

**Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting
of the Board of Education
Flossmoor School District 161
February 28, 2011**

President, Dr. David Dreyfuss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call was taken and the following members were present for the meeting:

Present

Mrs. Christine Marks
Mr. Ronald E. Moore, arrived at 7:01 p.m.
Mrs. Timijanel Odom
Mr. Thomas Sifner
Mr. John Simmons, via teleconference
Dr. David Dreyfuss

Absent

Mr. Arnold Crater

Others Present

Dr. Donna C. Joy, Superintendent
Dr. Susan Pingitore, Associate Superintendent of Administrative Services
Dr. Rebecca Elish, Director of Learning and Instruction
Mr. Joseph Martin, Director of Operations
Ms. Deborah Pitts, Director of Instructional Technology
Ms. Nancy Krent, Attorney, Hodges, Loizzi, et al
Ms. Louise King, Legacy Professionals LLP
Mr. Adam Simiga, Legacy Professionals LLP
Mr. Rob Grossi, Bloom Township Treasurer
Mr. Cathy Perino, Board Clerk

Visitors

See attached sign up sheet

Presentation on Legislative Update by Nancy Krent, Hodges, Loizzi, et al

Nancy Krent, a partner with the law firm of Hodges, Loizzi, works with the District on a number of legal matters, which include: special education advice, student discipline as well as addresses legal questions.

Ms. Krent updated the Board regarding new legislative developments. She shared that Governor Quinn sees consolidation of school districts as a necessary component of future cost savings in education. ISBE Superintendent Chris Koch has echoed this position. This could come as early as the 2011-2012 school year. Ms. Krent mentioned it is the Governor's goal to reduce the current number of school districts from 860 down to approximately 300. She will keep the Board updated on this matter. Also, ISBE and IASB will keep the District updated as well.

Effective December 1, 2010, the Care of Students with Diabetes Act was mentioned as legislation from the past year affecting students. This puts more control with the student and doctor. This Act sets new requirements for staff training and accommodation of students with diabetes in schools. Students with diabetes are to have individual care plans. Also, Student self-administration of medication now authorizes students self-administer asthma inhalers and epi-pens with a note from their doctor. Bullying and gang prevention legislation broadens the definition of bullying, including electronic transmissions from school computers. Finally, the Department of Justice issued new regulations dealing with the use of service animals.

Mr. Moore questioned the length of time it would take to implement the consolidation process. He also inquired as to how many jobs would be lost due to the consolidation. Ms. Krent believes that the implementation process of consolidation of schools could take anywhere from five to ten years. The goal would be to eliminate most of the administrative positions

Ms. Krent mentioned in certain areas they are starting to see small elementary districts sharing a Superintendent with the high school district, i.e. Lake Forest. In some rural communities, to maintain their extracurricular activities they have created one large high school system.

Ms. Krent distributed The Year in Review: The Highlights and Lowlights of Illinois School Law 2010.

The Committee members were asked to review the handout material and send any questions to Dr. Joy. The Committee thanked Nancy Krent for her presentation.

➤ *Recommendation: This was an informational item.*

Presentation on District Audit by Louise King, CPA, Legacy Professionals LLP.

Ms. Louise King introduced Adam Simaga, who does the audit work for the District. The District conducts an annual compliance audit as required by law. The results of the audit are compiled and Intermediate Service Center and the Illinois State Board of Education. Ms. Louise King, of Legacy Professionals, LLP presented the audit for the 2009-2010 school year. Ms. King reviewed the highlights of the audit by page.

- Page 3c: Government-wide financial statements, which summarize all assets and liabilities of the District.
 - ▶ Assets (including fixed assets/cash): \$46,293,859
 - Liabilities 1,828,501
 - Net assets at the end of 2009-2010 44,465,358
- Page 3d
 - Summarizes the District's changes in net assets.

Ms. King next discussed the Management letter. She stated that there were no weaknesses, all adjustments were usual, and there were no changes in the District's accounting policies. She mentioned a footnote has again been added because of the standard entitled Statement on Auditing Standards No. 112 had been added to the District's annual financial report. SAS No. 112 requires auditors to identify an entity's inability to produce complete financial statements including proper footnote disclosure as an internal control deficiency.

Lastly, the audit communication letter was discussed. She pointed out that management was very cooperative during the audit. This was an exceptional year. All of the Districts Federal ARRA funds were audited. The District did a great job.

Dr. Dreyfuss was glad to hear there were no problems with the ARRA funds because of all the documentation required. He appreciated the internal controls on that issue.

Dr. Joy asked Ms. King to clarify for the audience what this deficiency means. Because the district cannot prepare its own financial statements this is viewed as a weakness.

