

Dresden Education Exploratory Committee (tentative)
Informational Meeting Only
December 19, 2022
Notes & discussions

Present - Leah Bickford, Gary Blau, Lisa Hewitt, Karen Moody, Jonathan Doray, Peter Elvin, Jeff Bickford, and Shari Lilly.

This is the third unofficial meeting of interested residents wanting to secure the best environment for the education of our children. As expressed previously, the purpose is to see if staying in the RSU2 is the most beneficial to our students or if it would be in our best interest to research other areas, gathering the most information possible to provide to the public.

Leah reported that she has talked to the Select Board to get this Committee moving forward. The first order of this group will be to choose officers.

Nominations were presented from those present at this meeting.

Karen made a motion to elect Leah Bickford as the Chairperson; Gary Blau seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by a show of hands.

Karen made a motion to elect Lisa Hewitt as the Vice Chairperson; Gary seconded and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands.

Lisa motioned to elect Karen Moody as the Committee Secretary; Jonathan seconded and the motion passed by a show of hands. (The Committee Secretary fills in when the Recording Secretary is unavailable.)

Leah then repeated the following criteria for this Committee:

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.

In providing an agenda, Leah asked if there are any adjustments? Gary asked if two minutes is enough time for public comment - Leah replied yes, but it can be adjusted if needed.

Leah has sent a message to Daniel requesting our meeting information be put on the town website. Lisa noted that the SB does not want a number of people uploading to the website, so we would need to send all of it to Daniel.

Leah noted that the DOE will be a big resource for us to research. Also, we can reference town report books.

Do research of other towns such as Richmond, Wiscasset and others that have left an RSU.

Gary said we should also look at all tuition-based schools. Peter asked if we can approach any schools in the area? It was suggested to find out if they will give information.

Gary said one issue parents have is the distance of travel so we should first research schools that are closer - Richmond, Wiscasset and perhaps Bath and/or Gardiner. Jonathan added that we will also lose a bus because the one from Richmond will no longer pick up here. Jeff Bickford said we could still send our kids there on a Superintendent's agreement, but we would have to transport them ourselves. Gary wonders how much information the other towns would provide in regard to bus leasing, etc. He added that the goal of this committee is to be transparent on the information to the townspeople. We will need to add bus information to the Exploratory Research.

Teams - Leah wants to have teams that would focus on specific issues in order to be able to answer questions that may arise.

Research will be done on the following:

RSU2 - Richmond

Wiscasset - Bath - Gardiner

Tuition-based / Charter Schools

Research for Grants for Dresden

Lisa asked if we will develop a list of questions that we can use when talking to other schools? The members feel this would be a good idea so we have information relating to the areas of our interest from all those schools we contact.

Jeff B. said all the information from Richmond is available whenever we ask for it.

Peter asked about the discussions. One of the things we will talk about is the metrics for each school.

Things to research from each school.

How the children's grades show - where those issues are.

Activities that are provided.

Special needs students. - Transportation or other specifics.

Research goals - this is tabled until we get the teams together.

At this time, we plan to meet on the first and third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. However, January presents some conflicts so it was agreed to meet on Tuesday, January 10th and again on Monday, January 23rd. (tentatively)

We still need an RSU2 Board member to be assigned to this committee by the SB. Kathryn Marseglia is our primary representative. Peter Elvin represents the Planning Board, Karen Moody represents the Budget Review Committee, Leah Bickford, Gary Blau, Jonathan Doray and Lisa Hewitt represent Residents-at-large. We will need one from the Select Board.

Meeting closed at 7:02 p.m.

Shari Lilly