



SCHOOL BOARD RETREAT MEETING

Community National Bank
Community Room
Main St. – Barre, VT

MISSION STATEMENT

We are committed to providing a challenging educational environment that encourages high performance in a nurturing atmosphere characterized by dignity and respect.

October 14, 2015

5:30 p.m.

6:00 p.m. – Light Dinner

AGENDA

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long tail, positioned to the right of the meeting details.

- 1. Call to Order; Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Additions and/or Deletions to Agenda**
- 3. Visitors and Communications**
- 4. New Business**
 - 4.1 Board Member Self-Assessment/Review using Template from VSBA 2012**
 - 4.2 Review of Previously Defined Goals**
 - 4.3 Set Board Goals using Planning Template**
 - 4.4 Collate Board Goals & Priorities into Continuous Improvement Plan**
- 5. Adjourn**

Ground Rules for Meetings

Start and end meetings on time.

Members and administration will submit material in advance of meetings.

Members will be prepared for meetings.

Show mutual respect.

Listen to others and don't interrupt. People will speak when recognized. Share time so that all can participate.

We will honor brainstorming without being attached to our own viewpoint.

Be free to speak minds without fear or reprisal.

Attack the problem-no blame game.

Get consensus from board members for individual requests for information.

Make decisions based on clear information.

Identify pending issues and agreements at the end of each meeting.

Keep the best interest of the school and children in mind, while balancing the needs of the taxpayers.

4.2

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION DISTRICT #61

**Barre City Elementary
and Middle School**

John Bacon, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

John Pandolfo
**Director of Curriculum,
Instruction, & Assessment**

**Spaulding High School and
Barre Technical Center**

120 Ayers St.
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-5011
FAX: 802-476-4944

Lynne Carpenter
Sonia Bunker-Johnson
Interim Business Manager

**Barre Town Middle
and Elementary School**

*Doing whatever it takes to ensure
success for every child.*

Donald McMahon
Special Services Director

Diane Stacy
Technology Director

TO: BCEMS Board and Administrators
FROM: John A. Bacon, Ed.D.
Superintendent
DATE: October 7, 2013
RE: Retreat Follow-Up

Please find the enclosed notes from our work on September 23rd. Also included are pages from DuFour & Eaker's book, Professional Communities at Work which addresses a school's mission and vision and a school's mission and vision as a sample. You may want to spend some time developing a BCEMS vision and mission with the community and faculty in greater depth. You may also want to discuss opportunities to begin addressing the school's weaknesses and threats. Addressing some of the school's threats and weaknesses may be difficult and/or require time and financial resources. Other threats and weaknesses may be easier and we could get started now. We should also consider what could we do that would have a big impact on the school?

BCEMS Board Retreat

September 23, 2013

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Leslie Walz. Lester Felch, Linda Riddle, John Steinman, Anita Ristau, Leslie Walz and Sonya Spaulding (school board members) were all present. John Bacon (Superintendent), Stacy Ferland (Special Ed Director), Michele Cote (Principal, arrived 5:45 pm) and Jim Taffel (Principal, arrived 6:03 pm) were also present. Lucas Herring, Katie Lane-Karnas and Anita Chadderton were absent.

We discussed the sample of ground rules for committees and board meetings. Revised list is attached. We agreed that this would be an evolving document.

We discussed our vision of the school. See attached notes in RED for ideas that were discussed.

We discussed the strengths, weaknesses and threats. See attached notes in BLUE. Each person voted on the top 3 weaknesses and top 3 threats—see red check marks for those items that received the most votes.

We developed a list of opportunities and goals based on the top 3 weaknesses (see notes in BLACK). These include:

- Change Schedule
- Differentiation training
- Parent Program
- Stronger Partnership with mental health
- Bad PR

We will discuss how these goals might be accomplished in the appropriate committee meetings and then bring ideas to the full board.

Adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya Spaulding

BARRE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SCHOOL BOARD RETREAT MEETING

September 23, 2013

5:30 – 9:00 p.m.