Board members were asked to share any questions with either Dr. Joy or Dr. Dreyfuss.

The Board of Education thanked Ms. King for her presentation. He shared its always nice to get a clean bill of health.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education recommends moving this item for approval at its March 14, 2011 meeting the financial audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, as presented by Legacy Professionals LLP.*

Presentation on Annual Investment Report by Rob Grossi, Bloom Township Treasurer.

Mr. Robert G. Grossi, Bloom Township Treasurer, presented the annual investment report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010. Copies of the Annual Investment report were distributed to the Board members prior to tonight's meeting. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, school District 161 received \$779,910 in interest from its pooled fund balances.

Mr. Grossi discussed the four major categories of investments in the pool; certificates of deposit, commercial paper, bank and corporate notes, and government and government agency guaranteed. He shared the changes in the composition of the pool's portfolio and the need for more stable rates. He

reiterated, commercial paper, which was the pool's primary investment for short-term liquidity, is no longer used.

Mr. Grossi noted that because of the current state of the economy, his strategy continues to be to maintain liquidity and preserve capital with very low risk. Most of the District's investments are being placed in certificates of deposits, with the investment amount per bank being below the FDIC insured maximum levels. This type of investment type provides the best return with the lowest risk.

He will continue to keep the portfolio in the shorter end of the yield curve. Also, because of the revenue steam from State and local sources as uncertain, a higher level of liquidity must be maintained to ensure that funds are available to cover expenditures. It was noted that the state has been more than 200 days late with restricted grant revenues and fall real estate tax revenue from Cook County, which used to be due on September 1, may not be received until mid-December. He commended our school district because we have healthy fund balances.

Finally, the pooled funds consist of approximately 600 different investments which are monitored daily.

Dr. Dreyfuss asked how much of the investing is being done with local banks. Mr. Grossi responded that last year he was able to invest more with local banks in CDs. This year fewer banks are offering great rates on their CDs. He believes it will be another three to five years before we see a significant increase in interest rate. As long as unemployment is high will be difficult to pump up interest rate.

Mr. Moore asked about the ability to invest in foreign banks. Mr. Grossi will need to look into the Illinois Public Investment Funds Act. He also wants to maintain to same quality of safety and find high yield.

Mr. Gregg Lunceford, Board of Education candidate, questioned what is the investment policy of the District. Mr. Grossi stated he follows the Illinois Public Funds Investment Act. This information was summarized in the materials shared with the Board members. He shared a brief overview of what the District's policy is and that the District has to stay within the guidelines of the state limits.

The Board members thanked Rob Grossi for his presentation.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education recommends moving this item forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting and placing the approval on the consent agenda.*

John Simmons arrived at meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Discussion of Mini Bus Lease

Mr. Martin shared with the Committee of the Whole members that the administration is recommending approving a one-year lease for the two 29-passenger busses with an option to extend for an additional year at the same cost.

Mr. Martin discussed the previous bus lease agreement established the lease cost of \$17,346 per year; the District has the most up-to-date equipment for the safe transportation of its students; the leased vehicles are eligible for the State Pupil Transportation Claim each year. Also, the District no longer incurs costs to cover routes while a District bus is in for repairs, and the maintenance costs are minimal.

Mr. Martin stated the new rate is \$17,852, an increase of \$506 per year over the previous lease. Mr. Martin mentioned that if the District kept the current busses, we will have a cost of \$800 to replace tires. Mr. Martin shared the District would remain with the 18,000 mileage allowance for the year.

The Board of Education thanked Mr. Martin for his report.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education recommends moving this item forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting.*

Fiber Optic Proposal

Deb Pitts, Director of Instructional Technology, shared with the committee of the Whole members the administration is recommending upgrading the District's network infrastructure with fiber optics. This upgrade will support a faster, and more efficient network for the District.

Ms. Pitts shared currently the District office is connected to each school via AT&Y T1.5 lines that supply data and voice communication. In addition to T1 lines having limited capacity, several other disadvantages include low bandwidth, unreliable service, and T1.5 lines present little opportunity to expand technology applications.

Mr. Pitts mentioned the move to fiber optics would allow the District to move from the slow and unreliable T1.5 lines to a faster 5Mbps multi-point broadband Ethernet solution enabling communication between buildings.

Mr. Pitts summarized that fiber optics will provide increased bandwidth, reliable service, voice over IP capability to improve telephone service, all servers can be housed in a central location, web-based email services, and new learning opportunities.

Fiber optics will not negate the District's E-Rate percentage. The District will continue to receive a 46% recovery through E-Rate reimbursement. It was shared that by installing fiber optics the District's cost will increase by \$24,236 per year. In addition, there is a one-time \$20,000 hardware cost to install fiber optic equipment. This cost is also E-Rate reimbursable reducing the cost to \$10,800.

