Committee to Study Dissolution
Regional School District No. 11
Minutes of the Meeting of December 18, 2017

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Cesar Beltran, Bettina Bronisz, Nick Brown, Clare D'Appollonio, Stephanie Harrington, Jennifer Nelson, Steven Kurcinik, Rose Bisson, Matthew Venhorst, William Hooper

Absent: William Fazioli

II. Audience for Citizens

A number of citizens and students spoke in favor of retaining the status quo given the strong sense of community and positive educational opportunities and student outcomes at Parish Hill. A number of citizens also expressed that insufficient evidence had been compiled to show that dissolution would result in cost savings to the regional district. One member of the community remarked that special education costs for placing students in another district would be high. Various members of the community distributed materials opposing dissolution. Other community members expressed the opinion that the Committee should vote to recommend dissolution so the matter can go to referendum and the citizens can decide the future of the school district.

One community member said that, while the Parish Hill community is to be commended for the positive developments that have occurred over the years, the school district has a sustainability problem and that the status quo is untenable. The community member reported that Scotland is virtually insolvent and will have difficulty paying for Parish Hill if changes are not implemented.

III. Review of Draft Report and Appendices

Ms. Bronisz commented that the numbering in the "study history" section of the draft report should be fixed to show 11 voting members and to show that Ms. Bronisz replaced Ms. Mailhot as the Treasurer's designee. Mr. Venhorst questioned whether section 2 of the draft report reflected all of the district's assets and liabilities and noted that there should be a section explicitly addressing liabilities, as there was in the 2009 dissolution committee report. Ms. Nelson said that an audit report that had been conducted would be added to Section 2 of the draft report.

Committee members questioned what body would work to implement a dissolution plan in the event dissolution were to occur. Committee members agreed that the towns and boards of education would need to work closely and cooperatively during the period of transition. Ms. Harrington reviewed an analysis she had conducted that showed that the per pupil cost of

educating students in the event of dissolution could be similar to the current per pupil cost at Parish Hill. Ms. Harrington distributed written materials showing this analysis. Ms. Bisson noted that the Region 11 board of education currently has a large checking account balance. Various committee members commented that those funds should be put to good use.

IV. Discussion and Possible Action on Vote to Recommend/Not Recommend Dissolution

Mr. Hooper moved, and Mr. Kurcinik seconded, the following motion:

> RESOLVED, That this Committee recommend dissolution of the Region 11 school district given the data that is available;

Committee members, by a show of hands, voted as follows:

Yes:	Ms. D'Appollonio, Mr. Kurcinik
No:	Mr. Beltran, Ms. Bisson, Mr. Brown, Ms. Harrington, Mr. Hooper
Abstain:	Ms. Bronisz, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Venhorst

Ms. Harrington commented that she voted against dissolution because she did not see sufficient evidence of cost savings to justify dissolution. Mr. Venhorst noted that the Governor and the Department of Education have consistently sought ways to eliminate burdens on municipalities and districts, while encouraging regional cooperation whenever possible. However, the Department of Education understands that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges of running school districts and municipalities. Mr. Venhorst noted that he abstained from casting a vote in order to allow the democratic process to run its course and allow Committee members appointed by the local communities to be able to cast their votes for or against bringing the matter referendum.

V. Next Steps

The Committee agreed that a report should be submitted to the State Board of Education by December 21, 2017, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-43. Mr. Hooper said that he would put the existing materials in one cohesive document and send it to the Committee on December 19. Ms. Nelson said that she would email Mr. Venhorst the version of the report to be submitted to the State Board of Education on December 21.

VI. Adjourn

Mr. Beltran moved, and Mr. Hooper seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.