

Rehoboth K-8 Withdrawal Study Committee Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2022

Meeting Location: Francis Farm, Arcade Bldg.

Members of Committee:

Mike McBride (MM) (Chair)
Jay Crandall (JC) (Vice Chair)
Tim Maynard (TM) (Secretary)
Sue Ohsberg (SO)
Kelly Doran (KD)

In Attendance:

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

Official Observers:

None

Old Business:

Jay Crandall moved to accept the minutes of 18 March 2022. The motion was seconded by Kelly Doran and was passed unanimously.

New Business:

Kelly Doran presented some of the SPED information that she has been able to collect. In particular, she checked with Kristin Donahue with particular regard to what happens to SPED students when they transition to the high school from the middle school. “In regard to students transitioning from grade 8 to High School, the IEP plan identifies that services and accommodations that are needed for the student and the HS SPED staff that are responsible for implementing them. Districts are obligated to provide the services identified in the IEP plan but have the discretion regarding personnel. It is not uncommon for students and families to be anxious regarding the transition to high school – especially those with disabilities, so we try our best to have a representative from the high school participate in the students’ meetings at grade 8. In addition, guidance often meets with the students regarding course selection, extra curricular, and support available while the student is still in middle school. We do this for all students and if a student with a difficulty needs some additional time we coordinate that. In addition to open house days, we often provide individual tours for students who may have a specific need for that (i.e. anxiety, mobility issues, etc.)”

Kelly enquired about the number of SPED staff moving across buildings. The answer was that this usually involved staff with low case-loads. Additionally, some services were being provided by outside providers on contract with the district.

The SPED budget costs for the entire district were: (F.Y.)	2019-20	21-22	22-23
Palmer River Elementary	\$1.862 M	\$1.8M	\$1.48M
Beckwith Middle	\$1.800 M	\$1.65M	\$1.96M
Dighton Elementary	\$1.950 M	\$1.79M	\$1.9M
Dighton Middle	\$0.963 M	\$0.926M	\$1.463M

Information from Aaron Morse is that there are four personnel contracts that would have to be renegotiated for the staff moving over with the elementary and middle schools. These are teachers, paraprofessionals, secretaries, and custodians. Each of these is currently a four year contract.

General discussion ensued relative to concerns that school personnel may have relative to potential cuts in pay and/or benefits. The consensus of the committee is that there should be a transfer of personnel to the town payroll and benefit contracts with no loss to school employees. Prior discussions by Kelly with Deb Arruda suggest that there is room for the additional employees from the school within the structure of the current benefit contracts and they will simply be added to the town payroll.

In the entire district, for the current 2022/23 school year, there is a total of 2,699 students and a staff of 471.

The committee reviewed the prospective web site and their input was elicited. There was general favorability regarding the design of the web site and a few suggestions for change.

Jay Crandall shared some information on regional districts that is posted on the DESE web site. It was suggested that we should consider a link to these on our web site. It was generally felt that we have to emphasize, on the web site, that everyone should read the current regional agreement because it is the only contract in force today!

Mike McBride suggested that we have the DESE definition of public school districts on the web site. "A public school district consists of one or more public schools operated under the supervision of an elected or appointed school committee and a superintendent. The majority of school districts serve a single city or town, and are considered a department of the municipal government. Two or more municipalities can also join together to form a regional school district, which is considered a separate and independent unit of local government. A regional school district can offer all grades (PreK-12), just certain grades (for example, just elementary grades or just high school), or just certain types of instruction (for example, vocational and technical programs)."

Motion:

Move to adjourn
(at 12:20 pm)

Presented By:

Kelly Doran

2nd:

Sue Ohsberg

Vote:

passed unanimously