

**Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education
Flossmoor School District 161
May 26, 2009**

President, Dr. David Dreyfuss called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

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

Present

Mr. Ronald A. Moore
Mrs. Timijanel Odom
Mr. Thomas Sifner
Mr. John Simmons
Dr. David Dreyfuss

Absent

Mr. Arnold Crater
Mrs. Christine Marks

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 Wilson, Director of Special Education

Visitors

See attached sign in sheet

Discussion of Furniture Replacement Bid

Joseph Martin, Director of Operations, reviewed with the Board of Education the ten-year furniture replacement plan, which was approved in March 2005. The main thrust of the plan was to provide an appropriate replacement schedule based on need, standardize all furniture throughout the District's schools, and anticipated costs associated with the process.

The legal bidding was followed to obtain furniture bids, and bid packages were sent to eight contractors. There was a request for bids published in the Daily Southtown, Northwest Times, and Chicago Tribune. The sealed bids were opened at 2:00 p.m. on May 19. School Specialty met every requirements outlined in the bid packet and submitted the lowest responsive bid for 30 National Public Seat Chairs, 30 National Public Seat Arms, 40 Scholar Craft Desks, and 10 K1 Duralite Tables, totaling \$6,621.50. Lowery McDonnell met every requirement and submitted the lowest responsive bid for 55 Scholar Crater \$857 Desks, 124 Virco #9012 chairs, 113 Virco #9014 chairs, 173 Virco #9016 chairs, 48 Virco #9018 chairs, and 25 HON Teacher desks totaling \$28,019.65.

The District has dealt with both of these companies in the past and stated they are very reliable. Mr. Martin shared the administration will continue to evaluate furniture needs and update the plan in order to make the most of the resources available to the District.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of classroom furniture for 2009 to School Specialty for the above-mentioned items and to Lowery McDonnell for the above-mentioned items. The Board also recommends moving approval to proceed with year six (2010) of the ten-year furniture replacement plan forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting.*

Discussion of National School Lunch Bid

Mr. Martin shared with the Board of Education to be eligible for the National School Lunch Program the District needed to go out for a bid. The legal bidding was followed and bid packages were sent to four vendors. There was a request for bids published in the Daily Southtown, Northwest Times, and Chicago Tribune. Bids were received and opened at 2:00 p.m. on May 21. Ceres Food Group, Inc. met every requirements outlined in the bid packet and submitted the lowest responsive bid. The District is currently in the fourth year of its elementary hot lunch service and Ceres has been providing food service since the program's inception.

Mr. Martin shared the elementary schools will continue to receive fresh individually packaged lunches. The lunches will be prepared at Ceres central kitchen and delivered fresh daily.

By participating in the National School Lunch Program the District will be reimbursed at a higher rate per free lunch as opposed to the reimbursement from Illinois Free Lunch at a lower rate.

The price for a lunch will be \$2.50 including milk. Students who want to purchase milk only can be on a daily bases or pre-paid monthly. Food Service at Parker Junior High will continue to offer ala carte food options that are prepared at the schools along with pre-plated meals from Ceres. It was discussed that Ceres will need to consider changing its ala carte offers to healthier options.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of the food service bid to Ceres Food Group, Inc. forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting, pending approval by the State.*

Discussion of American Recover and Reinvestment Act

Dr. Joy shared with the Board of Education members that District 161 expects to receive allocations from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 for the support of special education students and at-risk students. These appropriations are being made by the federal government as part of the plan to stimulate the economy. Funds will be appropriated as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for school-age special education students and students between the ages of three and five for preschool special education services. Funds for at-risk students will be allocated through the Title I program.

Dr. Joy shared the four principles used to guide distribution and use of these funds.

The proposed plan for using the stimulus funds incorporates the requirements in three key areas: technology, increased support for reading, and improvement of academic achievement. The plan incorporates recommendations based on administrative and faculty input from the recently concluded Technology Summit, Reading Summit II, and the annual needs assessment input provided by parents and teachers in the area of special education. The District needs to demonstrate it is moving students' learning forward.

