

Cabot School Community Forum

Update on School Merger
Discussions

March 21, 2016

Tonight's presentation:

- Context for school merger discussions: Act 46
- Our process here in Cabot
- Update on our discussions so far:
 - Potential benefits for our students of merging with Twinfield or Danville
 - Possible configurations of merged districts

Act 46 Overview

- Goals
- Requirements
- Incentives
- Timeline

Goals of Act 46

- Improve opportunities and learning for students
- Increase efficiency, decrease costs per pupil
- Improve sustainability of schools

Act 46 Requirements

- School districts of under 900 students shall develop a plan by which Act 46 goals can be met
- School districts shall hold discussions with other districts to see if/how merging into a larger district can better meet Act 46 goals
- Plans must be approved by VT State Board of Education by November 30, 2017

Act 46 Incentives

- Approved consolidated districts receive:
 - Reduction in property tax rate for first 4 years
 - Transition Implementation Grant of \$150,000
 - Continuation of Small Schools Grant
 - Limit of +/- 5% on property tax rate
- Districts who choose not to consolidate:
 - Lose Small Schools Grant and “Hold harmless” protection from decreased student numbers
 - May be placed in a district by Agency of Education

Act 46 Timeline

- By July 1, 2017: Consolidation plans approved by voters of all towns involved
- By November 30, 2017: VT State Board of Education approves or rejects district plans
- By July 1, 2019: New consolidated districts begin operation

Our process in Cabot

- Jan-March 2016: Separate study groups with board/administrators of Twinfield and Danville Schools
 - Have met 3-4 times with each school group
 - Focus of discussions: How might merging our schools improve opportunities for Cabot students?
- March 21, 2016: Share findings thus far with community, and get feedback/input

Our process in Cabot

- March 30: Joint meeting with Danville and Twinfield boards/administrators
 - Determine interest for study of benefits of a three-school merger
 - At Cabot School Library, 6:00-8:00 PM

April, May 2016: continue study group discussions

--- Logistics, impacts of potential merger

Our process in Cabot

- Fall 2016: Larger study committee to be formed
 - Board members and community members
 - Will do in-depth research into potential merger options and their potential financial, educational and cultural impacts on our students and communities
 - May develop specific school merger proposal for approval by voters

By July 2017: Voters must approve any school merger plan

Benefits for Cabot Students: Merging with Twinfield

- Potential benefits across all grade levels:
 - Larger number of peers
 - Larger number and diversity of teachers
 - Larger number of sports and clubs
 - More options for scheduling

Benefits for Cabot Students: Merging with Twinfield

- Potential benefits for high school students:
 - Larger number of electives possible
 - Sufficient numbers to increase extracurricular opportunities (debate club, spring sports, etc)
 - Increased foreign language offerings
 - Greater access to personalized learning (The Renaissance Program)
 - Broader range of mathematics courses

Benefits for Cabot Students: Merging with Twinfield

- Potential benefits for elementary students:
 - Larger number of students per grade allows for
 - More flexibility to address varied student needs and learning styles
 - More opportunities for support and enrichment for all students
 - Expanded support for reading and math (MTSS)
 - Increased collaboration among teachers
 - Greater possibilities for students with common interests

Benefits for Cabot Students: Merging with Danville

- Potential benefits for high school students:
 - Increased number of elective courses
 - Opportunity to enroll in International Baccalaureate (I.B.) courses
 - Access to place-based courses in sustainable agriculture, environmental studies
 - Increased foreign language offerings
 - Broader range of mathematics courses

GRADE	CABOT STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	DANVILLE STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	TOTAL "TWO PONDS" STUDENTS	TOTAL STAFF	ESTIMATED STAFF NEEDED
Pre-K (2017) 3 & 4 yr olds	18	1	25	2	43	3	3
K	10	1	19	1	29	2	2
1	12	1	29	2	41	3	2 / 3?
2	13	1	18	1	31	2	2
3	10	1	30	2	40	3	2/ 3?
4	12	1	19	1	31	2	2
5	18	2	36	2/2	54	3/3	6
6	15		30		45		
7	11	2.2	25	2.8	36	5	5
8	10 (21 TOTAL)		25 (50 TOTAL)		35 (71 TOTAL)		
9	16		36		52		
10	13	3.2	24	9.2	37	12.4	17.5
11	15		24		39		
12	13 (57 TOTAL)		31 (115 TOTAL)		44 (172 TOTAL)		
TOTALS	186	13.4	371	25	557	38.4	
P.E.		.9		1.5		2.4	
HEALTH		.2		.5		.7	
ART		1		2		3	
MUSIC		1.3		1.6		2.9	
FOREIGN LANGUAGE		1		1		2	
NURSE		.8		1		1.8	1.5
LIBRARY		1		1		2	
TECH ED		0		1		1	
GUIDANCE		1		2		3	
SPECIAL ED		3.5		4.5		7.5	Total needed?
BEHAVIOR INT		1		0		1	
ACADEMIC INT		1.4		2.5		3.9	

GRADE	CABOT STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	TWINFIELD STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	TOTAL "ONION RIVER" STUDENTS	TOTAL STAFF	ESTIMATED STAFF NEEDED
Pre-K (2017) 3 & 4 yr olds	18	1	32	1	50	2	2
K	10	1	18	2	28	3	2
1	12	1	22	2	34	3	2
2	13	1	29	2	42	3	2 OR 3
3	10	1	25	2	35	3	2
4	12	1	26	2	38	3	2
5	18	2	23	3	41	5	5
6	15		28		43		
7	11	2.2	28	4.4	39	6.6	6
8	10		39		49		
9	16		27		43		
10	13	3.2	32	7.6	45	10.8	10
11	15		35		50		
12	13		26		39		
TOTALS	186	13.4	390	26	576	39.4	34 (?)
P.E.		.9		2		2.8	
HEALTH		.2		1		1.2	
ART		1		1.6		2.4	
MUSIC		1.3		2		3.6	
FOREIGN LANGUAGE		1		1.8		2.8	
NURSE		.8		1		1.8	
LIBRARY		1		1		2	

GRADE	CABOT STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	TWINFIELD STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STAFF	TOTAL ONION RIVER STUDENTS	TOTAL STAFF	STAFF NEEDED ESTIMATED
SPECIAL ED		3.5		4.5		8	
BEHAVIOR INT		1		1.5		2.5	
ACADEMIC INT		1.4		3		4.4	
GUIDANCE		1		1.5		2.5	

Possible Configurations of a merged Cabot/Twinfield School District

- All HS students at Cabot
 - PreK at both Cabot and Twinfield
 - All K-8 students at Twinfield

- All middle school (6,7,8) students at Cabot
 - All high school and K-5 students at Twinfield
 - PreK at both Cabot and Twinfield

Possible Configuration of a merged Danville/Cabot School District

- Cabot's preK-8 students at Cabot
- Cabot's High School students at Danville

Discussion

- In groups of 4 or 5 people, jot down on index cards and discuss:
 - What stood out to you?
 - What questions do you have?
 - What concerns do you have?