



# The Pomfret School

CHALLENGING THE MIND ★ ENCOURAGING THE HEART

**Board of Directors Monthly meeting - DRAFT  
Thursday, December 18, 2014 @ 6 PM, The Pomfret School**

**Present: Tom McKone, Greg Greene, Bob Coates, Jody Eaton, Jenny Hewitt, Richard Seaman – Director of Finance and Operations**

## **I. Call to Order 6:05 PM**

### **II. Visitors:**

Richard Seaman reviewed TPS budget – 2nd draft

### **III. Approval of Minutes: November 17, 2014**

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

## **IV. Reports**

### **Superintendent – Alice Worth – December 2014**

On November 17 and 18, I participated in The Green Mountain Imperative: A Breakthrough Summit on Public Education held in Burlington. The summit was attended by approximately 200 people including parents, students, Business Round Table members, legislators, educators and public health care officials who worked to better understand the challenges facing Vermonters, our children and our education system. We looked at issues and discussed solutions related to:

- 1. Equity- Identifying the educational opportunities to which we want every child to have access.
- 2. Quality- Discerning how Vermont's public education system is currently serving the children and taxpayers of Vermont.
- 3. Efficiency- Determining how to improve our systems to deliver educational opportunities in the most equitable and affordable way.
- 4. Systems Capacity- Understanding how to best harness the power and commitment of our communities to better serve all Vermont's children.

A report from this summit will be issued in early January and the hope is that it will play a role in crafting some direction for the legislature in this session. A framework for the discussion utilized the VSBA Situational Analysis as well as a presentation by Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcomb. Please let me know if you would like copies of these and or if you would like me to

share their content at the January Board meeting.

I'm pleased that the Small Schools Study Committee has finalized a proposal to bring to their Boards this month with the expectation of going to the Bridgewater and Pomfret voters on March 3 2015. They worked hard and collaboratively to wrestle with difficult challenges. A final report for this first Phase of the study and implementation proposal will be issued soon by consultant John Everitt. The discussions and decisions of the group mirror the discussions occurring state-wide to address the challenges of declining enrollment and increased cost.

#### **Act 166:**

The recently announced "transition relief" for implementation of Act 166 comes as a result of a delay in finalizing rules that would impact decision making and budget development. The Central Office Administrative Team is recommending that we take advantage of this option as there are too many unknowns to prudently move forward.

#### **Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction:**

Literacy consultants Aimee Toth and Kristin Downey report good progress in the classrooms as teachers implement what they have learned this fall in reading instruction and assessment. I have spoken directly with several teachers who have said this work has really transformed their teaching and that they feel they know more about their student's strengths and needs than they did prior to this work. I will be looking for support from the boards to continue funding coaching opportunities for teachers with consolidated federal grant funds in both reading and mathematics..

#### **Technology:**

Throughout the SU we are working on maintaining and improving the technology infrastructure while also providing professional development for teachers.

In terms of infrastructure, increasing internet bandwidth has been a frequent topic of conversation as principals prepare their budgets for next year. Additional bandwidth allows teachers and students to access more audio, video, and multimedia during classes without interruption. E-Rate (the federal program that helps provide internet access to schools and libraries) went through a major restructuring this past summer. The result of this restructuring is more of an emphasis on bandwidth and internal wiring, and less of an emphasis on phone systems. There is also a new provision that simplifies the filing process for "low cost high speed internet", which may make it easier to upgrade the bandwidth in a number of our schools.

Budgeting for technology purchases in 2015-16 has been another important infrastructure conversation. Using the technology inventory that they completed, I met with Karen White and Anne Koop to discuss various options for them to consider for next year. The basic process is to consider the technology that each school has currently, discuss what the goals are for using technology, and then identify the number of specific devices that are needed to achieve these goals.

