

## **Cabot School Sustainability Committee**

**Draft Minutes for February 11, 2026 Meeting      4:00-5:30 PM      Cabot School Library**

**In Attendance:** Stef Burt, Johanna Thibault, Shannon Jenkins, Theresa Lay-Sleeper, Melissa Pratt, Amy Richardson, Rebecca Nally, Steve Owens and Chris Tormey

1. **Draft minutes** of the January 7, 2025 Committee Meeting were reviewed and approved

2. **This afternoon's meeting agenda** was reviewed and approved

3. **Discussion: Update progress on initiatives discussed at 1/7 meeting.**

a. Making home-school families aware of Cabot School offerings:

Many thanks to Stef Burt for emailing an overview of high school project studio offerings for semester 2 (along with info about middle school arts and music electives) to home school parents in mid January.

b. Increase the number of volunteers coming into Cabot School to share their expertise:

Amy related plenty of interest in volunteering to help chaperone field trips. Stef Burt, Amy Richardson and Alex Underwood have assisted in getting shop space cleaned up and organized so it's able to accommodate band rehearsals while CSPAC is down w/ leak repairs. Shannon's husband's interested in helping to build skateboard ramps. General discussion about potential benefits (and past challenges) of planning/building a mountain bike "pump track" in Cabot.

c. Improve publicity of Cabot School events, learning activities, etc:

- Some good PR on FPF, Cabot Chronicle and Hardwick Gazette about the high school's "Exhibition night" in January
- Chris: Peter Stratman and school staff have contributed narrative pieces, photos of students and their work to "Cabot School Report" to be mailed out to Cabot mailboxes and posted on school website in next week/two: this should increase community's awareness of diverse learning activities across the school.
- Johanna will post an advertisement on FPF to enlist a volunteer "reporter" to be in school regularly and use photos/ brief written captions to highlight interesting events, projects, etc. on Facebook, Instagram, etc. (Angela Ogle did this well several years ago.)
- General discussion about shortcomings of our Cabot School website. Steve related challenging history (website "left" when its employee sponsor departed) and current gradual improvement. Melissa noted, "Still no Staff Directory- a basic feature". Committee members generally agreed on the large value a detailed, updated website can have for attracting qualified candidates for open school positions (like a new Principal). Chris committed to contacting CCSU office to try to jumpstart improvement of the school's site.
- Steve: still working on getting examples of student work into the community (at The Den, Cabot Library, etc.) Moving around large physical

projects can be challenging: he's looking into using posters w/ QR codes to allow folks to check out student projects digitally- more on this later .

- d. Cabot School Report: 35+ page overview of ongoing learning activities at the school (see "c" above). Chris thanked Peter Stratmen for spearheading the effort, and the SU office for funding it (layout, printing, mailing). All registered voters should receive a paper copy via USPS during the last week in February.

#### **4. Discussion: Cabot School Proposed Budget**

Chris gave a brief overview: The proposed budget to be voted on on Town meeting Day will, if approved by voters, is projected to result in a 3.7% increase in Cabot's Homestead Tax rate. Statewide, however, school budgets are forecasted to push up Homestead taxes by an average of 12% this year- because of this, Governor Scott has vowed to add \$75 million to the Education Fund. If that happens, the Cabot rate would be lowered below 3%.

**5. Next meeting :** Set for Wednesday, March 11 at 4:00 PM in Cabot School Library

**6. The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 PM.**