

Approved

**Act 46 Working Group
Sept. 26, 2017 Meeting
Cabot School Library**

Minutes

In attendance: Karen Larsen, Rory Thibault, Billie O'Connor, Roz Daniels, Aimee Ducharme, Jenn Boucher, Chris Tormey

Karen Larsen called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Public Comment:

- a. Billie reported about several discussion she has had with students who have recently left Cabot School. She found that all of them mentioned the desire for a larger peer group and/or greater access to extracurricular opportunities as their reason for switching to a larger school. However, according to Billie there had been some difficulty for those students in taking advantage of those extracurricular options (timing, space, etc.). Billie described the positive experience that she's had on the Cabot School Scholar's Bowl team, and suggested that we should try to develop more extra-curricular offerings at Cabot (in the visual arts, for example). Billie also described her recent digital efforts to make the "Cabot Academy" proposal easier to visualize, and promised to share her work in progress with the group.
- b. Rory reported on conversation with Barre resident about Cabot's offerings. His take away: that in our efforts to "find a home" in a new Supervisory Union, the philosophy and personnel in that SU would be important to consider. Roz followed up with her concern that our new SU should not be so large that access to specific staff like Special Services director would become difficult.

Draft Minutes from the 9/12 Meeting were approved without amendment.

Discussion:

- a. Aimee reported that she has been in the process of putting a list together of people in the community who might be interested in participating in after school enrichment activities. She also updated on her efforts to bring together a group of Cabot alumni to discuss how their education/experience at Cabot had been helpful to them: Aimee is working with Angela to coordinate using this kind of discussion as part of marketing for the school.

- b. Rory added that he's been brainstorming with several local fly-fishermen on a process to introduce Cabot School students to this activity.
- c. Roz mentioned that she will be working with Aimee and Angela on Cabot School marketing efforts, specifically in developing videos of Cabot alumni talking about the impact of the school, as well as working on a "Friends of Cabot School" website to reach out to alumni.
- d. Members discussed the general challenge of attracting new students to Cabot. Specific points: many students who have begun their school careers in a Waldorf School setting tend to continue with that model (and peer group) into high school; more effort has to be made to develop a sales effort for Cabot School (introductory brochure, website). Chris suggested that those efforts would have to come from community volunteers, but that Dave Schilling would be an excellent resource on things to highlight about the school in whatever marketing efforts were made. The group also discussed the value of developing a structure for an outreach/shadowing component as part of this effort, that would specifically invite eighth-grade students to spend a day at Cabot shadowing a high school student.
- e. Review of progress on research assignments for AGS application:

Chris reviewed data he'd obtained on AP offerings at Cabot and the success rate on the AP exams. Karen will follow up on researching course offerings at the high school. Aimee, Angela and Roz will continue work on marketing. There was discussion concerning an important part of the AGS application: that being which SU Cabot as an independent district would be a part of.
- f. .Karen gave a brief update on the Cabot Academy proposal. An article about the proposal in the Caledonia Record that appeared Sept. 26 will be followed with another in the Cabot Chronicle. The group working to develop the proposal is focusing at this time on public education about it, and has chosen to postpone a request for UDAG funds to get the program started to Town Meeting Day.
- g. Chris gave an update on the Act 46 process. Despite the reduced savings that would result, the Caledonia Cooperative towns (Walden, Waterford, and Barnet) continue to have an interest in Cabot joining their preK-8 district. The School Board will hold a community forum on Thursday, October 5 to present information and answer questions on the two main options it has been researching: closing the high school and merging with the Caledonia Cooperative District, or continuing to operate the high school and filing an "Alternative Governance Proposal" with the state by late December. After the forum, the School Board will solicit input from community members on the two proposals through a survey, before deciding as a board on one of the options on October 16th.

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Action steps:

- a. Members agreed to continue the research they have been doing to assist in building the pieces of a strong AGS proposal.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 3rd at 6:30 PM in the Cabot School library

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm

Respectfully submitted, Chris Tormey