

**Topic: consolidation of two campuses—essentially facilities and finance**

Present: Board members: David Jean, Ed Harris, Sally Mackenzie, Barbara Merson, Cynthia Shelmerdine, Kathy Wilson, Peggy Muir (on phone).

HCA: Scott Barksdale, Amy Bundt, Mae Applegate, Mel Christensen-Fletcher, Kaitlin Pulia  
Joe Drago, staff of MCSC

Scott provided historical context. Low enrollment is not a new problem, but it grew to this point during the last two years. Generally, HCA gets 50 ish new students every year, so the issue is not an enrollment issue; rather it's a retention issue.

He noted the leadership and facility staff changes throughout the nine years of the school's existence have been part of the problem in that things fall through the cracks. At the moment, have a solid Div 2/3 faculty whereas Div 1 faculty is largely new.

Cynthia said Scott made intelligent decisions last year (step salary for faculty, joining MPERS) to aid retention of faculty on the theory that that would help retain students. However, we don't have time to see the results of those changes.

Questions:

Can we try to attract more students?

- There are students who need this school.
- Mae says we could sell the school as a place for non-conformists. They can find a safe community at HCA.
- Don't mention the lottery
- We have a large class graduating. The data indicate that parents would be happier if the entire school moves to the landing. We would potentially lose +20 students in the move to Harpswell.

Can we sell the Harpswell school? Has anyone talked to the town?

- Appraised at 1.2 million. Realtors have no idea if/when it would sell and how much we'd get. It's about 7 acres of trails; 3 acres of school land.
- Town gets first refusal. They have 45 days to respond. Not enough time for this now.
- Even if sell the school, not enough to build a new one. Right now need buffer in the budget for cost over runs. We have to cover debt service.

Become just a middle school?

- Have to realize reduced numbers of faculty and move away from serving hs students, changes the model of the school. Major reconfiguration required. Not a simple change. If no high school, have to get them ready for public high school.
- See Scott's email about costs/savings for this option

Consider adding grades below fifth? (WHS was an elem school K-5 (or 6?))

Have we looked at other potentially available spaces?

Contact Jim Howard? He owns many buildings on the Landing. Scott will reach out to Priority Group.

Others?

- Empty Sears building at Cooks Corner
- Huge house( functions for while as museum) on Main St Richmond
- Stone Soup Institute in Harpswell Jimmy Cornish's farm
- Possibility of collaborating - using/renting part of spaces
  - Hyde School?
  - farm school for girls in Freeport?
  - Chewonki campus
  - LL Bean
  - SMCC on base - classrooms
  - New Catholic center in Brunswick adjacent to St. John's school?
  - church Sunday schools?
  - Fort Andros?

What does it mean to consolidate at Harpswell school?

- If consolidate at Harpswell, could HCA consider double sessions to accommodate the numbers and keep ma and hs apart?
- Need to enlarge parking lot, environmental concerns re: soil. The septic system can support 275 people. Modulars would not have bathrooms.
- Modulars: Have three estimates. Cost 55K first year for installation (i.e., above rental). Less the following years.
- Real challenge: 20 kids/classroom. Thus need to lower enrollment so classes are about the same size, but still need to increase it by 75 or 85. Need to max out all teaching spaces.
- There are competing budget interests. Subsidy could be lower next year (back to 2020-1 level). Next year we need 170 students = adding 68 students in order to get what we need for FY 24. (Mae notes that the school this year has never gone below 170 enrollment)

Who can we talk to?

Trish Riley

Pender Makin

Charter Commission

When do we have to make the decision?

Decision needs to be made at BOD meeting on March 16.

What is the Decision? =

Is there a viable way for the school to continue ?

If so, what is the decision re: finance and facilities?

What's the process/procedure for decision making?

- Finance and facilities committee needs to meet to weigh in on these questions.
- Executive Committee at its meeting on Tuesday March 8 will develop the process for decision making.
- If new info is found, send it to Cynthia to be distributed to the Board or send it to Board members directly.

Note: refer to emails exchanged re: clarifying questions from Scott and others for some basic and additional information.