MINUTES

School Vision/Mission

- ~Good start (pre-K & K)**
- ~Involved supportive parents**
- ~Students ready to learn**
- ~Teachers connected w/ parents, good communication**
- ~Parent trainings**
- ~Highly qualified teachers**
- ~Community based learning**
- ~Students taught how to learn**
- ~Professional learning communities (PLC)**
- ~Staff voice/input/feedback**
- ~Challenging academics for all children individualized**
- ~Experiential learning**
- ~Fostering independent learners**
- ~Recognizing different learning styles**
- ~Structured physical activity**
- ~Full service school community focused**
- ~Longer days and year round school**
- ~Respect, manners, social skills**
- ~Flexible/fluid scheduling**
- ~Interdisciplinary curriculum**
- ~Students feel connected to school**
- ~Students feel safe emotionally and physically and willing to take risks**
- ~Student voice in school**
- ~Volunteerism encouraged**
- ~More and better technology**
- ~Vibrant after school program (supporting curriculum)**
- ~Alternative programs**

Strengths

- ~Staff committed, dedicated, welcoming
- ~Some parents supportive
- ~Some students excited and connected
- ~School best part of day for some
- ~Curriculum specialists/in-service training
- ~Children excel
- ~Food service program
- ~Welcoming facility
- ~Aligned curriculum
- ~Excitement of new staff

Weaknesses

- 3 ~Not all staff committed
- 6 ~Lack of capacity to differentiate
- 3 ~Burdened by schedule
- 6 ~Unsupportive/indifferent parents, dysfunctional families
- 6 ~Evaluation of effectiveness of teachers and programs
- 1 ~Limited physical activity
- 1 ~Limited science
- 2 ~Communication (website)
- 2 ~Lack of technology

Threats

- ~High % of staff turnover
- 2 ~Limited tax base
- 8 ~Increasing population of students with high needs
- 6 ~Limited support from DCF and WCMH
- ~Funding restrictions special ed and regular ed
- 2 ~Transience
- 7 ~Short day not enough time
- 1 ~Poverty lack of \$ and norms
- 1 ~Some curriculum lacking
- 3 ~Bad press (PR)

Opportunities

- ~Change schedule
- ~Differentiation training
- ~Parent program
- ~Strengthen partnership with mental health
- ~Improve communication and PR

Examples of vision statements developed by different schools are offered in Appendix A, but readers who simply consider using one of these statements in order to accelerate their school improvement initiative will have missed the major point. The product, the statement itself, is not nearly as important as the process. If a vision statement is adopted, but not developed, by a school's staff, its words will probably mean little or nothing at all to the staff. It is only when the teachers and constituents who develop the statement find meaning and ownership in its words that a vision statement will have an impact. This impact lies not in the eloquence of its statement, but in the meaning and direction it gives to the people in the school who developed it.

Other critical variables in the impact of a vision statement include the extent of its use in the daily operation of the school and the effectiveness with which its importance is communicated throughout the school. Chapter 6 addresses these issues.

Summary

The first step in establishing the foundation of a professional learning community is to clarify the mission or purpose of the school. The typical mission statement for schools proclaims the belief that all students can learn and acknowledges that the school has been established primarily to ensure that this learning takes place. However, the assertion that all students can learn is meaningless unless the faculty is prepared to wrestle with two very significant questions:

1. What is it we expect all students to learn?
2. How will we respond when they do not learn?

Without a resolution of these crucial questions, mission statements will contribute little to the creation of a professional learning community.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT WORK

V. Slater

The second step in laying the foundation of a professional learning community is to address the issue of vision. If a change initiative is to produce the desired results, educators must be able to describe the results they seek. A shared vision provides them with a compelling, realistic picture of the school they are trying to create. Effective vision statements are:

- based on relevant background information and research
- desirable, feasible, and credible
- focused on clarifying direction and priorities
- easy to communicate
- developed through a collective process that promotes widespread ownership

Effective vision statements motivate and energize people. They create a proactive organization that is focused on the future, and they give direction to people within the school. They establish standards, and they create an agenda for action as the faculty identifies discrepancies between the reality of their school and the school they have described in their vision statement. The shared vision must be used to guide the daily operation and improvement initiatives of the school, and its importance must be communicated constantly.



