

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

August 12, 2009

6:30 P.M.

Educational Services Center

The Board of Education of the Bloomington Public Schools, School District 87, McLean County, Illinois, met in Regular Session.

Ms. Wilma Gleason, Board Secretary, established a quorum and the following Members were present: Mr. Joe Butcher, Mr. Mike Harrison, Ms. Judith Webster, Mrs. Mary Yount, and Mrs. Millicent Roth, Board Vice President.

Present from the administrative staff were Dr. Robert Nielsen, Dr. Barry Reilly, Dr. Teresa Hill and Mr. David Wood

Mrs. Roth stated we would have a hearing for the Issuance of Bonds as follows:

"In accordance with Sections 105 ILCS 5/19-8 and 5/19-9 of the Illinois School Code, the Board of Education will now hold a public hearing to receive public comments on the proposed issuance of \$10,000,000 in Bonds for the Bloomington Public Schools, District 87.

Public notice of the proposed issuance and this public hearing was published in The Pantagraph on July 25, 2009.

The District proposes to issue bonds for the purpose of paying claims against the District consisting of Limited Tax General Obligation Debt Certificates, Series 2009.

When all discussion has concluded, the public hearing will be adjourned.

Is there any discussion from the Board?

Is there any discussion from the Public?

The Public hearing is now concluded."

Mr. John Dirks, Board President, arrived at 6:35 p.m.

Mrs. Roth presented the Minutes for approval. It was moved by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Butcher, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held on June 10, 2009, the Minutes of the Special Sessions of the Board of Education held on July 7, July 8 and July 9, 2009, and the Minutes of the Closed Sessions on July 7, 8 and 9, 2009 be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Dr. Nielsen thanked Mr. Colin Manahan and the Custodial & Maintenance staff for the work they continually do, and especially for the work this summer. Approximately \$4.3 million worth of work was done this summer in our buildings. Dr. Nielsen stated that visitors always comment on the cleanliness and upkeep of our buildings. Mr. Manahan introduced Patt Mitchell (Administrative Assistant), Patrick Cortesi (Landscaping), Bob Bicknell (Elementary and ESC Supervisor), Brad Johnson (BHS/BJHS Supervisor), and Jay Smithson (Maintenance Supervisor). Bob Bicknell introduced Bob Kirk (Raymond), Matt McGowan (ESC and other buildings as needed), and Teresa Smithson (Bent). Brad Johnson introduced BHS custodians in attendance - Ted Monniker, Joan Travis, Jeff Langhoff, Adam Brooks, Travis Mattingly, Rick Sutton, and Tom Gibbens. Jay Smithson introduced Maintenance Staff in attendance - Fred Arbuckle, Scott Peifer, Troy Fulks, Mark Schultz, and Doug Morris. The Board and Administration thanked the Custodial and Maintenance Staff for all of their dedication and hard work put forth each day.

Mr. Harrison - No report.

Mrs. Yount stated that the Facilities Committee met three times this summer and continues to meet. She also attended the BHS marching band concert; 170 students are in the marching band and they were fabulous.

Mr. Butcher stated that he met with Beyond the Books and looks forward to meeting with them in the future. Mr. Butcher recently attended the Regional Planning Commission meeting.

Mrs. Webster recently attended the Illinois Association of School Board training for governments, law and finance. In meeting with other school boards and Superintendents, she noticed that some of them use "vision" instead of goals, and she would like to explore that possibility. A youtube video was shown discussion the rapid progression of technology and how students are being prepared for the onslaught of information particularly related to China, India, etc. She wonders if we might need to look at a longer school day and/or school year.

Mrs. Roth attended the back-to-school event at Horton Field House with her daughters and handed out backpacks. District 87 distributed 400 backpacks. Others will be distributed at the various schools to those who didn't attend. She also toured BHS and was very impressed with the work that has been done this summer. She noticed that the new kitchen doesn't have deep fryers, and she believes this is an indication of the commitment to wellness in District 87.

Mr. Dirks stated that he has attended three Facilities Committee meetings this summer. He attended the marching band concert as well; 15% of our student body is in the marching band and they sounded great. He encouraged those Board members who haven't seen the new cafeteria/kitchen at BHS to do so. The back to school party at Horton Field House was well attended.

Mr. David Wood presented the Tentative 2010 budget. As background, he reviewed the budget/levy calendar and the Board's financial principles. He illustrated that the District relies on local resources far more than the average Illinois school district and that four major revenues determine the financial condition of the District (property tax, CPPRT, GSA, and special education).

While the Legal 2010 Budget includes federal stimulus ARRA funds, the initial budget presentation focused on underlying District finances without these additional funds. The overall focus was on the Education Fund where most operations are funded. In aggregate, Education Fund revenues are down 1.9% (\$877,300) and expenditures are up 3.8% (\$1,755,600) which leaves a deficit approximately \$2.4 M. The district has sufficient fund balances to cover this deficit for at least one year.

In 2009, the district projected a deficit of approximately \$530,000 but ended with a surplus of approximately \$250,000. This was primarily due to the conservative budget assumptions the District uses, particularly for expenditures. Mr. Wood indicated that it is likely the District will be able to reduce the overall deficit again through careful spending but that the deficit was large enough this year it was unlikely to be entirely eliminated. With ARRA funds, the Legal Budget has a deficit of only \$1.8 M.

Education Fund revenues are up by 0.9% (\$400,000) and expenditures are up 5.4% (\$2,440,500). In general, the additional ARRA revenues are offset by additional ARRA expenditures. These funds must be used for supplemental programs and do not fundamentally change underlying District finances. ARRA funds will be used primarily for technology (special education and Title I computer labs, intervention software, smartboards and projection units) and data analysis activities.

