

Cabot School Sustainability Committee

Approved Minutes of June 26, 2024 Meeting

Cabot School Library

Meeting began at 6:35 PM

In attendance: Rebecca Nally, Melissa Pratt, Amy Richardson, Johanna Thibault and Chris Tormey

1. **Draft minutes** of committee's June 3rd meeting were reviewed and approved
2. **Agenda** for tonight's meeting was approved
3. **Discussion:**
 - a. Review of June 17th Community Forum: Positives discussed were civility, positive comments, opportunity to talk face to face with other community members, and the large volume and range of comments collected on the three focus questions from the relatively small (30?) number of people in attendance.
 - b. Review of input on the 3 questions from 6/17 Forum/dropboxes (recorded and collated by Amy Richardson). Discussion focused on input for Question #3 ("How could Cabot School improve..."). Committee members agreed that many of the specific comments fell into 4 general topic areas:
 - School climate and current discipline system
 - PBL and curriculum structure
 - Grading and report cards
 - Student-led conferences/ parent-teacher communication
 - c. Discussion of next steps based on Forum/drop box input:
 - Share input from forum with the community through short article on FPF and on school website with link to document w/ collated comments that Amy R. put together (Chris)
 - Meet with Cabot School administration/leadership team in July to discuss possible focus and format for next Community Forum (see below)
 - Potential focus for next Community forum:

Use the next forum to increase community understanding of the school's current approach to three of the general topics listed above (PBL, grading, and student-led conferences) and to get specific feedback from community members on their questions/concerns. (Concluded that addressing the climate/discipline issue would be better served by school staff and administration working internally, rather than devoting a Community Forum to repeating longstanding concerns.) Overall hoped-for longterm goal of this second forum: clarify for community how school practices work, and clarify for school staff community concerns about them, so school can potentially address some of those concerns.

-Potential format for next Community Forum :

Enlist school staff with experience/expertise in the 3 identified topics (PBL, grading, conferences) to make brief (5-10 min.) presentations to the entire audience explaining how the procedure works (for example, teacher well-versed in a particular PBL project would present that project's goals, how the students would work to achieve to achieve them, how they'd demonstrate what they'd learned, and the skills/proficiencies the students would gain in the process. Suggested that we have 2 PBL presentations: one Elem, one 7-12) After the presentation, community members at their small-group tables would jot down and then discuss both their positives and their concerns/questions about what had been presented. (As at first forum, summary of each table's input would be recorded on the overhead screen.) **Potential addition:** Allot 5-10 minutes at end of each presentation/feedback phase for audience members to verbally ask specific questions of the presenter ("Ms. Nally, could you go over again how this project on water would be helping my daughter with her math skills?") This could liven up the process and help get some immediate feedback to community members. Time frame for forum: after 10 min intro from Moderator, 30-35 min on each of three topic areas (PBL, grading, conferences). Note: advertise in advance when each topic will be presented/discussed, so folks with no interest in one or more topic do not have to stay the whole 2 hours

Long-term benefit of presentations: Info from school presenters can be used to put together public-outreach materials on how Cabot School works (Joanna: could be summarized in a report)

Homework: Schedule time (week of July 22) for our Committee to meet w/ school leadership and admin to discuss the next forum's potential focus/format with the goal of getting their buy-in (Chris) Reach out to potential presenters now to see if they would be willing to present assuming success of our meeting w/ school leadership in July (Amy/Becky).

-Discuss potential date for next Community Forum: TBD- looking at the week just before school starts (week of August 19-23)

4. Next Committee meeting: Looking at the week of July 22nd (open for those in attendance); date will depend on school admin availability.

5. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Notes by Chris Tormey