



The Pomfret School

CHALLENGING THE MIND ★ ENCOURAGING THE HEART

**Board of Directors Monthly Meeting - DRAFT
Monday, March 16, 2015 @ 6 PM, The Pomfret School**

Present: Tom McKone, Greg Greene, Bob Coates, Jody Eaton, Barb Leonard

I. Call to Order 6:05 PM

II. Reorganization of the board:

Jody Eaton nominated Greg Greene as Chair of the board

Moved: Bob Coates

Seconded: Jody Eaton

Greg Greene nominated Bob Coates as Vice-Chair of the board

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Jody Eaton

Greg Greene nominated Jody Eaton as Clerk of the board

Moved: Bob Coates

Seconded: Greg Greene

III. Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve Board of Directors Monthly Meeting - February 23, 2014

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

Motion to approve Pomfret School District Annual Meeting – March 3, 2015

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

IV. Reports

Principal – Tom McKone

At the Administration Meeting on Thursday, Alice Worth questioned the coverage that TPS has concerning after school bussing. We will be developing a plan to have someone at school until all of the children are dropped off at their respective drop zones.

Mica Seely has submitted a proposal for a new school team. She would like to create a school rock climbing team at the Green Mountain Rock Climbing Center in Quechee, VT. They have offered a short, introductory season to The Pomfret School. This will allow the school and students to try it out with limited commitment. Formal practice is once per week. Competitions/meets are held once or twice per month. The introductory spring season will run from April – June. The team will be open to boys and girls in grades 5 and 6. The Pomfret Trust has agreed to commit \$100 per student climber to assist with the fees.

Superintendent – Alice Worth – March 2015

Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction:

K-8 teachers of science attended a very engaging in-service on Monday March 2, which focused on teaching to the *Next Generation Science Standards* and was planned and delivered by members of a WCSU NGSS Science Team. That Team began work a year and a half ago as an outgrowth of the Think Tank to begin supporting teachers following the adoption of these standards by the Vermont State Board of Education. Chaired by WUHS Science Department Chair, Jennifer Stainton, the team consists of Tim Brennan (WUHS), Jenny Hewitt and Sarah Woodhead (Pomfret), Jay Mumford, Jill Kurash and Karen White (WES), Michelle Shepherd (RES), Allison Naugle (KES), Ingrid Johnson (BA), Katrina Gedney (BVES), Melissa Fellows (WUMS) and Joan Haley from Marsh-Billings Rockefeller National Park. In the morning session teachers conducted “hands-on-minds-on” grade level appropriate engineering investigations that they could do with their students and then worked with Literacy Coach Aimee Toth to connect their science learning to instructional approaches to teach the reading strategies needed to learn content from informational text. In preparation for this day, Jen and Tim personally visited the elementary schools to introduce teachers to the NGSS. Jen did an incredible job leading this work with her colleagues from around the SU. We are very fortunate to have this kind of commitment to high quality instruction and thank all team members.

In addition to other focused work at the high school and middle school Sherry and Dana facilitated a 7-12 mathematics meeting to develop a long range plan of action that aligns with the curriculum, assessment and instructional practices of grades K-6.

This June we will hold the third summer institute to support the development of units of study. *Designing Classroom Curriculum* will again provide a 3 credit graduate course through Castleton State to WCSU teachers. Jen Stainton and Raphael Adamek will join me in teaching this course that will emphasize project-based learning and science.

Joint District School:

The Joint District School vote passed in both towns on Tuesday with 94% of combined voters voting in favor of the new agreement. I am particularly grateful to Greg Jenne and Greg Green for leading their towns in making this bold decision, and Board members Seth Shaw, Justin Shipman, Jody Eaton and Bob Coates for their commitment and work to address pressing needs at their schools. The following press release was jointly developed by Secretary Holcombe and me:

Today the towns of Bridgewater and Pomfret took an important step in support of quality learning opportunities for their children by forming a Joint District School. The action, approved by ballot at each town meeting, creates a new school, which will be located on the campus of the present Pomfret School.

Windsor Central Supervisory Union Superintendent Alice Thomason Worth praised the communities and the Pomfret and Bridgewater Boards: "This was a courageous decision on the part of both communities and reflects a willingness to work together for the common good."

The Bridgewater community has elected to close a school building that has been in the center of town for 100 years. They were able to transcend the emotional aspects inherent in such a decision in order to join in a collaborative effort that benefits their children and taxpayers. The Pomfret community demonstrated a generous willingness to welcome their neighbors and work together. The Joint District School saves the Bridgewater and Pomfret voters 24% of their combined individual budgets with a per pupil cost of \$11,710.00 as opposed to \$16,564.00 and \$15,870.00 respectively.

Important to both towns was the opportunity to maintain a voice in future decision-making regarding quality and cost of education. Both Boards were recognized at Town Meeting by their communities for their hard work and focus on the future.

