educational outcomes and cultural experiences for every student by maintaining and expanding access to innovative, high-quality programs while serving as wise stewards of community resources."

SECTION 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR UNIFICATION

One of the central challenges of unification is recognizing the important relationship that community members have traditionally had with their local schools in conjunction with the responsibility of providing equitable opportunities for all students. In establishing these guiding principles of educational governance, the Committee is seeking to articulate what they believe to be a set of traditionally shared values that will foster confidence in each sending community concerning the new unified district's educational operations and educational quality.

Educational/Operational Principles:

Equity: Equity means having access to multiple learning opportunities that will provide for the highest level of individual student achievement as measured by state standards and locally defined goals. Access to learning opportunities may include intra-district school choice, flexible learning pathways, access to college level courses, and other methods of providing district-wide programming. Achieving the goal of equity means increasing opportunity for all, not reducing existing opportunities in the name of equality.

Student Achievement: The outcome of student achievement will exceed state standards and local goals by addressing the specific needs of all students. Learning goals, as measured by multiple forms of assessment, can best be achieved by providing high quality instruction, personalized learning plans, enhanced learning opportunities, and innovative programming.

Maximizing Efficiencies: Maximizing efficiency in a unified district means optimizing class sizes, reducing duplication, and consolidating operational services through thoughtful planning and innovative programming. Organizational decisions will be practical, sustainable, and based upon sound and innovative educational practices.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability: A new, unified board will provide extensive opportunities for community involvement in all matters that come before the board including: educational vision and goals, district policy, budget development, and assessment of student progress.

Effective use of Resources: The unified board will use resources, including tax dollars, to develop and sustain educational programs that the community values and supports.

Innovation:

We expect leadership that fosters instructional innovation designed to address the ongoing and emerging needs of students throughout the district within the context of school cultures that preserve and build upon valued traditions and established best practices.

Community Identity:

A new, unified district will work to preserve and enhance the deep historical connection that community members feel to their local schools. Community engagement in our schools is essential to their long-term growth and success.

Holistic Learning:

Real mastery in learning can only be achieved through instructional practices that foster in every child a love of learning, that put students at the center of their own educational journey and actively engage them in meaningful and rigorous, hands-on experiences.

Student Leadership:

Schools should be places that foster leadership, that encourage and empower students and educators to bring out the best in each other. Together, we will create actionable opportunities for young people to contribute meaningfully to their school and to their communities.

Communication:

School and community leaders will create a sense of pride in our schools by communicating the scope and direction of the work being undertaken to create great schools, promoting what is unique and special about our district's educational programs, and celebrating our students' progress and success – making our community a place where parents want to live and raise a family.

Sense of Place:

Our educational programs should be rooted in and built upon on what makes our communities special – our heritage, our land, our love and concern for each other. We desire educational programs that connect our students to the world around them and that extend and enhance their learning and life experience through strong, vibrant school/community partnerships and place-based learning.

Section 2: Strengthening Student Performance & Programmatic Opportunity

Introduction:

In approaching the issue of strengthening the educational programs in a unified district, the Committee looked at the goal of achieving educational excellence in two ways:

- a. Programmatic Opportunity – The equitable access for students to a broad range of program opportunities across all the schools in the district.
- b. Performance – Student achievement in relation to state and local goals/standards.

A. Goal: Strengthening Student Achievement/Performance:

The Committee found that there are real performance differences in student outcomes within schools and between schools in both the Northfield and Williamstown school districts. *[See Student Achievement Data, Appendix 7]*

Closing existing gaps in student performance between and among students and schools across both districts, as well as raising the overall level of student achievement to exceed existing state and local performance expectations is central to achieving the vision of a vibrant, unified school district expressed earlier in this report.

The Committee found that unifying the districts of Northfield and Williamstown will provide new and substantive opportunities for better addressing both the existing and emerging needs of our students, as well as, achieving the educational goals of Act 46. Taken together, every rationale expressed in this study and recommendation for changes in current practice are designed to achieve the goal of increasing student performance in our two communities.

A unified district, led by a single school board would create new opportunities to:

1. Learn from each other's successes and failures and nurture a culture of innovation and experimentation.
2. Develop more effective district-wide, school improvement strategies grounded in a more comprehensive analysis of overall student progress that is only possible when looking at data from larger student cohorts.
3. Strengthen the design and delivery of high quality instruction in every classroom through curricula which is aligned with state standards and regularly informed through analysis of student performance data.
4. Strengthen the instructional practices of the entire system by creating a more extensive, robust, and coordinated program of teacher development that:

- a. Fosters opportunities to share expertise, best practice, diverse thinking, and new/emerging instructional visions (mentoring, teacher leadership).
- b. Assist teachers in creating learning environments which:
 - i. Promote and support positive social responsibility through accountability and respect for self, others, and their school;
 - ii. Embed transferable skills into their instruction and to include them in all summative assessments.
 - iii. Implement personalized learning plans as a living document in a Proficiency Based Learning (PBL) system
 - iv. Develop real-world projects, instructional challenges and solutions.
5. Expand our cultural traditions (musicals, arts nights, etc.)
6. Coordinate special education programs and resources enabling staff to focus their professional development and therefore their expertise on particular disabilities, assessments and/or interventions. This would increase our ability to meet the needs of students and our capacity to serve them locally.
7. Enhance the district's ability to offer a wider array of interventions through Multi-Tiered System of Supports and other strategies.
8. Enhance the district's capacity to hire and retain a highly qualified, stable corps of teachers by being able to offer long-term positions better sheltered from fluctuations in enrollments, and/or fewer part-time positions by combining instructional needs into full-time positions across the new district.
9. Expand instructional alternatives/programs for students aimed at reducing the current drop-out rate.
10. Create safer, more supportive school learning environments by unifying discipline policies and implementing successful intervention strategies across schools to foster stable and developmentally appropriate school cultures PK-12. (e.g. PBIS, School Community Mental Health Partnerships, etc.)
11. Optimize the use of existing resources by sharing instructional staff, creating greater student access to programming across the new district, restructuring existing delivery models to optimize class sizes and eliminate redundancy in instructional programs, particularly at the high school level – e.g. finding creative ways to consolidate, redundant and under-enrolled courses at both high schools

