

**Windsor/West Windsor Board Retreat
Draft Minutes
July 16, 2018**

Present: Bill Yates, Kris Garnjost, Amy McMullen, Elizabeth Burrows, Nancy Pedrick, Tiffany Cassano, Jenifer Aldrich, Dave Baker, Susan Holson

Not Present: Beth Carter

Meeting called to order at 6:31 PM.

Agenda Revisions: None

Public Participation: None

Discussion Items:

Goals: Roles and responsibilities of town district, policy governance, district name, reflection and next steps.

Sometimes practice of what doing crosses the line in role of board and health of district. Administration gives direction on how to reach goals.

Vision statement and use as a working document. Futuristic, very broad statement that incorporates hopes and dreams of the district. Not actionable, something against progress can be measured.

Role in vision: adopt vision statement and is destination. Board goal is to make sure tools with policies and resources to support vision, right people in place and will work with you to get there. Encourage boards to have ongoing dialogue with community, not just those that show up to complain, but in broader sense and become part of the community. You are trustees and need their input. You should have some means of community involvement and can take multiple forms: forums, surveys, PTO's, coffee in town, informal and unstructured, focused and general. What we collectively want is children's education. We tend to define community as staff, parents, students, administration, but 78% of a community do not have kids in school. How involve those with no students in school as they are important and can contribute immensely to the school.

Once have vision keep it front and center. Some have it at the top of board agenda.

Mission statement is more directive and in presence and take it one step further. Vision tends to be shorter and in the future. Either one can be basis for defining direction.

Unified Union School District and how start defining. Can mesh both vision statements and see how community feels about it. Obligation as a board is to be transparent with warned meetings.

Bill Yates feels to mesh visions is pushing the factor in West Windsor and excitement in Windsor was a shift towards a project based curriculum. We pushed for voting and Act 46 merits starting from scratch and respecting involvement in community toward that direction. Susan mentioned it sounds like have a common thread that will help unify constituents. Tiffany Cassano mentioned should be what we value and look at them side-by-side as mission is more project based learning. Bill Yates feels the vision statement changes when prepare them to be innovative, risk taking community members. Susan feels, as a body, should start as a draft. Bill Yates prefers start to look at the beginning why doing this. Susan mentioned she saw a lot of common language. Caution school boards talking about curriculum as not a function. Jenifer Aldrich mentioned what got the community excited was project based learning and help with curriculum put out by the state. Susan feels should incorporate equity of place. Kris Garnjost feels should not set goals based on specific type of curriculum. Bill feels in discussion of project based curriculum for innovation of students and need to start with vision. Kris Garnjost feels would show up in mission as show up in goals. Dave Baker mentioned he got the sense of this happening in each town. Learning how to work together, blend cultures, and how make work. Heard in curriculum discussion using natural environment. On West Windsor side in what create together put constructs in place and allow them to happen.

Amy McMullen mentioned how Windsor got to mission/vision was having forums and what needed is ideal and what do we want. Gives you basis for policies, goals, and budget. We will be a new district as of July, 2019 and should have community react to a draft. Dave Baker mentioned cautions from Susan is when talk about providing resources and fear is do not want board or community to get into the weeds of what should look like. Susan mentioned it is important to hear from the community but need to be mindful and cautious that not hear from everybody. Dave Baker mentioned both districts want kids out in their natural environment. Kris Garnjost feels that can really merge over the next few years and all part of same district. Feeling that this is all ours but need to get community to think that way. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned in West Windsor tried to get parents to come out and was non-parents who come out.

Susan mentioned the first thing that needs to happen is that this body does not think us and them. Elizabeth Burrows mentioned not sure of demographics in Windsor but in West Windsor 67% are retired. We have less than a 50% homestead rate.

Susan mentioned combine vision of two districts and want to have one vision that this body adopts and applies universally to your schools. Ideal is that was universally applied to the SU. Dave Baker mentioned not always so sure that trust level filtered down into our communities. Susan mentioned when do community engagements do not isolate yourselves into town and encourage people to come. Bill Yates feels outreach is very important as a lot of anger surrounding the merger in West Windsor. This board and school has a lot of work fighting the misconception of what Windsor High School is. Susan mentioned if starting from scratch student voice is important. Tiffany Cassano feels the myth is shifting. Susan mentioned part of your job is taking results of education process and make sure community knows what is going on. Dave Baker mentioned when follow that process is having outside facilitation. Susan mentioned this is a year of integrating policies and looking ahead.

