

BOARD NOTES  
July 25, 2011

The regular meeting of the School Board was held on Monday, July 25, 2011 with Rich Shail, Al Williamson, Bernie Baltes, Dale Groves and LuAnn Schwingendorf present. Jim Dermody was also present.

Rich Shail reviewed guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

The Board adopted the agenda as written.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION**

- Jim Holifield showed a brief slide presentation on the China trip this summer.

New Prairie United School Corporation now has two sister schools in China. The new one is a special education school. Mr. Holifield received a \$1000 grant from IASP & Center for the Study of Global Change at IU Bloomington. He is hoping to make this trip an every-other-year trip. A Chinese delegation would then visit here on the opposite years.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

- The Board approved the Consent Items as follows:
  - Minutes – June 27, 2011
  - Financial Reports
  - Claims
  - Payroll
  - Personnel as follows:

**CERTIFIED**

- Leaves/Resignations
  1. Jennifer Smith – Language Arts – MS – Leave of Absence beginning September 5, 2011 through October 28, 2011
- Employment
  1. Holly Hauck—Biology—HS—Effective August 11, 2011

## **NON-CERTIFIED**

- Employment/Transfers
  1. Floyd Tibbs – Bus Driver – Transfer to single Olive Route effective August 15, 2011.
  2. Joe Ekovich – Bus Driver – Transfer to single High School route effective August 15, 2011
  
- Employment – Extra-Curricular
  1. Al Pesce – Assistant Girls Track – NPHS – 2011-2012 school year

## **REPORTS**

- Superintendent's Report
  - Mr. Dermody introduced Maggi Spartz from the Unity Foundation. Ms. Spartz has been working on the Balanced Literacy program with Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties. The Balanced Literacy program supports reading skills development for all students by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The Unity Foundation has also approved a large grant to support the Balanced Literacy program in the NPUSC. The three elementary principals and three teacher-coaches, Melissa Kobitz, Rachel Ralston and Amy Surma, are making this a priority in their schools and doing a great job of it.
  - Mr. Dermody also discussed the GPA for the Corporation extracurricular students this past school year. These students constitute a large percentage of the student body and their GPA is very good.
  - Mr. Dermody also reminded the Board of the Retreat/Work Session to be held on Wednesday, July 27, 2011. It will begin at 8:00 a.m. at the Central Office.
  - This Thursday, July 28, the principals will return to work and we will have a better perspective on student enrollment numbers at that time. Currently we are about 5-10 students higher than we were last year at ADM time. We have a significant number of transfer tuition students. A waiting list for certain grade levels has been established.

- Summer school is complete now. We had 34 middle school students and 24 high school students enrolled. The middle school had an 89% attendance rate and 71% for the high school. Both sets of students utilized the PLATO Program. Each participant's achievement progress will be documented during the 2011-2012 school year.
- Mr. Dermody gave Mr. Dennis a lot of credit for doing a great job with the collection of textbook monies. Mr. Dennis in turn congratulated the school treasurers. He said they did the hardest part. We started out this past school year with \$337,945.62 owed in book fees. We ended the year with only \$38,864.58 still due. That is quite an improvement from previous years. Mr. Shail said everyone deserves a pat on the back for a job well done.
- Last Tuesday, Mr. Dermody held a Leadership Retreat at his home for the administrators. They worked through a book called Rebooting...Leadership. The activity was evaluated as being productive and worthwhile.
- The Promethean Board installation is going well. Mark Norton has been working along with the installers to ensure that all boards will be mounted in the identified classrooms by the beginning of the school year.
- The technology mentors are working hard to prepare for two training sessions on each of two days, August 8 and 9<sup>th</sup>. Ninety-six teachers enrolled for the training.
- Mr. Dermody discussed the food bank program that the NPUSC, the Wesleyan Church, and the Northern Indiana Food Bank will partner with this school year.
- Late Friday, AYP/PL221 data was released. Our corporation achieved at a high performance level. Mr. Dermody will present a formal report regarding this information at the August, 2011 board meeting.
- Mr. Dermody gave a presentation on the Spring 2011 ISTEP+ results. Our students performed at a very high level this year. Several grades passed at 100%. Mr. Dermody thanked staff, students, and their families for doing a great job and working diligently on a daily basis throughout the school year.

- Mr. Dennis gave a report on the progress of the remodeling of Rolling Prairie Elementary and NPHS. Equipment is being installed at both locations now. There were five change orders discussed also. They are 1) fencing for condenser at Rolling Prairie, 2) traffic control rails at NPHS, 3) various masonry work and resizing exterior door, 4) firestopping top of walls at NPHS and 5) relocating various sprinkler heads. Everything is running on schedule. A contingency plan is also being developed in case of any problems.
- Kregg VanMeter gave a presentation on the Activity Center. Kregg thanked the board, Mr. Dermody, Mr. Dennis and the principals for their support. Their summer program will end on August 4<sup>th</sup>. They will have a luncheon at noon. From 12:45-2:00 p.m. the students will then have a car wash. They will accept no money as this is part of their "Give Back Day." The AC is now on Facebook. The Facebook page is updated about three times a week. Mr. VanMeter is hoping this Facebook page will assist in the fundraising area. Mr. Dennis is also working with our attorney to set up an Education Foundation or 501C3 status to support fundraising. Once the foundation or 501 is established, it will be easier for people to make donations to the corporation.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- The Board approved the Resolution for Designation of Qualified Publications. The LaPorte Herald Argus and the South Bend Tribune will continue to be our designated publications.
- The Board approved the hiring of Bruce Lasley as the new Transportation Director. He will begin his employment on Monday, August 15, 2011. He comes to us from the Nineveh-Hensley-Jackson United School Corporation where he had previously served as the Transportation Director.
- The Board approved the hiring of Kelley Kitchen as our new Financial Services Coordinator/Corporation Treasurer. She will begin her employment on August 15, 2011. She comes to us from Hamilton Community School Corporation where she had been employed as the Business Manager/Treasurer.
- The Board approved the Lakeshore Alliance for Student Success Agreement. This agreement places the NPUSC in a consortium with other Northwest Indiana schools to provide our staff with additional resources and training to better serve our students.

- The Authorization for Undeliverable Lunch Account Funds was approved at an amount of \$604.77 this year.

### **BOARD COMMENTS**

- Dale Groves, Al Williamson and Luann Schwingendorf thanked the principals and their staffs for doing such a great job with the ISTEP+ assessment process.
- Mr. Baltes also thanked Mr. Dennis for doing a great job with the book fee collection. Mr. Baltes complimented the New Prairie 4-H kids of both LaPorte and St. Joseph Counties for the hard work they put into their projects. 4-H can be a year-round activity and you can see their creativity through their projects. Also he wanted everyone to know that next year LaPorte's fair will be one week earlier.
- Mrs. Schwingendorf also wanted to welcome our newest employees.
- Mr. Shail is proud of the great job the Activity Center is doing with our students.