

Merrimack Valley School District

**Salisbury/Webster
Community Study Committee**

Summary Report

December 2011



Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Membership.....	1
Summary Report.....	2-5
Purpose.....	6
District Long Range Plan.....	7
First Meeting.....	8-20
• What does a Quality Education Look Like?	19
Second Meeting.....	21-26
Third Meeting.....	27-40
• Differences in Small Rural School and the Educational Impact	39-40
Fourth Meeting.....	41-46
• Advantages and Challenges of Small Rural Schools	43-46
Fifth Meeting.....	47-50
• Prioritized List of Options	49-50

Merrimack Valley School Board Members 2011-2012

Caroletta Alicea – Boscawen
Normandie Blake – Webster
Lorrie Carey – Boscawen
Audrey Carter – Penacook
Troy Cowan – Loudon

Thomas Godfrey - Webster
Mark Hutchins - Salisbury
David Longnecker - Salisbury
William Renauld - Penacook
Jim Lavery – Penacook
Laura Vincent - Loudon

Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee

Fall 2011

Community Member

Town

Tresea Barger	Webster
Brendan Casey	Penacook
Deanna Casey	Penacook
Phil Demarais	Webster
Thad Dougherty	Webster
Ben Forbes	Boscawen
Julie Gaudette	Salisbury
Jennifer Irving	Salisbury
Bruce Johnson	Webster
Kasey Landry-Fillion	Loudon
Lisa Lane	Penacook
Marcia Murphy	Salisbury
Pat Peick	Penacook
Cheri Perelli	Penacook
Michele St. Jacques	Webster
Joseph Schmidl	Salisbury
Carin Walker	Webster
Nancy Webster	Webster
Randy Wormald	Salisbury

Merrimack Valley School District
Webster – Salisbury Community Study Committee
Summary Report
December 2011

Introduction

The Merrimack Valley School District is comprised of five elementary schools. Of these five, the Salisbury and Webster Elementary Schools are smaller than the other three and therefore present with challenges and advantages that are different from those at larger schools. Recognizing the importance of providing a consistent elementary experience for children throughout the five elementary schools in the District, the Merrimack Valley School Board formed a citizen study committee in the fall of 2011 to have an educational conversation with regards to the two smaller schools.

Organization

Representatives from five communities met throughout October and November 2011 to look at data, review various aspects of the current school system, and envision a future for the two schools. The series of meetings began with tours of each school facility and presentations of data and information on enrollment, socio-economics, demographics, facilities and grounds, technology, educational programming, staffing, and student achievement. Committee members engaged in a discussion to identify the components of a quality education, to prioritize the advantages and challenges of the two schools, and to provide feedback for the school board in regards to the continued improvement to the educational experiences offered to students in the Salisbury and Webster Elementary Schools.

Findings

Although the viewpoints of the committee members appear on the various charts included in this report, some findings are highlighted in the paragraphs that follow.

It was clear from an initial list generated by the committee members that there was a consensus that a quality education included such essential things as strong parent and community involvement, strong student to teacher connection, diversity of opportunity, and a safe, respectful environment. It was also clear from the information provided by the school administrators that there were similarities and differences between some aspects of the educational program provided at the larger elementary schools and the smaller schools.

The sense of community and development of personal confidence was noted as an essential aspect of the small school environments that may not always be a focus in larger school environments. Maintaining personal interactions between students, parents and teachers was also identified by committee members as easier to cultivate in a smaller school setting. In addition, the ability of teachers and staff to really know the students and parents was seen as a valuable component of the education provided for the students in the Salisbury and Webster schools.

Sharing individual staff members between the two small schools was identified as the most difficult challenge in these small schools. Noting the impact on instructional time with students and the likeliness of specific staff members not being available to parents or for emergencies, this issue was most important to the members of the committee. Add to that the fact that the rural towns lack emergency and other town services lends more seriousness to the impact of sharing some of these positions. Meeting the individual needs of some students by matching learning styles and teaching styles was also identified as very difficult in a smaller school. Unlike schools with a larger population, small schools are unable to meet the needs of individual students by changing peer groups or arranging grade configurations. Another challenge highlighted by committee members was technology. Although the two schools have some equipment and access to the internet, providing current informational resources and training to the teachers is hindering progress in this area. Providing the benefit of speech

and occupational therapy preventative services for pre-school and primary school children was listed as a challenge as well.

Recommendations and Conclusions

In drafting the options for addressing those areas highlighted as priorities, the committee members worked together to provide suggestions to the school board for not only maintaining those advantages that are highly valued but for improving on those areas that are more challenging in the small, rural schools.

When asked to prioritize the numerous options suggested for addressing the three most valued advantages, the overwhelming choice of members of the committee was to maintain the small schools in each town. Further challenged to clarify their thoughts, committee members discussed the options of reconfiguring grade levels into two different schools, combining the two schools into one, and having a combined school closer to the town lines. Although the discussion was brief, the group appeared to be open and willing to consider any alternative that would keep an elementary school in each community.

Besides the option of maintaining the community based schools, the committee suggested continuing to focus on the professional development of teachers and staff in order for Salisbury and Webster students to achieve at high levels during their middle and high school years. To address the advantage of maintaining the sense of a town community and keeping the school as an extension of that community the committee suggested that improving the existing buildings was a high priority.

In addition to the suggestions for maintaining the advantages of the education provided students at Salisbury and Webster Elementary, and to address the challenges of sharing staff and integrating the use of technology into the curriculum and instruction at the schools, the committee recommended hiring more staff. In priority order these included a dedicated administrator in each school, a full-time nurse in each school, a full-time kindergarten teacher in each school, a district technology coordinator, a technology integrator for the two schools, and additional speech and occupational therapists.

In many ways the process of meeting for the purpose of an educational dialog was as important as the summary of the information. Including key community members in this educational dialog reinforced the value of participation in the process of change and the need for everyone to play a role in public education. The results of the process provide the school board with insights that would have lacked clarity if not for the thoughtful conversations and exchanges of ideas that took place during the meetings. It also appeared to help the committee members become more fully aware of the extent of the school programming and facilities and has hopefully deepened their support for our public schools. In that sense, the benefit of the school and community working together was immeasurable.

Follow Up Steps

The process of continued improvement is ongoing and continuous. Being aware of the accomplishments and shortcomings of the school system and the individual schools, as highlighted in this educational dialog, is an essential first step. The next step is to garner support for the resources needed to effect change and improvement. The information provided by the Study Committee will be presented to the Merrimack Valley School Board for their consideration. The Board will consider the recommendations in a broad view of what is in the best interest of the District and use the results of the process not only as an impetus to continued improvement but also to inform the community about the quality of education that Merrimack Valley students are receiving.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Barry, Assistant Superintendent

Salisbury/Webster Study Committee Purpose

Recognizing the importance of providing a consistent elementary experience for children throughout our five elementary schools, the Merrimack Valley School Board is undertaking an educational conversation with regards to Salisbury and Webster Elementary, our two smaller elementary schools. While there are numerous advantages to these small schools, such as the very personalized educational environment and the connection to their respective town, there are also many challenges. These challenges, such as the lack of flexibility of class offerings and lack of diversity for students and staff, are unique to small rural schools.

For these reasons a citizen study committee has been formed to look at data, review the current system, envision a future, and provide feedback to the school board for continuous improvement of our school system.

