

**West Windsor Board Retreat
Approved Minutes
August 18, 2016**

Present: Elizabeth Burrows, Nancy Pedrick, Bob Young, Jenifer Aldrich, David Baker

Meeting called to order at 9:18 AM

Additions: SCIP Packet, Number Crunching, Windsor Central Meeting

Minutes: June 23

Bob Young asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 23. Nancy Pedrick moved; seconded by Elizabeth Burrows; motion passed.

Continuous Improvement Plan:

Jenifer Aldrich mentioned there is information from the state that needs to be updated. The plan was established two years ago and replaced the school action plan. Objective is for student learning, designs for goal, professional development, safe school, harassment and bullying, and support from state. Developing social/emotional climate using responsive classroom and this year want to implement within positive behavior support system. We will use data to mark improvement and meeting needs of students. A universal design for learning is a systematic approach to teaching with four phases (read, write, talk, think). This is the way kids need to learn. All kids can learn with UDL systems set up so can backtrack and student can learn. First read, write about, talk about, and then think about it. It is designed to allow all students to participate. Elizabeth Burrows asked what UDL is. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned two teachers went to training and this year someone coming to work with our staff. Bob Young feels reading and writing the teachers still encourage students to make judgments and collaborate. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned this helps all kids to succeed. What is good for one child struggling has proven to be good for all students.

Jenifer Aldrich mentioned at the SU level discussing instruction practices. We did Skillful Teacher which is a dense version of fundamental practices. Working on clarity, why, what, and how teach. Make it specific for all kids and they latch onto what learning. Gives you understanding of why doing something and relate to it. As an SU we are working on clarity. As a staff, by the end of the year, we may do instructional rounds where teachers observe another teacher. This will give us information on how we can change instructional practice. Bob Young asked if can ask kids what learned. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned yes we can. Bob Young stated you need trust level and in West Windsor have trust level. The goal is to improve instructional quality and content is part of the goal. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned it is about practice. The SU is working on curriculum components. Bob Young asked how interact with students and how know knowledgeable about curriculum. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned the SU is covering that. The social studies and science curriculum is weak. Bob Young mentioned it has always been understood that teachers know the content, but some do not. It helps to have involvement with the content. We will add professional development and extending content knowledge around curriculum and skillful teacher. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned we will do instructional rounds in January and will bring data back in February.

The challenge is getting teachers to responsive training. We are trying to get responsive classroom up to us. Teacher language is reminding, reinforcing, and redirecting. Remind kids of how you want them to act and asking them to take ownership. Three rules we have in the school: take care of each other, take care of environment, and take care of self. Focus is on teacher language and school discipline. Sarah Day and I will do this.

Dave Baker mentioned for responsive classroom it is how intensively you do it. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned it depends on where the teacher is. To say have to do full boar does not make sense. Full school has a modified morning meeting and is expected to do in classroom. We end with morning message and here is our day, focus for the day. A greeting where all kids welcomed to the classroom with an activity and sharing. Questions and activity is to engage and have fun for 15-20 minutes. Proven to be effective to get kids together. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned she noticed that when schools have gone to responsive classroom teachers cannot say enough good things about it. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned they have exposure already.

Elizabeth Burrows asked have you looked into growth mindset. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned as administration it is about implementing. Growth mindset is how talk to kids. Bob Young mentioned need to have a goal. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned PBIS is reminding, reinforcing and is a punishment for those who do not get the reinforcement. Bob Young feels is a good fundamental idea but need closure. Nancy Pedrick mentioned the philosophy has to be internalized and needs to be simple and workable. Teachers need to excite the kids to learn. Dave Baker mentioned with more technology kids are not engaged with each other anymore. Kids will do well if they can. We need to do the same thing with teachers.

Jenifer Aldrich mentioned conferences are scheduled November and March right after report cards go out. Teachers want to do a curriculum night, a math night, and a reading night as want to get parents in the building and about what can do with your kids. There was no math homework last year due to new curriculum. What we found is a child can categorize the next step and understand fundamentals behind it. Dave Baker mentioned kids in grades 4-6 struggled with it. Bob Young feels a math night might be better to help parents understand the curriculum. Dave Baker mentioned the new math program has a lot of literacy involved.

The board reviewed the improvement plan.

Vision/Mission:

Jenifer Aldrich mentioned we do have one but is outdated. We should try to put some key anchor points as what want out of the education system for our kids. We need to know our purpose and anchor point for community. Think about one statement would want to make. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned it is important to have aspiration for Albert Bridge. Dave Baker mentioned should reflect the uniqueness of the school. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned we want input from all people. I want everyone to have the same purpose. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned the vision, if money or government no issue and all issues stripped away, what is our greatest aspiration. Mission statement is different from vision. Jenifer Aldrich feels should start with vision. Bob Young feels should look at different stages and what should happen with children. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned the board should start thinking about it. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned

vision and mission should be considered separately. At the next meeting we should consider the vision statement.

Data:

SBAC scores. With Rebecca Holcombe's leadership is less on test scores. We have cohort data. Track my Progress is done four times a year. The test is hard for Kindergarten students to sit for 20 minutes in front of a computer. The third grade is holding steady and grade 4 very bumpy as lots of change over. Grade 5 is solid and a consistent class. In good shape for reading. Grade 6 is right in the middle. Dave Baker mentioned is early in SBAC phase and good to review. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned will see trend in math.

