

1. **Introductions:** Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and introductions were made. Nelson stated that last time they met they didn't have much experience yet so this time they wanted to talk about how the transition is going and recently they sent out a survey to Rollinsford students and they got good responses and they are starting to collate the responses so there is more to come on that.
2. **Marshwood 7-12 Transition observations: academic, social, administrative:** Mary Nash stated that she prepared an overview to read. She stated that often when students transfer into our district from other Maine districts or from other states, we usually notice what attributes, skills, and knowledge they bring with them. When our Board Chair, Keri Tice and I met on January 26th with the Rollinsford Board Chair, Judy Nelson and the SAU 56 Superintendent Jeni Mosca, we were asked to prepare some thoughts for tonight's workshop on what attributes, skills and knowledge Rollinsford students brought with them-especially to our middle school program. Both Judy and Jeni asked: How are our kids doing? She stated that MSAD 35's core values support: 1. a rigorous academic program, 2. a vibrant fine arts program, and 3. a robust physical education, wellness and co-curricular program. It is upon these foundational principles that we develop our curriculum & instruction program. Tonight I am pleased to say that each of the Marshwood School Leaders is here today. I have also invited our Director of teaching and learning, Heidi Hersey Early and Beth Werker the curriculum leader for math at Marshwood middle school so that the Rollinsford School Board may have an in depth conversation with our teachers and administrators about the experience of Rollinsford's 7th and 8th grade students. She stated that our Professional Practice work around: content standards, performance standards, and opportunity to learn standards. Content standards outline what a student should know and be able to do in each of the content areas. Performance standards define how well student work must be demonstrated to be proficient or advanced. Opportunity to learn standards outline how every student will be provided an opportunity to succeed in mastering an academically rigorous program no matter who they are or what their initial skill set is upon entering. Part of our on-going work in the Marshwood district is to look at our student data and to analyze how we could improve our teaching and learning. We do this by aligning our curriculum work horizontally across the grade levels, vertically between the grade levels and between our five schools. This is our professional practice and it is on-going work much like polishing a stone. A good example of the professional practice work we do across grade levels, between grade levels and between buildings is to give our 5th grade teachers a copy of the 6th grade end of year exam so that we can analyze the expected learning outcomes of the 6th grade math curriculum. This way, our 5th grade team can understand how best to align their teaching and learning with the expected learning outcomes in the 6th grade. She stated that we found that Rollinsford students came to Marshwood Middle School: eager to learn, wanted to do well, highly creative and self-directed, were exceptional communicators, advocated for themselves well, and with regard to social, emotional and cultural elements, teachers unanimously noted "You cannot tell a Rollinsford student from any other student at MMS." We also noticed that:

- 1 of 22 Rollinsford (7th) grade students have been placed in our advanced 7th grade pre-algebra math class.
- None of 22 Rollinsford 7th grade students are currently placed in our most advanced 7th grade algebra I class.
- 6 of the 27 Rollinsford 8th grade students are placed in our Algebra I class
- None of the 27 Rollinsford 8th grade students are placed in our most advanced 8th grade math class-high school geometry.
- In general, we noticed that Rollinsford students needed to be explicitly taught study and organizational skills (just as we noticed that our own students need to be explicitly taught in this area)
- We also noticed that students needed to be taught how to use expository texts as reference materials as they make connections throughout the curriculum
- Surprisingly, we noticed that Rollinsford students tended to look at deadlines as “suggestions” which they thought as fluid and guidelines rather than expected due dates. This is not unusual for middle school students and we notice it in our own middle school students as well. This is why we explicitly teach study and organizational skills in grades 4-12 i.e. to use Cornell Notes, Costa’s Levels of Knowledge and WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading).

How can we help? She stated that MSAD 35 invites Rollinsford Grade School to join us in our work around aligning our curriculum across grade levels, between grade levels, and between schools. To this end, we invite Rollinsford Grade School teachers and its administrator to:

- Observe our instructional practice and planning sessions- especially our unit of study planning session and our analysis of the NWEA data
- Review our 6th grade math end of the year assessment to facilitate a conversation among the 5th-6th grade teachers in both districts on how best to “back-map” our curriculum and instruction for our students
- Help us plan and implement step up day at both MMS and MHS

MSAD 35 will continue to offer Rollinsford students:

- Access to our after school co-curricular programming including our Rock Stars and Steel Hawks programs
- Access to our AVID strategies and organizational skill sets
- Access to the math lab
- Access to after school academic support in all content areas
- Continue to engage in our work with Rollinsford parents by improving our communication systems