Stevenson High School Vision Statement

Community Relations

An Exemplary School

If Stevenson High School is to be an exemplary school, it must have a clear sense of the goals that it is trying to accomplish, the characteristics of the school it seeks to become, and the contributions that the various stakeholders in the school must make in order to transform ideals into reality. The following vision statement is intended to provide the standards that Stevenson High School should strive to achieve and maintain.

I. Curriculum

An exemplary school provides students with a common core curriculum complemented with a variety of elective courses and co-curricular activities. This balanced program stimulates intellectual curiosity, requires students to demonstrate that they have learned how to learn, and enables them to become productive and effective citizens. The school articulates the outcomes it seeks for all of its students and monitors each student's attainment of those outcomes through a variety of indicators. In such a school, the curriculum:

- A. Addresses mastery of academic content that integrates acquisition of essential life skills.
- B. Enables students to broaden their perspective in order to understand and appreciate diverse cultures within the school as well as cultures and conditions beyond those of their local community.
- C. Stimulates active engagement on the part of students.
- D. Recognizes and provides for individual differences and interests.



Sample Vision Statements

- E. Integrates technology as a means to achieve specific curricular outcomes.
- F. Reflects the District's support of innovation and commitment to continuous improvement.

II. Attention to Individual Students

Regardless of its size, an exemplary school recognizes the importance of each individual student. Those within the school make a concerted effort to communicate and demonstrate their concern for each student. As a result, each student feels that he or she is valued as a member of the school community. In an exemplary school:

- A. Attention is paid to facilitating each student's transition to and through high school.
- B. Each student is provided the information, assistance, and support that enables him or her to develop appropriate educational and career goals.
- C. The behavior, academic progress, and emotional well-being of each student are continually monitored, and appropriate services are initiated as needed.

III. Personnel

An exemplary school operates on the premise that a school can only be as good as the personnel that it employs. Therefore, the Board and Administration are committed to recruiting and retaining individuals with exceptional expertise in their respective fields. In such a school:

- A. All staff demonstrate their support of and commitment to the school's vision and values.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT WORK

- B. All staff have high expectations for student success and work individually and collaboratively to create conditions that promote student success.
- C. All staff model the importance of lifelong learning through their commitment to ongoing professional development.
- D. The Board of Education and Administration are proactive in promoting and protecting the District's vision and values.

IV. Students

In the final analysis, the effectiveness of any school is assessed on the basis of the conduct, character, and achievement of its students. In an exemplary school, students:

- A. Accept responsibility for their learning, decisions, and actions.
- B. Develop the skills to become more self-directed learners as they make the transition from freshman through senior year.
- C. Become actively engaged in and give their best effort to academic and co-curricular pursuits.
- D. Contribute to school and community service.
- E. Conduct themselves in a way that contributes to a safe and orderly atmosphere and ensures the rights of others.
- F. Are considerate of others—teachers, staff, fellow students, visitors, etc.

V. Climate

An exemplary school provides a warm, inviting climate that enables students to enjoy their high school experience and results in a shared sense of pride in the school. In such a school:



Sample Vision Statements

- A. There is a commitment to provide an emotionally and physically safe, supportive environment.
- B. There is an ongoing effort to providing a school that is free of alcohol, other drugs, and violence.
- C. There are opportunities for high levels of participation in the curricular and co-curricular programs.
- D. All individuals are treated with respect and consideration.
- E. Relationships are characterized by caring and cooperation.
- F. There is recognition and celebration of individual effort and achievement.
- G. There is open communication between students, staff, administrators, and the Board of Education.
- H. Well-maintained physical facilities meet the needs of students and the community and reflect pride in the school.

VI. Community Partnerships

An exemplary school recognizes the importance of establishing effective partnerships with the larger community—parents, residents, businesses, government agencies, and other educational systems. It strives to develop the community's allegiance to and ownership in the school. In such a school:

- A. The community demonstrates its support for the vision and values of the school.
- B. The community provides the resources that enable the school to offer exemplary academic and co-curricular programs and holds the school accountable for long-

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT WORK

range financial planning to safeguard the community's investment in education.

