



The Pomfret School

CHALLENGING THE MIND ★ ENCOURAGING THE HEART

**Board of Directors Monthly meeting - DRAFT
Monday, October 20, 2014 PM, The Pomfret School**

Present: Tom McKone, Greg Greene, Bob Coates, Jody Eaton, Sarah Woodhead, Sherry Sousa – Director of Instructional Support Services

I. Call to Order 6:03 pm

II. Visitors:

Mike Bald, Sue Heston, Blake Heston, Henry Greene, Patty Kuzmickas

Sherry provided information on the WCSU Literacy Initiative in both regular classrooms and special education classrooms and also spoke about the PALS program.

Mike Bald, Henry Greene, and Blake Heston presented their findings from their Summer Science Program. Over the past 4 years 400 plants have been treated. This year Mike, Henry, and Blake treated 231 plants. The conclusion of this program was entering their information into a statewide database called imapinvasives.org. Thank you to Mike for teaching the children that Science has an application inside the classroom as well as out. Good work, Henry and Blake.

III. Approval of Minutes: September 15, 2014

Moved: Bob Coates

Seconded: Greg Greene

IV. Reports

Superintendent – Alice Worth – October 2014

September was a very busy month in WCSU. We hired a new Director of Finance and Operations; planned the transition for Richard Seaman and David Leenders; collaborated with Tyler, Simms and St. Sauver to conduct the FY14 audits; planned for the Act 153 small schools consolidation grant community forums; researched and planned for needs related to meeting Act 166, “universal PreK” requirements; planned for Pittsfield transition; began budget planning with the Administrative Team and continued to move curriculum, instruction and assessment work forward in the content areas of mathematics, reading and science. Involvement of Board members, teachers, community members and administrators in these initiatives has been terrific.

Act 166:

Sherry, Catherine Malo and I have met periodically since last January with a PreK task force with the goal of trying to understand both need and capacity to provide PreK opportunities for three and four year olds within the Bridgewater, Woodstock and Pomfret communities. Although there are many unanswered questions about the *implementation* of Act 166, we needed information that could assist in the FY16 budget planning for this new requirement as well as how to meet the intent of the law. We will present some preliminary recommendations at the WCSU Board meeting on the 14th. Act 166 provides publicly funded access to prequalified PreK programs operated by a public school, Head Start or a private provider for 10 hours a week, 35 weeks a year, for all Vermont three and four-year-olds. The law sets a statewide tuition rate which is expected to be \$3,000.00 per child and will apply to enrollments beginning on July 1, 2015. It also establishes rules regarding what constitutes a program that is eligible for funding. The criteria includes licensing standards with specific approved endorsements as well as quality standards. We will update the Board on these aspects at the October meeting.

Administrative Team:

The administrative team began budget planning at our October 2nd meeting. Principals all have access to ADS and are expected to use the system to do some minimal local budgeting. This will enable them to monitor their budgets, communicate more easily about them and do future planning. Additional support for this is available from both me and Richard. Our goal is to have a draft budget to the Boards for the November meetings.

Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction: The Literacy Initiative is gaining traction. Consultants Aimee Toth and Kristin Downey have been working with K-8 teachers. K-4 teachers have completed their first run of our uniform assessments to get a baseline understanding of their student's skills and needs and to form Guided Reading groups. Teachers are working hard and feedback is very positive and notes lots of new professional learning happening in our schools. A K-12 Mathematics Leadership Team will be meeting October 9th to further plan professional needs to advance student mathematics achievement. The goal is continued development of cohesion in curriculum and instructional practice K-12. The science task force which began meeting last year is working with facilitation of Jennifer Stainton to plan for the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The group is developing a long range plan that will start this winter with exposure to the standards for those teachers new to them and includes an inservice in March with "hands-on, minds-on" science activities that can be used in the classroom. As curriculum, assessment and instruction work has taken on specific content focus (reading math and science) we have developed off-shoots from Think Tank and will suspend for this year the integrated Think Tank model.

Technology:

Reports from the schools consistently express appreciation for our new Director of Technology Raphael Adamek. Raph's teaching experience, technology understanding and "know how" make a perfect combination for the current needs of WCSU and member schools. The following report comes by way of Raphael.

Since the start of the school year I have been engaged in a needs assessment that examined the strengths and shortcomings of the technology infrastructure and the ways that technology has been used in the classroom throughout the WCSU. In many ways the technology infrastructure at the WCSU is in good shape. The majority of the schools have adequate access to high speed internet on affordable month-to-month contracts. The locations that have the poorest access to high speed internet, Killington and Pomfret, have high speed fiber projects underway to significantly increase their bandwidth. The wireless internet access in some schools, Reading and Bridgewater, has been hindering the use of technology by students, and will need to be addressed. Our internet content filtering service needs to be replaced, so I have initiated a pilot project to use a service called Securly at the SU office and Woodstock Elementary School.

