

## BOARD NOTES

February 22, 2010

The regular meeting of the School Board was held on Monday, February 22, 2010 with Rich Shail, Al Williamson, LuAnn Schwingendorf and Dale Groves present. Bernie Baltes was absent. Dr. Bender was also present.

Rich Shail reviewed guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

The Board approved the agenda as presented.

Dr. Bender announced that Yvonne Derosiers was awarded the Lilly Foundation Outstanding Teacher grant in the amount of \$8,000 to be used for professional development. She will begin this endeavor this summer.

The Board recognized Kymra Keigley who placed 30<sup>th</sup> at the State Diving finals.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION**

Jim Holifield and Scott Braun presented the Teaming Concept at New Prairie Middle School. Mr. Holifield discussed the characteristics of middle school students and how the teaming concept recognizes those characteristics in helping with the transition of middle school students as they enter high school. With teaming, teachers have time to design integrated units, solve student issues and discuss curriculum and management issues.

Becky Gaff said school success is often judged by test scores. She said there is more involved than test scores. The goal of preparing students is life-long. She feels if they become a junior high again, they will ignore the life-long learning. They cannot accomplish this by just teaching to the test. If teaming would be eliminated, they would be on a status quo basis. They would not meet the needs of the students. The things they do like "Make a Difference Day, Christmas in April, etc. are activities that instill working with youth. They could not continue those activities without teaming. Without a common plan time, the hidden curriculum will come to an end or be reduced. She said success is not measured by ISTEP. Our students are always recognized in assemblies because they instill respect.

Jim Holifield is aware that test scores are flat and they are working on this. In Language Arts, they saw gains of 3%, 4% and 9%. If that is the reason we are looking at getting rid of teaming, he feels they can still be successful.

Rich Shail said he is not an advocate for or against the program. He is not an educator. He would like to see the metrics to support it. He sees the philosophy you can provide. How many students are seen for remediation, social, etc. Where are we getting the bang for the buck. Jim said they have the data. Rich said if he has to make a decision, he would have to make it on facts and figures, not philosophy. Jim said some information is not based on facts and figures. Guests say how much they like our children. That is what we can do for our children. You cannot document in numbers. Rich said he agrees with the programs. He has to ask how you know you cannot do this without the teaming concept. There is no way to judge. Is it because we have the best teachers in the classroom? Is the 45-minute of blocked time making or breaking the program?

Dr. Bender said other schools meet outside the day. Jim said he would like to talk about that. Dr. Bender said we have a \$500,000 deficit that we will have to deal with. Are you willing to tell everyone that you are going to lose your job because we are keeping teaming? He knows the values of the teaming. This economic crisis is such an issue that we do not know how we are going to deal with it. You have to understand that something will have to go. He said he does not know how else to say it. We have been told to look at another 2%-3% cut in January.

If teaming is eliminated, you will lose teachers at the middle school. If we keep teaming, we will push elementary and high school teachers out of jobs. Dr. Bender said the superintendent did not create this. Schools always get hurt in a recession. Somewhere along the line, something has to give. He said teaming is under consideration because it has to be. The high school is under issues as well. These are issues we are faced with to keep this corporation afloat. He knows the philosophy and he knows what good can come from it. This may be something that will have to go.

Jim said the middle school has posted over \$200,000 in savings. He asks that the middle school not take the brunt of the heat. He knows and understands the decisions. They feel it is important and they are willing to make sacrifices.

Judy Bubanovich said in looking at what you need to do, if they revised their day so they could pick up an extra class, would administration be open to a the revision of time? Dr. Bender said we are open for everything. Look outside the box. Look at a nine-period day. We are looking for options.

Kelle said they keep minutes and student numbers. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade met with almost 100% of our parents for parent conferences. We either met with them or contacted them by phone during our team time or flipping team time and lunch. They call home for incompletes, failures, etc. The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade teams do the same.

Bernie Baltes arrived at 6:36 p.m.

Kelle said it is not a time they are just saying they need. They utilize the time for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to meet at the same time.

Dr. Bender asked what you would suggest at the elementary schools for them to meet with parents. Those parents could not be seen because there were no parent/teacher conferences.