Basic reason for school board:

- High quality education for every student
- Public gets good return on investment (budget according to vision)
- Monitoring your system, as a board, is operating efficiently, effectively and ethically

First: vision and goal. Administration made happen and you monitor and making progress towards vision.

Board, Superintendent, Principal Roles:

Board:

- Primary point of contact for superintendent
- Sets clear goals
- Assures good communication between board and administration
- Establishes and monitors clear system for accountability

Superintendent:

- Chief executive officer
- Operations
- Educational leadership
- Accountable to SU and District Boards

Principal:

- Instructional leadership and day-to-day school operations
- Relies on SU action plan, priorities, and initiatives
- Accountable to Superintendent

Boards assure schools are well run - they do not run them.

Board's job is governance:

- Provide direction for whole district
- Adopting district policies
- Evaluating superintendent

Superintendent is the management:

- Putting plans, systems and procedures in place (accomplish desired outcome and priorities)
- Monitoring results
- Adjusting as needed

Policy Governance:

Comprehensive set of integrated principles by which an organization is managed. It is used in school districts. It is hard to implement policy governance within an SU unless the whole SU adopts it.

Guiding Principles:

1. Ownership -- boards exist to act as the informed voice and agent of owners (tax payer). Entrusted to make good decisions.
2. Board holism: authority of board is held and used as a body.
3. Ends policies (broad policies that define where want to be and up to administration to figure out how to get there.
4. Means policies (everything not considered ends).
5. Executive Limitations Policies: puts limits on authorities; clear path of whose job is what.
6. Policy Sizes: board decides its policies in each category first at the broadest, most inclusive level.
7. Clarity and coherence of delegation.
8. Any reasonable interpretation.

Traditional, narrow policies, put out a lot of fires, focus on operations, directing all employees in traditional model; knowing what your role is. Single driver is end policy, decisions unrelated to policy, reactive management.

Policy Governance:

Few, broad policies based on community values and focused on results.

What's in a Name?

1. Encourage something simple and easy to remember
 - Reflects solidarity
 - Brings in qualities of region
 - Recognition

Get community involved in name change.

Elizabeth Burrows asked should we talk about a new vision or do a hybrid.

Bill Yates feels should start with new. Involve students in next round and create a vehicle for students to communicate. Susan mentioned climate in high school may change and might want to wait. Bill Yates feels should get Windsor High School students exposed to West Windsor residents to start to get rid of myth. Dave Bakes feels need to get them engaged in this merger. Bill Yates feels this is an audience for high school students to show their projects.

Dave Baker feels should integrate the two statements and then long term redefine the plan. What would we like Susan to do to continue this dialogue?

Kris Garnjost feels not just put the two vision statements together but rather do some brainstorming as to what is the rest of the board thinking. We want the board to have a clear vision. Elizabeth Burrows feel the Vision/Mission should be done before budget season.

Name Change: possibility of not changing name of district to new name but have students be part of it. Local tradition, specifics and how process took place, economics. This could be a rich debate among students and get their input and look at area.

The August 15 hearing is for Hartland and Weathersfield in front of the State Board to restate their case why should remain separate. Plan to put in context of not separating whole SU. Not sure what role Windsor/West Windsor plays in this unless comes up about joining Springfield. Not the intent but might come up. Elizabeth Burrows asked Dave if talked to Hartland/Weathersfield about their options if become merged, or they go to Springfield or Hartford. Dave Baker mentioned talked individually and a strong feeling on both boards if try to put them in another district they should merge and operate as a single district. They need to talk together. Elizabeth Burrows feels this needs to be discussed at the August 7 meeting. We discussed policies and all go to SU policies.

Elizabeth Burrows feels should use Robert's Rules of Small Boards so do not need a second to every motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tessier, Board Secretary