

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT MEETING  
COMPONENT BOARDS OF EDUCATION  
BETWEEN CLYMER & PANAMA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2017 - 7:00 pm

CLYMER STUDENT PERFORMANCE CENTER  
8672 East Main Street  
Clymer, NY

**AGENDA**

- I. Meeting Convened by the District Superintendent
  - Pledge of Allegiance
- II. District Superintendent Appoints Clerk for Meeting
- III. Boards of Education Call Meeting to Order
  - Panama Board of Education
    - Clerk Calls Roll
  - Clymer Board of Education
    - Clerk Calls Roll
- IV. District Superintendent Comments
  - Purpose of the Meeting
- V. Presentation of the Feasibility Study for the Purpose of Consolidation – Learning Design Associates, Inc. - David Kurzawa, Marilyn Kurzawa & Thomas Schmidt
- VI. Questions & Answers – Boards of Education
- VII. Next Steps
  - Updated Centralization Timeline [pending SED final approval]
  - Community Meetings
    - November 7, 2017 - 7:00 pm – Panama Auditorium
    - November 9, 2017 - 7:00 pm – Clymer Student Performance Center
    - Boards of Education to approve Advisory Referendum [Straw Vote] – on or before October 27, 2017
      - If Boards approve vote – Vote to be held on November 13, 2017 in both districts
- VIII. Adjournment of Meeting – District Superintendent Adjourns
  - Panama Board of Education Adjourns
  - Clymer Board of Education Adjourns

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**AGENDA**

- I. Meeting Convened by the District Superintendent - Meeting was convened at 7:00 pm by Dr. O'Rourke.
  - Pledge of Allegiance - The Boards of Education and audience stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance
- II. District Superintendent Appoints Clerk for Meeting - Dr. O'Rourke appointed Cynthia Marx as Clerk for the meeting.
- III. Boards of Education Call Meeting to Order
  - Panama Board of Education - President Donald Butler called the Panama Board of Education meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
    - Clerk Calls Roll - Mrs. Marx called the roll - the following Panama Board members were in attendance:
      - Donald Butler, President
      - Gregory Hudson, Vice President
      - Dawn Brink
      - Robert Delahoy
      - Peter Komarek
      - James Mistretta
      - Carrie Munsee
  - Clymer Board of Education - President Mike Schenk called the Clymer Board of Education meeting to order at 7:04 pm
    - Clerk Calls Roll - Mrs. Marx called the roll - the following Clymer Board members were in attendance:
      - Mike Schenk, President
      - Willowe Neckers, Vice President
      - Ed Mulkearn
      - Amanda Stapels
      - Norman Upperman
- IV. District Superintendent Comments
  - Purpose of the Meeting - Dr. O'Rourke explained that he was serving in the capacity of the Commissioner's Representative in this initiative. SED has vetted the study and approved it. Additional review of aid assumptions was the cause of the rescheduling of this meeting from its original date.

The purpose of the meeting was to have the Study Consultants present the Feasibility Study to the Panama and Clymer Boards of Education at a public meeting. There will be time at the end of the presentation for the Board members to ask questions. The Boards and superintendent will be holding Community meetings at which time the public may ask questions about the study and its recommendations.

V. Presentation of the Feasibility Study for the Purpose of Consolidation – Learning Design Associates, Inc. - David Kurzawa, Marilyn Kurzawa & Thomas Schmidt

Dr. O'Rourke introduced Learning Design Associates, who began the Study presentation.

The study was an 8-month process with many meetings with the Advisory Committee and various Focus Groups. The schools/communities have more similarities than differences. The consultants briefly reviewed each area of the study. The consultants ended the presentation by reviewing each of the 26 recommendations.

The complete study will be uploaded to both the Clymer and Panama Websites.

VI. Questions & Answers – Boards of Education – Dr. O'Rourke opened the floor to the Boards of Education to ask questions of the consultants [see attached document]. There were some questions that needed clarification which Dr. O'Rourke will get answered by SED and report back to the Boards.

VII. Next Steps

- Updated Centralization Timeline – Dr. O'Rourke reviewed the revised Timeline, noting that it would be posted to both districts websites. Dr. O'Rourke briefly explained the process beginning with Community meetings to possible Advisory Referendum [Straw Vote] which is non-binding to determine if there is community support for the Commissioner to layout a new district and order a special meeting for the purpose of holding the binding vote for centralization of the two districts. Dr. O'Rourke also talked about if the vote was positive that there would be another vote to set the number of board members and to elect those members to serve.

- Community Meetings
  - November 7, 2017 – 7:00 pm – Panama Auditorium
  - November 9, 2017 – 7:00 pm – Clymer Student Performance Center
  - Boards of Education will need to approve an Advisory Referendum [Straw Vote] – on or before October 27, 2017
    - If Boards approve vote – Vote to be held on November 13, 2017 in both districts
  
- Mr. Lictus indicated that everyone needs to think about their core values. There will be differences of opinions on whether to merge or not. But we need to think about our kids and what is best for them. Expectation is for respectful discussion.

VIII. Adjournment of Meeting – District Superintendent asked the Boards to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm.