Dr. Dreyfuss asked about Comcast vs. AT&T. Comcast is currently running at each of the schools. AT&T would upgrade the District. Comcast can be used as a back up service.

Mr. Moore questioned if discounts could be established if the District's reaches capacity. Ms. Pitts stated service could be upgraded without any additional cost.

Mr. Sifner asked if this is part of technology plan. Yes, one component was to improve communication throughout the District. Ms. Pitts stated the District's Technology Plan is 83% complete. Dr. Pingitore stated this was budgeted for.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education recommends moving this item forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting.*

Review of 2011-2012 school calendar

Dr. Joy shared that the administration begins development of the 2011-2012 in January. The 2011-2012 calendar is parallel with past calendars. The calendar is developed according to the guidelines of the Illinois State Board of Education and the Flossmoor Education Association (FEA) contract. This draft calendar reflects 186 days per our teachers' agreement, and 174 instructional days. Dr. Joy also collaborates with the superintendents of Homewood-Flossmoor High School District 233 and Homewood District 153.

The 2011-2012 school year is scheduled to begin with a half-day session for students on Tuesday, August 23. One early release day is scheduled on September 23 for School Improvement activities. The calendar also includes five emergency days. The last day of school attendance will be Wednesday, June 6 if no emergency days are used and Wednesday, June 13 if all five days are needed. There are four days for Parent-Teacher Conferences, two in the fall and two in the spring. There are four institute days scheduled, which include one day prior to the first day of school.

Any questions regarding the calendar should be brought to Dr. Joy's attention.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education recommends moving this item forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting.*

Review of Student fees

Dr. Pingitore shared with the Committee of the Whole members that there would be no increase in the textbook fees this year; however, the administration is asking for a \$5.00 increase in the Outdoor Education fee in order to cover camp costs. The administration is also asking to increase graduation fee at Parker from \$60 to \$65. This increase is due primarily to the increased cost for the yearbook with the remainder attributable to the cost of caps and gowns as well as expenses related to the eighth grade dance. Finally, an activity fee for athletics is considered. The following athletic activities could be considered for the proposed fee: basketball, volleyball, track, cheerleading, cross country, and steppers. A \$20 fee could generate approximately \$6,100 based on the number of students participating in these activities.

The fee for students in Grades K-5 would be \$155 and the fee for Grades 6-8 would be \$190. However, the fee would remain the same as the fees for the 2010-2011 school year for returning students who participate in mail-in registration or students who register during kindergarten registration in April. These fees would be \$120 (K-5) and \$155 (6-8).

Dr. Pingitore referenced a survey of school district fees as well as fee history to the Committee of the Whole members.

Dr. Pingitore also noted that no fee increase is recommended for locks, gym uniforms, school lunches, intramurals, band or industrial arts.

Mr. Simmons asked what would it take for the District to be revenue neutral for this program. This program is running a deficit of approximately \$30,000.

Ms. Odom shared her concern that raising fees is hitting the same people.

Dr. Joy mentioned a discussion should occur regarding the structure of Outdoor Education program. This program is a drain on the District financially. The District needs further discussion on ways to modify this program i.e. using local facilities.

Mr. Sifner shared the Board of Education has been good stewards of setting the fees in comparison to other districts and mindful of our community and we

must continue to be mindful of providing programs that are beneficial to our students.

Dr. Joy reiterated that the District PTO offers scholarships to those families unable to finance the program. It was clarified that paying parents are not subsidizing those who cannot afford the program. This program is part of the District curriculum.

Ms. Odom suggested the District look into obtaining grants to supplement this program. The administration stated they would look into this.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of fees for the 2010-2011 school year forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting.*

Update on Strategic Plan – Action Plan

Dr. Joy shared with the Committee of the Whole members that an executive summary and action plans were developed to support the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Dr. Joy reported the development of the strategic planning process began in October with the members of the Board establishing the five goal areas. These areas are: student learning and achievement, parental involvement/communication, finance and facilities, school structure and organization, and professional development.

A Strategic Planning Committee was formed with members of the community that included parents, elected officials, and faculty members. As a result of the Committee's work a document was developed that provides the District with a common purpose and vision for the future. At the November 8 Board of Education meeting, an update to the Strategic Plan was approved. Based on this revised update, action plans were developed.

Dr. Joy stated that Board members Christine Marks and Tom Sifner met with the administrative team to help develop the action plans, which reflect the Board's vision for the Strategic Plan. The administrative team wanted to ensure that the actions plans were aligned with the Board's goals. After Mr. Sifner and Mrs. Marks reviewed the action plans, they recommended an executive summary be developed as part of the overall Strategic Plan. The executive summary and the draft action plans were discussed.

