Dublin Education Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2024

Attendees Committee: Blake Anderson, Andy Freeman, Bill Gurney, Andy Hungerford, Peter Imhoff, Jesse Marcum, Blake Minckler, Carole Monroe, Jay Schechter, Jon Sistare

Other Attendees: May Clark, Karl Eckilson, Christopher Gallagher, Judy Knapp, Geoff Pinney, Lucy Shonk, John Wood

1. A motion was made by P Imhoff and seconded by A Hungerford to elect J Schechter as Committee Chair. Voted all in favor.
2. Data gathering groups will appoint their own leaders and will review, add to, and prioritize the task list.
3. The Committee reviewed all data gathering groups and tasks (see attached spreadsheet).
4. Report from Communications Group
   1. J Schechter spoke with Bethany Craig from Bennington, who would like to see the school stay open
   2. Francestown - The town is greatly concerned and the Select Board has supported an ad-hoc committee
   3. Called Greenfield Select Board members and they indicated that will get back to us in two weeks
   4. Sharon – Spoke with Sharon and the Town is happy with ConVal
   5. Temple - Jessica will provide a contact to speak with us about the Mason withdrawal process.
   6. B Minckler suggested we draft a standardized set of questions to ask those towns who have gone through withdrawal or who have looked into it. To add questions to the list, send them to B Minckler
   7. Bennington and Francestown are interested in working with us.
   8. Dublin Select Board members will attend the School Board Selectmen’s Advisory Meeting to clarify the purpose of the Committee
   9. We will also reach out to Hancock as Hancock’s appropriation for ConVal per student is just slightly lower than Dublin’s appropriation.
   10. We will be reaching out to current and past Dublin Elementary School parents for input.
   11. We will reach out to other towns/districts to determine how they educate their students, what other models are there?
   12. We will continue to reach out to our local state representatives. We have spoken to the State Rep who, in 2023, put forth the legislation to terminate all School Districts.
   13. We will establish a contact at DOE to assist us with accessing data or information at the DOE in Concord
5. Although we know from the State data how many Dublin Children attend ConVal and how many Dublin Children avail themselves of state funds from Education Freedom Account, we do not yet have a handle on the number of Dublin children homeschooled or attending private schools.
6. 2/13/2023 Meeting Minutes will be reviewed and approved next week. It appears some members did not receive the draft minutes.
7. The Committee discussed Dublin Warrant Article 18 - To see if the Town will vote to direct the school board of the Contoocook Valley School District (ConVal) to initiate a feasibility study of Dublin’s withdrawal from the Contoocook Valley School District, pursuant to RSA 195:25. Although we do not have the results from this newly formed committee and do not yet know where the data/information gathering will lead us will, the Feasibility Study will provide Dublin and the Committee with more information. As a Committee we have agreed to support this warrant article.
8. Right to Know – going forward J Sistare will follow up on the RTK requests already files with the District and manage the process of requests made on behalf of this Committee.
9. C Monroe will work with Twin Bridges, our contracted IT professionals, on a solution for accessible, shared, secured committee storage (like Google Drive).
10. Public Comment
    * K Eckilson – This Committee is way overdue. Information to review should include a review of why students do not choose ConVal, and a look into Charter Schools, public and private.
    * J Woods has volunteered to follow up available data at NH DOE and NH DRA.
    * G Pinney – Reminded us that the DCS playground land has an easement and we should check the Register of Deeds to determine what that easement is and whether easements are on the adjoining properties. We can also get information from the Annual reports in Conval archives.
    * M Clark
      + Norman Makechnie was the Atty on the school board at the time of the District change to a 50% Equalized Value and 50% students enrolled appropriation calculation.
      + There are many complicated ways to compare costs per student by town dependent on the data needed. Using tax appropriation numbers divided by number of students attending is a simplistic way of cost calculation.
      + Supported the current appropriation formula when it shifted to a 50% Property Values / %0% number of students as a fair way to support the ConVal community.
      + The state taxes the towns for school state taxes using equalized property values;

Higher Property Values = high education taxes.

* + B Anderson – any analysis that we do will be a range, Real Estate prices will continue to go up, and they are not headed down.
  + Dublin citizens are considering an ad with signatures in the Monadnock Ledger to encourage residents to “Vote No” on ConVal Warrant Article 10.
  + Next meeting February 27 at 5:30
  + Motion to adjourn made by P Imhoff, B Minckler second, all in favor.