

BOARD NOTES  
May 21, 2007

The regular meeting of the School Board was held on Monday, May 21, 2007 in the Central Office with Bernie Baltes, LuAnn Schwingendorf, Colleen Lincke and Al Williamson present. Rich Shail was absent. Duane Wrightson was also present.

Bernie Baltes reviewed the guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

There was a motion by Lincke, seconded by Schwingendorf to adopt the agenda. Al Williamson made a motion, seconded by Lincke to add Agenda Item "AA" - Expulsion Case #2 to the agenda. The motion and amendment were approved 4-0.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION**

- Linda Krick from Olive Elementary School presented information on their "Turn Off TV Week". Mrs. Krick said about 7-8 years ago, Olive became involved in encouraging reading and more family time. They began a "Read-In" that was originally held in the evening. But, because of after-school activities and family functions, they incorporated the "Read-In" during classroom time. The "Read-In" is held in grades K-2 where local heroes come in to read to the students.

Bernie Baltes asked if there has been any follow up to see if students have taken any more interest in the reading since this program began. Mrs. Krick said they have not followed up on that, but they have noticed the increase in students watching TV and playing on the computers.

- Julie Jerzak introduced their FBLA members who gave an update on their activities during the school year. The New Prairie Chapter raised money for the March of Dimes, sponsored a Blood Drive and worked concessions among some of their fundraisers. Members are required to work within budgets that they established. One goal was to purchase a new hot dog machine; however, with other expenses incurred during the year, they were unable to make this purchase. Mr. Wrightson asked how much the machine costs. It is estimated at about \$800. Mr. Wrightson said he will have to look for an unidentified donor.

About 27 members attended the state conference and about 12-13 will be attending the Nationals in Chicago in July.

Mrs. Jerzak advised that the New Prairie Chapter received the Gold Key award. Also, one member, Teresa Slevin was the first New Prairie member who placed first in every event she entered. Mrs. Jerzak also reported that Mark Norton has been named Indiana Businessman of the Year. He will be asked to attend the Nationals in Chicago to receive his award.

Bernie Baltes said this is an example of what education is all about - students learning outside the classroom as well as inside the classroom. He said he is extremely proud of everyone.

▪ **REASONS WE'RE PROUD**

Mr. Wrightson reviewed the Reasons We're Proud submitted by each building.

Bernie Baltes read an article recently on Brittany Humphrey and her accomplishments.

▪ **CONSENT AGENDA**

The board approved the Consent Agenda as follows:

- Minutes - April 23, 2007 meeting
- Financial Reports
- Claims
- Payroll
- Personnel Report as follows:

**CERTIFIED**

- Employment
  1. Chad Cripe - Social Studies Teacher - NPHS - Effective August 10, 2007
  2. Leifschon Walker - Temporary Spanish Teacher - NPJHS - April 30, 2007 through June 4, 2007
- Employment - Extra-Curricular
  1. Chad Cripe - Head Boys Basketball Coach - NPHS
  2. RaLynne Newcomb - Ass't Girls Track Coach - NPHS

## **NON-CERTIFIED**

- Leaves/Resignations/Retirements
  1. Lee Povlock - Bus Driver - Retirement effective August 11, 2007
  2. Floyd Tibbs - Bus Driver - Retirement effective August 1, 2007
  3. Jack Haverstock - Bus Driver - Resignation from Indianapolis bus route effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year
- Employment - Extra-Curricular
  1. Bobby Whiteneck - Assistant Boys Track - NPJHS - 2006-2007 school year

## **REPORTS**

- Mr. Wrightson reviewed the recent articles by Lowell Rose. Mr. Wrightson also attended the Study Council meeting recently where Mr. Rose was the guest speaker.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- The board upheld the decision on Expulsion Case #2 on a vote of 4-0.
- Full-Day Kindergarten

Mr. Wrightson advised that at this time we have approximately 160 students. He indicated that we have no space to offer full-day kindergarten. By the time schools starts, we would possibly have 200 students. We would need six classrooms which we do not have. Mr. Wrightson recommended to the Board that we not offer full-day kindergarten for the 2007-2008 school year; but would recommend offering it beginning with the 2008-2009 school year when the new middle school is completed. He said it is frustrating that they institute new programs, but offer no funding or inadequate funding.

The board approved the recommendation not to offer full-day kindergarten for the 2007-2008 school year with the understanding that they will review the option of offering full-day kindergarten for the 2008-2009 school year.

