

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #51**

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**MINUTES**

Pittsfield High School Tuition Study Committee  
Monday, November 16, 2020; 4:30-6:00

I. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Heidi Asdot; Susan Bradley; James Cobern; John Graziano, Chairperson;  
Ross Morse; Robert Schiferle; Leslie Vogt; Tobi Chassie, Recorder

REGRETS: Mary Paradise

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

The meeting was called to order at 4:37 p.m by Superintendent John Graziano.

II. AGENDA REVIEW

The agenda was reviewed by Dr. Graziano. No changes were suggested.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Vogt and seconded by Mr. Schiferle to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting. Mr. Morse clarified by saying that the study could be completed during this year, but a change could take three years to implement. Mr. Morse clarified that the Tuition Study Committee is a committee that will make a recommendation, but has no authority to make decisions. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Committee Assignments

1. BUDGET / FACILITIES - R. Morse / R. Schiferle
2. PITTSFIELD COURSE OFFERINGS - H. Asdot / S. Bradley
3. DISTRICT CONTRACTS - J. Cobern / M. Paradise
4. OFFERINGS PROVIDED BY OTHER DISTRICTS - H. Asdot / L. Vogt  
/ J. Graziano

B. Recording Secretary

Dr. Graziano nominated Tobi Chassie to be the recording secretary to which the committee agreed.

### C. Chairperson / Vice Chairperson

Dr. Graziano stated he was the facilitator of the committee, but opened the nominations for chairperson. The members of the committee agreed that Dr. Graziano would be the Chairperson. Mr. Schiferle nominated Mr. Morse as Vice-Chairperson, but Mr. Morse could not accept the nomination. Mr. Morse nominated Mr. Cobern, but Mr. Cobern could not accept the nomination. Ms. Vogt suggested that Ms. Paradise is better suited for the position, but since she is not present, it was decided to table the decision until the next meeting.

### D. Pittsfield School Board Consideration

According to Dr. Graziano, the Pittsfield School Board has strong feelings about the Tuition Committee addressing the socio-economic impact on the community if the school was closed. The Board asked the Committee to take this into consideration as research is completed. Ms. Asdot stated that the Board is concerned about families being willing to purchase property in Pittsfield if there is not a school. She also stated concern for students going to a large school after experiencing a more personalized education in the small school of Pittsfield. Mr. Schiferle stated this should be considered when doing research. Mr. Cobern asked if there is baseline data available. According to Mr. Morse, Mr. Mitchell stated at the School Board meeting that businesses are always interested in a community having schools before considering opening business in a town. Mr. Schiferle suggested that students might be working in Pittsfield business. Ms. Asdot added that students, if attending school in another town, might not come back to Pittsfield to work, but may work in the town in which they go to school. Mr. Morse wondered how the economy would be impacted if students were being transported to other towns and not taking advantage of businesses in town. Ms. Vogt suggested that all businesses may be affected by the fact that less traffic would be moving through town if students are attending schools outside of Pittsfield. Mr. Morse asked if this topic would be included in any of the sub-committee's work. Discussion ensued and it was decided that this was outside the purview of the four sub-committees and may require a fifth committee to be formed. Ms. Bradley stated that the scope of socio-economic impact may need to be further explored. Mr. Schiferle suggested that maybe this sub-committee be put on hold until the work of another sub-committee is completed so those committee members could be moved to the socio-economic sub-committee. Ms. Bradley agreed to make a place-holding folder for this sub-committee in the Google Folder.

### F. Timeline

Ms. Vogt is interested in having a timeline associated with the work of the Tuition Study Committee. If there is a goal for completion, it will help to pace the work of the committee. Ms. Bradley asked if the timeline included the committee meeting once per month or a total of eight meetings before the end of June 2021. Mr. Cobern suggested planning the next five meetings according to sub-committees. Mr. Morse

suggested the committee have a target date of June 30, 2021. Mr. Cobern asked if there was an expectation to have information before a school district meeting. Mr. Morse suggested that the recommendation would need to be made in time for the next budget preparation season. The team agreed that a target of June 30, 2020 was appropriate. Dr. Graziano asked if it would be appropriate for a preliminary report out for the School District meeting in March. The committee agreed they would rather have more solid information, with lots of detail, available before going before the public. Ms. Vogt asked Dr. Graziano to assign a target month for each sub-committee to report out; he agreed to do so.