- Panama Board of Education Adjourns – President Butler asked for a motion to adjourn the Panama Board meeting at 8:49 pm
  - Motion by Mr. Hudson, seconded by Mr. Komarek
- Clymer Board of Education Adjourns – President Schenk asked for a motion to adjourn the Clymer Board meeting at 8:50 pm
  - Motion by Mr. Mulkearn, seconded by Mrs. Stapels

Respectfully submitted,

*Cynthia L Marx*

Cynthia L. Marx  
Clerk for the meeting

**CLYMER/PANAMA BOARD OF EDUCATION QUESTIONS  
FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY**

**Willowe Neckers**

**Use 51% of incentive aid to level taxes.**

- What would the taxes look like if we did not use incentive aid?**

**DK - Will have to send that information to you - I have it but did not bring it with me. Most studies and mergers do use incentive aid to level taxes - the % depends on districts. {DK - NEED FOLLOW UP/CLARIFICATION}**

**Don Butler**

- Is 51% normal number or is it high - average - low?**

**DK - Most use 35 - 40% - so it is high.**

**Willowe Neckers**

**Level up teachers salaries.**

- What about extras [co-curricular] is that included in the numbers?**

**DK - No, Clymer pays more than Panama.**

**Willowe Neckers**

- Do all the recommendations that you shared have to be taken by the new Board? Or can they pick and choose?**

**DK - Part of the study is to make recommendations if the districts were to merge. Looked at each recommendation with the committee and staff and we did put together items and recommendations that would work in each community and board. The study gives a foundation to start**

discussions. This is the method that NYS uses to guide the process in the newly formed district.

DOR - How obligations of a newly elected board have to abide by the recommendations of the study - provides a good foundation on data that will help guide the new board. Does not bind the board. It is the method NYS uses to guide the board of education.

James Mistretta

- The community are 3<sup>rd</sup> generations - the way incentive aid is - after 14 years would residents be responsible for tax increase?

DK - The new board develops the plan for incentive aid. Districts who take step forward to figure out how to spend the aid properly. This could bring more people to the communities and make the tax base better.

Ed Mulkearn

- When we level tax rate with incentive aid - at some point it will go away. Are we going to be able to maintain or find ourselves in the situation of having to increase taxes?

DK - With aid coming in and how you spend it wisely. How good plan and maintain balance, I think you will be able to balance it for 14 years. And when it goes away you should not be in trouble.

New board develops a five-year plan. Districts who have done the planning make it work. Numbers assume no cuts, reductions or expenses. The appendix has budget to reduce budget - Appendix N or M show a way to reduce aid.

Level tax rates at some point, tax rates go away to meet the obligations with 2% cap

Five years, 10 years planning - good planning. Balance tax rate after 14 years. Board takes responsibility and guidance from the superintendent and business official.

Ed Mulkearn

- Are there caps on reserves?

DK - Yes.

Ed Mulkearn

- Will we be able to hold those dollars in reserves?

DK - Yes, but need to talk to your accountant. Will need board approval on certain ones to move money into it. Need voter approval on some others.

Amanda Stapels

- What role did the committee have in making these recommendations?

MK - We analyzed their homework responses - we listened hard to the focus groups and others. We polled the Feasibility Study Committee - there were 13 member presents - 7 voted for merger. The study represents the thoughts of the group and final recommendations are based on the advice of the student committee.

Willowe Neckers

- Is there anything in the study that gives any consideration to students leaving the district to go to another district?

MK - Do not believe you can predict either way. Good schools sell homes.

## James Mistretta

- The schools that kids would be attending – what was the thought process on recommendations that you presented?

MK – Gives the new board a way in which to go. Listened very strongly to what parents said – in particular for the elementary students. Middle schoolers in Panama would give all the students in district the pool – we all know that high school students don't want to jump in the water but middle school kids love it.

We considered the strength and weaknesses of each building.

K-5 both buildings, 6-8 Panama, 9-12 Clymer. One building would not have the capacity to hold the entire student population. PK-5 helps the parents embrace the model. Clymer has good ag building for 9-12. Clymer HS supports businesses. Must share between Clymer and Panama to capitalize on fields for practices and games.

## Greg Hudson

- \$16m – 50% pulled for tax leveling – does that leave enough money to get to a place where people will want to come?

DK – you would spend 5 cents on the dollar in first 5 years.

## Willowe Neckers

- In order to get the 95% building aid – does it have to be in the first 5 years?

DK – You have a 10 year period. Building/renovation can start in 10<sup>th</sup> year, I believe to get the 95%.

DOR – Enhanced incentive building aid is available for 10 years to the reorganized district. The specific question on what constitutes this timeline has been submitted to SED for clarification.



## Willowe Neckers

- New board starts with a clean slate - Recommendation for a 9 member board.

DOR - This is getting ahead of statutory process. I will explain that in a little bit.

## Amanda Stapels

- After we have time to digest the study - where would we direct our questions?

DOR - talked through the process for the community meetings - will have a slide deck for the Community meetings

Reviewed the revised timeline - and noted it would be up on the website in the morning. And, briefly talked about the statutory process should the straw vote be positive in both districts.

## Ed Mulkearn

- What is process for absentee ballots in straw vote - same as in a budget vote?

DOR - yes, and the County Board of Elections has already been notified of the date for the Advisory Referendum [Straw Vote].

## Willowe Neckers

- What about the Amish? Is there a registration process?

DOR - It will be like a normal school votes - there is a challenge procedure just like a regular vote.