

# STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION

The Strategic Planning Committee was charged with investigating the effect that creating a full day kindergarten program would have on the district. Through discussion, data analysis and findings of research the committee looked at the following:

- Effect on facilities
- Effect on transportation
- Effect on district finances
- Effect on student achievement
- Recommendations on how to present issues to the voters

# Facilities

The committee discussed two possibilities for housing the program if full day kindergarten was approved.

- Housing the program at LCS
- Housing the program at FRES

# Facilities

Housing the program at LCS would be effective. The current classroom used for the extended day program would become the third kindergarten classroom. The kitchen has already been set up to accommodate lunch for students. There would be no increase to the need for utility costs to speak of. Estimating an average enrollment of 40 students, the facility could accommodate growth of 14 students.

# Facilities

The kindergarten program could be housed at FRES. The first grade classroom would need to be moved to an upper floor, there is a fire code regulation that kindergarten classes must have a ground level egress. With the elimination of a fifth grade class in the upcoming budget, there would be enough classroom spaces to accommodate the three anticipated kindergarten classes at FRES but this would fill the facility.

# Facilities

A good deal of discussion occurred as to the long term ramification of housing the kindergarten program at FRES. If the program was moved to FRES, there would be no ability to handle any increase in student population. If there were an influx of new students or if the district chose to restructure by adding other towns to our enrollment there would be no way to accommodate the influx. This would limit our ability to find new sources of revenue and may create a crisis if the WLC population grew.

# Facilities

The Strategic Planning Committee came to a consensus that if full day kindergarten was approved, keeping the program at LCS would be prudent until further study could be done to see what the long term effects would be of moving the program.

# Transportation

It was agreed that whether the program remains half day or is changed to a full day program there would be no increased cost or change in transportation cost to the district if the program is housed at LCS. There would be a cost savings if the program was moved to FRES.

It was also discussed that a key to increased enrollment in kindergarten would be that the district transports all students. Parents who do not have transportation now, have difficulty in picking or dropping off at the midday.

# Finance

The costs to implement full day kindergarten at LCS are as follows:

|                                                    |                              |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 New Kindergarten teacher                         | \$59,000 salaries/ benefits- |
| Master's 3 and 2 person plan                       |                              |
| Increase half time pre-school teacher to full time | \$34,000                     |
| Part time food service                             | \$10,200                     |
| Furniture                                          | \$2,500                      |
| Total                                              | \$105,700                    |

# Finance

Additional revenue from the state assuming an enrollment of 40 kindergarten students

|                                       |                     |          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| An additional 9 students              | \$1,800 per student | \$16,200 |
| New state revenue for all 40 students | \$1,100 per student | \$44,000 |
| Total additional revenue              |                     | \$60,200 |

# Finance

The Committee discussed the following:

Would there be a need for increased personnel for physical education, art and music?  
There would not be with current enrollment levels.

Would there be an increased cost for special needs services?  
The students who have IEP's and 504 plans who are kindergarten students are already receiving needed services, there would be no increase.

If the program was moved to FRES would there be a decrease in cost?  
Only if the pre-school was relocated as well. If so, there would be a decrease in cost for the school nurse, office staff, custodial services and the kindergarten transportation run. The total reduction would be approximately \$110,000.

# Finance

The committee did discuss the possibility of reducing the needs for services for speech/language, occupational therapy (OT) and contracted services for reading with the additional 300 hours of instruction .

A student receiving reading services has 4 hours of service per week at \$40 per hour an annual cost for one student of \$5,440.

A student receiving speech/language services has 1 hour per week at \$80 per hour for an annual cost of \$2,720.

A student receiving OT services has 1 hour per week at \$60 per hour for an annual cost of \$2,040.

# Finance

Students currently receiving services at the elementary level:

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| Reading through contracted service         | 20 |
| Speech/Language through contracted service | 7  |
| OT through contracted service              | 15 |

If through increased instructional hours in kindergarten 20% of our students no longer needed these services the cost savings to the district would be:

|                                          |          |
|------------------------------------------|----------|
| Reading- reduction of 4 students         | \$21,760 |
| Speech/Language- reduction of 2 students | \$ 5,440 |
| OT- reduction of 2 students              | \$ 4,080 |
| Potential reduction                      | \$31,280 |

# Finance

Net cost of running full day kindergarten at FRES

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Increased cost                      | \$105,700  |
| Increased revenue                   | \$ 60,200  |
| Potential decrease in SPED services | \$ 31, 280 |
| Net cost                            | \$ 14,220  |

The committee had a concern that new revenues from the state may not continue to be provided.

