**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE – EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE**

**April 14, 2016**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requires minutes for all school committee and subcommittee meetings.  The recorded minutes are open to the public for inspection within 10 days of the meeting. Minutes recorded provide a brief overview that reflects the subject matter discussed and any decisions made.  If any motions are made clearly state the motion and indicate who made the motion and who seconded the motion.  Record who was in favor, opposed, or abstained.  The names of any person(s) appearing before the committee are to be indicated.

**Date:**  Thursday, April 14, 2016 **Time:** 9:30 a.m. **Place:** Mohawk Superintendent’s Conference Room

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Kate Barrows [Colrain], Leslie Rule [Plainfield] and Martha Thurber [MTRSD School Committee]

**Committee Members Not in Attendance:**  None

**School Committee Members in Attendance:**  None

**School Administration**: Michael Buoniconti [Superintendent], Lynn Dole [Mohawk Principal], Joanne Giguere {BSE Principal], Sarah Jetzon [Curriculum Coordinator 7-12], Wayne Kermensky [Hawlemont Principal], Emma Liebowitz [Sanderson Principal], Amy Looman [Colrain Central Principal], Leann Loomis [Director, Pupil Personnel Services], Rachel Porter [Curriculum Director pre-K to 6]; Jessie Porter-Henry [Vice Principal Mohawk],

**Others in Attendance:**  None

**Documents:**

Draft BEST Education Subcommittee Minutes March 24, 2016

Draft: Restructuring Options for Further Review

**Call to Order:** Martha Thurber called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Citizen Comments:** None

Martha Thurber introduced Leslie Rule as a new BEST Education Subcommittee member. Ms Rule then provided some brief background on her experience as an educator and consultant.

**Minutes**

On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by Kate Barrows, the Mohawk’s BEST Committee voted to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2016 meeting, with minor corrections. Leslie Rule abstained.

**Feedback on Draft Mohawk BEST Facilities & Finance Subcommittee Options for Further Review**

Martha Thurber distributed the options agreed upon so far by the BEST Facilities & Finance Subcommittee as being worthy of significant further review and analysis and asked for feedback from DLT members. She noted that the BEST Committee would also review these at its meeting later in the day and that the plan was to thereafter distribute these broadly to the community via a press release. She also noted that at this point all of the items presented were simply ideas that appeared to warrant further analysis. Negative reaction and/or other ideas were encouraged.

Among the ideas and suggestions:

• Leanne Loomis suggested identifying willing parents to participate in various focus groups to discuss the idea of incorporating all Grade 6 students into the Mohawk MS.

• Sarah Jetzon suggested not making a broad distribution of these ideas at this point, but rather to develop additional materials to provide more background, context and rationale for the ideas presented.

• Joanne Giguere suggested that the DLT begin working on the outlines of a 6-8/5-8 curriculum.

• Rachel Porter questioned whether these options could be phased in and assessed over time. Superintendent Buoniconti said any plan would need to be phased as it would take time to develop and pass underlying amendments to the existing Mohawk Regional Agreement.

• Jesse Porter-Henry suggested looking at Twin Valley MS/HS in Vermont as a model of an integrated 6-12 MS/HS.

• Joanne Giguere put forth the idea of a separate MS using the existing BSE campus. The existing MS wing at Mohawk might then be used for a “collegiate” HS in cooperation with GCC or another college. This also would provide additional space for new and/or expanded PBL/hands-on vocational courses at the HS. She also suggested the idea of having separate “academies” at the HS, each with a separate focus such as college prep/academics, biology/ecology, etc.

• Leslie Rule suggested forming several focus groups of students to determine what courses/academies and learning formats most interest them. She urged that we use this opportunity to revision education in the District.

• Wayne Kermensky noted that, based on his experience at Hawlemont, he saw several key issues facing small elementary schools in the District: classes (Grade levels) were too small; physical facilities were too large; bus rides were too often too long; and not all students had access to home Internet. He urged that whatever models were adopted should take into consideration these issues.

• Rachel Porter suggested courses/programs that partnered with local businesses, such as Zoar Outdoor and Berkshire East.

**Next Steps**

Martha Thurber said she would take these suggestions back to the full BEST Committee at this evening’s meeting. Superintendent Buoniconti said the DLT would meet several time over the next couple of weeks to discuss in depth the educational implications and opportunities of the ideas presented.

**Update on Mohawk’s BEST “Mohawk Marketing” Discussions**

Not discussed

**Vocational/Internship Opportunities at Mohawk**

This topic was covered in the prior discussion.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by Leslie Rule, the Subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Next Meeting: TBD

Submitted By:

Martha Thurber