

**June 11, 2020 Session Highlights**  
Session Held via Zoom Video Conference

**Updates Pertinent to Our Work**

June 11, 2020 Session Highlights Session via Zoom Videoconference

- George Cormier, the business consultant whom the Committee had hoped to work with on the financial analysis, withdrew his name from further consideration due to family obligations. Outreach was conducted to secure the names of other consultants experienced at this kind of work in New Hampshire and Vermont. Four were identified. One never responded, one declined consideration due to his current workload, one has been interviewed and is interested, and one will be interviewed. RHR Smith, a consulting firm with staff in western Maine and Vermont, are the interested firm – after a productive and positive interview, they offered to invest a day at no cost better understanding the project.

**ACTION: Kyle and Carole will coordinate a visit with RHR Smith. Kyle will schedule a time to interview the second consultant and invite Carole, Don and Kristin to join the interview.**

- On August 11th, the Canaan bond vote will be confirmed, following the procedures necessary to legally certify it. The originally approved bond amount and conditions remain the same.
- In their May 7th and 14th sessions, the Sub-Group re-opened the issue of which school configuration to model. Given the pandemic and related shifts in community and economic health, the need for a re-vote/confirmation on the Canaan bond, the overall condition of the Canaan school buildings as outlined in the Black River Design report and the reality of future enrollment trends/state funding support, the Sub-Group believes it is worthwhile considering one location for middle and high schools at this time. In previous discussions, this was perceived as a potential eventuality, perhaps happening five years post-consolidation. All things considered, now may be the time to embrace this. Discussion about what to model, and why, included the following:
  - o As a result of the Black River Design report and subsequent follow-up, we have a good idea of what the Canaan building needs in terms of upkeep and improvements. With this, there is an expectation that Canaan would pay for its improvements. We need a similar assessment of Colebrook, conducted by someone who is local, acquainted with the facility, and credible.
  - o The Canaan bond covers one million of the needed upgrades, but that clearly is not the total amount. Colebrook will not support investing in Canaan – and it is a fair question as to how Canaan would feel about investing in Colebrook. Tuition/student funding calculations would be a primary method for this, so it is possible it will be part of the embedded cost, in any case.
  - o A cornerstone consideration is what we learned from the DOE Commissioner: there is 60% crossover in partaking of programs/classes when CTE and the high school are co-located and 4% crossover when they are not. New Hampshire is very motivated to support this crossover for workforce development reasons.

- The radically changed COVID19-related landscape (economic/health/social) means a one campus middle school/high school grades 7-12 is worth analyzing. This, in combination with “Model 11”, heretofore known as “Model 1” and the one campus model as “Model 2” are the first financial analysis priorities – and this will be presented as a recommendation for the full committee’s review on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

This approach aligns with our north star – doing what is best for students versus “What can we sell to the community?”

**The Committee considered the Sub-Group’s recommendation for modeling two approaches – “Model 1 (High school and CTE in Canaan/middle school in Colebrook, with elementary schools largely untouched and Pittsburgh middle school remaining there) and Model 2 – one middle school/high school grades 7-12 in Colebrook, with elementary schools absorbing grade 6)” and approved it with the following comments:**

- While Vermont does not provide building aid for CTE, it does invest in programming.
  - Having staff on one campus would allow for expanded instruction/utilization of teacher expertise across grades 7-12. It would also allow for CTE to be available for middle school grades.
  - It is essential that we move away from “Colebrook/Canaan” and instead regard the locations as “our schools”.
  - The Articles of Agreement will outline the who-pays-for-what terms; the commitment is to an interstate approach, governance-wise. Mutuality/joint ownership and collaboration is a cornerstone of this project.
- The single school staffing model work is incomplete. Woodsville has been identified as a similar size model and can be utilized for staffing numbers/ratios. See notes shared by Kyle in May. The educational benefit in terms of electives/array of courses based upon input gathered earlier from students and staff has not been compiled. **Action: Working with Kyle and Kristin will pull together the staffing numbers utilizing the Woodsville model and including student preferences/staff recommendations in terms of course offerings. Debra will serve as first reader. The services of Steve Sanborn and Judy DeNova will be secured to create a cohesive single staffing model that can be used to help voters better understand what is possible through consolidation from cost, quality and array of offerings perspectives. Target draft date for Committee review is July 2<sup>nd</sup> – in time for review and discussion at the next Committee meeting.**