

Long-Range Planning Committee Minutes

November 13, 2017

Attendees: Deirdre d'Albertis, Diane Lyons, Laura Schulkind, Joe Phelan, Tom Burnell

Survey #1

Five days after sending out the first survey, we have received 156 responses (of approximately 600 sent) from the full parent community and 16 responses from the 25 new families to the District. Generally speaking, respondents spoke of small class size, academic and teacher quality, and community as some of the strongest attributes of the schools (see word cloud attached). Indeed, nearly 90% of respondents report that the local public schools influenced their decision to live in RCSD. Tom will send a reminder to complete the 3 question survey on Tuesday evening (11/14) in order to capture more feedback from our parents.

As we gather more information, we will dive deeper into specific comments regarding questions parents raise about the future of the schools and address those questions in public session discussion and potential presentations. The committee will continue to look at all aspects of District operations while understanding that it is a lengthy process that requires time and attention. Presenting our findings as we go along is our goal.

Community Participation

To date, we have heard from 4-5 community members who have expressed interest in participating, on some level, in the long-range planning process. Deirdre will reach out to make sure that each of these people are aware of the upcoming Coffee with the Board on November 15. We will also make an effort to outline possible ways for people to be engaged in this process including:

- following or attending meetings,
- completing future surveys,
- participating on an advisory committee if/when a need is identified,
- attending public presentations regarding progress/research outcomes, and
- communicating directly with the committee via the special email address: lrp@rhinebeckcsd.org

Forecast5

Tom is in the process of uploading 5 years worth of data re: expenditures, revenues, fund balance and reserves. The balance of the data upload will be pulled directly from SED. He is hoping that all the data will be resident in Forecast5 by the end of the week. At that point, we will begin looking at specific data. Once we are able to look at comparative data across the county and against our "statistical neighbors," it is our hope that we will begin developing a public presentation to share information with our community.

Study Halls

The committee turned to far-reaching discussions of the use of Aides vs. Teachers in different settings. What are the benefits of Aides vs. Teachers proctoring study hall? What are the appropriate "class sizes" and age-ranges for study halls? It will be important to understand the costs and benefits of our human capital as enrollments decline into the High School. Are there opportunities to use study hall time differently, i.e. for mindfulness or yoga sessions for students?

Athletics

The committee would like to schedule a visit with Steve Boucher at an upcoming meeting to fully discuss our athletic offerings and whether, as our population declines, our focus on providing opportunities for kids vs. delivering efficiencies for the district is still the best course of action. How much time is spent trying to recruit kids to field teams? Are merged teams more beneficial than phasing out programs where interest has declined? Are there different opportunities that could be offered, i.e. individual vs. team sports, training sessions for the next season? It is important that we look equitably across the spectrum of extracurricular and after school opportunities for our students.

Tom would like to look more closely at our enrollment across gender and grade level to forecast how many students (male and female) would likely participate in particular sports during a given season. If there are certain students who are particularly skilled at a sport we don't offer, what kinds of arrangements might we look at to allow for that student's participation? There are structures in NY for such a "shadowing" program. What does the structure and cost look like?

Master Schedule

We briefly touched on the secondary master schedules. New Paltz is the only school in our area who still employs "block scheduling." Joe will reach out to the New Paltz Superintendent for information - what are the benefits and constraints? Joe and Tom continue to discuss the format of a meeting with their area colleagues re: shared services. They are considering having a "Northern Dutchess Summit" with Pine Plains, Millbrook and Red Hook to begin brainstorming but have not yet set up a meeting.

Next Meeting Agenda: 11/27 or 12/1 depending on availability

Forecast5 Update

Parent Survey Update

Questions re: Master Schedules

Additional Meetings:

December 11

December 20

On-going LRP To-Dos:

- Administrative meetings
 - Steve Boucher
 - Sheldon Tieder
 - Steve Jensen/Marvin Kreps
 - Ed Davenport/John Kemnitzer
- Develop Advisory Committee Charter as necessary
- Explore Shared Svc opportunities
- Long-Range Planning software review
- Statistical Neighbor review & School engagement
- Organizational Charts - District & Building Level (Forecast5?)
- State Mandated Services vs Rhinebeck offerings
- Develop ongoing survey questions/timing
- Set up additional Listening Sessions/Coffees with the Board - timing & topics
- Set up meeting with Realtors
- additional research as feedback gathered

Long Range Planning Goal:

The Board will work to understand and address the challenges of declining enrollment and attaining financial stability. In the first-year of this multi-year goal, the Board will engage the school community and community-at-large in providing feedback regarding a preferred and sustainable model of educational programming, while projecting fiscal assumptions and enrollment data over a 3-5 year period in support of the development of the 2018-19 proposed school budget. In year two, the Board will complete the long-range plan, to be updated annually.

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Schulkind