Throughout the SU there are outstanding examples of how teachers and students have used technology to enhance learning. From the 1:1 initiative in the middle school to the widespread use of Google Docs in the 5th and 6th grades, I have seen numerous examples of successful technology integration. Teachers have reached out to me to provide additional support in the creation of class websites, the organization of Google Drive, and around the effective use of Smart Boards.

From a policy and planning perspective, I have spent some time familiarizing myself with the changes to the E-Rate program (a federal program that provides reimbursements for the cost of internet connections, phones, etc.). One major change to the E-Rate program is the removal of the requirement to have a state approved Tech Plan. The WCSU Tech Plan expires in June 2015, so I have engaged the VT AOE and our local Technology Team in a process of evaluating the existing plan and identifying the key components of the next plan.

Instructional Support Services:

In September, Lois Perlah, Reading Specialist and consultant to WCSU through the IDEA grant, began her review of the literacy practices of special education teachers in the district. She met with special educators regarding their concerns in the selection and implementation of reading and writing programs for special education students. In September, she worked with teachers in the middle and high schools, and will be working with WES teachers for the months of October and November before moving to Killington

Elementary School. Additional consultation from the Stern Center and Loralyn LeBlanc is also in place to insure the quality of intensive reading instruction programs at the middle and high schools.

At the district Special Education meeting, educators set goals for this school year including further developing skills in writing Common Core based Individual Education Plans, diagnosis of disabilities, and use of technology in instruction. Special Educators are also working to further their abilities in writing assessment reports for special education determination and improving their assessment skills on new tools.

Summer SOAK planning has already begun. Two teams have been identified to assist in that process. An internal team of principals and educators will meet monthly to address the logistics of developing this program. An Advisory Committee comprised of other local programs such as Artistree, VINS and Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Park, parents, students and educators will also meet monthly. They will address the larger questions of programming, registration and private funding.

Principal – Tom McKone

Students, Programs & Academics

- Science NECAP Results
 - Five of the ten Pomfret students who took the Science NECAP in the spring of 4th grade scored proficient, many fewer than in recent years. Three missed by one point and one by two. One student missed by a few points. In reviewing the data, both Jenny Hewitt and I thought that a notable factor for the students who did not achieve proficiency was difficulty reading the assessment tasks.
- Literacy Initiative
 - All regular classroom teachers and our special educator continue to participate in the WCSU reading initiative and to implement practices and assessments at school.
 - Teachers are establishing reading levels of books we already have; we will be buying new books to fill in gaps or to supplement limited options; we are seeking parent/community volunteer to help with leveling process.
- Gifted Learners Workshop
 - All regular classroom teachers from Pomfret and some staff WES and Barnard attended an October 2 workshop we hosted: Differentiating Instruction and Meeting the Needs of Gifted Learners, presented by Dr. Carol Story, a consultant with the Talented Development Institute.
- Chromebooks
 - PTO buying three Chromebooks for school to try out in anticipation of need to buy laptops or other small computers.

Emergency Preparedness

- Need to select new first contact(s) to give to fire department and alarm company.
- Emergency Management Manual
 - Updated and distributed to staff last month; old copies collected and shredded.
- Emergency Drills
 - At least one drill each month, per schedule from the state.
 - With today's egress (aka fire drill), we also evacuated to Chippers.

- Will increase our lockdown (secure the building) drills this year.
- Number signs for interior and exterior are on order.

Buildings & Grounds

- Fire Marshall Inspection on September 25
 - Approved plan for venting and final work in art room.
 - Checked building and found no problems.
 - Told us alarm system is outdated; if it needs work at some point, we will have to replace it with a new system; the current system could last a month, a year, or many years.
- Chippers trimmed the trees in front of the building.

Front door handle had to be repaired again. I have asked Tim to get options for replacin

Board Members

Greg Greene spoke about the three Consolidation Forums held in September and October in Bridgewater, Woodstock, and Pomfret. He provided information on each forum. The next Consolidation Meeting will be held Thursday, October 30th at 6:30 PM in the Conference Room at WCSU.

Jody Eaton provided information regarding the current legislation regarding mandated Pre K funding.

Motion to adopt Professional Development Policy D2

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

Motion to renew Mark Van Gulden's position as the Drum Corps Director for the 2014-2015 school year

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Jody Eaton

Executive session at 7:45 to discuss personnel

Executive session ended at 8:30

The board has accepted with regret our Principle, Tom McKone's resignation, effective June 30, 2015. Our school is very fortunate to have had Tom lead us. He has accepted a permanent position as director of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier. We wish him all the best and offer a giant thank you for his dedication, creativity, and knowledge while working here at The Pomfret School

VI. Adjournment at 8:40 PM

VII. Upcoming Meeting:

Pomfret School Board Meeting: Monday, November 17, 2014, 6:00 PM @ The Pomfret School

WCSU Meeting: Monday, November 10, 2014, 6:00 PM @ WCSU Conference Room