- C. The community participates in the life of the school by attending programs, volunteering service, and assisting in the processes that have been designed to enhance the various aspects of the school.
- D. The community calls upon the school to establish effective two-way communication that both provides information and seeks feedback.
- E. The community has ready access to the school's resources and facilities.
- F. Parents play an active role in the education of their children, monitor their children's academic performance, and work with teachers to emphasize the importance of education.
- G. Partnerships are established with business that reinforce the relevance of the academic and co-curricular programs and provide a direct link between the school and the workplace.
- H. The school establishes effective linkages with sender districts and institutions of higher education.





SCHOOL BOARD PLANNING

4.3

Goal: What will you set out to accomplish?

Indicator: What will you measure to assess progress toward your goal?

Strategies: How will you go about accomplishing your goal?

Task: What activities are included in your strategy?

Roles: Who is responsible for each task?

Timeline: When will the task be complete?

Resources: What will you need to complete the task?

Outcome: What will result from the completion of the task?

Monitoring Criteria: Does the outcome/result fulfill your goal?

Barre City Elementary & Middle School
Continuous Improvement Plan
(Condensed Version)
August 2015

Goal #1: To improve student achievement, professional teams will have shared responsibility for decisions related to curriculum, assessment, instruction and professional development.

Task 1: Create a process for determining the purpose and goals for current and future professional teams (other than the School Improvement Team) as well as a process for periodic review and evaluation of all professional teams.

Task 2: For all existing teams, review and determine appropriate membership, meeting time, decision making authority, and channel for communication/taking action.

Goal #2: To improve student achievement, the school will partner with parents to support the educational experience for every child.

Task 1: Increase parental participation in Parent Teacher conferences, Open House, Math nights and Literacy nights.

Task 2: Implement parent survey at the beginning of the school year.

Task 3: Increase focus on teacher-parent communication by: (1) implementing TA level parent-student-teacher partnerships in middle school, including parents in decisions for individual students; (2) conducting effective communications from school to home and vice-versa about school programs and student progress; and (3) setting up a school-wide parent email system.

Goal #3: To improve student achievement, educators will improve their own professional practice while supporting the professional learning and practice of their colleagues.

Task 1: Implement evidence-based (individual and group) professional development which is informed by student academic and social/emotional performance data, teacher self-reflection/evaluation, and supervision/evaluation data.

Task 2: Implement embedded Professional Development in which teachers engage in collaborative learning.

Year 1: Continue and Improve Lesson Study and Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Pilot peer observation /support.

Year 2: Scale up of collaboration professional development determined by Year 1 action research.

Year 3: Develop and implement a mentoring model for targeted support beyond collaborative professional development.

Goal #4: To improve student achievement, units of study will be developed from: (1) a vertically coherent progression of student learning goals; and (2) shared expectations for effective instructional practices.

Task 1: Align curriculum, instruction & assessment with the Common Core State Standards for reading, math, and writing.

Task 2: Continue unit development including formative and summative common assessment (non-math and literacy subjects).

Task 3: Develop a K-8 social emotional learning goals, skills, and strategies document for all students, including students with disabilities and students on Free and Reduced Lunch.

Task 4: Develop, in collaboration with the Supervisory Union, a shared instructional practices document that will be implemented in all classrooms.

Goal #5: To improve student achievement, a cohesive and articulated Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will be implemented. The MTSS will be supported by the effective and efficient use of data.

Task 1: Create an MTSS oversight team, evaluate the current system of supports, and determine what is missing or needs to be improved.

Task 2: Provide training on how to use the new data system; and provide training and implantation on how to analyze data to monitor progress, identify students for intervention and inform instruction.

Task 3: Train teachers, in collaboration with the Supervisory Union, on in-class Tier 2 interventions and differentiation.

Task 4: Implement assistive technology strategies for supporting students with disabilities.

Task 5: Based on a careful analysis of SWIS Data and student health records, an appropriate number of dental hygienists, behavior specialists, behavior analysts, behavior interventionists, and behavior support staff (to include one school based professional educator, a student assistance professional, and one para-educator) will be employed to provide the necessary mental health and dental hygiene supports to help students be able to access the educational programs offered.