

Pelham Education Visioning Committee
Meeting Minutes: September 23, 2010

Attendance: Kathy Weilerstein (School Committee), Jim Huber (Select Board), Bill Martell (Select Board), Fred Vanderbeck (Finance Committee), Warren Hall (Planning Board), Tom Fanning (past School Committee), Claire Kurtz (past School Committee), Michael Hussin (past School Committee), Sarah Hayes, Lisa Desjarlais (Pelham Principal)

Not present: Ed Martin (selectboard), Tara Luce, Darius Modestow

1. Introductions – each member introduced themselves and shared his/her background and connection to past and future educational opportunities for children in Pelham
2. Discussion included:
 - a. Reviewing the charge; “To explore options for the quality educational future of Pelham’s school-aged children – taking into consideration financial viability, governance, leadership, and configuration or structure – and to provide a written report outlining the options, implications for each, and recommendations for next steps.”
 - b. WHY this committee was formed; general financial challenges for the town as a whole, declining enrollment in the elementary school, Amherst School Committee discussing the possibility of getting out of Union 26, the 4-Town study recommendation.
 - c. The importance of all members knowing the same relevant information: history, current issues, specific data (Pelham School budget, Pelham Town budget, per pupil expenses, regional agreement, central office expenses), school choice and charter school policies/procedures/implications,
 - d. Need to create a meeting structure – more clarity on goals and process (will consider breaking into subgroups)
 - e. Leadership – possibility of SC and Selectboard Reps as co-chairs or other member. Kathy agreed to facilitate meetings until we decide. Agenda for next meeting was determined prior to end of this meeting.
3. Next steps
 - a. Review Shutesbury’s scenario list
 - b. Develop specific ‘scenarios’ for Pelham to study (which grade configurations and with which towns)
 - c. Consider inviting ‘speakers’ to address specific issues/topics

Agenda for next meeting, Wednesday, October 6th @ 6:30PM:

1. Update on Sept. 28 joint Amherst SC & Pelham SC mtg and response
2. Review scenarios choices to consider for future study
3. Discuss criteria to evaluate
4. School Choice and Charter school policies
5. Budget considerations
6. Future meeting agenda