

APPROVED BY THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

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

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Work Session
November 18, 2021
Pittsfield Middle High School

Members Present: Justin Clough, Vice Chairperson
Sandra Adams
Molly Goggin
Diane Rider

Others Present: Bryan Lane, Interim Superintendent
Derek Hamilton, Principal, PMHS
Michael Wiley, Principal, PES
Members of the Public

Mr. Clough facilitated the work session to begin to develop the district vision and mission statement. Mr. Clough began by reading the current vision and mission statement. He provided the Board with a definition of vision and mission. Mr. Clough provided the Board with some vision examples from Disney, Google, Instagram, and Nike and an example of a mission from the US Navy.

Mr. Lane stated that usually a district vision and mission is written collaboratively by the entire school community, including parents, students, teachers, and administration. He recognized the desire of the Board to want to have a highly aspirational vision and mission. Mr. Lane suggested that as the Board develops a mission and vision, they invite other stakeholders to participate.

Mr. Clough suggested creating a survey to be used to elicit feedback from students. Mr. Lane explained that survey information exists from the NEASC work that has been done; this information may be helpful.

Ms. Goggin stated that the forum scheduled for this Saturday is a beginning point of creating a new vision and mission. She stated that she is concerned that the Board will take over driving the process when the NEASC process is already underway.

Ms. Bickford explained that the current vision and mission was created by multiple stakeholders over the period of one year about four years ago.

Mr. Clough stated his concern that some of the data in the NEASC report is ten years old. Mr. Lane clarified by saying that the survey data is recent. Ms. Bickford stated that the NEASC process takes place over a ten-year period, but is updated intermittently.

Mr. Clough stated that a main concern for him is that the administration needs to have a vision and mission statement that drives their work.

Ms. Goggin reiterated her concern that the Board not be the driving force behind the mission and vision.

Ms. Rider stated that she believes there should be more emphasis on the individual child. Mr. Lane explained that the “picture the graduate” exercise that is taking place on Saturday is exactly that - an emphasis on the graduate. Ms. Rider stated that she thinks the current vision and mission is stifling to a graduate and that they need something that speaks to beyond their career in school.

Mr. Clough stated he hopes that there is a good turn-out at the event on Saturday. He opined that the vision and mission is the way in which the school creates the vision of the graduate that is identified in the “picture the graduate” activity scheduled on Saturday.

Mr. Wiley stated that as he onboarded into his position as principal it became evident that the community does not support education in Pittsfield. He spoke of the people, such as Mr. Hamilton, who have worked here for a long time and are dedicated to working to improve the education in Pittsfield. Mr. Wiley suggested that education in Pittsfield needs to be rebranded and celebrated.

Ms. Rider stated that the work is not meant to be a criticism of the past but an effort to move forward. She emphasized that the work of education is to catapult students into a future of lifelong learning.

Mr. Clough stated that he is not being critical of the work done previously, but feels that a message needs to be sent about the good things that are happening in the district.

Mr. Lane stated that the vision of the graduate does need to include what happens to the student after graduation. He agreed that the positive marketing of the school is a priority. He pointed out that the role of the Board is more critical in an environment where there is a frequent turnover in staff.

Ms. Goggin stated she is uncomfortable with comparing an education system to a business. She agreed with Ms. Rider relative to looking at the vision and mission from the perspective of an individual student. She stated that the driver should be “Is this good for kids?”; the driver should not be a brand or a product.

Mr. Clough clarified that although a school should not be run like a business, there are some practices that can be utilized.

Ms. Rider stated that she agrees with considering what is good for kids, but would add “in the long run”.

Mr. Lane suggested the book, “The Fifth Discipline” by Peter Senge and suggested that his work might be helpful.

The work session ended at 7:06 p.m.