**MERRIMACK VALLEY LONG RANGE PLAN
SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2007-2012**

GOAL I PROMOTE ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL GROWTH

OBJECTIVES:

- 1A. The District will maintain and improve its existing academic, athletic, co-curricular and community service programs to ensure that every student is provided with the opportunity to succeed in their chosen post-high school educational and career goals.
- 1B. The District will maintain and promote a physically and emotionally safe environment.
- 1C. The District will complete a financial and educational impact study of full day kindergarten.
- 1D. The District will broaden its mix of athletic and co-curricular options to meet the needs and interest of all students.
- 1E. The District will expand strategies and procedures for attracting, retaining, and developing high quality teachers.
- 1F. The District will promote and expand the opportunity for active parent and community involvement in student learning.

GOAL II FOCUS ON ESSENTIAL LEARNING SKILLS

OBJECTIVES:

- 2A. Students will read at grade level or higher by third grade.
- 2B. Students will become proficient in oral and written communication.
- 2C. The District will expand its technology curriculum and use of technology in the educational process.
- 2D. The District will promote higher levels of learning in math and science at all grade levels.
- 2E. The District will develop a comprehensive (K-12) plan to reduce the high school drop-out rate.

GOAL III PROVIDE A MORE STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVES:

- 3A. Through a collaborative effort of student, school and parent, a personal learning plan will be created and revised annually.
- 3B. The District will provide a network of supports that addresses the individual needs of each student.
- 3C. The District will emphasize and strengthen a culture of student responsibility/accountability with regard to academic, athletic, co-curricular and community activities.
- 3D. The District will foster student engagement in the learning process by emphasizing the relevance of its academic content.

GOAL IV: USE DATA TO MAKE SOUND DECISIONS

OBJECTIVES:

- 4A. The District will expand its capabilities and expertise in the quantification, measurement and assessment of all educational programs and systems.
- 4B. The District will weigh the impact and quality of its educational programs on students versus the financial impact on taxpayers when developing its annual budget.
- 4C. The District will expand its efforts to secure sources of revenue beyond the local taxpayer.

Merrimack Valley School District
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
Salisbury Elementary School
September 28, 2011
6:45-8:30

Agenda

6:45	Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Michael Martin Superintendent of Schools
7:00	Building Tour	Fred Reagan Facilities Director
	Meeting Facilitators	Chris Barry Assistant Superintendent
		Sandy Davis Salisbury/Webster Principal
7:15	Purpose of the Study	
7:30	Organizing Activity	
8:00	Presentation of Demographic Information	
8:20	Wrap Up	

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
September 28, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Tresea Barger, Brendan Casey, Deanna Casey, Sarah Chalsma, Phil Demarais, Ben Forbes, Julie Gaudette, Jennifer Irving, Bruce Johnson, Lisa Lane, Marcia Murphy, Pat Peick, Cheri Perelli, Michele St. Jacques, Joseph Schmidl, Carin Walker, Nancy Webster, Randy Wormald

Board Members Present: Normandie Blake, Tom Godfrey, Mark Hutchins, Laura Vincent

Administrators Present: Mike Martin, Chris Barry, Sandy Davis, Fred Reagan

Mike Martin welcomed the committee members and introduced the administrators and school board members.

Fred Reagan and Sandy Davis led the committee on a brief tour of the Salisbury Elementary School building.

Following committee member introductions, Chris Barry clarified that the purpose of the study committee was to have an educational conversation with regards to the district's two small rural schools and their advantages and challenges. The committee will look at data, review current systems and practices, envision a future, and provide feedback to the school board for continuous improvement to the school system.

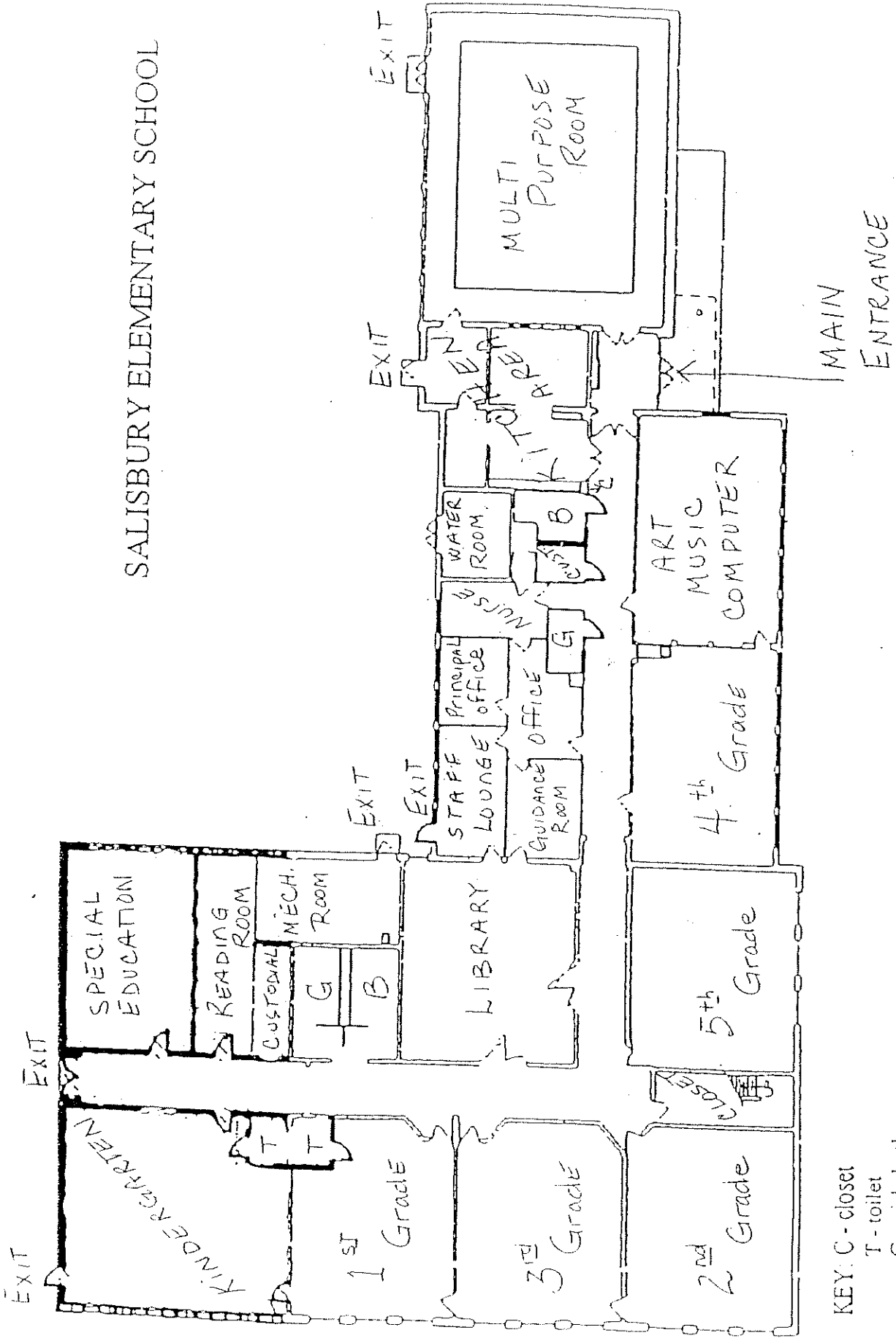
Sandy Davis led a group activity to answer the question: What does a quality education look like? Groups identified patterns, overlaps, gaps, and categories, and then shared with the bigger group. (see attached)

Enrollment, socio-economic information and other demographic data was presented and discussed. (see attached)

Board members spoke individually on their reasons for this educational discussion and thanked the committee members for their time and commitment to this process and the children in our schools.

