

**“Unapproved”  
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ BOARD RETREAT**

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023  
Cabot School – Library (relocated from Humanities Suite)  
4:00 p.m.**

**Call to order** by Rory Thibault at 4:17pm

**In attendance:** Rory Thibault, Frank Kampf, Chris Tormey, Jason Monaco, Ellen Cairns  
Superintendent Mark Tucker, Principal Rebecca Tatistcheff, Michael  
Concessi, CCSU Business Manager, Anthony Christiano, Sarah Ainsworth,  
Jackie Batten, Sonia Scherr, Noah Villeneuve

**Public Comment:** None

**Board Discussion:**

● Alumni Panel (all from class of 2022):

Brody Moran – Cabot School creates “resilient problem solvers.” However, Cabot lacks in literature and reading comprehension – felt skills below peers during first year in college. For example, curriculum did not require reading classics, e.g. Shakespeare. He would like to see focus on literature and comprehension. Cabot prioritizes innovation over writing skills. High school curriculum should include greater focus on essays or integrate them into project studios.

Olivia Smith – Cabot prepared through emotional and organizational efforts. Advocated for self, identity and expression. Connected more with what she was interested in. Felt accommodated and staff assisted in financing post-secondary education. Valued dual enrollment. Lack of diversity of classes is a concern, concerned about size of school and recognizes this as a limiting factor.

Alex Moran – Quality of work required (exhibitions/presentations) provided good preparation. Trimester system made it tough to go into sufficient detail – would run out of time (e.g. science classes). Encourage more time for project studios.

Noah Villeneuve – Graduated and went to Americorps team, one of eleven in a team. Familiar with being on a team via Cabot School education. Immediately engaged in construction and labor relating to disaster relief. PBL was a good preparation for

post-secondary plans. During school had a hard time meeting deadlines, now realizing importance in professional roles. His Americorps experience was detailed.

- Alumni Panel Discussion:

Ellen commented on Brody's observations and reflected that reading of classics was not enjoyable as a student.

Frank discussed his experience re: emphasizing writing over pure emphasis on reading classics. Reading comprehension is still important. Also discussed in engineering background, recognizing those with writing skills from secondary education as well as ability to work in a team.

Becca responded and discussed some of the aspects that make Cabot School district and that innovation is happening in all grade levels.

Rory added that small scale and quality interactions between students and faculty/staff creates maturity and confidence in young adults.

Chris noted that skills are being built in Cabot School and enabling kids to overcome challenges in post-secondary education or employment.

- Discussion: Programs/Staff in Future

Becca initiated dialogue about competing priorities, deferred maintenance, and other historic challenges of school operations, and began a presentation entitled "Looking to a Sustainable Future." Cabot's Act 67 plan drawn from Expeditionary Learning (EL) education. The presentation detailed cost allocation from grant sources (primarily Community Schools Grant) to support programs within Cabot School (e.g. fieldwork, professional development/planning, and Senior X).

After School program (ESSER and supplemental grant) are focused on high quality programming versus a traditional day care structure.

Becca specifically noted the board may wish to consider:

+0.2 librarian (\$15,000)

+0.4 world language (\$45,000)

Further discussion of Grant Funded Positions, a 1.0 FTE ESSER funded interventionist, and the need to convert the position to a MS special educator in the future.

Conversation shifted to cooperation with other districts, including the potential with Danville on a shared opportunity with Caledonia Works (D. Schilling) and choices for MS art on Danville campus. Quarterly electives either housed at Danville or at Cabot. For example, building trades, culinary, theater, outdoor experiences.

Becca noted the intent to shift from a trimester to a semester schedule (more time for classes to progress, and aligning with TUS and Danville).

- Discussion: Infrastructure

Discussion began with concept of re-aligning campus to swap elementary and high school/middle school building use, and costs – including whether to prioritize this effort.

Michael presented various bonding options for infrastructure, discussed current debt service, and reviewed Act 127 changes to pupil weighting. The Board consensus was FY25 is an opportunity to invest in the campus infrastructure without increasing the tax burden on the community.

Board commits to walk around at the June meeting and provided guidance to the administration on potential priorities and bonding options.

**Adjournment:** Rory made a motion, seconded by Chris. Motion passed at 7:08pm.