

# Peacham School and Community Forum

Peacham Elementary School

October 28, 2007

3:00 – 5:00 PM

## Committee Report Out Information

### **3:10 - As Is Committee**

- Still viable option – changes in student enrollment has diminished cost per pupil
  - New cost per pupil = \$12,443
  - If enrollment increased from 36 to 46, per pupil cost would diminish to \$11,631; at 56 students = \$9,554
    - Enrollment increased from 36 (budgeted to 43 actual)
  - If enrollment declines, the cost per pupil increases
- Full CCSU assessment is currently charged to Peacham Elem.
- Education impact
  - Small class sizes – personal learning plans
  - Experienced teachers, higher cost for town
  - Shorter bus ride
- Disadvantages
  - Not as many peers
  - Fewer programs
  - Secondary tuition increase, cost cutting occurs at the elem. level
- Community impact
  - Accountability
  - Volunteer opportunities
  - Community use of facilities
  - Community connections
  - Exploring overlapping roles with select board

### Feedback

- Limited in number of specials
- Only one choice of teacher for each grade
- Don't area schools have similar dynamic?
- Reduced staff with increase in student enrollment
- Working with Planning Commission to bring affordable housing to town

### **3:30 - Choice Committee**

- Full choice model – close current school and tuition students to other schools
  - Increased students, possibly because of choice in Kirby
- Open school as a private school
  - Similar to Winhall situation
- Religious schools can't receive tuition
- Grades k-2 here and tuition out grades 3-6
  - Elmore model
- Enrollment trends over time – 93% attend public; 7% go elsewhere
- Governance under choice – still elect public board members
  - Reduce CCSU costs by 70%

- IEPs and Special Education wouldn't change
- Transportation – retained costs in projections
- Financial information
  - Comparisons of announced tuitions in area schools in full report
  - \$18, 442 down to \$13,500 per pupil costs this year – used allowable tuition
  - \$12,500 costs for tuition out costs?
- Voters make own choices

#### Feedback

- Kirby and Winhall property tax rates (differences may involve CLA impact)
  - Winhall - \$2.10 tax rate
  - Kirby - \$2.399 tax rate
  - Compares to Peacham at \$1.81
- Table includes special education and transportation costs in report
- Table includes loss of Small School grant
- Dept. of Education doesn't include home schoolers by grade – data problem
- State has formula for what public and private schools can charge for tuition
  - If high school has a tech ctr., town pays full tuition – \$9,126
- School governance – ghost boards don't have power over much – Tuition, special education, transportation
- Schools don't have to take all special education students
  - Local schools can manage needs proactively, in an attempt to get them off special education programs
  - Surcharge of \$4,000 to \$6,000 above regular tuition fees
- How will special education work with local independent school?
- School board should go to other schools to ??
- Parents can request the school board to send child to other schools – have choice now
- Dependent on acceptance of students to area schools
  - May not be available in all schools
- Most parents in Peacham happy with current public school
  - If independent, voters would not have a say in governance and decisions
  - With current board, citizens have voice
- Kirby trends
  - Number of tuition students are increasing – budget going up
  - What about CLA and taxes
  - 5% increase in enrollment
  - Auditor with 1200 sq. ft. house, pays \$500
  - New families moving in for choice – Budgeting for 95; now up to 105
- Winhall
  - 26 more students moving into town
  - factors over several years within with funding formula and student count
- Secure accurate number from Kirby and Winhall

### 3:50 - Expansion Committee

- Not add high school
- May look at 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> here
  - Is room for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> now
  - Staff agreed that this could be done
  - Hallway would divide upper and lower grade levels
  - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders could become big buddies for younger children
  - Research shows that need for more options – area schools provide addition programs that students could access
  - Curriculum needs – personal learning plans could be basis for career planning and further interests
- General budget
  - Hire additional staff person
  - Need for more lab equipment – some questions about this
- Surveyed parents
  - Feedback in favor of moving middle school students to Peacham
    - 14-18 said yes; 3 said no and one said maybe
  - Most said include both grades in the same year
- Governance would remain the same
- Parents like consistency for kids – one less transition

#### Feedback

- What is the cost now? \$130,000 now
- \$140,000 for tuition for all students – estimates
- Survey only for parents in school now
  - If include all parents, results might be different
  - Include parents with children currently in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade now
    - Committee decided not to do this
      - School program has changed – those parents wouldn't know about current program
- Need more financial data – Full report is online with cost per student
- What is teacher certification requirements?
  - If self-contained, elem. license works
  - If multiple classes, must have middle school endorsement
  - One current teacher could obtain license with little extra work
  - 5-6 and 7-8 team teaching – need dual endorsements
  - Hire one person to teach all subjects for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>
- Solicit feedback from college students
- Are survey results anonymous? Yes.
- How was survey circulated? At school on table. Spring survey went home with students
- How would transition work for students who were already attending another school? Lot more planning needed.

#### 4:10 - Merger/Collaboration Committee

- 5 pages on Internet site
- Possible schools
  - Barnet
    - Space crunch
    - Never heard back from school
  - Monroe interested
    - Peacham students would have to cross state line
  - Danville
    - Fred Kitchell laid out options
      - Put CREEP and K all in Peacham
      - All others attend Danville
      - Rent empty classrooms by CCSU
  - Send all K-6 children to Danville
    - No CREEP
    - Savings about \$50,140
  - Pre-K-K to Peacham
    - More expensive
    - \$54,864 more
  - K-12 to Danville
    - \$280,000 savings
- Governance
  - Option 1 and 2 – open to discussion
    - Board K-6, another bd. For all
    - Unified union if created one board
  - Don't know Monroe costs
  - Send younger students to Peacham and older to Danville
  - Danville can absorb all Peacham students
  - Five member board, Peacham would have one rep on unified union board; 7 member board, Peacham would have 2 reps
  - Option 1, savings of \$50,000 – close Peacham School, then pay tuition to Danville – Danville might like this option
  - Tuition cost to Danville - \$9,319
- Cons
  - Option 1 - limited savings ??
  - Option 2 – specials, nurse
  - Options 1,2,3 – class sizes might be larger in Danville
  - Option 3 – lost school choice
- Look at collaboration with Stevens School
  - Can't designate independent school or collaborate on options
  - Can't require all students to attend independent school
- Danville has 50 and Peacham has 20 K – Enrollment would fill Peacham

## **General Discussion**

- How do you get out of a union?
- Others might like choice in elementary as well
- Does the town pay the difference in private choice
- How are IEP students handled?
  - Parents would apply for admission
  - Receiving school would determine if they have a program to meet needs
- Riverside doesn't pay difference for tuition
- Rare that public or private schools to refuse students
- School board can pay families for transportation
- Having children in different schools was problematic
- 14 students who could be but are not in the public elementary school
  - 25% of elem. school population
  - How address specific family needs?
  - If these students attend public school it would greatly improve tax liability
    - Survey those families
    - Home school, private...