Act 46 Update:

Dave Baker mentioned for us it is just Weathersfield away from a regional as feels some resistance. Do not want to put in a lot of subcommittee work if no interest. Need to do work on regional. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned what if regional was at Weathersfield, as is right next to highway and close for Perkinsville. As a school board member the facilitator is not good. At Windsor Central their facilitator runs the numbers for them. There has been no unified process or direction given to each previous subcommittee. Feels the facilitator should be replaced. Dave Baker mentioned that Ed Connors has a lot of the data. We need to decide as a group to change out the facilitator. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned she does not know the law but feels the committee does not know what missing. Bob Young mentioned at Windsor Central the issues are easier. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned there is no unified curriculum. Bob Young mentioned when the West Windsor Local Act 46 Committee met we left agreeing would leave the process if do not see some motion. This would free people up to look at things independently. Nancy Pedrick mentioned the town and Act 46 Committee are on the same page. Bob Young mentioned it did not know if SU Committee done or just us. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned can informally look, but whole committee needs to disband before can look formally. They would have to form a new committee without West Windsor but could rejoin if invited. Towns are required to have a vote. When run the numbers to be a preferred structure has to have 900 students Pre-K to 12. West Windsor is a non-factor. Hartland, Weathersfield, Windsor can decide to join, Weathersfield, Windsor, West Windsor can do something, or Hartland, West Windsor, Windsor are all scenarios that would work. All choice schools together do not have 900. If other towns want to try regional you would be willing to stay. A side-by-side is not scalable to make it rich enough to be in the mix. Bob Young mentioned that at our Local Act 6 Committee Meeting Glen Seward stated there is a movement to have a petition brought up at Town Meeting to force us to merge with another school. Dave Baker mentioned what can petition the town to do is to designate but cannot petition to merge. Only a 706 Committee has the authority to merge.

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned a number crunching party. People, who like to run numbers, hear about it, and running all different scenarios. The can be set up with a program where can switch screens out. Numbers are all there and find out what they mean. Bob Young mentioned the downside could be making a decision based on numbers but not on kids. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned this is only looking at the bottom tax line. Bob Young feels things are better than they think. One last key piece is what happens to the school. Dave Baker mentioned the town wants the school. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned at Windsor Central the definition of equity is

how much cost for these classes at schools. They discussed how get there. Dave Baker mentioned Windsor does not want their school to go away, as West Windsor does not.

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned if merge with Reading would get enough savings as would be savings on food program. Bob Young feels we should talk to them. What is causing problems is uncertainty and spending. The longer the issue hangs on more people will move. We should talk to their board informally. Reading/West Windsor gives both communities a larger school. Nancy Pedrick feels we might not want to be part of their SU if they want to get rid of small schools. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned their Superintendent mentioned the Act 46 Committee is separate from the SU. Bob Young feels should start with the SU as Act 46 will be gone. Nancy Pedrick asked if Reading would consider joining our SU. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned Reading has 15-19 kids in younger grades. Dave Baker mentioned what does a 3:1 do to sustainability. The West Windsor board should explore. The Board needs to decide in all plans what makes the most sense. The decision is for a long time and what is the draw to West Windsor. Elizabeth Burrows asked how come no movement to create a super district? Dave Baker mentioned there is a great divide with Hartland. Bob Young asked Jenifer if anything to be aware of if schools combined. Jenifer Aldrich feels could house Pre-K-2 at Reading and 3-8 at ABS as could do high quality middle school work. Jenifer Aldrich feels it is reasonable to think about multi-age learning as learn from each other as there are advantages if done well. Jenifer feels would be a good thing and allow us to do some of the work we want to do.

VEHI By Law Change:

Dave Baker mentioned this is a petition of the VSBA of Rick Scott, a Bridport board member. Petitioning the VEHI board to reconsider by-laws. They have a five member executive member board and two are NEA members. School boards manage and pay for the plans and too large union representation. We need a motion to authorize Bob Young to sign the petition to request the by-law change the 5 member board of directors, from two union members to one and replace the other member with VSBA representation. Nancy Pedrick moved to replace one NEA member with a VSBA member; seconded by Elizabeth Burrows; motion passed 2:1.

SCIP:

Elizabeth Burrows mentioned this is School Community in Partnership. SCIP is putting together a packet of information to give to parents the first day of school including what SCIP does, film nights, and page on importance of town meeting. There will be a welcome letter from the school board, our role, and a page about what Act 46 is and where we are. As board members we should introduce ourselves to parents. Bob Young will write about the school board, Nancy Pedrick will write about town meeting, and Elizabeth will write on Act 46.

Policies:

Coordinated School Health & Wellness Policy:

Policy is research based. Move to next meeting. Jenifer does not see any issue.

Employee Harassment and Bullying:

Addresses bullying. Superintendent has to appoint a male/female to receive complaint. Dave Baker mentioned staff bullying is not at the state level. Jenifer Aldrich feels it may be vague. Feels it should be passed and amended before next teacher contract.

Agenda: September 22

Policies

Tuition Voucher

Act 46 Update

Jim Taft - maintenance update

Financials

Vision Statement

Continuous Improvement Plan

Adjournment:

Bob Young asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Pedrick moved; seconded by Elizabeth Burrows; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tessier, Board Secretary