

MEMORANDUM

TO: Massena Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Jessica Cohen
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of September 20, 2017
DATE: September 22, 2017

Attendance: Committee Members: Michael Besaw, Steven Booth, McKay Burley, Kerrie French, Rachel Hurlbut, Bess Kirnie, Debora LaRose, AnneMarie Miller, Carmela Phelix, Duane Richards, Jeff Stenlake, David Vroman, and Kim Wells.

Consultants: Alan Pole and Jessica Cohen

Observers: Craig Chevalier, Bob Beckstead, Paul Haggett, and Patrick Brady

Location: Massena High School

1. Superintendent Pat Brady welcomed everyone to the meeting, provided an overview for the purpose of the study, and introduced the study consultants. Committee members were asked to introduce themselves and discuss their connection with the school district.
2. Alan Pole reviewed the purpose of the study which is to answer the following question:
In considering 2-3 prioritized options, is there a better way educationally and fiscally to reconfigure the grades and facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future? If so, how should the grades and facilities be arranged?
3. Meetings of the Advisory Committee will be held from 6:30-8:30 pm as follows:

Date	Topic	Location
September 20	General overview of the study process including the committee's role; student enrollment projections	High School
November 1	The instructional program	Jefferson
December 20	The district's facilities	Nightengale
January 31	Transportation; Begin exploring possible future facility options	Madison
March 1	Staffing; Continued implications of options	Junior High
April 11	Finances; Continued implications of options	High School
May 30	Review of draft report and tentative recommendations	High School
June 21	Presentation of final report to the Board of Education	High School

While the meetings of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 pm, optional tours of the five schools will be held before each of the next five meetings beginning at 5:45 pm. These tours are for committee members and for anyone that will be observing the business meeting that will follow.

4. A contact list of the members of the advisory committee was shared with email addresses. Members of the group were asked to verify the accuracy of the information since email will serve as the primary means of communication between the consultants and the committee members. Meeting materials will be emailed to all committee members prior to the meeting. Paper copies of the materials will also be made available at each meeting.

5. Meeting notes will be provided after each meeting. The notes will be emailed to all committee members and copied to the superintendent. It will be the responsibility of the superintendent to distribute the notes within the district, as he deems appropriate. It is anticipated that, at a minimum, notes will be provided to board members and posted on the district's website. The PowerPoint that is used at each meeting will also be posted on the district's website after the meeting occurs.

6. All meetings of the advisory committee will be open. Members of the public will be welcome at these meetings. At the conclusion of each meeting, the observers will have the opportunity to offer comments or ask questions.

7. Alan Pole presented a PowerPoint overview of the study process and the role of the advisory committee. He indicated that the function of the committee is to advise the Board of Education and the consultants and to communicate with the public about the process. In addition, the committee will add a cultural context for Massena as the various aspects of the study emerge. The superintendent is not a member of the committee but serves as a resource to the committee. Committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings, freely express their points of view, be key communicators with stakeholder groups, and be a respectful, contributing member of the committee.

He emphasized that the consultants bring an outside, unbiased perspective and will ensure that the process is open. They will produce meeting notes after each committee meeting and will be responsible for the final report. The recommendations in the report will benefit student learning and will be educationally sound and fiscally responsible. They will also be independent of special interest groups.

8. Jessica Cohen presented an overview of past enrollments for Massena as well as projected future enrollments for the district. The study begins by reviewing enrollment trends since enrollments influence all decisions regarding staffing, course and curricular offerings, facilities, transportation, and finances.

Enrollment has been declining slightly since at least 2011-12 when the analysis began. Since 2011-2012, the enrollment in Massena has declined from 2,740 students to 2,595 students in the 2016-17 school year, a decrease of 145 students or 5%.

To predict future enrollment, the consultants employ the Cohort Survival Projection method that uses information on the number of births in each school district over a period of years and calculates patterns of enrollment. A cohort survival ratio is developed that tracks how each cohort of students changes as it moves through the grade levels. This ratio, used with the live birth information, predicts what the enrollment will be for a period of years given consistent and predictable conditions. It does not take into account significant economic development changes such as a major employer leaving or entering the area and other similar changes.

Using this method, the enrollment in Massena is predicted to decrease from 2,595 in 2016-17 to 2,401 students in the 2023-2024 school year, an additional decrease of 194 students or 7.5%. The number of home schooled students, non-resident students, and resident students enrolled in non-public schools are all factors that are considered in projecting enrollment. It does not appear that any of these factors will significantly influence the enrollment projections that were made for Massena. Jessica also reviewed demographic information for St. Lawrence County. This review clearly demonstrated that the county is aging and a slight decrease in the population of the county and the school district are anticipated for the future. Jessica mentioned that updated live birth counts and enrollment numbers for this school year will be collected and projections will be updated at a later meeting. This is a process we are going through and the consultants will make corrections and updates at the beginning of each meeting.

Jessica also reviewed the “big picture take-aways” that were identified for this meeting as follows:

- The purpose of the study is to answer the question, “In considering 2-3 prioritized options, is there a better way educationally and fiscally to reconfigure the grades and facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future? If so, how should the grades and facilities be arranged?”
- The study process will be open to ensure there is not a perception it is being conducted behind closed doors.
- The Advisory Committee was formed to assist the consultants throughout the process, but the final recommendations will be the consultants.
- The district has seen declining enrollments and will likely continue to see enrollments drop slightly.

9. In response to questions from committee members, additional information on enrollments prior to 2011 will be provided at the next meeting. In addition, during the discussion of finances, information on costs per pupil will be considered. The meeting was then opened up to the observers for questions and comments.

10. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at the Jefferson Elementary School. An optional tour of the school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on September 20. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact us. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Thanks again for agreeing to serve on this committee. Looking forward to seeing you again on November 1. The tour will begin at 5:45 and the meeting will start at 6:30!!

C: Pat Brady