

Special Cooperative School Board Meeting
Cooperative Board Work Session
RCW 43.30.080

Wednesday, October 26, 2016
Endicott School Library 6-7PM

Endicott School Board Chair Marvin Schmick, St. John School Board Chair Janet Leifer, and Lacrosse Board Chair Terry Miller called their respective boards to order and jointly opened the work session at 6 PM.

Attendance:

Lacrosse School Board

Terry Miller
Harmon Smith
Michael Stubbs
Tami Schwartz

Endicott School Board

Marvin Schmick
Jamie Misner
Greta White
Nancy Anderson

St. John School Board

Janet Leifer
Shantyl McGuire
Val Brewer
Jim Rogers
Alan Blumenshein

Others in attendance: Darrell Miller, Matt and Amanda Webb, Amy Swannack, Jay Mills, Mark Purvine, Bruce Porubek, Trish Hilt, Sandy Martin, Dana Crider, Jeff Pietila, Doug Curtis and Suzanne Schmick.

Marvin Schmick welcomed everyone to the work session of the Lacrosse, St. John and Endicott School Boards. The three items for discussion were state as follows: 1.) What is St. John-Endicott's vision of a sports cooperative with Lacrosse, 2.) Data Sharing on current athletic participation (SJE and Lacrosse), 3.) How can we support each other's goals? All members agree to these items as the sole focus of the meeting.

Name tents were used on the meeting table so as to facilitate conversation and eliminate the need for reintroductions. Lacrosse Superintendent Doug Curtis reviewed for the group how Lacrosse had arrived at their current status. The community of Lacrosse expressed their desire to keep their students together with a cooperative program of some sort rather than seeking a waiver from WIAA allowing students to participate at any location of their choice, thus splitting up student athletes. Superintendent Doug expressed that it was the desire of the Lacrosse Board to learn and know what the SJE Boards envision as the future of sports locally.

Athletic Directors Sandy Martin and Darrell Miller along with Principals Porubek, Purvine and Pietila provided materials on enrollment numbers in the three schools and the actual number of students participating in each sports season. Discussion was had about the numbers in sports and the use of fifth graders and 8th graders to help support team capacity at both the high school and middle school levels. The boards discussed

their concerns about the fact that this type of measure were being put in place, stating their safety was something to be strongly considered when implementing these options.

Lacrosse Board Member Mike Stubbs expressed his support for how well the middle school programs have been working together. Students from Endicott, St. John and Lacrosse seem to be enjoying both the social and athletic interactions with one another.

St. John Board Member Valerie Brewer asked about the reasons why the Lacrosse community wanted to “turn the lights on” in their facility and why the timing for that was such a strong request right now. Multiple Lacrosse Board members spoke to the fact that having that opportunity to “turn the lights on “ would help create a reality that their sports program still was a real option for families. Lacrosse Members Stubbs and Miller suggested to the group that it was tough to motivate students to play when the future of the team and program seemed to lack consistency or a strong commitment or plan for the next year.

Discussion of practice locations and game sites continued. St. John Board Member Shantyl McGuire asked Lacrosse board members to clarify their requests regarding game site locations. McGuire further asked about the number of Lacrosse students participating and whether that should be a factor in where games were located. Multiple board members from all communities represented participated in the discussion. Lacrosse Board Member Terry Miller restated the fact that having an opportunity to play a game in Lacrosse helps to build a future of interested athletes and supportive family groups. St. John Board Member McGuire expressed her concern that if practices also moved to Lacrosse that this would create a potential hardship for some of the SJE families. She expressed that she hated to see SJE lose students. St. John Board Member Janet Leifer reminded the group that Lacrosse had only asked for one game and had not asked to move any of the practices.

The next phase of discussion moved to conversation about Lacrosse’s commitment to SJE in terms of years, following a question raised by St. John Board Member McGuire. Lacrosse Board Member Terry Miller stated that the Lacrosse Board was not looking too far into the future, as student numbers were uncertain. However, Lacrosse is willing to help support the combined sports effort financially in any way that best suits the schools involved. Endicott Board Member Jamie Misner asked if all sports teams would combine with SJE if we worked as a full sports cooperative. Multiple Lacrosse board members responded to this question with answers supporting a “yes” response. Lacrosse Board Member Tami Schwartz stated that it was important to Lacrosse that students are able to identify with a team and start developing team spirit and a sense of belonging starting with the younger students and building on that throughout middle and high school. Building programs in the middle school allows those students to have a strong and solid learning opportunity before entering the high school, thus avoiding the situation of taking from the junior high program to make a high school program work. Endicott Board Member Greta White expressed her concern about SJE’s low participation numbers and not being able to field full JV games for at least seven years.

The final phase of conversation focused on how each school group could support each other's goals. Superintendent Doug Curtis restated his communities interest in keeping students together no matter who they worked with in the near area. Lacrosse Board members shared their experiences with their public forums. Formats and sample questions were suggested to the SJE Boards. Lacrosse board members suggested that showing the real numbers and keeping the board members role, as note takers only were two of the key factors in making their public forum informative, helpful and successful.

Lacrosse Board Member Terry Miller reminded the group that it would always be difficult to make all people happy. Keeping the focus on what is best for the students will be a helpful guide to a solution.

St. John Board Member Valerie Brewer asked if the "game in Lacrosse" would become a deal breaker. Lacrosse Board Member Terry Miller indicated that he did not see that as the case. Students and families will make choices on what they feel best, Lacrosse just hopes to keep students together as much as possible.

St. John-Endicott Athletic Director Darrell Miller shared with the group that SJE would not have fielded a football team without the participation of the Lacrosse students. He shared with the group that this situation may become more of a reality for other SJE teams in the future.

Endicott and St. John Board Members shared that their next steps were to meet together to plan for their public forums to be held in Endicott and St. John. No future meeting dates will be set with the Lacrosse Board until the forums are completed and reviewed.

Lacrosse, Endicott and St. John Board chairs closed the meeting at 7:03 PM.