## V. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1. BUDGET / FACILITIES - R. Morse / R. Schiferle

Mr. Morse stated that he and Mr. Schiferle will be using the default budget as a starting point for their research. They have asked Mr. Hamilton for information relative to facilities. Mr. Hamilton has offered to take Mr. Morse and Mr. Schiferle on a tour so they can see what difficulties might potentially be present. Mr. Schiferle stated that the budget is being discussed with Sally Blanchette. They think they are talking to the right people to approach the issues of budget and facilities appropriately. Mr. Hamilton has provided facilities requirements documents, which will need to be read and processed. Mr. Morse stated that the issue of capital improvement projects will also be investigated.

### 2. PITTSFIELD COURSE OFFERINGS - H. Asdot / S. Bradley

Ms. Bradley reported that she has added information to the Google drive that describes academic course offerings. Also, online courses that are offered are listed. Ms. Bradley stated that there are extended learning opportunities still available to students, although not as robust as when initially implemented. Ms. Bradley also added to the drive a list of clubs, activities, student support services, and guidance responsibilities to students. Mr. Morse suggested adding teams that are in place, such as the Good to Great Team and Booster Club, who are in place to support students. Ms. Bradley will make additions to the list, as suggested. Ms. Vogt suggested that these offerings, other than courses, should be considered by her sub-committee, as well. Mr. Cobern asked if we might want to know the numbers of students who have participated in the clubs and activities. Ms. Bradley stated that the numbers change by the year. Ms. Asdot suggested the data would be hard to compare to larger schools that may be considered. Mr. Morse also asked for the Mentor Program to be included in the list as this opportunity would disappear if students went to another school. Community service is also a consideration, according to Mr. Morse, as he wondered how many hours of community service would be lost if students moved. Mr. Cobern asked if the Flex program was included, to which Ms. Bradley answered affirmatively.

### 3. DISTRICT CONTRACTS - J. Cobern / M. Paradise

Mr. Cobern stated that he has researched several districts to begin gathering information. Mr. Cobern and Ms. Paradise will begin to analyze the contents of the contracts. Ms. Asdot stated that Barnstead has a Joint Maintenance Agreement in which services are shared. She offered to place a copy of the document in the Google folder. Mr. Morse asked if there was a typical timeframe with the contracts, such as ten years. Mr. Cobern said he will take note of that factor while investigating. Ms. Vogt stated that Barrington has multiple contracts on their website, as they tuition students to numerous schools. Mr. Morse said the Deerfield budget shows how much they spend on schools. Mr. Morse expressed his interest in knowing what representation Pittsfield would have at the decision-making level if they tuitioned students to another district(s).

### 4. OFFERINGS PROVIDED BY OTHER DISTRICTS - H. Asdot / L. Vogt / J. Graziano

Ms. Vogt stated that a spreadsheet has been initiated with questions that will be asked of each district being researched. It was noted that comparisons will be difficult when considering students' opportunity to participate in sports or activities.

## IV. OTHER

Ms. Bradley asked if there are issues when students go to another district regarding students being "the Pittsfield kids". She wondered if there would be social considerations or consequences of students being assimilated into another school community.

Ms. Vogt expressed her desire to eventually ask students what they think about a move. Mr. Schiferle stated that especially for upper classes, it would be difficult for students to move.

Mr. Cobern stated that he is aware of a transition that was gradually implemented. He said that students had some choice until a certain point at which time all students had to go to the new school.

Ms. Asdot shared a situation where students had choices about when they would move to a new school. Mr. Morse asked if that would mean tuitioning students out and keeping the high school open for a period of time. The committee felt that this was not a sustainable option, both from a financial and staffing perspective.

Discussion ensued regarding student participation in clubs, sports, and organizations.

## III. PUBLIC INPUT - None

IV. NEXT MEETING

The third Tuesday of the month was agreed upon. Meetings would be on December 15, January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20, May 18, and June 15.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2020 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m via Zoom.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Ms. Asdot and seconded by Mr. Morse the High School Tuition Study Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 5:51 p.m.