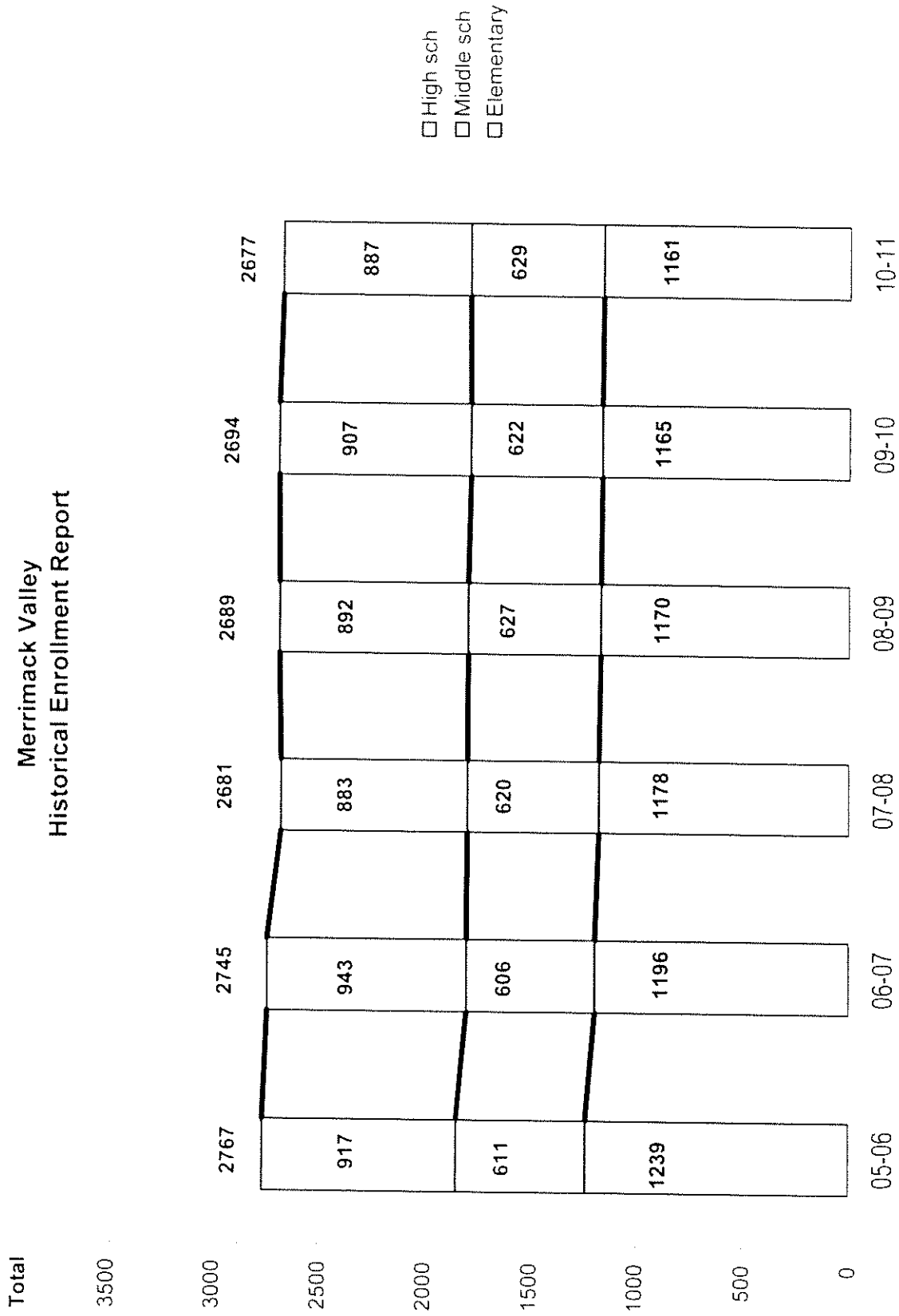
The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at the Webster Elementary School.

SALISBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



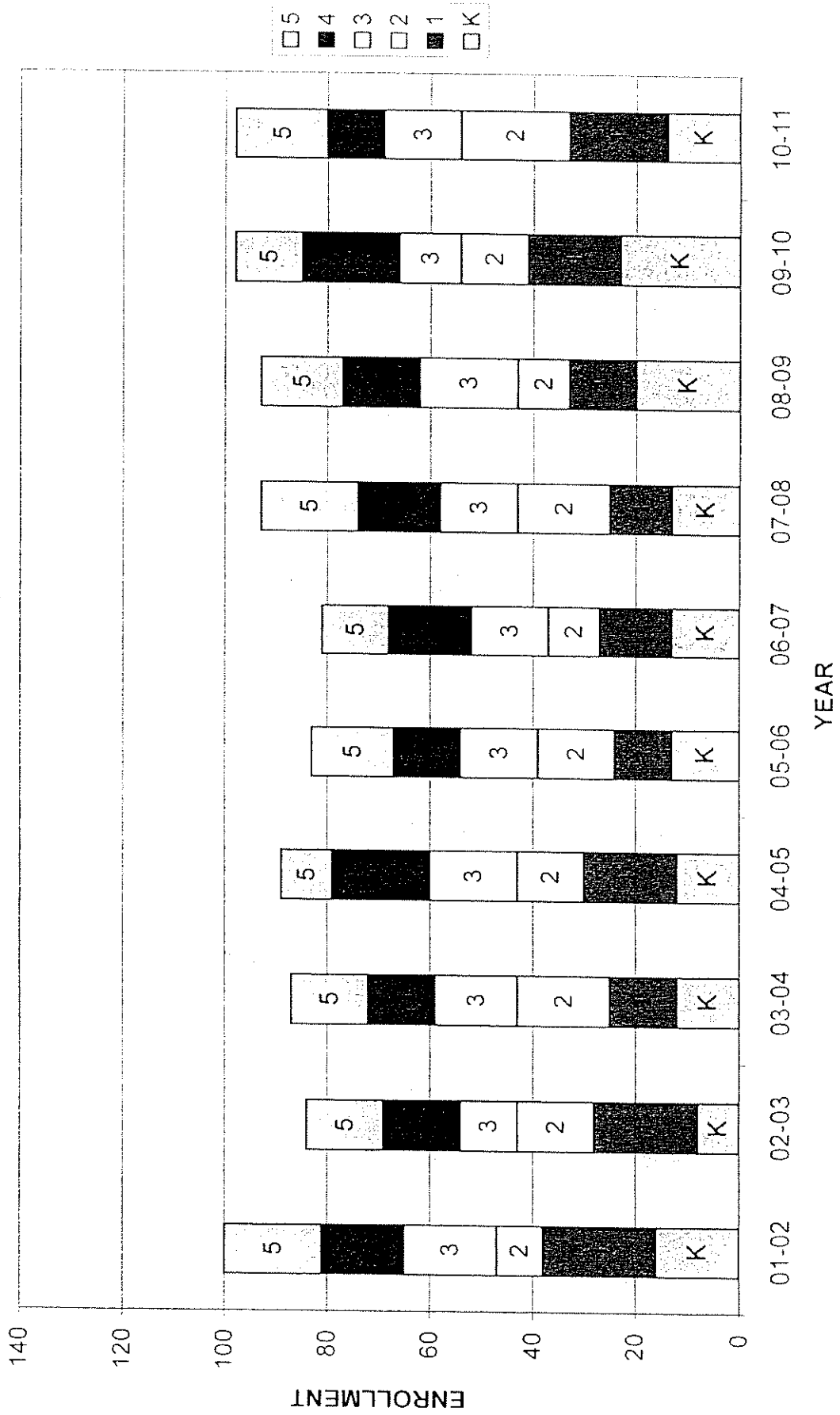
KEY: C - closet
 T - toilet
 G - girls bathroom
 B - boys bathroom

