

**Feasibility Study Committee
Meeting #1 Notes – April 27, 2017**

1. Tom Schmidt, member of Learning Design Associates, the consulting group conducting the study for the Clymer and Panama Boards of Education, welcomed members of the Feasibility Study Committee. He introduced the other members of the consulting group, David Kurzawa and Marilyn Kurzawa and then asked committee members to introduce themselves to others in the room.
2. Dave Kurzawa then described the process laid out by the NYS Education Department for a merger study, also known as a consolidation. This study could result in a merger of the two contiguous districts. In order for that to happen following the conclusion of the study and the final report of the consultants to NYSED, the boards of education must decide to allow the first of two public referendums to occur. IF the voters of both districts agree to proceed, there is then a second referendum that would take place to determine the success or failure of the merger.
3. Tom then described the role of the members of the Feasibility Study Committee. Each member represents him or herself; agrees to remain neutral and keep an open mind while examining data about the two districts; studies and reflects on the information provided to become well informed; helps draft recommendations; communicates with others outside the committee; and attends all scheduled meetings.
4. Marilyn described the focus group meetings as those that would allow any and all community members to learn more about the two school districts and then voice their opinions on a series of questions presented.
5. She then led the group through a short activity to determine the ground rules (also known as team protocols) for this group.
6. Tom described the process for the non-team member public attending these meetings to address questions to the group. They will be invited to write down their questions on an index card that will be provided and handed to Tom, Dave or Marilyn at the end of the meeting. All cards must also contain the name of the person asking the question and the district in which they reside. Answers that require further research will be answered at the next meeting.
7. Marilyn presented the first of a series of slides that will be used at all focus group meetings concerning demographic information about the two districts' communities. Most of the information demonstrated the many similarities between the two communities.
8. Tom then presented enrollment projections from 2017- 18 through 2017-28, based on a live-birth formula method. In both districts, growth is consistently modest.
9. Dave presented a large amount of financial data derived from reports that the business offices have sent to NYSED after being audited. It is important to note that the consulting group acts as an outside agency and uses only audited reports, except when needing more current information that has not yet been submitted for audit. Audited reports are about two years behind the current budgeting cycle. What was shown at this meeting was only the information that

will be presented to the focus groups. The committee will receive much more in-depth information as we progress through the meetings.

10. Marilyn then spoke to the committee members about the communication process from this meeting. These notes will be sent to both newspaper contact people and to the districts' websites. A relatively lengthy discussion occurred concerning getting the word out to the Amish community so that they can learn about the study since they are potential voters in this process. Suggestions included dropping off a flier about the focus groups planned for them at their schools; making direct contact with the elders of the community; inserting an ad in the Penny Saver; posting a flier in local stores, restaurants, and post offices. Direct mailing was discussed, but there is probably too short a window of time between this meeting and the start of the meetings to make this practical.
11. The schedule of meetings for this group was reviewed and finalized. Members of the committee completed an evaluation of the meeting, and the meeting ended at 8:40 pm. Please note that future meetings will probably last until 9 pm.

NOTE: The next meeting will be at Panama CSD on May 15. The building walk-through begins at 5:15, and the architect will be there. The meeting itself will begin as close to 6pm as the walk-through allows.

Questions from the meeting for which answers will be sought and presented at the next meeting:

1. Does either school district accept tuition-paying students from outside the district?
2. How many students attend either district who live outside the district but whose parent teaches in the district?
3. If the straw vote goes down, can the board petition NYSED to move to the next step anyway?
4. How are the shared positions and services identified in the budget information?
5. Can the PowerPoints be printed in color? (yes)

TENTATIVE! Meeting #2 Agenda Preview

1. Review of the walk-through
2. Focus group feedback
3. Enrollment projections in more depth
4. Curriculum and Instruction: Courses, number of sections, number of students
5. Technology comparison
6. Property taxes and expenses per pupil
7. Reorganization Incentive Operating Aid
8. Meeting evaluation