

**BLUE MOUNTAIN UNION SCHOOL BOARD RETREAT**  
**WELLS RIVER UCC CHURCH**  
**October 14, 2015**

Present:

Board Members: Angeline Alley, Chair; Sara Dennis, Paul Hazel, Judy Murray,  
Julie Oliver, Tom Page, Josh Souliere, Bruce Stevens

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Scott Blood, Donna Waelter, Kimberly French,  
Lori Blood, Todd Powers, Dena Baker, Judy Colby

- I. Retreat came together at 5:00 PM
  - a. Dinner and conversation
- II. Overview of Educational Quality Standards (EQS)
  - a. Team will go to training December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - b. Visiting team will come in January/February to see where BMU is in the process
    - i. Will report findings and offer recommendations
  - c. What are Educational Quality Standards?
  - d. Where does BMU stand?
  - e. How do we plan to meet them?
- III. Overview of Act 46 and Discussion
  - a. What do we want education to look like for our students at BMU?
  - b. Challenges—Insufficient enrollment to meet Act 46
    - i. Also, a bit of a challenge of geography
  - c. Choices:
    - i. Align with OESU or districts in OESU
    - ii. Create interstate district
    - iii. Look at other VT districts?
    - iv. Another course of action?
  - d. Have applied for grant to form BMU's own study group
    - i. To look at whether it's a good idea to form a new district
  - e. "Side-by-Sides" is another option
    - i. Enables districts to retain choice and still have enough numbers to meet the criteria
  - f. Accelerated Mergers
  - g. Financial information—Lori Blood
    - i. Loans would follow the school in a consolidation
    - ii. Labor would need to be worked on in negotiations
    - iii. Benefits would be negotiated
    - iv. Software conversions would need to be managed
    - v. Trust Funds would stay with the town/school
    - vi. Will any cost savings be seen?
      1. Probably not for 5-10 yrs. down the road
- IV. Goal Setting: Act 46 and EQS
  - a. What would possibilities look like?
    - i. Various configurations

- ii. Should set goals of what we want and over the next few months, eliminate some possibilities
- b. What happens next?
  - i. Joint study with OESU
  - ii. Our own study
  - iii. Conversations with Danville? Or other schools?
  - iv. Setting Goals for what we want to achieve
    - 1. Each person present shared his/her thoughts on who BMU should partner with as we go forward
      - a. Culture, values, money, traditions, keep our high school, expand programs in the high school
- c. What do we want to achieve by August?
  - i. To have a partner with whom we're moving forward
  - ii. Community being informed and having buy-in
  - iii. Working on Articles of Agreement
  - iv. Work toward having a working knowledge of the Educational Quality Standards
  - v. Suggestion to draft a Mission Statement based on Act 46

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

**The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.**