Merrimack Valley
Historical Enrollment Report

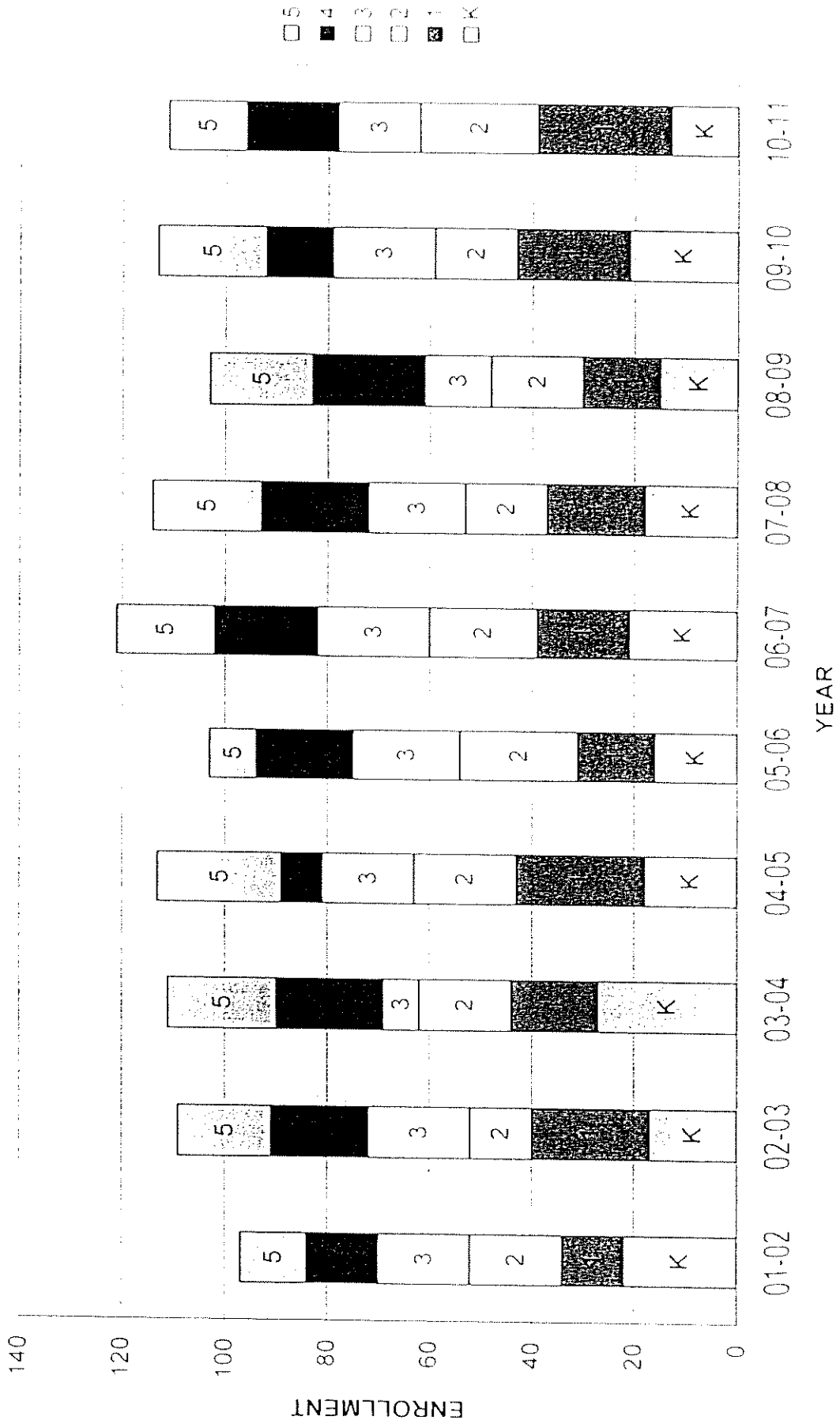


High sch
 Middle sch
 Elementary

SALISBURY ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT



WEBSTER ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT



MVSD October 2009 Enrollment by Town

	Kind	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Boscawen	33	36	45	35	36	44	35	45	48	55	41	34	38	525
Loudon	47	51	53	67	61	62	70	69	57	65	81	51	57	791
Penacook	69	59	53	62	61	68	50	54	70	59	64	61	55	785
Salisbury	23	20	14	12	20	13	16	24	16	26	14	14	18	230
Webster	21	26	19	20	13	21	25	22	19	17	25	16	21	265
Total	193	192	184	196	191	208	196	214	210	222	225	176	189	2596

MVSD October 2010 Enrollment by Town

	Kind	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Boscawen	43	34	38	44	35	39	43	36	42	54	53	35	26	522
Loudon	51	53	56	59	65	61	64	68	67	58	67	69	49	787
Penacook	60	67	59	54	62	59	73	51	61	71	59	45	62	783
Salisbury	14	20	22	15	11	19	13	15	24	24	18	12	15	222
Webster	15	27	25	19	18	15	22	25	23	22	17	24	18	270
Total	183	201	200	191	191	193	215	195	217	229	214	185	170	2584

Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility by District, 2010-2011

<u>District #</u>	<u>District Name</u>	<u>Enrollment</u> <u>s of 10/1/2010</u>	<u>Free/</u> <u>Reduced</u> <u>Eligible ²</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Participation</u>
	State Average Gr 1-12	178,013	45,666	25.65%
	State Average Gr 1-8	116,416	31,233	27.60%
	State Average Gr 9-12	61,607	13,533	21.97%
	Boscawen Elementary School	204	77	37.75%
	Loudon Elementary School	290	72	24.83%
	Penacook Elementary School	302	95	31.46%
	Salisbury Elementary School	84	20	23.81%
	Webster Elementary School	98	16	16.33%
	Merrimack Valley Middle School	629	191	30.37%
	Merrimack Valley High School	887	196	22.10%

Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility, 2009-2010

<u>District Name</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>Enrollment</u> <u>s of 10/1/2009</u>	<u>Free/</u> <u>Reduced</u> <u>Eligible ²</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Participation</u>
	State Average Gr 1-12 ³	181,379	43,441	23.95%
	State Average Gr 1-8	117,412	30,837	26.26%
	State Average Gr 9-12	63,967	12,604	19.70%
Merrimack Va	Boscawen Elementary School	215	84	39.07%
	Loudon Elementary School	290	60	20.69%
	Penacook Elementary School	300	98	32.67%
	Salisbury Elementary School	75	19	25.33%
	Webster Elementary School	92	14	15.22%
	Merrimack Valley Middle School	622	178	28.62%
	Merrimack Valley High School	907	199	21.94%

Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility by District, 2008-2009

<u>District #</u>	<u>District Name</u>	<u>Enrollment</u> <u>s of 10/1/2008</u>	<u>Free/</u> <u>Reduced</u> <u>Eligible ²</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Participation</u>
<u>352</u>	State Average Gr 1-12 ³	183,559	38,303	20.87%
	State Average Gr 1-8	119,661	27,761	23.20%
	State Average Gr 9-12	63,898	10,542	16.50%
	Boscawen Elementary School	212	71	33.59%
	Loudon Elementary School	303	45	14.85%
	Penacook Elementary School	308	94	30.52%
	Salisbury Elementary School	73	10	13.70%
	Webster Elementary School	88	13	14.77%
	Merrimack Valley Middle School	626	134	21.41%
	Merrimack Valley High School	890	153	17.19%

Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility by District, 2007-2008

<u>District Name</u>	<u>Enrollments of 10/1/2007</u>	<u>Free/Reduced Eligible</u> ²	<u>% Participation</u>
State Average Gr 1-12 ³	187,140	36,398	19.45%
State Average Gr 1-8	121,071	26,339	21.76%
State Average Gr 9-12	66,069	10,059	15.22%
Boscawen Elementary School	212	46	21.70%
Loudon Elementary School	310	36	11.61%
Penacook Elementary School	302	73	24.17%
Salisbury Elementary School	80	11	13.75%
Webster Elementary School	96	11	11.46%
Merrimack Valley Middle School	621	111	17.87%
Merrimack Valley High School	877	134	15.28%

FY 2006-2007 Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility

<u>District Name</u>	<u>Enrollment of 10/1/2006</u> ¹	<u>Free/Reduced Eligible</u> ²	<u>Participation %</u>
State Average Gr 1-12 ³	190,348	35,936	18.88%
State Average Gr 1-8	123,381	26,185	21.22%
State Average Gr 9-12	66,966	9,751	14.56%
Boscawen Elementary School	240	60	25.00%
Loudon Elementary School	312	49	15.71%
Penacook Elementary School	299	79	26.42%
Salisbury Elementary School	68	5	7.35%
Webster Elementary School	100	11	11.00%
Merrimack Valley Middle School	606	105	17.33%
Merrimack Valley High School	943	129	13.68%

SPECIAL PERMISSIONS 2010-2011

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u># STUDENTS SENT</u>	<u># STUDENTS RECEIVED</u>
Boscawen	1	14
Loudon	1	0
Penacook	6	5
Salisbury	2	0
Webster	10	0

HOME SCHOOLED 2010-2011

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u># STUDENTS HOME SCHOOLED</u>
Boscawen	36
Loudon	51
Penacook	18
Salisbury	9
Webster	7

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u># STUDENTS HOME SCHOOLED</u>
Elementary	49
Middle	35
High	37

What does a quality education look like?

RED GROUP

Diversity in all things (referenced Mr. Martin's bull's eye)
Variety of instruction to meet the variety of student needs
Teachers who model high expectations academically as well as socially
Students master necessary skills with self-initiation and motivation

YELLOW GROUP

Resource materials
Disciplinary
Safety
Enthusiasm
Parent involvement, community spirit
Student-teacher recognition
Tolerance
Student-teacher connection
Innovation and Opportunity for all

BLUE GROUP

Small class size
Teachers who teach you how to learn- no matter how you learn
Calm, focused, safe environment
School becomes a community
Real life application
Student self-accountability
Individual high expectation

GREEN GROUP

Environment
 Respectful, safe environment that supports active learning
Teachers
 A dynamic, enthusiastic teacher that makes personal connections
Demographic
 Low student/teacher ration
Curriculum
 Challenging and age appropriate
 Strong co-curricular programs
 Diverse delivery
 Supporting global understanding
Culture
 Positive and creative
 Allows students to build confidence and take ownership
Community - "It takes a village to raise a child"

What surprised you?

(re: data presented on enrollment and other demographic information)

- 8% of Webster Elementary students don't attend Webster Elementary
- enrollment has been pretty steady over the past 6 years
- The % students qualifying for free and reduced hot lunches
- Salisbury and Webster Elementary have the lowest % of students who qualify for free and reduced hot lunches
- When looking at individual grade levels, Salisbury and Webster combined have larger grade level numbers than Boscawen
- The number of Salisbury and Webster students going to Boscawen

In the parking lot.....

Projected student population figures for 2012-2015

Merrimack Valley School District
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
Salisbury Elementary School
October 12, 2011
6:45-8:30

Agenda

6:45	Building Tour	Fred Reagan Facilities Director
	Welcome Recap/Follow up of 10/4/11	Chris Barry Assistant Superintendent
	Facility and Grounds Information Town Services Information	Fred Reagan
	Small Group Activity	Sandy Davis Salisbury/Webster Principal
8:15	Wrap Up	

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
October 12, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Tresea Barger, Sarah Chalsma, Phil Demarais, Thad Dougherty, Ben Forbes, Kasey Fillion, Julie Gaudette, Jennifer Irving, Bruce Johnson, Pat Peick, Cheri Perelli, Michele St. Jacques, Carin Walker, Nancy Webster, Randy Wormald

Board Members Present: Normandie Blake, Tom Godfrey, Mark Hutchins, David Longnecker, Laura Vincent

Administrators Present: Mike Martin, Chris Barry, Sandy Davis, Fred Reagan

Fred Reagan and Sandy Davis led the committee on a tour of the Webster Elementary School building and grounds. After the tour Fred provided detailed information on the facilities and grounds, highlighting the origins of the buildings, the additions to the buildings, the spaces within the buildings, the site sizes and access to playgrounds and athletic fields, the hvac systems, water supply, and technology access.

Committee members recorded their thoughts regarding the differences between the 5 elementary schools and how the differences may impact the quality of educational experiences offered to the children. Individual thoughts and responses will be shared at the next meeting scheduled for October 26, 2011 at Salisbury Elementary School.

