**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**MOHAWK’S BEST EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

**May 26, 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, May 26, 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], Eric Glazier [Heath Principal], Joanne Giguere {BSE Principal], Sarah Jetzon [Curriculum Coordinator 7-12], Emma Liebowitz [Sanderson Principal], Leann Loomis [Director, Pupil Personnel Services], Rachel Porter [Curriculum Director pre-K to 6]; Wayne Kermensky [Hawlemont Principal]

**Others in Attendance:**  None

**Documents:** None

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

**Approve Minutes:** On a motion by Kate Barrows, seconded by Leslie Rule, the Committee voted to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2016 meeting.

**Citizen Comments:** None

**Discussion: 6th Grade at Mohawk Parent Focus Groups:**

Martha Thurber noted that all of the operational proposals currently under discussion by BEST included the concept of moving 6th grade students to Mohawk to become part of the Middle School. In order to get feedback from parents on this idea, BEST is proposing to have a “focus group” of parents discuss their reactions. The DLT was generally in agreement with this concept and, after discussion, it was agreed that:

• A letter will go out as quickly as possible from the Superintendent explaining the concept, inviting participation and giving a range of things participants might think about prior to coming (e.g., what might be the potential benefits and challenges of this idea?). Leslie Rule will provide a draft of that letter.

• Each session should be limited to 6-12 participants. Principals will look over the list of parents responding and contact additional parents, if necessary, in order to get a good cross-section of grades. Ideal composition will include parents of current Grade 4-6 students, as well as several Grade 7 parents (to be identified by Lynn Dole and elementary principals) in order to provide perspective on the transition of their students to the Middle School environment.

• Rather that holding one focus group session at each school (as originally proposed), participants will be given a choice of three potential times on the same date (June 9) from 9-10am, 1-2 pm or 6-7 pm at Mohawk.

• Sessions will be moderated by Leslie Rule; principals and SC members will be encouraged to come.

• A Google-based calendar will be created to track sign-ups for each session.

**Update from District Leadership Team on Curriculum Work:**

Lynn Dole, Sarah Jetzon and Rachel Porter then provided BEST Education members with an update on their work to enhance the overall curriculum by adding more “hands-on” learning opportunities for students. They noted that STEM offerings have been expanded, including a reworking of the Middle School PBL program to focus on STEM and expanding HS STEM offerings, e.g., computer science and robotics. They also discussed new interdisciplinary courses that combine, e.g., art and English and new elective offerings such as Contemporary Issues in Art, Hiking and Nature Drawing. They also noted expanded independent study opportunities, a wider range of AP courses and the Senior Capstone project, which will be a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2017. Finally, Leann Loomis noted that some SPED classes were being refocused toward practical skill building as well as assistance with academic subjects.

**Other:**

None

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Kate Barrows, seconded by Leslie Rule, the Subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Next Meetings: TBD

Submitted By:

Martha Thurber