Rich asked how we evaluate this. The buck stops here to be financially solvent. We have to evaluate this. People will be glad and people will not be happy. We will discuss this along with round two of the cuts. This room will be filled with twice the people with other budget reductions. We have to answer to everyone. He did not understand what the teaming concept was all about. We received a good presentation on the benefits to you and our students. We have to look at another standpoint and make a decision. It is not personal to you. We have to take money from somewhere. It is not Dr. Bender's fault. We are to blame – not Dr. Bender. Help us to be creative. Dr. Bender has asked everyone to come up with ideas. We are considering them. We know that by your presenting the ideas, it is something you can support.

Doug Gaff said to look at your children that have come through the middle school. You can evaluate with that difference. Rich said both of his children went through the middle school. How do I judge them? – by their success? LuAnn said she had one go through both. She could not tell you whether one was better than the other. She would encourage you to put your ideas together and help us come up with ideas. Something has to give. With your help, we can try and come up with solutions.

Al said in reference to meeting with parents, at Prairie View teachers worked with students with no elementary conferences. They met once a week to meet with the child. They made it work without teaming. The teacher and principal stayed after school. Teaming makes it work easier, but it can work without it.

### **CONSENT ITEMS**

Minutes – January 25, 2010

Financial Reports

Claims

Payroll

Personnel Report as follows:

## **CERTIFIED**

- Leaves/Resignations/Retirements
  1. Carol Shamory - Vocal Music Teacher - NPHS - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
  2. Mary Ann Webb - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher - NPMS - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
  3. Phyllis Shepherd - Computer Teacher - NPMS - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
  4. Linda Miller - Science Teacher - NPMS - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
  5. Teri Hall - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher - Prairie View Elementary School - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
  6. Donald Thomas - Science Teacher - NPHS - Retirement effective at the end of the 2009-2010 school year
- Employment - Extra-Curricular
  1. Jim Holifield - Science Fair Coordinator - NPMS
  2. Jim Schwingendorf - Assistant Boys Track - NPHS

## **NON-CERTIFIED**

- Leaves/Resignations/Retirements
  1. Scott Fischer - Bus Driver - Leave of Absence beginning February 2, 2010 for approximately six weeks
  2. Michelle Banks - Food Service - Leave of Absence beginning March 8, 2010 through approximately March 15, 2010
  3. Ed Maurushes - Lead Custodian - Leave of Absence beginning May 6, 2010 through approximately July 2, 2010.
- Employment - Extra-Curricular
  1. John Mrozinski - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Basketball Coach
  2. Sara Adkins - Co-Swim Coach - NPMS

## REPORTS

### Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bender reported the board points earned through the ISBA by attending meetings and workshops.

Dr. Bender advised that the broad based committee will be meeting on Wednesday evening to discuss facility updates.

We are not ready to approve a calendar because the state is still looking at mandating the start of school after Labor Day. We will be meeting with the union on Wednesday

In reference to Race to the Top, Indiana did not meet with the Gates Foundation so we do not know if we will receive any dollars. Arne Duncan made no mention of Race to the Top at the recent conference.

There are some bills in legislation to give schools the opportunity to move monies between funds.

Keith reviewed the latest budget deficit. We were told that on January 1<sup>st</sup>, we should expect another 2% to 4% cut. The state has a \$70 million revenue deficit for January. We would be adding 3% reductions for 2011 of \$480,000. We will have to incorporate that into the budget this summer.

Dr. Bender said we have a meeting with the Association on Tuesday to discuss these issues. When we discuss reductions, you will see the items in bold which are what we have done so far. The other items listed are ideas to discuss. Those ideas are as follows:

- Eliminate Assistant Middle school principal
- Consolidate High School Assistant Principal and Athletic Director
- Eliminate Transition Counselor – Middle School
- Eliminate Elementary Receptionists
- Eliminate Elementary Counselors
- Convert Olive Remediation Certified to Assistant
- Eliminate Middle School Remediation

- Eliminate Team Plan Period in Middle School
- Reduce Spanish ½, Social Studies and Science – High School
- Eliminate High School P.E. Position
- Reduce ½ English Electives Position- High School
- Eliminate Elementary Planners
- Convert Elementaries to Grade Specific Buildings
- Reduce hours of building operation
- Eliminate Busing
- Reduce Athletic travel to conference schools – Middle School
- Close High School Pool

These are ideas that have been communicated in general conversation. They are things to think about. Time is coming to make a decision. If there is a reduction in personnel, the timing is close. Many things we have to deal with. It is not a good time anywhere.