Among the instructional challenges to be faced by a unified district are:

1. The current use of different structures for providing teacher support. Northfield uses a coaching model and Williamstown uses an expert teacher model. These differing approaches will need to be reviewed, coordinated and/or aligned.
2. Declining enrollment in both districts that result in ongoing spending pressures to maintain instructional opportunity in both districts.
3. Finding cost effective strategies to support multiple pathways at the high school level (e.g. community based learning, mentors, dual enrollment, career tech.)
4. Under-enrolled core courses currently offered at both high schools and the ongoing loss of elective courses in both schools.

SECTION 2: ENHANCING PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITY

A unified district with a combined and coordinated instructional approach would:

1. Free up resources to:
 - a. Extend Language programming to lower grades.
 - b. Create more rigorous and robust academic program offerings throughout the district
 - c. Enhance visual and performing arts programming (K-12).
 - d. Strengthen before and after school enrichment opportunities, and summer programs.
 - e. Expand outdoor/experiential learning programs.
 - f. Coordinate and expand student-centered/non-traditional programming. (E.g. STAR - Students Taking Alternative Routes to graduation, Flexible Pathways, and Personalized Learning Plans)
2. Create a critical mass of elementary, middle, and high school students to support program enrichment across schools, both academic and co-curricular, rather than program elimination.
3. Through enhanced program coordination and community partnerships, strengthen student access to the full range of academic, social, and emotional supports currently offered by each school district. (E.g. Special Education, Multi-Tiered System of Support, Washington County Mental Health)
4. Extend opportunities for more students to get involved in programs that develop leadership skills. (examples – school board membership)

SECTION 3: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM REORGANIZATION TO STRENGTHEN TEACHING AND LEARNING

A sectioning analysis of high school courses offered by both districts revealed the capacity to combine sections in certain courses to optimize class sizes and an extensive duplication of course offerings in high school programming. (**Appendix 5**).

The Committee concluded that real opportunities exist for exploring creative ways for restructuring current delivery models to optimize student access to existing programming. This could result in enhanced student/teacher ratios and commensurate savings in current instructional costs that could be used to enhance and extend educational programming PreK-12 without additional taxpayer support. For example, programs offered in one high school but not in the other could result in increased educational opportunities for all students, through better scheduling **and** program coordination, the use of technology, and/or the restructuring of high school programs.

Over the course of its deliberations, the Committee examined a number of options that a unified school board could and should explore in greater depth that might maximize access by all students to the considerable educational opportunities offered throughout both districts.

These options included:

1. Maintaining existing programming at Northfield and Williamstown High Schools while maximizing existing teacher resources by sharing teachers between the schools.
2. Utilizing creative scheduling (e.g. Block schedules) that allow students to travel between schools.
3. Investing in technology to maximize distance learning opportunities. For example, offering web-based classes where teachers in one school offer joint courses with students in another school who are participating in the class electronically.
4. Restructuring both high schools to optimize program access for all students. For example, hosting grades 9/10 in one school and grades 11/12 in another.
5. Offering specialized Magnet schools with specialized programs to which students can choose to attend. For example, a STEM program at one school and an arts/music emphasis at the other.
6. Creating one new, unified high school program.

The Committee noted that there may be other restructuring alternatives, beyond the six that the Committee considered, that could and should be explored by a new, unified school board in greater depth and with greater opportunity for community input to decide which option(s), if any, might best meet the needs of students in Northfield and Williamstown.

The Committee will submit articles of merger that will guarantee a robust and transparent public process for any restructuring of educational delivery.

For the Committee, the key point is that without merging, this or any other future plan for creating greater educational opportunity through a more efficient sharing of existing resources is not possible.

SECTION 4: PROVIDING A QUALITY EDUCATION AT A COST THAT PARENTS, VOTERS, AND TAXPAYERS VALUE

The Committee believes that achieving this goal depends upon creating within the new unified district a sense of community ownership, identity and culture and budgetary processes that are responsive to the fiscal realities in both communities. To this end, the Committee recommends that the new Board work to:

1. Structure school websites to promote a common identity and establish improved patterns of communication and outreach.
2. Coordinate community activities across schools so that certain functions could take place in one school but serve families from all schools. (Examples: District music concerts, district art shows, speakers, open houses)
3. Celebrate district-wide examples of educational progress and student achievement.
4. Explore ways to unify or coordinate PTA/parent council activities
5. Foster district-wide opportunities for outreach to community and municipal organizations and leadership groups.
6. Initiate regularly held committee meetings to facilitate community input and monitor the implementation of educational policy by administration (e.g. school-based councils, community forums, and open houses).
7. Explore creative governance structures that encourage non-voting, community representation and engagement on standing board committees to foster greater community input and engagement in the development of board policy.