How can the Rollinsford and MSAD 35 Board and Administrators help? Thank you to the Rollinsford board for sending out a survey monkey to all Rollinsford parents whose children are enrolled in our district. Reegan Spinney asked about the AVID program. She stated that she just heard about it two weeks ago and she had never heard about it before and asked if it was a referral by teacher. Mary Nash stated that it originated in San Diego by a group of

teachers worried about students not in the AP class but should be. She stated that they didn't have the organizational skills. She stated that it is a tool we use to help kids who need help getting into the AP classes and it is remarkable the progress the students made. Anthony Bourbon stated that they will be sending a letter out to parents and it is based on a teacher referral or a parent referral. He stated that these are gap kids who have the ability to be college bound but don't have the study strategies and we work with guidance, teachers and parents to figure out who best fits. Nelson asked if a letter goes out to all parents. Bourbon stated yes all students get a letter. Kunz stated that the kids have been in school since September and asked if there is a period of time the evaluations are done before people are notified. Bourbon stated that we are just starting now for next year. Becky Wright stated that she is a resident of South Berwick and a teacher in Rollinsford and asked about the criteria for advanced placement. Beth Werker stated that they look at the common core test, and looked at the NWEA scores and they met with Kate a couple of times. She stated that they gave an assessment to the current 7th graders and look at their NWEA scores. Anderson stated that they quickly went through the survey and it seemed overall that it has been a positive transition. Kunz stated that once we drill down into the results it will be interesting to see.

3. **Short discussion on petition warrant article directing Rollinsford Board to close RGS:** Nelson stated that on the surface this seems like strictly a Rollinsford subject. We're bringing it up this evening because when we had our school deliberative session on January 30th, we were surprised when a resident related a discussion she had a couple weeks earlier with Mary about this. Another resident mentioned Mary's letter from August in response to an informal request from Jeni. They used both the letter and the discussion to support the petition warrant to close RGS, specifically mentioning the costs cited in the letter and noting from the more recent discussion that Marshwood would consider re-districting so our K-3 would not have to go to Eliot. Our board would like to be very clear this evening: we have not authorized any formal requests for information from Marshwood regarding our elementary students other than the Mark Joyce study. The August letter was in response to an informal request to gauge possible willingness and costs should we make a formal request for this information. The discussion between Mary and a Rollinsford resident, as interpreted by that resident is now part of the official record. She stated that we have spent and will continue to spend a lot of time and energy trying to set the record straight: No, the true cost to send one student to Marshwood is not \$9650, that is the tuition cost for regular education for the 2015-16 school year, there are additional costs and regardless of how many hypothetical situations anyone discusses, none of them is legally binding. She stated that we strongly believe that Marshwood is the right place for our 7-12 students and we want to focus our energy on making the transition go well. She stated that we want to be good partners in the transition. We are consumers of the excellent education you provide and some folks like Mark Joyce call us renters and we want to be good tenants. This year we are budgeted to pay Marshwood close to 1.39 million and next year's budget for Marshwood is close to 1.46 and we appreciate the modest tuition increase. She stated that as partners on this endeavor we have a few expectations. Unless or until a formal request is made by the Rollinsford School Board to the Marshwood School Board for further

information regarding grades K-5, we expect any discussions Marshwood has with Rollinsford residents or the press on this subject to begin and end with: check with the Rollinsford board; and we expect that communication between Jeni and Mary on this subject to be informal and only shared with their respective boards. She stated that if either Superintendent or board believes it's time to go public it seems the courtesy of checking with their counterpart is in order. Nash stated that she was contacted in the Fall by a reporter and she did begin and end with the board made it clear they wanted to keep Rollinsford open and Marshwood felt it was a Rollinsford community decision and she didn't like that answer. She stated that when the taxpayer called she had the same conversation and she said she had my letter and I said I had nothing to say unless Rollinsford creates an RFP. She stated that she agrees with what you said and she will alert you when they contact me and she apologized for the uncomfortableness at the public meeting but her conscience is clear. Nelson stated that you talked about redistricting. Nash stated that we looked at all options for 7-12 and we would do the same at the elementary programs but she doesn't remember talking about redistricting. Nelson stated that she appreciates hearing this but it seems that nothing in the conversation made you think that you needed to give Jeni a heads up. Nash stated that she kept saying that they need to talk to you. Supt. Mosca stated that one piece that has been a work in progress is communication. Marshwood is taking in 100 students and that changes the dynamic for you and it also changed our dynamic and a key piece is how do we build communication and keep each other on constant radar. She stated that at times she finds out second or third hand and the board is looking to me and she doesn't want to be caught off guard. She stated that we have clearly stated that the board wants to keep RGS open and are looking at reducing costs for the tax payers. She stated that as long as we can keep communication open and as often as possible. It is the little things. Kunz stated that we do our best to give Jeni direction and she fills us in on things that are going on. He asked if there are any discussions between the board chairs taking place regarding conversations and what happens because ultimately it is the board making the decisions. Tice stated that she has had some conversations with Judy but not a lot. Nelson stated that it has to be the Superintendents talking and then we get informed. Supt. Mosca stated that it is about how do we gingerly not step on each other's toes but have each other in our thought process. She stated that the other day she had taken care of Rollinsford and Somersworth with the snow but she was not sure if Marshwood was going to school or not. Nash stated that they were still in the process when they spoke. Supt. Mosca stated that it is just another added piece to be aware of. She stated that there is always an extra layer that she needs to do and it would be helpful to keep me in the forefront. Kunz stated that what he is trying to say is the administrative stuff needs to be the Superintendent but his concern is on a higher level stuff that voters have to talk about. Nelson stated that when and if we want to request information which we are not saying it would be more formal and happen through the Superintendents. She stated that when she was at the polls yesterday she heard a number of people ask if the late bus could be later because the bus leaves too early. Supt. Mosca stated that would affect supervision. Leach stated that our late bus comes the same time as Marshwood's so it is not just a Rollinsford issue. Tice stated that it rotates so not every team has late times. Nelson stated that knowing all these day to day things is helpful. Leach stated

