

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 24, 2010

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. Michael Harrison, Dr. Steve Perry, Ms. Judith Webster, Mrs. Mary Yount, Mrs. Millicent Roth, and Mr. John Dirks, Board President.

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

Mr. Dirks presented the Minutes for approval. It was moved by Ms. Webster, seconded by Mrs. Yount, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held on February 10, 2010 be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Ms. Webster - No report.

Mrs. Roth - No report.

Mrs. Yount attended the 8<sup>th</sup> grade/BHS band concert. The bands performed together which was very impressive.

Mr. Harrison stated that parents and teachers have brought it to his attention that a number of students at BHS are not aware of graduation requirements. Mr. Harrison feels that the Board needs to give attention to this and make sure all students understand the requirements.

Dr. Hill stated that report cards list the number of credits earned. She further stated that students often do not understand the number of credits needed to advance to the next grade.

Mr. Harrison asked if students **have to see** or are **encouraged to see** counselors on a regular basis. Dr. Reilly stated that students meet with counselors each semester to register for courses for the following semester.

Ms. Webster asked if there are ways to notify students how many credits they have earned.

Dr. Hill stated that this is done in meetings with counselors. Extra efforts are made with students who aren't making necessary progress towards graduation. Parents are also notified. In most cases, when students are not making progress towards graduation, it is that they have failed a particular course needed to graduate. Counselors will then meet with the student and classroom teacher.

Dr. Perry attended the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade choir and band concerts. He was very impressed with the bands.

Mr. Dirks attended the 8<sup>th</sup> grade/BHS band concert as well as the art show. Mr. Dirks noted that the students' art was very good, particularly at the junior high level.

Dr. Nielsen presented Board Policy 2.250 (Access to District Public Records) for 1<sup>st</sup> reading. This is in response to the revised Freedom of Information Act which was put in place in January 2010.

Ms. Webster asked that a definition of what is **not** public be added to the policy. Dr. Nielsen stated that under "Responding Request #2" of the proposed policy, we are precluded from providing certain information and would have to give justification for denial. Dr. Nielsen cautioned that if the Board attempts to delineate other exclusions, something could be left out and then "we become a victim or our own omission." Dr. Nielsen recommended leaving the policy language general and then explain the reason for the refusal if necessary.

Dr. Perry stated that the Illinois School Law Bulletin had a list of what the law lists as exempt. He suggested that the Board consider adding language in current state law.

Dr. Nielsen stated that since the law was written in November 2009, it has already changed.

Mr. Wood stated that the District gets the draft policies from the Illinois School Board Association. The language is occasionally tweaked, but we usually accept them as presented. If the Board adds language regarding specifics, there is a risk of leaving something out as Dr. Nielsen stated.

Dr. Nielsen noted that the state statute is referenced at the bottom of each policy.

Dr. Teresa Hill presented the 2010 Summer School proposal as follows:

- Elementary Summer School (Paid with Title I with exception of tuition)
  - 5-week program serving students completing grades K-5
  - Monday - Thursday, June 7-July 8, 2010
  - \$50/student
  - 70 hours of instruction focusing on literacy and mathematics
  - Pre and Post assessment of skills
  - Research Based Curriculum
  - Professional Development & Collaborative Planning for Teachers
  - Breakfast and daily transportation for students

Mrs. Roth asked how many of the elementary students who attend summer school are on free/reduced lunch. Dr. Hill stated that almost all of the students are free/reduced lunch students.

Mrs. Roth asked if the program is for retention of students. Dr. Hill stated that summer school is focused on building skills and trying to prevent the gap that takes place during the summer. Dr. Hill said we do not typically make summer school a requirement for passing on to the next grade. She further stated that the district has worked very hard on developing this program.

- Extended School Year (ESY) (District paid)

- 5-week program serving students whose IEPs indicate a need for special education services to extend the school year
- Monday - Thursday, June 7-July 8, 2010
- 70 hours of instruction focusing on literacy and mathematics
- Pre and Post assessment of skills
- Research Based Curriculum
- Professional Development & Collaborative Planning for Teachers
- Breakfast and daily transportation for students
- Early Start (State Farm)
  - 3-week program serving students at Sheridan and Irving Elementary Schools (grant funded)
  - Tuition free for recommended students
- BJHS Summer School (Tuition based)
  - Available for students who do not meet promotion requirements in one or two core subjects (Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education)
  - Monday - Thursday, June 7-July 8, 2010
  - \$150/course

Mrs. Roth asked how many of the junior high students who attend summer school are on free/reduced lunch. Dr. Hill stated that when students have to pay for summer school, far fewer students ended up attending summer school. Those that needed to attend summer school paid for the course. The district has waived tuition for a homeless student.

- Transition Program (State Farm)
  - Short program designed to help students entering middle and high school prior to the start of the school year
    - ✓ BJHS
      - 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade transition program (grant funded)
      - Tuition free for recommended students
    - ✓ BHS
      - Raider 101 (grant funded)
      - Tuition free for recommended students
- All tuition free and reduced tuition programs are grant funded for FY10.
- Elementary summer school and extended school year are funded by Title I, IDEA reimbursement and tuition.
- Early Start and Transition Programs are funded by State Farm.
- BJHS Summer School is funded by tuition.

Due to uncertainty of grant funding, we do not anticipate offering elementary summer school in 2011.

