

Fletcher Act 46 Study Committee

Agenda

Thursday, May 18, 2017

6-8pm Fletcher Elementary School

1. Welcome
2. Review and Approve Draft notes from 5/4/17 meeting (attached below)
3. Updates from conversations with other school districts
4. Alternative Structure Decision
5. Next Steps
6. Public Comment

Resources:

- [Questions for other communities on google doc](#)
- [Data file from the State](#)

Scheduled Meetings (6-8pm at FES):

Thursday, June 1, 2017

Thursday, June 15, 2017

Preliminary Report to the Fletcher School Board: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Fletcher Act 46 Study Committee

Draft Notes

Thursday, May 4, 2017

6-8pm Fletcher Elementary School

- Welcome

Attendees are: Betsy Lesnikoski, Jensen Welch, Christina DeGraff-Murphy, Cielo Mendoza, Jillian Clark, Todd Baumeister, Sara Villeneuve, Shannon Lenox

Audience: Michelle Senna

- Review and Approve Draft Notes from 4/13/17 Meeting

Add Sara to list

Under #4 - From Tara S. said Town Office has had 4 inquiries of school choice

Under #5 Comments from Todd: last bullet point - % of students who attend college from BFA Fairfax - is lower than Todd reported, Tara reported a different number

- Updates from conversations with other school districts
- Letter was sent to Westford/Essex - Martha Heath, Board Chair, said she would reply in 3 weeks.
- Jensen and Betsy met with Scott Mitchell from Fairfax and Ben C from Georgia - each school felt that alternative structure would be the best for all schools - Betsy's take away: all three towns maintain their identity by pursuing alternative structure.
- Alternative Structure discussion

Positives: Fletcher cares about choice, alternative structure will maintain choice and will maintain our identity as our town

Negatives: Fletcher will still have issues with space, (Is a program defined by its space?)

Fletcher will bear all costs of educating students, there will not be a larger tax base

School Board will have to be very planful in the future with its budget

Other comments:

- Ned is very positive that we will be granted alternative structure
- Fletcher may be considered an "orphan school" and quality for alternative structure
- Is the school board looking to address some of the equity issues by looking at funding and budgeting - improve art and music by building more time into the schedule rather than building more rooms.
- The FWSU is working to increase equity around special education district wide
- The 1-to-1 ipad initiative in Fairfax starts earlier, there is a higher ratio of technology in Fairfax than in Fletcher.

- Space will always be an issue for Fletcher - will we be able to ask the town to go over the spending cap in order to build more space for the school?
- Does Alternative structure had to show a new and bigger collaboration between the 3 schools in order to qualify?
- Another equity question - is alternative structure leaving Fletcher in an inequitable position?

Next Steps

- Does Georgia want to merge with Fletcher? - No they want to pursue the Alternative Structure
- Should the board look at renovating the current space to meet some of the space needs?
- Is there a point when the community will need to see consolidation as a more viable option than continuing to fund our school independently?
- The Board needs a community marketing plan about the education in our school and the upcoming needs
- Social media? More outreach? Front Porch forum?
- How do we get more parent involvement?
- A merge with Westford and Essex - would not maintain school choice and preserve our identity

Public Comment

- Michelle - could we get the town to support a bond to add to the school and support the students? We need space. Is the alternative structure sustainable?

Questions for next time:

What are the demographics of Fletcher? How many taxpayers have children? Or not?

We'd like to hear from Essex-Westford.

Announce at the next meeting we will decide on whether or not to recommend alternative structure to the school board.

Committee has probably reached the conclusion to recommend alternative structure to the school board. We will not likely need to meet more than one more time.

Announce the meeting on schoology, Fletcher School letter, Facebook, FPF, one call?

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