South Bend is talking about reductions. Plymouth's teacher association gave back their raise. Many things are going on around the state. It takes everyone to be a part of this to make it work so the heat is not felt by one group. Unfortunately, it is getting bigger. School corporations are in the business of people. If we did not have cash on hand, we would not be paying people. Dr. Bender said he would not put this corporation in deficit spending, but this is the second month that we are in deficit spending.

Rich said last week the New Prairie Schools was recognized by the DOE for creativeness in budget cutting. We are not proud of making budget cuts, but proud that we have come together. We have a long way to go.

Rich said this Facility Planning Committee is going to evaluate whether we should go for a referendum to get money. If we are successful, it would not hit the funds until 2012. We are going to aggressively go after it, but it is in the hands of the taxpayers to support us. We want to continue to do the things we do, but we have to cut somewhere. Please bear with us.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- The board approved Driver's Training for 2010 at \$325 for student fees and \$26.00 for trainers. Al asked where this money would go if we decided to charge more. Dr. Bender said this is a curriculum piece and is not sure of that possibility. Al said we have to make money to save academics. Is this something we can use.

Marty Mosson said we are in competition with those outside groups. Maybe a few extra dollars might help, but getting the cars is a problem. We have a draw of students outside the corporation. He would not suggest doubling the fee, but a little more would be okay. The private companies pick up students at their home and it is on their own schedule.

Bernie said if it is going for a particular purpose, you may be able to take the money, but if it is going somewhere else, you may not be able to do that. Bill Kaminski said he will have to look into this. He does not think you can make a profit.

Clara said we have to start advertising prior to spring break so we are ready to go. Bernie said we can approve it at a maximum and minimum rate. Dale feels we may lose students if we raise it. Bernie said \$25 may not make the difference. With the outside contractors, you do not get the waivers. They charge about \$450. We could set a minimum of \$325 and a maximum of \$375. Dale said as long as we are under the competition, he is not opposed to raising it.

There was a motion by Baltes to rescind the motion on the table and seconded by Williamson. The motion was approved 5-0.

There was a motion by Williamson, seconded by Baltes to approve the Driver's Education program at a minimum of \$325 and a maximum of \$375. Teacher's salaries would remain at \$26.00 per hour for 2010. The motion was approved 5-0.

- There was a motion by Groves, seconded by Schwingendorf to approve the Lawn Mowing quotations for a period of three years to C.J.'s Outdoor Services. The motion was approved 5-0.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- The following Board Policies were introduced for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading:
  - #1521, 2221, 2700, 3121, 3142, 3430.01, 3437, 4121, 443.01, 4437, 7440, 7440.01, 7540.03, 7540,04, 7542, 7543, 8121, 8315, 8330, 8351 and 8600.
    - Bernie said he feels Policy #2221 – Mandatory Curriculum is a step in the right direction.
    - Bernie said he sees redundancy in the policies. He was wondering why we couldn't combine those policies into one. Bill Kaminski said NEOLA set it up for each class to be targeted differently. They have always kept each group separate. We could combine it, but there are certain things that apply to only certified or administration and you would have to have another series for all groups. ISBA does the same as NEOLA. Dr. Bender feels with PL217, they emphasize the structures to be different.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

- Dale said he has received three letters from Holy Family School to send our children to their school. With the situation we are in and trying to figure out creative ways to cut or bring in more money, could we possibly advertise to bring in more students into our district. If we save a few jobs in the process, we should do that. Dr. Bender said we have to be careful because we do not have open enrollment in the state. Middlebury had a big sign out and the state was not in favor of this. We will have a statement going out to kindergarten parents that is a subtle way of telling them to send their children here. We are stacking Rolling Prairie and Olive. We have Prairie View with under 300 students. We do not want to turn people away, but if people want to come here, we may have them enroll at Prairie View. We have 65 students that we are not receiving any property taxes. That adds up. We are looking at requests now. Principals will review based on availability. We have an issue with Prairie View because numbers are dwindling. We hope to push students there. By word of mouth, we continue to receive requests every day. We need to be low key.



- Rich wanted to thank the Middle School for sharing their passion for the teaming concept. It was a great presentation. Please bear with us as we go through this budget reduction process. It is tough for all of us and tough decisions have to be made. We do not know whether this is one. There will be many other people that will be as passionate as you are.

Marty Mosson said he has never met Mr. Shail. He wants him to understand that we are very passionate about the teaming. We feel it is very important. That is why we were here.