

Unapproved

Peacham School Board Grades 7/8 Planning Meeting
June 2, 2008, 6 p.m.
Peacham Elementary School

Present: Jean Dedam, Wendy Olcott, Paula Guion, Neal Gombas, Jenny MacKenzie, Jo Anne Post, Judy Chypre, Karen Joyce

1. Meeting called to order at 6:04 p.m.
2. Minutes from the May 5 meeting approved as written.
3. Mission statement: A working draft of a mission statement for the committee was adopted, and reads as follows: "We aim to create a middle school program that, in addition to satisfying the financial needs of our town, will definitely meet the needs of our students, with a strong foundation in academics, a focus on hands-on education and community involvement, and leadership and extracurricular opportunities." This is a working document, and may be amended or refined over time.
4. Plan components: Research will need to be carried out in the following areas: curriculum, finances, staffing, physical space, social-emotional needs, extracurricular activities and transportation.
5. Task list/time line: The committee will aim to complete its work by early November, with the goal of presenting a proposal to the community in late November or early December. Thoroughness is more important than speed, however, and a revised timeline will be provided if the research cannot be accomplished within this time frame.

Some specific tasks were suggested: Nene Riley will be contacted for a list of local resources to provide learning/mentoring opportunities for middle school students; Jenny MacKenzie will follow up with inquiries to Shelburne School about their project-based curriculum. A list of possible schools to contact/visit includes Burke Town School, Waterford, Monroe, Walden, Stevens, Riverside, Barnet, Cabot and Danville.

6. Research assistance: Shelley Green found a graduate student, Jennifer Duguay, to help with research on topics of interest to the committee. It was suggested that Jennifer be asked to study the literature on —
 1. the basic emotional and social needs of middle school students
 2. the impact of staying with a cohort through 8th and making one transition versus moving to a middle school then high school in two transitions, in order to help determine whether or not students would benefit from remaining at Peacham School through grade 8.
 3. impacts on K-6 children in a K-8 configuration
 4. 5th/6th and 7th/8th integrated self-contained classroom program vs. a departmentalized program for 5-8.

7. Other business: As Joe Oddo has declined to serve on the committee, Wendy will look for another parent to take his place, preferably someone with a child in the lower

grades. Additional input may be sought through a brainstorming meeting with local residents who are or have been middle school teachers.

8. Next meetings: Thursday, June 12 at 3 p.m. and Tuesday, July 1 at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Anne Post