that were still in the place where we don't know what we don't know and it gets frustrating but it is tough because we are used to this place where we know everything that is happening. Tice stated that wouldn't you have the same issue if you went to Somersworth it is not just Marshwood it has to do with the transition. Nash stated that we have a wonderful tech team so maybe there is a way to set up a communication device. Tice stated that she gets a lot of information from the Facebook page. Anderson stated that she has talked to the staff and everyone has been great. Nelson stated that the survey did say once they figure out what to ask they do get the answer. Reegan Spinney stated that everything has been great. She stated that she doesn't go to the website very often and asked if they had a middle school newsletter. Werker stated that each of the academic teams have websites. Bourbon stated that these are the things that we want to hear. He stated that they do have an agenda book that has the clubs and co-curricular. He stated that the website for the middle school lists all the intramurals with the advisors and has information on what is going on under the families tab. Tice stated that one thing she finds helpful on the high school website is that on the announcement tab it has what the kids hear for announcements that day. It is great to hear what they hear. Nelson stated that she appreciates you inviting our teachers to Marshwood and they would also invite Marshwood to come to our school because we are doing unbelievable work here.

4. **Movie: Most Likely to Succeed:** nelson stated that we are doing a lot of that work here and when we heard about it we were hoping to have the potential to work together because we have an expert here who is willing to sit at the table because we are proud of that work so we are disappointed that we are not partnering with you. Werker stated that as soon as they have the flyer finalized they will pass along to everyone here; they would love to have you. Lucas asked if there will be a panel discussion. Werker stated that we will reach out to you because we are doing a panel. Julie Person stated that she saw the film twice and it was amazing to see that it is exactly what we are doing. She stated that she would encourage everyone to see the film and come here and see what we are doing. Supt. Mosca stated that she will set up a visit with Mary. Becky Wright stated that she feels like we have very different educational philosophies and she wants to ensure that each philosophy is respected by the other district and the other board because we are trying to meld kids together and each have attributes the other may not feel is as strong but they need to see and hear a respect for where our kids are coming from and where they are going. Susan Berman asked what the greatest difference in the philosophy is. Wright stated that Marshwood does common core k-12 by the book and straight level education and our philosophy is to go deep and think deeper. Nash stated that she doesn't think that was respectful. Nelson stated that as a community and board the education at Marshwood is where we want our kids to be and although we have a different philosophy as a district we are completely invested in this. She stated that we want to continue to work together and bottom line that our kids are respected for what they bring in and they need to be respectful of what the learning is. Leach stated that the survey says the kids do feel respected. Deb Nichols stated that our school has worked harder on math in the last three years and we help kids understand concepts and she had a child move from another district and they answer the math problem by algorithm and what we're trying to do here is to allow kids to know multiple ways and use tools to figure out the answer and share their strategies with the class

and try different strategies. Nash stated that we do the same. Nichols stated that seeing that child they can't move beyond the algorithm versus the other kids who aren't afraid to try other things. Nelson stated that this is not the forum to have philosophy of education discussions. Supt. Mosca stated that it goes back to us talking and communicating and sharing. Fred Wildnauer stated that he saw the movie and it was unrealistic and he would like you to come and give us your experience because the examples they used were in California with tons of money and community support. He would like to have the principal come and do a presentation. He stated that talking about educationally philosophies you can get passionate. Kunz stated that he appreciates what you are saying and it is important to have a forum but I think we can all agree that the most useful forum is where people don't agree and he would have liked to have heard Becky's comments and he doesn't feel she was being disrespectful it was more you didn't like the answer. He would encourage whatever forum be respectful of hearing things you may not want to hear. He stated that he is not an educator but he respects them for their experience and he also wants to hear the perspective of the Marshwood teachers because our kids are going there. Nelson stated that she appreciates everyone coming out tonight and they will set a date for the next meeting after vacation.

5. **Adjournment:** nelson closed the meeting at 7:10pm.

Katie Krauss
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval