



MINUTES
APPROVED: 10/1/07

Stratham Memorial School - Vision Committee

MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 10, 2007 - 6:30 PM

Stratham Memorial School Library

39 Gifford Farm Road

Stratham, New Hampshire



Present: Luke Breton, Stratham School Board-Chair/Committee Co-Chair; John Hazekamp, Stratham School Board/Committee Co-Chair; Tom Fosher, Principal; Laura Batchelder, SMS Teacher Representative; Tony Baldassaro, Joe Kenick III, Judy Merrill, Mark Poirier, Travis Thompson, Jeff Wilson.

Absent: Lisa Calandra, Rogers Johnson, Doug Scamman, Jon Tymann.

Audience: Rebecca Ruel, Donna Maher.

Handouts: Minutes - 6/4/07 (unapproved), Agenda - 9/10/07, 31 pages of materials.

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance - Mr. Breton opened the meeting at 6:40 P.M.

2. Approval of Minutes - June 4, 2007 revisions suggested to Pre-K discussion.

3. Visitor Comments - None

4. Discussion - Depth of Programming Impact -

Principal Fosher reviewed a graph outlining programs that have had an impact on space and personnel at SMS since 1989. Mr. Hazekamp distributed materials to help members understand some of the federal/state mandates depicted on the graph. The committee concluded that the programming impacts have been significant during this time period with most programs added due to need or to comply with state and federal regulations. The committee also felt that it's final report should include a comparable clear, but brief, outline of the impact of these programs.

5. Discussion - Extended-Day Kindergarten -

Co-Chair Breton talked about the impact of SMS's extended day kindergarten program on classroom space, while pointing to materials he'd sent to members showing the latest research, statistics and trends. Committee members acknowledged that there is little research on the benefits of extended-day versus full-day kindergarten. The vast majority of research on the latter show numerous benefits of a full day program versus half-day including better academic performance in both reading and mathematics as well as reduced retention in grade. Mr Breton relayed the comment from phone discussion with the Dept. of Ed. that there are no known studies that conclude that half-day programs offer more benefits.

Included with mailed materials was the SMS parent surveys of 2000 through 2006 which shows significant support for the existing program. It was felt by the committee that the current extended day gives us most of the benefits that would be realized with a full-day program without the resultant pressure on space. Even though going to a full day program might save the cost of a bus initially, these savings may be eaten up by the increased man hours needed to allow for a duty free lunch for the teacher's as well as contracted preparation period.

The trend away from half-day programs is clear both within the state and nationally.

6. Old Business - None

7. New Business / Wrap-up - Discussed topics for next meeting and getting materials out earlier. Testing impact and appropriate class size was decided, with possible look at year round school attendance feasibility. The Committee's materials are now available on the SAU 16 website with video recordings of the meetings also available at the town library courtesy of Minuteman Documentation.

8. Next Meeting Date - October 1, 2007 - 6:30 PM

9. Adjournment - 8:45 PM