2011-2012 ENROLLMENT DATA

	<u>K</u>	<u>Gr 1</u>	<u>Gr 2</u>	<u>Gr 3</u>	<u>Gr 4</u>	<u>Gr 5</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SALISBURY ELEMENTARY	8	13	17	19	16	15	88
WEBSTER ELEMENTARY	14	16	21	22	18	18	109

MERRIMACK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

	Boscawen	Loudon	Penacook	Salisbury	Webster
Sprinkler Systems	Installed 1996	Installed 2007	Installed 2007	None	None
Air Handling Systems	Ongoing Updates	Ongoing Updates	Ongoing Updates	Ongoing Updates	Ongoing Updates
Parking	75 Spaces 4 ADA	80 Spaces 6 ADA 54 Spaces 3 ADA - Athletic Field 15 Spaces Oak Hill	97 Spaces 4 ADA	46 Spaces 2 ADA	25 Spaces 1 ADA
Gym Space	5720 sq. ft.	7696 sq. ft.	7696 sq. ft.	2000 sq. ft.	2000 sq. ft.
Water/Sewer	Municipal	Private/Bottled (Fluoride)	Municipal	Private	Private/Bottled (Salt/Chloride)
Cafeteria	1600 sq. ft. Stage off Caf. 780 sq ft	2400 sq. ft. Music Room off Gym 1152 sq. ft.	2060 sq. ft. 940 sq. ft. stage	Multi-purpose room	Multi-purpose room
Athletic Fields	Soccer, Baseball	2 soccer	1 soccer	1 soccer	Use Town Owned Field for gym class
Phone/System	Installed 2006	Installed 2007	Installed 2002	Installed 2006	Installed 2006
Secure Entrance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kitchen	1485 sq. ft.	824 sq. ft.	2495 sq. ft.	728 sq. ft.	591 sq. ft.
Acreage/School Site	91 acres	29.95 acres	21 acres	16.15 acres	3.09 acres
Technology Speed	16/2	16/2	16/2	15/2	10/2

Date: 10/11/11

**MERRIMACK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
TOWN SERVICES**

	Boscawen	Loudon	Penacook	Salisbury	Webster
POLICE	100% Town Police Coverage	100% Town Police Coverage	100% Town Police Coverage	0% Town Police Coverage	50-55% Police Coverage
FIRE	Volunteer	Professional Staff	Professional Staff	Volunteer	Volunteer
RESCUE	Professional Staff	Professional Staff	Professional Staff	Volunteer	Volunteer
LIBRARY	Part-time hours Not in walking distance	Part-time in walking distance	Part-time not in walking distance	Part-time not in walking distance	Part-time in walking distance
EVACUATION OFF SITE	Bussed to High School	Safety complex in walking distance	Bussed to High School	Safety Complex in walking distance	Safety Complex or Town Hall in walking distance

Date: 8/16/11

<p>What are the differences between the five elementary schools?</p>	<p>How do the differences impact the quality of the educational experience offered the children?</p>	<p>Which are most critical?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can live with it. It is acceptable. 2. I cannot live with it. It is unacceptable. 3. I don't see this as an issue. I am neutral.

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
October 26, 2011
6:45-8:30

Agenda

6:45	Building Tour	Fred Reagan Facilities Director
7:00	Welcome	Chris Barry Assistant Superintendent
	Educational Programs Information	
	Staffing Information	
	Student Achievement Information	
	Small Group Activity	Sandy Davis Principal
8:15	Wrap Up	

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
October 26, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Theresa Barger, Sarah Chalsma, Thad Dougherty, Jennifer Irving, Bruce Johnson, Marcia Murphy, Pat Peick, Michele St. Jacques, Carin Walker, Nancy Webster, Randy Wormald

Board Members Present: Tom Godfrey, Mark Hutchins, David Longnecker, Laura Vincent

Administrators Present: Mike Martin, Chris Barry, Sandy Davis, Fred Reagan

Fred Reagan distributed follow up information on the Webster Elementary water.

Chris Barry and Sandy Davis presented information on educational programs and staffing in the five elementary schools. Enrichment/remediation programs and co-curricular offerings were explained. State testing results for the past 3 years across the five elementary schools was reviewed. Feedback from middle school teachers was distributed and high school achievement data was presented and discussed.

The work groups spent time processing the information and developing a list of the differences between the schools and how those differences impact the quality of educational experiences offered the children.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on November 9, 2011 at Webster Elementary. At that meeting groups will prioritize their thoughts on how the education of students in these small schools is impacted by the advantages and challenges. The groups will then provide feedback to the school board for continuous improvement.

DISTRICT ELEMENTARY ENRICHMENT/REMEDICATION PROGRAMS

Boscawen	Loudon	Penacook	Salisbury	Webster
Guidance Program	Guidance Program	Guidance Program	Guidance Program	Guidance Program
Remedial Reading	Remedial Reading	Remedial Reading	Remedial Reading	Remedial Reading
Special Education Modified Regular Program	Special Education Modified Regular Program	Special Education Modified Regular Program	Special Education Modified Regular Program	Special Education Modified Regular Program
Special Education Resource Room Program	Special Education Resource Room Program	Special Education Resource Room Program		
District Special Education FACT Program		District Special Education L & A Program		
District Special Education Pre-School Program		District Special Education Pre-School Program		
Federally Funded Title One Program for Remedial Reading & Math		Federally Funded Title One Program for Remedial Reading & Math		

Date: 10/18/11

2011-12 DISTRICT SPONSORED ELEMENTARY CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Boscawen	Loudon	Penacook	Salisbury	Webster
Basic Woodworking	Student Council	Chorus	Student Council	Student Council
Great Books Boys Read	Spring Book Club	Ski Club	Book Club	Chorus
Scrabble	Chorus	Yearbook	Scrabble	Scrabble
Great Books Club	Environmental Club	Reading Is Fun	Chorus	
Yearbook Club	Ski/Snowboard Club	Word Games	Lego Club	
Recycle Club	Chess Club	Sports Camp		
Chorus	Newspaper	Newspaper		
Investigating Mysteries	Lego Club			
Technology Club	Garden Club			
Read/Cook & Write				
Take Apart/Invent				
Poetry Club				

Date: 10/5/11

Merrimack Valley Staff Enrollment

2011-2012

	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES
Student Enrollment	261	320	410	89	109
Classroom Teachers	12.5	15.5	15.5	5.5	5.5
Reading Teachers	2	1	2.5	0.5	0.5
Special Ed. Teachers	2.5	2	2.5	0.5	0.5
Art Teachers	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2
Music Teachers	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.3
PE Teachers	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2
World Lang. Teachers	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2
Administrators	1	1	1	0.5	0.5
Administrative Asst.	1	1	2	1	1
Nurses	1	1	1	0.7	0.8
Guidance	1	1	2	0.5	0.5
Reg. Support Staff	5.5	4.5	5.5	1.5	1.5
Spec. Ed. Support Staff	12.4	6	13.3	4	2.7
Kitchen Staff	3	3	3	1.5	1.5
Custodian	3	3	3	1	1

Transition Time data Between SES and WES

Position	Times per week	Number of days transition per year	Total Time spent /year in transit between SES and WES (ave. 25 min. per transition)
	# / wk	Days	Minutes
Principal	3-4	140	3500 min.
Guidance Counselor	daily	180	4500 min.
Nurse	3 x /wk	108	2700 min
Special Education Teacher	daily	180	4500 min.
Reading Specialist	2/wk	72	1800 min.
Reading Tutor	1x/wk	36	900 min.
Kindergarten teacher	daily	180	4500 min.
Teachers (11) for collaboration	1x/wk	396	9900 min.
Total			Per year = 32300 min. = 538 hours = 83 school days (6.5 hours / day)

S. Davis 10/24/11

2010-2011 NECAP Scores % of Proficient Students

Reading

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	86	89	87	77	94	86	80
4	97	79	84	73	70	82	77
5	92	81	88	83	85	85	78
6	79	79	70	93	62	75	77

Math

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	82	91	75	69	60	81	76
4	81	80	79	73	75	79	74
5	88	79	79	85	85	82	73
6	63	69	63	86	57	64	71