Over the past month there have also been a couple of new professional development activities. On Tuesday, November 25th I did a short workshop for the teachers at the Killington Elementary School on Google Classroom. A new tool that was made available to schools this fall, Google Classroom gives teachers a way of distributing and collecting assignments to students. Although Google Classroom is somewhat limited, it can be a very effective way to organize student work.

Lastly, I created a Technology Professional Development survey and distributed it to each of the schools. Using the information provided in the survey I hope to create a few small groups that are very interested in learning about a new aspect of technology.

#### **Instructional Support Services:**

During the month of November, the Summer SOAK committee developed a timeline of tasks to insure that the program is ready for students on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Proposal applications will be sent out to teachers in mid-December, decisions for offerings will occur in February and registration will begin in March and close in May. Parents received a "Save-the-Dates" notice to inform them of when registration will begin and the weeks that Summer SOAK will be offered.

Killington, Reading and Bridgewater are investigating after school programming which we will fund through the Title I grant beginning in January. Teams are looking at how to best to implement this opportunity which will focus on the academic needs of students. The remaining schools are pursuing other options to meet the community need for after school opportunities for students.

Special educators are continuing to develop their skills in writing standards-based IEPs and diagnostic teaching. Lois Perlah, Reading Specialist, has completed her support and review of special education literacy services at WES. She will begin in BA in December. She has begun to identify areas for future professional development including writing instruction. The Math Interventionist job description was developed and the position was posted. This position will be one day every two weeks and will be funded with IDEA funds.

### **Principal – Tom McKone**

Jenny Hewitt will be presenting soon to the board on the Literacy Initiative. She also participated in two days of training last month for NGSX. NGSX is a web-based Professional Development environment designed to engage teachers in the major ideas of the National Research Council's Framework for K-12 Science Education and the student performance expectations found in the Next Generation Science Standards. Jenny will participate in two more days of development in January as well. A new third grader will be joining us after our holiday break. Literacy Consultants Amy Toth and Kristin Downey's literacy training for our teachers is winding down for this year. Luke Fisher's Math Initiative will commence in January.

The PTO bought 3 Chrome Books, new sleds, and sponsored a Clean Eating Workshop. They have also approved buying 8 new cameras. Thank you, PTO. Conversations about how to behave during recess have begun. 3, 4, 5, and 6 grade students will be coming up with ideas for what needs to be done on a school wide basis to ensure that everyone knows how to be respectful to others during recess.

### **Teacher – Jenny Hewitt**

A lengthy discussion took place to discuss forming a joint district school between Bridgewater and Pomfret. K-4 graders just finished Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System literacy units. The Primary Numbers and Operations (PNOA) Assessments will begin in January. Hannah Taska, an Upper Valley Educators Institute (UVEI) intern has been in Jenny Hewitt's classroom for the past 5 weeks. She has made really nice progress. On January 12, Veena Reid, also from UVEI, will be joining Jenny's classroom until the end of the school year.

### **Board Members**

Proposed timeline for Community Meetings to discuss a joint school district with Bridgewater and Pomfret

Wednesday, January 14, 2015 @ Bridgewater @ 6 PM

Wednesday, January 21, 2015 @ Pomfret @ 6 PM

Tuesday, February 3, 2015 @ Bridgewater @ 6 PM

Tuesday, February 10, 2015 @ Bridgewater @ 6 PM

**V. Action/Discussion**

**Motion to adopt Substitute Teacher Policy D6 as presented**

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

**Motion to support the formation of a joint district school between Bridgewater and Pomfret and to bring this to the voters on March 3, 2015**

Moved: Greg Greene

Seconded: Bob Coates

**VI. Executive Session**

8:50 – 8:56

**VII. Adjournment at 8:57 PM**

**VIII. Upcoming Meetings:**

Pomfret School Board Meeting: Monday, January 12, 2015 @ 6:00 PM @ The Pomfret School

Pomfret School Board Meeting: Monday, February 23, 2015 @ 6 PM @ The Pomfret School

WCSU Meeting: Monday, January 19, 2015 @ 6:00 PM @ WCSU Conference Room