Dr. Dreyfuss shared he is pleased with the outcome and focus of the plan. This is clearly the framework the district needed.

Mrs. Odom echoed his comments.

Mr. Sifner thanked the administrators and Mrs. Marks, who were very influential.

Dr. Dreyfuss suggested scheduling forums to share the District five-year blueprint with the community. It was suggested that the Strategic Plan be placed on the District's website and made very visible for community members to view.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of Strategic Plan forward to the March 14, 2011 Board of Education meeting.*

Teacher Evaluation Committee Update

Dr. Becky Elish stated a Memorandum of Agreement stemming from the 2009 FEA negotiations called for a Teacher Evaluation Committee to be established to develop a Teacher Evaluation Plan.

The Teacher Evaluation Committee comprised of five administrators and 12 teachers representing all schools and grade levels. The Committee has met six times this school year. The committee's work on the development of the plan will continue through spring 2011. The committee plans to meet periodically over the next several years to make modifications and ensure implementation.

The state law was reviewed in depth by the committee to ascertain exactly what needed to be included in the plan.

Dr. Elish stated that after reviewing various teacher evaluations plans, the committee determined that the *Framework for Teaching* by Charlotte Danielson was an excellent model for the District's process. The Danielson model is based on many years of research. The framework is based on four domains: *Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities*. The evaluation is based on a rubric using four levels of performance. District 161 will use the levels of performance of *Unsatisfactory, Needs Improvement, Proficient, and Excellent*.

Dr. Elish shared that implementation of the Teacher Evaluation Plan and Process will begin in fall of the next school year. The committee is currently developed an implementation plan. In addition, a professional development plan will be developed to ensure all administrators and certified staff have a working knowledge of the new plan.

Dr. Elish discussed the committee's final draft of Beliefs and Commitments and Parts 1-4. Also discussed was the Danielson Domains & Components to be evaluated, the rubric description of the performance levels and a summary of

the legal requirements. This plan is about teacher growth. A student growth model lies on top of the teacher growth model.

Mr. Moore suggested adding CHARACTER COUNTS! to the teachers rubric. Dr. Elish added this could be discussed at next committee meeting.

Dr. Dreyfuss would like to see teachers evaluated on yearly basis.

- *Recommendation: This was an informational Item. The committee will continue to work on tenure and non-tenure components of the documents and plans to complete the process by June 2011.*

August Academy

Dr. Joy shared that research based on the work of Dr. Joseph Murphy from Vanderbilt University indicates that schools need to be able to layer many interventions and strategies in order to help students close the achievement gap. Some of these strategies include: parent involvement, increase time outside the traditional school day, class size of 12 to 15, problem-based learning, and use of technology are a few actions that positively affect student learning.

Based on this research the Administrative Counsel, developed an August Academy for students in grades 3 through 8 to support learning of selected students. The academy will held at Serena Hills and Parker Junior High from July 25 through August 19. Students would attend from 8:45-2:30 and teachers would work until 3:30 using that extra time for planning time. Dr. Joy shared how the day would be scheduled. During the first year, approximately 75 students could participate in the Academy.

Dr. Joy mentioned parental involvement would be required, and transportation and lunch would be provided. Teachers and students would interact through the summer via technology. The academy instruction would include 120 minutes of language arts and 60 minutes of mathematics. The remainder of the day would focus on problem-based learning activities, which are real-world problems or investigations that do not have a predetermined solution or outcome. iPads would be available for students for home use and daily use during the Academy. The cost of the academy was discussed.

The administration believes this is an exciting approach to learning as well as extending the learning for at-risk students. The program is designed to be different and to be more engaging.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the rationale behind offering this pilot program. The Board is unclear how this program will differ from the summer school program. Identification of students was mentioned as a problem. The use of iPads was questioned as well as insuring them. It was

stated that parents would be responsible for the iPads. Also discussed was using the iPads with wireless technology.

- *Recommendation: The Committee members asked that more information be brought back to them before this matter can be moved forward.*

Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Sifner seconded by Mrs. Marks to go into executive session to discuss matters relating to personnel 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1). All AYES. Motion Carried.

The Board of Education went into executive session at 10:00 p.m.

Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Mr. Sifner seconded by Mrs. Marks to return to open session. All AYES. Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 10:35 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Moore seconded by Mr. Sifner to adjourn the Board of Education meeting. All AYES. Motion Carried.

The Board of Education meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Dr. David Dreyfuss, President

Ronald E. Moore, Vice President