

To: Oneida School Community Advisory Committee

From: Steve Bocciolatt

Re: Meeting Notes – Meeting of April 27, 2023

Date: June 2, 2023

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Approximately 19 committee members were in attendance. Sign-in sheet misplaced

Consultant: Stephen Bocciolatt

Resource: Matthew Carpenter

Location: Seneca Street Elementary School

Note: A building tour was conducted prior to the committee meeting by Penny Houser, Principal of Seneca Street Elementary School.

1. Mr. Bocciolatt began the meeting with a review of the agenda for the meeting

- Introduce New Committee Member(s)
- Questions/Comments from Building Tour
- Review Minutes from 3/23/2023 Meeting
 - Review and discuss if any additional advantages and disadvantages should be added to the Pre-K-5 current grade configuration as outlined in the minutes.
- Transportation Overview
- Grade Center Option – Small Group Discussion
- Public Questions/Comments
- Next Meeting Dates/Locations/Topics

2. Questions/Comments from the building tour

- Tour Feedback (Tour of Seneca Street Elementary)
 - 3rd grade classroom-open space, moveable space
 - Well maintained facility
 - One gym/cafeteria (shared space)
 - Recess space challenging (in a variety of spaces)
 - Kindergarten has door that has direct access to the playground
 - K-2 each has own bathroom, 3-5 use group bathrooms
 - Was there ever a second floor at Seneca? Looking to get more information on this...

- Common themes (advantages and disadvantages) of the current Pre-K-5 grade configuration were shared from the four break-out sessions from the previous meeting.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation – living close to school -Sense of community/community within a community/sense of home on a personal level/building relationships. -Consistency for families to have their children in one building. Participation of family members at school events. -Vertical alignment/collaboration -Peer role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Single graded buildings/levels – no teaching partner to collaborate with. Students are with the same group every year. -Scheduling for shared staff -Inequities - inefficient use of resources, shared spaces/single grade/class size not balanced - Horizontal alignment - lack of consistency across grade levels in the district/collaboration issue - Lack of exposure to diversity/isolating community in each building -Social grouping issues (going into middle school) -Limits ability to provide push-in support to students with special needs/least restrictive problems (special education)

3. Minutes from 3/23/2023 meeting were not reviewed for any possible changes.

4. Mr. Bocciaolatt gave a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the following items:

- Purpose of Study/Critical Question
 - The purpose of this committee is to answer the question, “In considering a number of options, is there a better way educationally and fiscally to reconfigure the grades and facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?”
- Reviewed takeaways from committee meeting #1, meeting #2, and meeting #3
 - Meeting #1: The district has seen declining enrollment and will likely continue to see enrollments drop. The study process will be open to ensure there is not a perception it is being conducted behind closed doors. The advisory committee was formed to assist the consultant throughout the process, but the final recommendation(s) will be the consultant’s.
 - Meeting #2:
 1. Building tour of Durhamville
 2. The 2020 Building Condition Survey (BCS) costs for all buildings in the district identified approximately \$15,800,000 of work to be completed in the district’s facilities. This dollar amount does not take into account the work being done in the current capital project.
 3. Two common approaches to organizing elementary attendance zones
 - a) Neighborhood concept
 - b) Grade center concept (Princeton Plan)
 - Meeting #3:
 1. Building tour of Willard Prior
 2. The neighborhood school concept has been embraced by Oneida for the location of its elementary schools.
 3. The current elementary school class sizes are well below guidelines set by policy, general procedures, and the teacher contract.
 4. The most common grade configuration of schools in New York and the U.S. is K-5, 6-8, 9 -12, although there does not seem to be any consistent research that indicates that one grade pattern is necessarily better for student learning than another.
 5. The elementary special subject area program is comparable across all four schools.
 6. Advantages and disadvantages of current Pre-K-5 grade configuration were discussed in four break-out groups. Common threads from each group will be noted at the next committee meeting.

- In-Zone/Out-of-Zone: Students attending each elementary building from their elementary attendance zone (In-Zone) and from other elementary buildings attendance zones (Out-of-Zone)
 - DV 44 of the 221 students are out-of-zone
 1. 26/44 are CSE related
 - NB 18 of the 178 students are out-of-zone
 1. No students of the 18 are CSE related
 - SS 43 of the 206 students are out-of-zone
 1. No students of the 43 are CSE related; 8/43 are ESL/ENL students
 - WP 49 of the 141 students are out-of-zone
 1. 27/49 are CSE related
 - Total: 153 or 20.5% students attend a school out-of-zone across the elementary schools

- Transportation Update
 - Reviewed transportation
 1. Review of # of vehicles/replacement plan for vehicles/cost of 66 passenger bus
 2. Transportation policy for transporting students
 3. Bus routes – 43 daily am and pm bus runs to the district’s buildings
 4. Times of regular bus runs
 5. Number and location of out of district bus runs
 6. Distance between the four elementary schools are located relatively close together

- Breakout Session: Two groups
 - Discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a grade center configuration based on 2022-2023 student enrollment.
 - An initial conversation was held about a grade center plan with two K-2 buildings and two 3-5 buildings. The committee wanted to focus the discussion in the breakout session on a K-1;2-3;4-5 grade center configuration (See Appendix A)

- Following the break-out sessions, Mr. Bocciolatt presented initial takeaways from this meeting.
 - The district has few students who walk to school. The average ride for students is approximately 60 minutes (A follow-up will be given on the # of walkers at a future meeting)
 - The district uses a double trip system. The first trip is for the high school and middle school students and the second trip is for the elementary students. There are 43 trips daily (am & pm).
 - The district has approximately 21% of its elementary students attending a school out of their attendance zone.

6. Upcoming School Community Advisory Committee meetings

- **Cancelled:** Thursday, May 25, 2023 at North Broad Elementary School in the gymnasium due to Memorial Day Weekend. Rescheduled to Thursday, June 1
- **Cancelled:** Thursday, June 1, 2023 due to elementary concert at North Broad
- **Rescheduled** to Monday, June 5, 2023 at North Broad Elementary School in the gymnasium.

Note: An optional tour will precede the meeting and will begin at 5:45 pm. The meetings will begin at 6:30 pm and last no longer than two hours.

C: Matt Carpenter

Appendix A
Break-out Sessions on K-1;2-3;4-5 Grade Center Configuration

Group 1: Option 2

<p style="text-align: center;">Advantages</p> <p>(Academic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Horizontal collaboration -Equitable/shared resources -Equity in class sizes -Diversity – exposure to all students in all grade levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consistent expectations across all grade levels -Special education services across grade levels -Consistency with service providers 	<p style="text-align: center;">Disadvantages</p> <p>(Academic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collaborating amongst grade level colleagues -Inequities in terms of shared staffing -Horizontal curriculum alignment -Lack of diverse opportunities/mix of students
<p style="text-align: center;">Advantages</p> <p>(Logistics)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scheduling – equitable -More options for mixing students within a grade level 	<p style="text-align: center;">Disadvantages</p> <p>(Logistics)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation -A lot of transition for students -Attending events at multiple schools for multiple students

Group 2: Option 2

<p style="text-align: center;">Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staggered start time -Shared common resources, dedicated staff to each building, minimizing shared staff -Shared instructional strategies -Access to common programs/field trips -Single Oneida Community “One Oneida” adults and students -special education services -Consistency in transiency -flexible grouping of students -Less social stigma -staff morale -positive impact on community opportunities (little league, etc.) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation (but data shows it is minimal) -logistical staggered start time -Change - change is hard -Parental feedback/concerns
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