Writing

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
5	66	65	62	83	36	63	56

Science taken in April 2011

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
4	71	54	57	77	78	62	55

2009-2010 NECAP Scores % of Proficient Students

Reading

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	94	92	80	---	72	86	80
4	94	92	70	67	93	82	75
5	76	88	80	100	55	80	79
6	67	76	61	94	80	72	76

Math

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	91	86	75	---	78	83	76
4	88	81	84	62	69	80	75
5	76	80	73	79	59	74	75
6	78	73	58	88	80	71	72

Writing – new test questions year – scores not available

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
5							

Science

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
4	57	56	57	67	71	59	54

2008-2009 NECAP Scores % of Proficient Students

Reading

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	83	87	71	70	60	77	78
4	63	80	74	78	69	73	75
5	65	79	78	93	70	76	76
6	56	70	54	74	74	63	74

Math

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
3	71	86	68	59	60	72	72
4	69	77	69	71	58	71	73
5	69	83	73	87	85	78	73
6	61	73	54	69	78	66	69

Writing

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
5	51	55	56	81	58	59	60

Science taken in April of 2009

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
4	40	54	55	60	48	53	53

Science taken in April of 2008

Grade	BES	LES	PES	SES	WES	DIST.	State
4	43	47	39	75	58	47	

6TH GRADE TEACHER INPUT
MAY 2011

Are there any distinguishing characteristics that indicate which town students come from? What do you see or hear that causes you to identify these characteristics?

- Webster and Salisbury students can be quieter, need more teacher attention. At the same time, some have more confidence.
- Students who used to go to Ferry Beach came with more environmental science knowledge.

Can you identify where students live by their social behaviors?

- Webster and Salisbury students tend to be more involved with local organizations like 4-H.
- Penacook students are more street wise; mature behaviors are more prevalent.
- More Loudon and Penacook kids stay after school so they can hang out more with friends. (Loudon- long drive?)

Can you identify where students live by their academic performance?

- Boscawen students seem more academic achieving or better prepared.

Can you identify where students live by their parent's involvement?

- Loudon parents seem to attend more activities. (parent nights, field trips)

Is there something the school/district should do to ensure a better transition to middle school?

- Penacook students are more familiar with binders, planners and our dress code.
- Some experience with having more than one teacher prior to middle school.
- More experience with organizational skills to prepare for multiple teachers.

Merrimack Valley High School Achievement Data (10-26-11)

YOG 2011	Boscawen	Loudon	Penacook	Salisbury	Webster	Total
Total Students Enrolled	25	50	57	13	17	175
Percent by Town	14%	29%	33%	7%	10%	93%
25% (T&B) Predicted	6	13	14	3	4	44
Top 25% Actual	6	10	17	3	3	39
Bottom 25% Actual	8	11	16	4	5	44

YOG 2010						
Students	36	60	48	16	21	205
Percent	18%	29%	23%	8%	10%	88%
Top 25% (T&B) Predicted	9	15	12	4	5	51
Top 25% Actual	6	16	16	3	3	44
Bottom 25% Actual	13	12	12	3	4	44

YOG 2009						
Students	29	46	48	19	16	174
Percent	17%	26%	28%	11%	9%	91%
Top 25% (T&B) Predicted	7	12	12	5	4	43.5
Top 25% Actual	5	20	8	5	2	40
Bottom 25% Actual	7	4	17	4	4	36

YOG 2008						
Students	37	62	36	16	18	187
Percent	20%	33%	19%	9%	10%	90%
Top 25% (T&B) Predicted	9	16	9	4	5	46.8
Top 25% Actual	5	22	7	4	6	44
Bottom 25% Actual	14	9	9	4	6	42

Observations - 4 year trend						
Top 25% Actual	69%	125%	102%	94%	78%	
Bottom 25% Actual	132%	66%	114%	94%	106%	
Top 25% Actual	Under	Over	Over	Under	Under	
Bottom 25% Actual	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over	

<p>What are the differences between the five elementary schools?</p>	<p>How do the differences impact the quality of the educational experience offered the children?</p>	<p>Which are most critical?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can live with it. It is acceptable. 2. I cannot live with it. It is unacceptable. 3. I don't see this as an issue. I am neutral.

DIFFERENCES IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

<u>DIFFERENCES</u>	<u>IMPACT</u>
Shared staff (teachers, principal, nurse, etc) between SES & WES	HUGE!
Building spaces outdoors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entryway @SES • Multi-purpose rooms all rooms that have multi-uses (gym/caf/etc) • Forward thinking = i.e. server rooms
Inequality of technological offers	
NECAP scores	
Shared Staff (teachers, principal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal – lack of time to develop the professional development needs of the staff which could impact the educational culture of the school. • Nurse & Principal & Guidance – possibility of not being available for an emergency. • Teachers – stretched too thin – students miss the full potential of the small class size.
Building spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety concern – SES entryway • No full-size gym-fails to fully develop the whole child. • Forward thinking – utilize technology.
Several times a week guidance, nurse and principal transition to another school during the day.	The possibility of a delay in providing emergency services or being physically available.
Reading & special education teachers transition each day.	Approximately 1-3 hours of lost instructional time per week.
Fewer dedicated spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time spent scheduling less time teaching. • Transportation cost

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of flexibility • Impact test scores • Impact class sizes
Lack of specialized programs	
Small size of schools (Pop.)	Impact transition to a larger school.
Single class per grade	Little collaboration or interaction.
Long bus rides	Fatigue, loss of time either recreational or academic.
Remote location	Students may not mature too quickly
Building & facilities	Not as modern or high tech but adequate and functional
Shared staff	Allows for gaps
Single class per grade	Prevents variety of both students and teachers
Fewer dedicated spaces: Art, Gym, World Languages, Music, Cafeteria, Community Space	Scheduling effort and lost time.
Lack of specialized programs: L&A, FACT, More involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport(s) • Impact on receiving schools • Emotional child/family • Test score effect?
Small school/class impacts greater on tests	Produce SINI/DINI unfairly
Unpredictable class sizes (planning)	Fluctuation in teacher/student sub-optimum ratio
Lost work time due to "transition" costs	Mileage expenses dollars lost contract time with students
Network connection speed - school to school/internet	Last in information capture
One class per grade	No student type mix teacher collaboration
After school activities	Smaller school students get less exposure to activities
More special education and extra support in larger schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of background knowledge for some. • Additional help, and some students receive education away from home school.
Transition time make up of class and teacher assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not much concern • Not all children learn the same way

Merrimack Valley School District
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
Webster Elementary School
November 9, 2011
6:45 - 8:30

Agenda

6:45 Building Tour

7:00 Parking Lot Questions/Answers

Finish Brainstorming: Differences/Impact Chart

Group Work: Advantages and Challenges of Small, Rural Schools

Coming to a Consensus and Prioritizing

Developing Recommendations for the Board

8:15 Summarize and Action Planning

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
November 9, 2011
Webster Elementary School
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Theresa Barger, Sarah Chalsma,
Thad Dougherty, Julie Gaudette, Jennifer
Irving, Bruce Johnson, Marcia Murphy, Pat
Peick, Cheri Perelli, Michele St. Jacques, Carin
Walker, Randy Wormald

Board Members Present: Normandie Blake, Tom Godfrey,
Laura Vincent

Administrators Present: Mike Martin, Chris Barry, Sandy Davis,
Fred Reagan

After administrative responses to questions generated at the last meeting, work groups continued to refine their brainstorming list on the educational impact of the differences noted between the small, rural elementary schools and other district elementary schools. The groups reported out, and then continued work to focus the list into advantages and disadvantages, the educational impact of each, and the various options for addressing and improving each. It was decided to have another meeting to allow more time to reflect before prioritizing and coming to a consensus on feedback for the board.

