

**Northville Public Schools
Short Term Options Committee
March 21, 2005**

M I N U T E S

Dave Bolitho welcomed the Short Term Options Committee at 6:09 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Conference Room of Main Street.

Those Present included: Steve Anderson, Laura Blickle, David Bolitho, James Cracraft, Gina Cunningham, Patti Damaska, Kristin Evans, Eileen Freeman, Eric Hanpeter, Erika lafrate, Jane Jones, John Leverton, Jennifer Luikart, Carol maise, Frank Maraffino, Ann McCutcheon, Kurt Meister, Sue Meyer, Rick Pivetz, Brian Rathsburg, Nancy Raynes, Doug Thaxton, Rob Watson

Guests: Marilyn Bachorik, Anne Marie Fallek, Lynn Osaer, Stacey Mandragon, Sandra Morante

The minutes from the March 14, 2005 meeting were reviewed. The statement that the Kindergarten Relocation Plan would not work for year two was questioned. The wording is changed to read, "It is not known if this Option would work for the second year because it is impossible to estimate how many families would transfer to Ridge Wood for first grade."

A new chart, "Proposals that Work", was reviewed. This chart groups similar Options. The chart also shows how many times children have been moved. A point was made that although the number of times a child has been moved is significant, it is also necessary to consider how many times a family has been moved. The challenges to families/children being moved to another school were further discussed.

It was also brought up that a Ridge Wood Subdivision moved to Thornton Creek would result in confusion about which middle school the child would attend. Thornton Creek is in the Hillside Middle School attendance area, while the Ridge Wood subdivisions are in the Meads Mill attendance area.

The Kindergarten Relocation Plan was analyzed using this model. The ESI projections were applied to show that Ridge Wood could/would have 27 total sections in 05/06 and 29 sections in 06/07. The threshold is in 29 sections with a possibility of 30 sections maximum.

If an unexpected event occurred during the 06-07 school year, the “Overflow Concept” would be invoked, sending new families to schools where capacity exists.

The 06-07 model shows all children leaving their kindergarten school and transferring to Ridge Wood for 1st grade. It is unlikely that this would occur due to the likelihood that the students would be transferred to the new elementary school in 07-08, resulting in yet another transition.

There was discussion about the accuracy of the ESI projections due to their short tenure with the District. The ESI projections were adopted by the Enrollment/Projections Committee and accepted by the Board of Education.

The Kindergarten Relocation Plan uses only the ECC classroom.

A committee member distributed additional enrollment information.

A committee member visited Dickinson School in Livonia and Cooke School and found Dickinson was in excellent condition to house a Northville 5th Grade program. It was indicated that the leased sections could be vacated and that the length of the lease is flexible. Dickinson is larger than what is needed to operate the Center Program currently housed at Cooke School. Dickinson is located 2 miles east of the State Psychiatric hospital. The cost per square foot is \$11.00 - \$13.00, but the price is negotiable. The District could decide to remain there for a longer period of time or leave within 1-2 years. It could be converted into a 5-6 building.

A committee member commented that the cost to the District’s General Fund would be approximately one million dollars and asked if the District afford this additional expense.

Next year’s budget shows that expense exceeds revenue by approximately \$750,000. Administration is currently meeting to further reduce school building and Districtwide budgets.

Other reactions included questioning the wisdom of sending 5th grade Northville children to another school district. The impact on the elementary schools, minus the 5th graders and creating a 5-6 building is a deviation from the current K-5 grade structure. The majority of the Committee was not supportive of this Option.

Attention reverted back to the original chart, “Proposals that Work”. A question was asked about why the “Overflow Option” was not included in the above chart. The “Overflow Option” distributes the overcrowding equitably for the first year, but puts Ridge Wood under capacity the second year. The other elementary

schools remain overcapacity for the second year, therefore the Option was rejected.

The question was asked if we should apply the remaining Options to the Mandatory Attributes and Variable Criteria that was developed several meetings ago.

The Committee overwhelmingly supported continuing to work with the “Options that Work” chart. It was asked if anyone objected to this new direction. There were no objections.

The proposals remaining were as follows:

- Redraw attendance boundary lines
- Move 5th graders to Silver Springs and Winchester
- Relocated Ridge Wood Kindergarten students to other school
- Emergency back up: Apply the overflow concept if Ridge Wood overcrowding occurs.

The Option of moving the Ridge Wood 5th grade to Hillside Middle School was discussed. It was pointed out that the four Old Village School, Center Program Classrooms would be the rooms that would be affected to implement this Option. The OVS students would be displaced back to OVS. It was also pointed out that the Hillside Middle School lacks a playground and that the Specials would be difficult/impossible to conduct i.e. music, physical education, etc.

The Committee, by consensus, rejected this Option. Keeping the Ridge Wood 5th graders in an elementary setting, i.e. Winchester and/or Silver Springs was more acceptable to the Committee, plus the feeder to Meads Mill remains intact.

Questions remained about the second year impact at Ridge Wood under the moving 5th graders to Silver Springs and Winchester Option. This is a concern that the section total may increase to 31 because the distribution of students by section is an unknown. It was explained that the overflow concept would be applied if this is occurs.

At the conclusion of this discussion, it was apparent that the Committee was ready to decide if the four recommendations remaining were the only ones that would be presented to the Board. The question was asked if anyone could not support the four recommendations, three on the “Proposals that Work” chart and the one previously decided upon, “Build a new elementary school”. There were no comments made to the contrary. Therefore, the Committee had completed its Charge.

The Committee was then asked if the four recommendations should be prioritized. There was not support for this suggestion.

Therefore, the four recommendations to the Board, in random order, are as follows (drum roll please):

- Construct a new elementary school
- Move Ridge Wood 5th graders to Winchester and Silver Springs
- Relocate the Ridge Wood Kindergarten Students (KRP)
- Redraw attendance boundary lines

The Committee was informed that a Special Call Board Meeting will be held at Hillside Middle School on April 5th at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of the Short Term Options Committee presenting recommendation to the Board.

(Subsequently, the Town Hall Meetings were scheduled)

Wednesday, April 6th, 7 PM at Meads Mill

Thursday, April 7th at Hillside Middle School)

The Committee was asked for volunteers to present the recommendations to the Board.

A draft copy of the Report will be electronically conveyed to the Committee for review, comment and revision as will the format and agenda for the Presentation to the Board.

All Committee members were encouraged to attend the meetings.

Note from the Chair: I want to thank the Committee for the creativity, patience and civility shown during these lengthy and sometimes emotional meetings. The amount of time and energy you have devoted to this process will best serve the children of this District for the next two years. Kudos for a job well done!

Next Meeting: Board Meeting, Tuesday, April 5th at 7:30 p.m. at Hillside Middle School.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.