

Dresden Education Exploratory Committee (tentative)
Informational Meeting Only
December 05, 2022
Notes & discussions

Present - Leah Bickford, Gary Blau, Lisa Hewitt, Jeff Bickford, and Shari Lilly.

This is the second unofficial meeting of the interested residents to make plans for the future to look for different avenues for the education of our children. The purpose is to see if staying in the RSU2 is more beneficial or to research other areas, gather the most information to provide to the public.

Jeff Bickford, one of our school board representatives, provided copies of the newest formula from the State to generate the cost-per-student of education. The paper he passed out gives the ratio of student per teacher and student per staff.

Pre-K is 13.93 which is 15-1 student to staff. The total amount is then broken down - - Elementary is Pre-K to grade 6 and Secondary education is grades 7 to 12. He provided the EDU279 specifics with all the information pertaining to the entire education per student, based on average student count reported. This paper is based on 18.85 to come up with this year's average. It also indicates the teacher salary per student.

Gary asked if we have truent officers. Jeff said yes, but they are covered under a different category.

Lisa asked if this budget is for RSU2. Jeff said this is mainly the State's breakdown. This is for all RSUs. Gary said it's like a guideline to which Jeff said that's what it is. He also mentioned that we have 78 students in Pre-K to grade 5 and the rest are in grades 6 - 12 (approx. 70).

Page 4 is broken down by the schools. 8.31% of the student population is Dresden.

Sending students to schools other than Hall-Dale requires having a 'Superintendent's Agreement'. This also gives a breakdown of what the town's budget for the property valuation will be. Jeff added that the State can change the set up on this anytime and towns can't do anything about it. We are at the mercy of the State. Gary asked if any of the DOE attend any of the School Board meetings. Jeff replied, no, they just go by their own formula.

Leah - Section 5 F. Adjusted percentage. Why does it say 8.13% but they have us at 10.1%? It looks like they change from town to town and year to year. Jeff said that if we are not valued correctly on our property assessment, we end up losing on the education part and then it ends up affecting the mil rate which then affects the 55% from the State share.

NEWA - Report says no schools scored 64%. Lisa asked if we have a performance evaluation system. Jeff said we just got a new superintendent who handles so many issues and this is going to be something that will be worked on.

Thank you to Jeff for the great information and help he is providing the group. He also reminded everyone that this reflects the withdrawal of Richmond from the RSU as of next year (2023). We will have to pick up some of that cost. It will also affect the bus runs as

one was from Richmond. Other changes to the bus issue will be in regard to pick up times, getting a third bus and another driver. Especially, with more families coming into town. Lisa wonders if the town may have any stats on projecting how many children are in a household which could help to give us a better estimate of what to plan for. Jeff reminded everyone to remember that Richmond will be out so we will need to make sure the public knows that we will have to share that extra cost. Lisa can remember when it was said by a RSU2 member that they wouldn't miss us if we left. However, it appears it may bother them since Richmond has now left. Gary said our other costs should go down as far as administration as we wouldn't have to share costs of Richmond. One increase would be a bus and, Jeff added, the cost of the computers which we lease. Parents want a quality education, later bus pick ups, closer to home for activities or other necessary issues. It would be good to keep track of how Richmond makes out moving forward. Leah added that we would also look into other options besides Richmond. Gary asked if we know how much money is in the 'slush fund'. Jeff said he doesn't have that information, but will try to get it. Leah said one thing we'll be looking at is the totals.

Rules of this Committee

- 1.) Fact-based only - no personal issues.
- 2.) Keep meetings to no longer than one hour.
- 3.) Follow an agenda to keep focused.
- 4.) Be respectful to all members - give time to talk and share opinions.
5. Give the information only.

Moving forward, come up with teams for specific issues. At least two people on a team to present and answer questions. Presentation would be best done in Power Point as well as a handout for the public to take home.

Gary said we should have a link on the town website so people can access the information. Lisa suggested having a more unique name other than Education. Not Withdrawal which was used in 2016. It was agreed to be the Education Exploratory Committee. Leah will attend the next Select Board meeting to present a list of names for those who want to be appointed to the committee.

We will meet on the first the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting closed at 7:10 p.m.

Shari Lilly