

November 4, 2018 Highlights

Updates Pertinent to Our Work

- The Secretary of Education in Vermont is supportive of this team's efforts. Karen talked directly with him.
- Jennifer Rancourt will not be joining us as a team member; her schedule does not allow it.
- Dan Wade is due back in January; Kyle is keeping him apprised of our progress.
- The October 4th session notes were modified to reflect that pre-k is a priority to this group – adopting a model consistent with what is available in Vermont is the ideal. While this is not within the current scope of work of this team, there is agreement that it is important.
- Alum e-mail contact information has proven difficult to obtain. In most instances, it does not exist. For now, the team is setting aside the possibility of seeking input from recent alums on what they wish they had access to in high school.

Modeling Options for a Re-Envisioned Future

- See handouts "Model Rubric" and "Top 3 Model Pros and Cons" – Both dated 11/1/2018
- The Process the Model Team Utilized:
 - Three meetings were held –
 - Meeting one focused on creating the rubric and ensuring enrollment numbers were included in every model. The intent is to show the impact on each school. All involved in this exploration were invited to submit models.
 - Meeting two - the models initially submitted were reviewed. Discussion ensued about single versus multiple middle and high schools. Additional models were generated.
 - Meeting three focused on narrowing to the most viable/promising models utilizing a pros/cons approach. Every option for each community was reviewed.
- One superintendent/central office was not discussed and is not driving the modeling process. While it is a possibility, it is not an area of focus at this time.
- Essential next steps:
 - Definitions for key terms must be created. Examples include:
 - Alternative education
 - Charter
 - Dual enrollment
 - High school completion program
 - Special education
 - The building inventory and student offerings work that was compiled in September and October must be overlaid onto the models.
 - Financial analysis must be performed for the final 1-2 models. It must factor in cost per student, by community.
- Timeline for our work:
 - We will hold a special meeting in two or so weeks to further discuss the models and ensure all understand the options and the tradeoffs of each.
 - At our December session, we hope to form a recommendation.
 - January's session will be used to prepare for one all-community public meeting, which will be held mid-January.

- o All timeline considerations are based upon school budget timelines.
- Thoughts from the team about the three finalist models:

Model 15

- o Model 15 requires the most bussing and Columbia's bussing will be especially tedious. Travel is increased by up to 30 miles. For students on the fringe, this is especially challenging and may result in opting out of this region. The goal is to regain kids who are currently enrolling out of the region.
- o Alternative education is proficiency-based and the students frequently change their minds about what to enroll in. Distance is a real challenge in these situations.
- o A single middle school is good, though it will result in empty building space.
- o Elementary schools are untouched.
- o Colebrook could move the high school to the elementary school.

Model 11

- o Elementary children are all close to home and there is potential for pre-k programs.
- o School to work is simplified from the employer's vantage point.
- o All are within 20 miles.
- o It causes the least change/amount of disruption of any of the models.
- o Building improvements are needed to some buildings and alternative sources of funding would be sought for this (philanthropy/federal government).
- o 5th grade transition for Norton is substantial.
- o High school is under one roof.
- o There is choice in middle school.
- o Streamline curriculum and simplified high school scheduling.
- o a/p is not split up.
- o As children grow up, the distance to school increases slightly, aligning with their ability to cope with it.
- o All buildings will be occupied.
- o Staffing efficiencies are likely.

Model 12

- o Stewartstown has central office and alternative education with small children going to Colebrook or Pittsburg.
- o It is the most efficient model, financially.