Ms. Webster asked if students who want to attend summer school but are not recommended are able to participate. Dr. Hill stated that this has not been done in the past. For the Early Start programs, all students who want to attend may do so. The other two programs are kept fairly small and are focused on students that might struggle with transition. The administration works with teachers and principals to identify students who are then individually invited.

Ms. Webster inquired about the attendance of students new to the district. Dr. Hill stated that parents talk to the building principal, and a student's attendance depends on the situation and room in the program.

Mrs. Roth stated she does not like charging students tuition for summer school. Dr. Hill agreed with her and stated that, in light of state funding and the budget deficit, there are not other options.

Mrs. Roth asked the possibility of individual donations for funding the program. Dr. Nielsen said this was done in 2002-2003, and although funds were received from donations, they did not cover the cost of the program.

Dr. Perry asked about the length of time junior high students who take two courses will attend each day. Dr. Hill stated that a student taking one course will attend from 8:30-10:30 a.m; students taking two courses will attend from 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

It was moved by Mrs. Roth, seconded by Mr. Harrison that the Consent Agenda (Human Resources Report, Bills, FOIA Report, Treasurer's Report, Financial Summary, Athletic Field Reconstruction Bid Recommendation, Irving Roof Bid Recommendation, BHS Classroom Renovations Bid Recommendation, BHS Classroom Casework Bid Recommendation, BHS Lower Purple Fire Protection Bid Recommendation, BHS Classroom Furnishings Bid Recommendation, Sheridan Media Center Renovation Bid Recommendation) be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 02-24-10/1)

Mr. Dirks complimented Dr. Manahan and Mr. Wood on keeping the bids within the budget.

Dr. Nielsen stated that he wants to make sure the community knows that the deficit in the education fund is going to grow. Gov. Quinn and his budget director have indicated that there will be a 10% across-the-board reduction in funding for all public sectors, including education. (In the budget assumptions for 2010-11, it was assumed that the funding would remain the same.) The \$5.3 million deficit the district is facing could grow upwards of \$6 million which would devastate District 87. The district is faced with a challenge of reducing a deficit we did not create; this is a revenue issue not an expenditure issue. Dr. Nielsen stressed that the renovation bids which were approved come from dedicated funds. Bonds were sold and debt was structured long-term in order that taxes would not be raised. The law prohibits the transferring of funds.

Dr. Nielsen reminded the Board that the Illinois State Scholars Dinner will be held at Bloomington High School on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6:00 pm. Illinois State Scholars are designated by the State Board of Education. Students are invited, along with their parents, to the dinner, and are encouraged to invite someone who has been influential in their life. This is a great night and a chance to reunite students and former teachers.

The Illinois School Board Association's Corn Belt Dinner will be held on March 4<sup>th</sup>, at Olympia North Dr. Reilly, Dr. Perry, Ms. Webster and Mrs. Yount are scheduled to go; if others want to go, inform Wilma.

Mr. Dirks stated that the Board evaluates the Superintendent each year. In light of Dr. Nielsen's retirement on June 30, 2010, he asked the Board if they want to evaluate Dr. Nielsen this year.

Mrs. Roth stated that she does not feel it is necessary to do so in light of the time it takes the Superintendent to prepare his part of the evaluation. She feels Dr. Nielsen's time can be better spent on the business of the district and the budget deficit.

Dr. Perry stated that the evaluation is not just about the person, it is also about the state of the district. This is one opportunity that Board members get to pool their thoughts and see what others are thinking. Even though the evaluation is focused on the Superintendent, he feels that it has value in terms of understanding how Board members feel about the district, and he would like to see the Board evaluate Dr. Nielsen this year.

Mrs. Yount, Ms. Webster, Mr. Harrison and Mr. Dirks agreed with Mrs. Roth. It was decided that the Board would not evaluate Dr. Nielsen this year.

It was moved by Mrs. Roth, seconded by Mr. Harrison, that the 2010-11 Deficit Reduction Plan Adoption be approved. Dr. Nielsen reminded that this is a multi-year plan (at least two and possibly three-year plan). Dr. Nielsen appreciates the BEA's concern and does not necessarily disagree with them. Dr. Nielsen stated that the goals of the district are met in the proposed 2010-11 Deficit Reduction Plan.

Ms. Webster stated that this is a multi-year plan, and the Board needs to look at all possible ways to cut the budget.

Mr. Dirks stated that it is important to remember that this plan is not set in stone, and the Board will continue to discuss ways to alter the end results.

Dr. Nielsen stated that Phase II of the plan only has a timeline and that cuts are not specified. On July 1, 2010, the District will begin addressing the deficit that will now be more than \$3.5 million due to state and federal funding.

Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 02-24-10/2)

It was moved by Ms. Webster, seconded by Dr. Perry, that the 2008 Appeals to the Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 02-24-10/3)

It was moved by Dr. Perry, seconded by Ms. Webster, that the 2011 Actuary Engagement - Medical Health Insurance Rates be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 02-24-10-4)

It was moved by Mrs. Roth, seconded by Mrs. Yount, that the Bloomington Education Association Letter of Understanding - Decision and Bargaining on Reduction in Force be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 02-24-10-5)

It was moved by Ms. Webster, seconded by Dr. Perry, that the Board go into closed session for the purpose of collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

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

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

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President

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Secretary