# Student Achievement

The current half day kindergarten program is 2 hours and 30 minutes of the day. Within the current day, there are 15 minutes taken up in the transitions to the beginning and end of the day and 20 minutes of recess. While recess is an educational component for socialization, it is not academic instruction. This leaves about 2 hours a day for instructional purposes, annually 348 hours.

A full day program would be 6 hours and 40 minutes. Taking out time for transitions, lunch and recess the instructional day would be about 6 hours in length, annually 1,044 hours per year. Instructional time would triple.

Research indicates that if students had three times as much time to learn and apply basic skills, they would be better prepared for success in first grade.

# Student Achievement

2017-18 September STAR Results

|         | Proficient | On Watch | Intervention | Urgent Intervention |
|---------|------------|----------|--------------|---------------------|
| Grade 1 | 35%        | 14%      | 26%          | 26%                 |
| Grade 2 | 47%        | 16%      | 24%          | 13%                 |
| Grade 3 | 39%        | 18%      | 16%          | 26%                 |
| Grade 4 | 47%        | 29%      | 15%          | 5%                  |
| Grade 5 | 54%        | 27%      | 15%          | 4%                  |

These results indicate that 65% of students are lacking skills that allow them to be ready to read as they entered first grade this year.

# Student Achievement

The characteristics of a student who is in need of an intervention or an urgent intervention would include:

- Inability to recognize letters
- Inability to recognize numbers and have number sense by counting
- Inability to recognize “pre-primmer” words
- Inability to recognize that each letter has a specific sound
- Inability to form letter and numbers appropriately in their hand writing

An additional 600 hours of instruction would give students the opportunity to gain these skills and be better prepared to be successful in first grade and beyond.

# Student Achievement

Students who lack basic skills to be ready to read receive services in reading, speech/language and occupational therapy at a much higher rate than those who do not. The research presented to the committee indicated that as in medicine, early identification of need in education allows for remediation to take place before students build poor learning habits and when they are most able to accept this essential learning. The committee was presented with research on brain function that documented children are able to create better brain pathways to learning through the age of 5. Kindergarten is the best chance to take advantage of this ability to learn new things.

# Student Achievement

The committee raised a concern that the academic day may be too structured toward academic “seat” time and the day may not allow for socialization and application based learning.

The current kindergarten teachers presented proposed schedules that included instructional strategies to include:

- Direct Instruction- reading and math
- Instructional center active learning
- Whole group instruction- reading and math
- Small group instruction
- Choice Time

# Student Achievement

Specific Instruction to include:

- Phonics
- Phonemic awareness
- Word recognition
- Writing practice
- Number recognition, number sense
- Number manipulation
- Art, music, physical education
- Themed activities

# Student Achievement

The committee discussed a student's readiness to be in school full time.

New Hampshire law indicates that a child who turns six by a given date is required to attend a full day educational program. At this time the only option in our district is first grade.

If there were full day kindergarten a parent could make the decision that their child is not ready for first grade and choose to enroll their child in kindergarten at age six instead of first grade. The district could help with providing screening information on the child's readiness but the ultimate decision would be the parents choice.

# Student Achievement

Looking at the current screening data, the committee made notice that by the time students were in the fourth and fifth grade, only 5% of students were in need of “urgent intervention” and would that suggest, as some research does, that the positive effects of kindergarten even out after the third grade.

It was noted that the 5% of students were those with significant learning disabilities in grades 4 and 5. Using the current statistics, the data would indicate that there were about 46% of students who were not proficient in reading in grade 5. These students will struggle in middle and high school due to increased expectations.

Earlier intervention by having students ready for first grade would most likely have allowed more students to be ready to enter middle school.

# Student Achievement

The committee discussed other possible effects of full day kindergarten.

If more students were ready to be proficient, teachers would not have to differentiate curriculum in such a wide range. This would give the teacher more opportunities for enrichment instruction that could help more students be beyond proficient.

This might also allow the redirection of other services to meet the needs of advanced students.

With increased time on socialization skills, students would have fewer behavioral issues in first grade and beyond.

# Options on Presenting

The committee discussed three outcomes to their work.

- Recommend not to present full day kindergarten to the voters.
- Recommend to present full day kindergarten as a warrant article to the voters.
- Recommend to present full day kindergarten as part of the annual budget.

# Options on Presenting

There was little discussion of not presenting the idea to the voters.

There was a great deal of discussion and general consensus on the part of the committee that considering the history of presenting kindergarten and a desire to let the voters choose, that full day kindergarten should be presented as a warrant article if it is presented.

The Superintendent brought to the committees attention that with planned reduction of a fifth grade teacher, the fifth grade position could be transferred to kindergarten and all additional expenses would be covered through new revenue. This presented the possibility that full day kindergarten could be presented as part of the operational budget with no increase to the budget.