

**Slate Valley Unified Union School District
Innovation Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 19, 2018
Fair Haven Union High School
ARSU Conference Room
5:30 PM**

Approved Minutes

Attending: Peter Clark, Jason Rasco, Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Julie Finnegan, Cheryl Scarzello, Kris Benway, Joshua Hardt, Jerry Volpe, Linda Peltier, Bonnie Lenihan, Chris Cole, Walter Ripley, Casey O'Meara,

Call to Order: Julie Finnegan called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Brooke Olsen-Farrell made a motion to approve the agenda, this was seconded by Linda Peltier.

Approval of Minutes- November 27, 2018: Brooke Olsen-Farrell made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/27/18, this was seconded by Joshua Hardt; No Abstentions; Motion carried.

- A. Update on Education Specifications from Subcommittees: Consultant
 - i. Elementary School Committee - Presentation/Discussion
 - ii. Middle School Committee - Presentation/Discussion
 - iii. High School Committee - Presentation/Discussion
 - iv. District Wide (Special Needs) Presentation/Discussion
- B. Review Summary List of Proposed Renovations and Building Enhancements based on sub-committee work - Discussion/Comment
- C. Community Engagement - Plan for Parent and Citizen Forums for the next year.

New Business: Peter Clark takes over the meeting and handed out a copy of a 26 page document, *working draft* entitled Building the Educational Future of Slate Valley. This document has the new information highlighted in yellow; which is work completed by individual committees since last Steering Committee meeting.

Peter notes that while there is a proposed Middle School schedule included this is not necessarily the one that would be adopted, it does take into consideration the needs of a changing Middle School. It should be placed in the appendix of this plan after review.

After discussion, there was a recommendation to change the last paragraph on page 2, to reflect the following:

The proposed plan includes short and long term facilities needs of our district schools, as well as an energy audit of our existing buildings and the educational specifications for a district middle school. This plan also includes a cost/benefit analysis of undertaking such a project, and an exploration of a proposed partnership with Castleton University to better serve our Pre-Kindergarten students.

On page 3, paragraph #1 and throughout the document, differed maintenance needs to be corrected throughout the document to read deferred maintenance.

On page 4 of the document there was discussion about the wording of the 4 bulleted items. Julie Finnegan will take a look at this and how to reflect an easier interpretation of Act 46 and the changing needs of education in our schools moving forward. The jargon is heavy and not necessarily meaningful to general public, it was suggested to use 21st Century Skills versus the other jargon.

Also on page 4 there was a recommendation to add a bullet that would indicate we are interested in developing a school system that is welcoming, with the potential to attract new

students and families to our communities, knowing that we are working so hard to address the changing face of education.

The committee then reviewed the rest of the draft items. We began by reviewing Benson Village School. It was recommended under Core Infrastructure on all Towns to change heat regulators and AC to HVAC. Discussion also ensued about what actual needs of individual buildings comes under deferred maintenance versus renovations. This becomes important distinction if we were hoping to capture any potential funding sources for new renovations. There are a number of items under each town which may be addressed throughout the length of this project and through the current school year budget; the Director of Operations will continue to update this committee on the progress of the scope of work underway on deferred maintenance items, and this document will be update to reflect the changes.

There was a lengthy discussion about the long term viability of sustaining Benson Village School based on the dwindling population and especially if we move to a district middle school model; another consideration is parent choice to send their students elsewhere. The concern is that parents may find class sizes of 3-5 students not a benefit to their child.

On page 7 it was decided to remove the last bullet as the After School Designated programs listed are not run by the School District.

On page 8 Under Fair Haven Union High School Core Infrastructure, committee recommends adding under ADA Compliance the replacement of the elevator. Strike from this section: reopen boarded areas with glass and Skylights: increased natural light in hallways...add it to the Proposed Upgrade Section to Increase Natural Light in the building.

On page 9 of the document there was considerable discussion about the viability of a 600 seat theater. It was determined that we look rather at the feasibility of a Multi-Purpose Space that would accommodate between 400-425 spectators.

Providing Team Space versus totally updating locker rooms was also discussed. Per the committee they were not ready to explore a full Field House but would like the architect to price out the difference between a $\frac{3}{4}$ and full size gym that would include a second floor indoor track. Also the committee also asked to price out the Turf Field as if Middle School is relocated on the grounds of FHUHS, we need more field capacity.

Under Fair Haven Grade School on page 9, change Heat Regulation and AC to HVAC (4th floor).

On page 11 of the document, on second Paragraph simple say: Move grades 4-6 to a current middle school floor. Remove the rest of that paragraph as this would need to be explored by the Administrative Team and determined as a need for all within the SU.

On page 11, bottom of page under second tier: Strike 2nd gym for school and community use, strike Designated after School Programs bullet.

On page 12 under Orwell School:

Strike Renovation of the Town Hall, Under Core Infrastructure leave the 3 bullets for Gym, Cafeteria, and Kitchen. Per Brooke Orwell needs a building to address the needs of the students. On bottom of page 12 first bullet should reflect: Creating a 4, 5, 6 Upper School wing.

The next discussion items included Peter discussing the differences between a Two Team Instructional Model at the Proposed Middle School Level versus a Three Team Instructional Model. He felt the work of the committees next needed to include the impact of these two models. He developed a mock schedule for each model and mock specials schedule for teams to consider.

Under a two team model it would require a 12.2 staff, while under a 3 team model it would require 18 staff. Considering the projected shrinking population (projected to be down another 100 students over time, would we be adding staff?) Another difference he would like the committee to keep in mind. Under a two team model class sizes would average 22-24, under a 3 team model class sizes would be approximately 15-17. Several committee members discussed average class sizes of 22-24 is not unique to their schools as this has been the norm. He also added to the discussion that as the population is projected to keep shrinking the committee may also want to think about a Grade 6, 7, 8 mix in a middle school. Several committee members said we already determined this was not the interest of the community in their response but several middle schools in the state are grade levels 7, 8, 9 as they are developmentally more appropriate to be grouped together. Lastly Peter asks the committee to consider the 3 team model as if we do attract new families we want to assure we have planned for space to accommodate them.

The Committee would like to have all Board members directed to read the Innovation Committee Meeting Minutes prior to the next SVUUSD Board Meeting as we need to be making some final decisions and need to have Board members understanding what work the committees have done. After reading those minutes if Board members have specific questions Peter would like them asked ahead of time so he can come with a prepared response so that not all the work has to be revisited. These questions should be submitted to Brooke to forward to Peter before 1/14/19.

Brooke, Casey O'Meara and Josh Hardt are going to work to develop a draft of how we want to roll this out to community prior to the next meeting. They will be working on the important discussion points from the Innovation Committee and to clear up any misperceptions about the scope and intent of the project.

Community Input: Julie Finnegan noted she is excited to hear what the community is thinking.

Adjourn: Josh Hardt made a motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m., this was seconded by Walter Ripley.

Next Slate Valley Innovation Committee Mtg. - January 9, 2019 - FHUHS ARSU Conf. Room - 5:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Bonnie Lenihan