When informed of the vote, Secretary Rebecca Holcombe of the Vermont Agency of Education congratulated the towns and noted: "This joint venture allows Bridgewater and Pomfret to expand opportunities for their children while reducing costs. It took a tremendous amount of work and trust, but this vote leaves both taxpayers and students better positioned for the future. Pomfret and Bridgewater have shown today that when we think more expansively about community, we can create better opportunities for all our children."

As most of you know, Greg did not run for reelection this year and his leadership and involvement in all aspects of governing WCSU will be missed. Greg was not only on the BVES for ten years and Board Chair for three, but he is a graduate of BVES and his father also served on the BVES Board. Greg worked tirelessly to provide information on all aspects of the Joint District School planning to the community in public forums and in many one-on-one conversations. Greg will be greatly missed as an active school board member.

Student Support Services:

Plans for Summer SOAK 2015 are being finalized. The website is online and provides the schedule and list of 21 offerings provided by 21 WCSU instructors (wcsu.net/summer-soak). The line-up is exciting and includes ballet dancing, rocket building, martial arts, women in engineering, Introduction to College Studies through CCV, and contemporary art at the Hall Art's Foundation collection. Registration will begin on March 16th. The program received

a grant of \$8,000 from Hypertherm. The Byrne Foundation awarded Summer SOAK \$20,000 last fall. Two other grants are pending from the Department of Children and Families Child Development Division (\$10,000) and the US Swimming Association for (\$5000). Both of these grants will cover scholarship requests from families.

Special Educators are beginning workshops on Wilson Reading Instruction and Driving Towards Mastery in reading instruction in March. These workshops continue the focus on improving the quality of specialized instruction for IEP students. The Wilson workshop will dig deeper into the elements of a quality reading lesson. The other workshop will review current research on best practices in reading instruction. These workshops will take place once per month for the next three months.

Principals have received allocations for Title I funds for 2015-2016. They are now developing proposals for the use of those funds based on School Action Plans, data on current student needs, and review of assessment results from previous programs.

Anne Marinello, District Nurse Leader, is working with Sherry to develop a district Health and Wellness group. The task of this group is to look at issues of wellness policy and planning from the district level. Representatives from nursing, physical education, and food services will be asked to participate.

Legislative Updates: (information compiled from VSBA Legislative Updates and AOE policy briefs).

The Legislature will hold its annual Town Meeting break this week and be back in session Tuesday Marcy 10th. I want to remind everyone of our **Legislative Breakfast which will be held at WUHS on Monday March 16th at 8:00** and encourage all members to regularly read the VSBA/VSA Legislative Updates posted on the VSBA site which focus on education issues. If you are not on the VSBA emailing list please notify my office and we will ensure they have your current contact information.

Of particular note to date is the passing of a bill unanimously last week by the House Education Committee. The bill is designed to control spending. H.361, would provide incentives for consolidation of school districts and address school spending by limiting the increase in per-pupil spending to 2% annually over the next several years. School budgets that increase more than 2% will automatically fail and revert to the previous year's budget. It also seeks to increase staff to student ratios and transition public school employees to Vermont Health Connect by 2018. School districts would also be required to work on consolidation plans with neighboring districts with a goal of establishing districts of at least 1100 students by 2019. Financial incentives in the way of grants will be available for those districts that get their plans in place by Nov 2017. Districts unable to consolidate can petition the Secretary of Education for a waiver.

Teacher – Barb Leonard

Incredible astrological pictures were taken by both Andrew Gubbins of The Pomfret School and by the Reading/Barnard community members who were invited to use our observatory. The Reading/Barnard crew took an amazing picture of Horsehead Nebula also known as Barnard 33. Chess Club is in it's second week of the program with over 30 participants. Trish is here for our Artist in Residency program. She will

be working with the kids on developing and then acting out small skits. The show will be March 26th at 6 PM.

Sugaring is underway with Chippers. The children will be studying gravity feed vs. vacuum feed along with the differences between 3/16th and 5/16th tubing. WPTZ has been to school twice to interview the fifth grade children and Sarah Woodhead. We will be extending invites to Bridgewater Village School for our Farm Day Workshop on April 24th. Multi-age groups will visit 6 or 7 stations with local farmers teaching what they do. We will also be inviting Bridgewater children to participate in Jump Rope for Heart. SBACs start on March 30th and will run for three weeks.

Board Members

Summer SOAK registration opened on March 16th. The Joint District School vote passed in both Pomfret and Bridgewater. We are moving forward with combining our two schools. There will be lots to do in order to make this a smooth transition for the children and staff. We will need to set up the kitchen for the new food program. We are also going to begin an after school program.

V. Action/Discussion

Motion to approve Pomfret School Rock Climbing Team except that we will not be providing transportation

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

VI. Adjournment at 7:26 PM

VII. Upcoming Meetings:

Pomfret School Board Meeting: Thursday, April 23, 2015 @ 6 PM @ The Pomfret School

WCSU Meeting: Monday, April 20, 2015 @ 6:00 PM @ WCSU Conference Room

JDS Meeting: Thursday, March 19, 2015 @ 5:30 PM @ WCSU Conference Room