

WITHDRAWAL STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Belmont Mill Building - 14 Mill Street, 4th Floor

September 25th, 2023

IN ATTENDANCE

Committee Members: Randi Johnson, Committee Chairperson, Charlie Krautmann, Jessica Treadway, Tracey LeClair, Travis O'Hara and Sumner Dole

Consultant: Phil McCormack

Absent: Cheryl Gordon, Mark Ekberg and Calvin Todd

Guests: Nathan Fennessy, Michael Tursi and Debbie Thompson

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Randi Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

MEETING MINUTES

Review/Approval of the September 11th 2023 meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Jessica Treadway and seconded by Travis O'Hara to approve the September 11th, 2023 Withdrawal Study Committee Meeting Minutes with noted changes. The motion passed by unanimous vote with Tracey LeClair and Travis O'Hara abstaining due to their absences.

The next meeting of the Withdrawal Study Committee will be October 9th, 2023 in Canterbury.

LEGAL GUIDANCE

- Nathan Fennessy of PretiFlaherty was present to discuss any questions the committee had regarding his responses to the committee's questions. (Response is attached to these minutes)
- The committee had the following additional questions:
 - Who's responsible for maintaining records for the school of record?
 - Canterbury will be responsible for tracking which students go where but the receiving school would maintain the student records.
 - If a current student with an IEP that has transportation included and an out of district placement wanted to select one of the choice schools, would transportation be provided?
 - These are two separate obligations, one is to provide for students and the other is to provide transportation for disabled students. If a currently placed out of district student wants to go to one of the choice schools, the parent will need to make the argument that the other district better suits the students needs
 - Whose obligation is it to transport homeless students?
 - Canterbury will be responsible for transporting homeless students.
 - In regards to buyout, what happens to the taxes that Canterbury paid already?

- Counsel would need to be retained by the town of Canterbury to negotiate the buyout amount.
- Do we need to comply with 194c-3 in regards to Superintendent Services?
 - Because Canterbury would be a single school district they would not have to comply with 194c:3

COST OF PLAN

- Randi Johnson indicated that after the last meeting we identified an additional 100k that would need to be added to the budget for out of district tuition and transportation of said students . We also clarified that the transportation cost is per bus and there is no increased charge for Canterbury due to distance.
- Superintendent Michael Tursi and Business Administrator Debbie Thompson were present to discuss any questions the committee had regarding the budget information discussed at the last meeting. The group had additional questions that were clarified as follows:
 - Teachers: A withdrawal would be considered a RIFF to the current collective bargaining agreement and that Canterbury teachers with higher seniority could take positions from those at the Belmont Schools if they had been there longer. Teachers that chose to remain at CES would then have to apply for positions at CES and form a new union and CBA.
 - Staff: Staff choosing to stay at CES would need to apply for positions.
 - Assets: All assets including computer equipment for Students and Staff would need to be included in the buyout negotiations. CES would need to establish their own server room and equipment (IT Services could be contracted).
 - Software: The budget reflects Canterbury's share of district wide costs thus things like Software would need to be adjusted to show 100% of the cost and not the apportion rate
 - Special Education:
 - CES would need to hire an administrator to oversee Special Education
 - Additional staff member would need to sit in on all Special Education Meetings
 - A LEA (Local Education Agency) Representative would be needed to act as an Out of District Liaison
 - An additional 180k needs to be added to the budget to cover current 1:1s and services for Middle and High School Students
 - Buildings & Grounds: A facilities manager would need to be hired but this role could also act as a lead custodian. New equipment would need to be purchased for buildings and grounds maintenance.
 - Food Services: A Food Services Director would need to be hired. It was noted that the current food costs are part of volume pricing that the district gets as a whole and would need to be increased to support a single school district.
 - The budget reflects \$361,415.00 in benefits for employees. This is based on volume pricing that the district gets as a whole. We could go through Health Trust or School Care and get combined with other small districts for a group rate.

- The budget reflects \$267,725.00 in current transportation costs. This is based on the long standing relationship between Shaker Regional and First Student. If Canterbury were to withdraw, it would be a net new contract with whomever provides transportation.
- Superintendent Services: If Belmont were to agree to allow Canterbury to contract Superintendent Services through the SAU it would be a warrant article. It was stated that although Canterbury would be a single school district, that it is still double the work for whomever takes this on.
- State Funding Clarification: The state deems Canterbury's adequate aid to be \$1,078,453.00 Based on Canterbury's Tax Base, it is determined that Canterbury's share of that is \$536,549.00 thus the actual amount we received from the State was \$542,304.00 for Canterbury Students
- Space: Space at CES would need to be evaluated to determine what max capacity is as well as office space for new staff positions if Canterbury were to withdraw.

RECEIVING SCHOOL QUESTIONS

- Phil McCormack provided the committee with the information from the receiving school districts. Committee members agreed to review the information over the next two weeks and come back with questions.

NEXT STEPS AND OPEN QUESTIONS

- Committee Recommendation
 - The committee is targeting their October 9th date for making their final decision in this matter. All information that has been collected so far will be reviewed from start to end prior to voting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made at 7:52 pm by Jessica Treadway and seconded by Travis O'Hara to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Randi Johnson
Withdrawal Study Committee Chair