- Summer School

Dr. Bender advised that the state will not be funding summer school at 100%. In looking at the program, it would cost us about \$13,000 to offer summer school. Mr. Wrightson advised that the principals felt if we were going to spend that kind of money, they would rather have a Jump Start Program that runs during the school year where they can better target those students that they have identified. We cannot mandate those students who we know could use the extra help to attend summer school. He would recommend that we still offer Algebra and Language Arts at the High School because those students need to get their credits. The board approved the recommendation not to offer summer school with the exception of Algebra and Language Arts at the high school. The corporation will look at offering the Jump Start Program during school year which is intensive tutoring before or after school.

- Class Size

Mr. Wrightson advised that after reviewing the class sizes at the elementary schools, he would recommend the board approve the addition of one additional teacher at Prairie View. The sixth grade is over the recommended guidelines. Mr. Wrightson said he may come back in August for an additional teacher at Rolling Prairie depending on the second grade which may depend on retentions. The board accepted the recommendation.

- Strategic Plan

Mr. Wrightson advised that Dr. Bender attended a meeting with the parents and teacher committee members. Only four individuals were able to attend. The committee expressed their comments regarding the Strategic Plan. They felt because of the money and the time that would be involved in the process, they felt it would be better time spent on the NCA District-Wide Plan and PL221. Mr. Wrightson said after looking at some of the other school models, he felt you would be looking at additional staff along with the cost of the program. He said we will look three-years down the road at what direction the board wants for the corporation.

Bernie said he felt both plans he reviewed were very “wordy” and did not feel it was on target. You can have a great document, but to carry it off is something else.

Dr. Bender, Mr. Wrightson and other staff will be attending the NCA District-Wide workshop.

The Board accepted the recommendation of the administration to not pursue the Strategic Plan, but proceed with NCA District-Wide.

- Student Handbooks

Clara Clark and Jim Holifield presented their recommended changes to their student handbooks for the 2007-2008 school year. Brian Williamson reviewed the revisions to the Athletic/Activities Handbook.

The board approved the student handbook for the JHS for the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. Williamson said Rich Shail had some questions regarding the high school handbook and the Athletic/Activities Handbook. Since Rich Shail was not available at the meeting, they would suggest holding a worksession to review those questions before approving them. Clara Clark had concerns because the high school handbook needs to be sent to the printer by Tuesday in order to receive them in the appropriate time. Mr. Wrightson said we will send the books to the printer and if it needs to be amended after meeting with the board, we will do so.

- School Improvement Plans

- Karen Lindley and Chrystal Wilkeson presented their School Improvement Plan for New Prairie High School.
- Krista Smith and Phyllis Shepherd presented the School Improvement Plan for New Prairie Junior High School.
- Tammy Moore presented the School Improvement Plan for Olive Elementary School.

The board approved the School Improvement Plans for New Prairie High School, New Prairie Junior High School and Olive Elementary School. Prairie View and Rolling Prairie Elementary Schools will present at the June meeting.

- Textbook Fees

The Board approved textbook fees for the 2007-2008 school year as follows:

Kindergarten	\$59
Grades 1-2	\$90
Grades 3-6	\$92
Grades 7-8	\$130
Grades 9-12	Based on course selection

- The board approved the Affidavit for Payments for the building projects.

## **DISCUSSION**

- Mr. Wrightson said in reference to the handbooks, he knows there are some questions regarding some rules in these books, but he did not hear anything except that Rich Shail has some concerns. He said if we started having discussions on the rules or explanations tonight that would have become lengthy; he would have suggested a worksession. Are we doing this for one board member? Al Williamson said Rich had some questions that Al could not answer. Mr. Wrightson said he saw four members that did not have any concerns. He did talk to the principals and Athletic Director that there might be some questions.

Bernie said he did not have time to spend on reviewing the handbooks. He would like to see what concerns Rich Shail has before making a decision. Duane said when issues arise like what has happened over the last few months, we ask ourselves if the rules are too strong, should we look at it, etc. That is when you make changes - when there are questions/concerns from the community.

Duane said we will get together as soon as Rich gets back in town and we will go through any comments. These people have put in a lot of time and effort in enforcing those rules. Sometimes it is not pleasant. That is the job these people are expected to do. If there is something in the rules that they need to look at, that is okay. But, the board has to remember that these are rules and guidelines established by administrators to carry out policy. Policy is the board's baby.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

- Bernie would like to commend everyone on the recent tornado evacuation. He was pleased with the process. Duane said he received some calls from parents who were not pleased. Duane said they will be discussing the use of cell phones to call radio and TV stations in the future. However, in this case, the local radio station in LaPorte had also lost power.

The next regular board meeting is set for June 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. (Central Time)