The District plans to monitor expenditures closely, rely on fund balances for this year, and revisit the deficit next spring.

Mr. Dirks asked when we will know the actual levy percentages. Mr. Wood stated that it will be approximately March 2010; a tentative number will be brought to the Board in October.

Ms. Webster asked for clarification on the budget dates. Mr. Wood explained that this is for this fiscal year (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010). The budget for this year has to be filed by the end of September.

Mrs. Roth inquired about AARA funds (federal stimulus money). Mr. Wood explained that the district has to include it in the budget because the Board will authorize the district to spend it.

Dr. Nielsen stated that periodically we review the district's mission statement and goals (published on each Board meeting agenda). The Board, last spring, asked for a review of the mission statement and goals. Dr. Nielsen stated that the goals set the priorities for the entire district from the Superintendent's office to the classrooms. If the Board decides to look at significant reprioritization, it will probably take a year or so to do complete this. Dr. Nielsen asked that the Board tread lightly and to give the administration lead time in order to refocus resources to achieve the goals. Mr. Dirks said the Board must work with the administration to see what impact any changes would have on the district.

Ms. Webster stated that she is used to being very goal driven through her employment. She likes District 87's goals but feels that we are shortchanging our students because, in her opinion, there's a lot that isn't addressed (wellness, physical fitness of our students in light of the growing nationwide problem of obesity, and the arts). She feels this is key for students who aren't thrilled about academics and thinks that the arts can be incorporated into problem solving, creative thinking, etc. Ms. Webster would also like the Board to look globally when writing the goals. She doesn't want to delete any goals; she wants to add to them and reach out a little more.

Mrs. Roth stated that she feels Ms. Webster makes some excellent points. She feels that the focus on wellness was studied a few years ago and that the district has "taken the bull by the horns." Mrs. Roth explained that there is a set of district goals for wellness, and that she can see value in stating wellness as a district-wide goal. Mrs. Roth is also concerned about how well the district is globally preparing students. If the Board is going to state global preparedness as a district goal, we must see what that means in terms of financial impact, curriculum, etc. Mrs. Roth would like to see more focus on the Arts.

Mr. Dirks asked, in the areas of wellness and the arts, if the stated goal would be something the district is already doing or if these would be new goals.

Mrs. Roth stated that, in the areas of wellness and the arts, the stated goal would recognize what the district is already doing. Wellness is beyond an initiative; it is current practice, and she feels that it could be listed as a goal.

Ms. Webster stated that by having goals on the district website, people can see what the district is doing.

Mr. Harrison feels that the goals deserve some conversation and he inquired how, in light of the federal government and NCLB, this would all play out. If the Board states these things as goals and puts them in writing, the district will be held to them. Our objective in educating students and closing the achievement gap must be first and foremost, and he would like to have more conversation on how all of this can fit together.

Ms. Webster stated that the Board could look at the goals this year and try to make changes for next year or the year after.

Mr. Dirks stated that if the Board adds something to the curriculum, something must be taken away. In light of the budget deficit, the Board will have to look closely at any suggested changes. Mr. Dirks would like to hear a report on wellness and our existing curriculum.

Dr. Nielsen stated that all of the district goals are measurable. Reports are given to the Board on how well the district is doing in achieving district goals. If the Board says that wellness is a goal of District 87, there must be a rubric to evaluate that goal. If global preparedness is a goal, there must be a rubric to evaluate that goal. How do we know that what we're doing is moving students toward that goal? If the Board says that students will be globally prepared, what does that mean and how will it be measured?

Mr. Dirks stated that the Superintendent is evaluated based on accomplishing the district goals.

Mr. Harrison stated that if it ever becomes to the point that the Board is exploring goals for wellness, arts, and global preparedness as compared to math, science and reading, he feels that the Board must stay with math, science and reading.

Mrs. Roth stated that she agrees and that the district has done well with achieving beyond what the state and national figures show. She doesn't think we have to be limited, in light of the deficit. If the Board identifies priorities that benefit our students, discussion is one thing, but if that means pushing ourselves beyond where we've been, we owe it to ourselves to see what's out there. When we talk about going into the future, what does that mean? What math was 20 years ago isn't what math is today. The core things are the same but now we incorporate technology into almost every curricular area. What are we doing to prepare our students?

Ms. Webster stated that there are ways to tie the arts, global awareness/preparedness and fitness to things that already exist and by tweaking, they could be dovetailed together.

Dr. Nielsen stated that the district will send a letter to the BEA and PTO's asking for input from them. This is a very involved process which will take time. Our goals must be for all students.

It was moved by Mr. Butcher, seconded by Mrs. Yount, that the Consent Agenda (Human Resources Report, Bills, Payroll, Treasurer's Report, Financial Summary, Designation of Bank Depositories, WAVES Contract, Food Service Agreement with St. Mary's School, District 87 Group Medical Plan Amendment) be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 08-12-09/1)

Dr. Nielsen reminded the Board of the following upcoming events:

- New teacher orientation/lunch at BJHS will be Friday, August 14, 2009, @ 11:30 am. 2400 applications are on file with District 87 and 35 new teachers have been hired.
- The BHS cafeteria and kitchen final walk-through is Saturday, August 15, 2009.
- All staff breakfast/reception will be Monday, August 17, 2009, at 7:30 am/8:30 am.
- The first half-day of school for students is Thursday, August 20th, and Friday, August 21st, is the first full day of student attendance.
- September 4th is the Sheridan Back to School Parade at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Woods stated a meeting was held with the bus drivers on August 12, 2009. 60% of the bus drivers were with First Student and are driving the same routes. The buses are here; radios and cameras, and GPS systems are being installed.

It was moved by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mrs. Roth, that the 2009-10 Tentative Budget Resolution be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 08-12-09/2)

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Dirks adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

President

Secretary