

Unapproved

Peacham School Board Grades 7/8 Committee Meeting
October 13, 2008
Peacham Elementary School

Present: Superintendent Martha Tucker, Jean Dedam, Wendy Olcott, Neal Gombas, Jo Anne Post

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.
2. Key components of plan: Martha Tucker outlined components of a 7/8 program based on best practices for middle school. These include:
 - ▶ A rigorous curriculum that is aligned with Vermont standards
 - ▶ Instruction that is differentiated for a wide range of learners
 - ▶ Integration of curriculum and instruction across subjects
 - ▶ Teaming and collaboration among teachers
 - ▶ Variety of instructional materials including technology

To these, committee members added the following:

- ▶ Teacher advisory to enhance the group connection among students
- ▶ Student leadership opportunities
- ▶ Service learning (addressing community needs through curriculum-based activities)

2. Financial/demographic information: Martha Tucker shared demographic information represented in graph form for the years 1990-2008. Enrollment for grades 7/8 is at about the same level now as it was in 1990, but constitutes a higher percentage of the total student population today, given the decline in elementary numbers and the small increase in high school numbers.

If a 7/8 program were to be phased in at Peacham Elementary School over a 2-year period, it would make the most sense to begin seventh grade in the 2011-2012 school year for the students currently in fourth grade. The program could be run as a 1.0 FTE position, possibly adding a .7 position the following year when there would be a combined 7/8 grade.

3. History/context: Jean summarized the background and mission statement of the expansion proposal and read excerpts from a 2002 committee report on the feasibility of adding grades 7/8, noting many similarities to the current study.

4. Next steps: Notice of the special Town Meeting on December 6 should be posted in town by election day. Jean will contact Matthew Langham about working on a report of the committee's findings. Jo Anne will pull together census and financial information. A report should be ready for the school board at its November meeting, and an informative brochure or letter made available to voters by mid-November.

5. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Anne Post

Next meeting: Monday, October 27 at 4 p.m.