Another meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 7:00 P.M. at the Webster Elementary School.

ADVANTAGES OF MV SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS

ADVANTAGES	EDUCATIONAL IMPACT	OPTIONS
Short commute for students	Less time on the bus	Maintain guidelines for bus ride lengths
Main sense of town community Teachers have to pull together more and cross grade collaboration	Improved sense of community Communication between schools become student centered schools	Keep one school in each town
School is extension of neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More stress free environment • Greater accountability between students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve buildings • Hire appropriate staff
Easier for parents	Meet more easily and readily – more involved in all aspects of school	Each parent a helicopter
Small school population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are known by all staff • Increased possibilities that issues can be handled more quickly • Comfortable secure safe • Parent know all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain small schools don't combine them • Make no changes • More community functions in school
Teachers and staff really know the kids and kids get to know all the teachers	Strong support system	
Large percentage of Salisbury and Webster make middle school and high school honor roll		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain small schools don't combine • Continue staff development and strive for IB
The first schools to apply and be ready for IB		

CHALLENGES OF MV SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS

<u>CHALLENGES</u>	EDUCATIONAL IMPACT	OPTIONS
Shared staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal – lack of consistent leadership for students & teachers • Kindergarten – lack of dedicated time to the students • Nurse – lack of consistency to the overall needs of the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time principal in each building or • Dedicated assistant principal in each school • Two ½ time teachers • Two full time teachers am teacher is pm aide • Full nurse in each building
Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Hardware/software 	Not preparing students for the 21 st century	District Technology Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology intergrator Webster & Salisbury • Strategic plan for purchasing cycle for hardware & software
Short of economic resources	Unable to mix students/staff	Hire more staff
Inequality of physical space	More stress on capability of teachers	Combine into 1 school or hire more appropriate teachers
1 class per grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't "mix" class make-up over 6 years • Can't "match" teaching/learning styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine into 1 school • K-2 in 1 building • 3-5 in 1 building

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clubs • Transitioning staff • Make up of class and teacher assignments don't change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of background knowledge • Less opportunity to appreciate school and how it relates to funny • Availability for emergencies • Instructional time/time with students • Differentiating instruction • Students' individual social needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and encourage paraprofessionals to run clubs • Encourage parents to create and run clubs • Allow/make possible for kids to go to other schools • Teachers from other schools run clubs at SES/WES • Creative planning/scheduling to reduce travel • Full time person in each school or combine positions: principal/RDG specialists • Schedule nurse and principal in separate buildings at same time • Combine schools leveled or 1 big school • Address the problems – if two kids don't get along – help them figure it out
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of Speech and OT Services • Preparing for varying class sizes (unexpected enrollment) • Reduced overall staff versus population • Single classes per grade • Extra-curricular offerings • Over long bus rides • Teacher collaboration • Shared or part-time staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling to meet needs of all children • Oversized class – difficult to get aid for • Less flexibility for matching teachers with kids or kids/kids • Does not support "consistent elementary program" • Fatigue or over-stimulation • Rushed, untimely, gaps, lost time in transition • No spontaneity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring more staff • Opening a preschool at smaller schools so staff can be shared • Training for K-1 teachers they can reinforce and facilitate skills • Permanent aides • Reduce complications to receiving assistance • To have more classes per grade • More money and/or time to provide activities • More bus routes (busses)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency in providing a consistent elementary program both academic/social/health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have similar grades in each school • Staff fully
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Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
November 16, 2011
Webster Elementary School 7:00-8:30

Agenda

- 7:00 Work Groups Complete Charts
- 7:20 Prioritize the Advantages/Challenges
- 7:40 Clarify and Discuss the Options
- 8:15 Summarize Committee Work

Merrimack Valley School Board
Salisbury/Webster Community Study Committee
November 16, 2011
Webster Elementary School
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Theresa Barger, Sarah Chalsma,
Thad Dougherty, Julie Gaudette, Jennifer
Irving, Bruce Johnson, Marcia Murphy, Pat
Peick, Michele St. Jacques, Carin Walker,
Nancy Webster, Randy Wormald

Board Members Present: Normandie Blake, Tom Godfrey, Mark
Hutchins, David Longnecker, Laura Vincent

Administrators Present: Mike Martin, Chris Barry, Sandy Davis

Work groups completed charts detailing the advantages and challenges of Merrimack Valley's small, rural schools, the educational impact of those advantages and disadvantages, and the various options for addressing each one. Next, individual group members indicated their priorities and the committee discussed those that were highly valued by committee members. After clarifying the various options, individuals selected which of the options was the best choice for either keeping an advantage in place or improving on a challenging situation. Committee members shared their own experiences and thoughts regarding their preferences and discussed alternative solutions. When asked which was more important, having a school in each town or hiring additional staff, most committee members indicated that keeping the school as a focal point of the community was a very high priority.

This information will be presented to the full school board at the December 12th Merrimack Valley School Board Meeting. The superintendent and school board members expressed appreciation and thanks for the time, interest, and input committee members have offered to this educational conversation.

MV SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS LIST OF PRIORITIES

<u>ADVANTAGES</u>	<u>OPTIONS</u>
1. Small school population	1. Maintain small schools – don't combine them
2. Large percentage of Salisbury and Webster make middle school and high school honor roll	1. Maintain small schools – don't combine them 2. Continue staff development and strive for IB
3. Maintain sense of Town Community/School is extension of neighborhood.	1. Keep one school in each town 2. Improve buildings 3. Hire appropriate staff
• Easier for parents	• Each parent a helicopter
• Short commute for students	• Maintain guidelines for bus ride length
• The first schools to apply and be ready for IB authorization	• -----
• Teachers pull together more/cross grade collaboration	• -----

MV SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS LIST OF PRIORITIES

CHALLENGES	OPTIONS
1. Shared Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dedicated assistant principal in each school 2. Full-time nurse in each building 3. Two full-time kindergarten teachers
2. Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. District technology coordinator 2. Technology Integrator for Webster and Salisbury 3. Strategic plan for purchasing cycle for hardware and software
3. Availability of Speech & OT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hire more staff 2. Train K-1 teachers to facilitate and reinforce skills
4. Lack of Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and encourage paraprofessionals to run clubs • Encourage parents to run clubs • Allow/make possible for kids to go to other schools • Teachers from other schools run Salisbury/Webster clubs
5. Single classes per grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More classes per grade
6. Overlong bus rides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add more busses
7. Reduce overall staff versus population	<p style="text-align: center;">-----</p>
8. Short of economic resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire more staff
• Make up of class & teacher assignments – do not change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine schools into one school • Restructure into K-2 in one building and 3-5 in other building
• Teacher collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have similar grades in each school
• Inequality of physical space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine into one school • Hire appropriate staff