The total of the IDEA allocation is expected to be approximately \$600,000 and PreK IDEA funds of \$24,000. Dr. Joy noted that the SPEED Co-op would receive seven percent of the funds. The funds for at-risk students in the Title I program will be approximately \$145,000. Title I funds must be spent by June 30, 2010 while IDEA funds must be expended by September 30, 2011.

These dollars are part of the stimulus package and are one-time only. In addition, Infant Jesus of Prague, Homewood Academy, and Flossmoor Montessori with eligible children in our area are entitled to a percentage of these funds.

The Board will approve purchases on a monthly basis. The District has followed the guidelines set forth by the federal government in developing this Plan. The ARRA Plan is needed in order to prepare the FY2010 budget and write the grants for the FY2010 allocations, which will then be submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education.

A discussion took place regarding the fact that our students have made great advances with the current reading program, and the need for additional interventions. The model the administration is recommending is the training of four additional teacher assistances to deliver a highly structured reading intervention program in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. This will provide an additional dose of reading instruction to students who are in need of additional time under the direct

supervision of reading specialist. Susan Zlabis, Reading Specialist/Coordinator shared with the Board her thoughts on this program and the fact it is designed for students who can benefit from an intensive daily intervention. These students get an extra boost in a very intensive very focused approach.

These school year special education teacher aides were trained in this model, and served students in grades 2-3 who qualified.

Mr. Sifner shared his concern that the cost is the predominate concern of the Board Members and would like additional information.

A discussion took place regarding smartboards and the fact that they are an excellent educational tool, but just a tool. Technology is a way to make a connection with today's students.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends approving the plan to expend funds the District will receive from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in support of the District's academic programs in the areas of reading and mathematics, to meet the needs of special education students, and serve the District's at-risk students with early intervention services forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting.*

Recommendations From the Reading Summit

Dr. Rebecca Elish shared with the Board of Education members the District held Reading Summit II, which comprised of K-8 teachers and administrators. The purpose of the reading summit was to determine what additional supports were necessary to impact student achievement in reading. The committee developed a goal, which is all students in School District 161 will complete third grade reading at grade level. The committee targeted four areas that would provide the necessary additional support for students in the area of reading. These four areas include; additional staff, increased reading time. Addition and/or expansion of reading support programs, and technology support for reading.

- *Recommendation: 1) The Board recommends moving the addition of two reading specialists, one at Heather Hill School and one at Western Avenue School forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting. The District will fund these reading specialists.*
- *2) The Board recommends moving the addition of four paraprofessionals, one at each elementary school, to expand and support reading interventions for students in kindergarten and grade one forward to the*

June 8, 2009 Board of Education Meeting, which will be supported by ARRA dollars.

4) The Board recommends moving the purchase of kindergarten and grade one intervention materials forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting, which is funded by ARRA money.

5) The Board recommends moving the purchase of a site license for language arts and special education teachers in grades six, seven, and eight to utilize leveled reading material for small group instruction and reading interventions for identified students forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting, these licenses are funded by ARRA.

Discussion of Technology Purchases

Deb Pitts shared with the Board of Education that she is recommending hardware purchases, which will support and allow the District to move forward with the approved technology plan. This purchase will be funded with District dollars remaining in the 2008 technology budget. Ms. Pitts is proposing the purchase of 77 personal computers as teacher workstations at Parker Junior high. The teacher workstations will allow staff to bring differentiated instruction into the classroom, make provisions in allowing deliverance of additional content material such as curriculum based CDs and web-based materials. These PCs would cost approximately \$62,370.

These hardware purchases are being made to position the District for the future to enable delivery of technologies in the classrooms, and to meet the goals and objectives established by the technology summit committee members.

A discussion took place regarding laptops vs. desktop computers, and teachers use of computers during planning time.

Dr. Dreyfuss recommended a comparison be developed of laptop vs. desktop computers.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of hardware purchases to support the first phase of the five-year technology plan forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting with additional information as requested. These purchases are supported by District funds from remaining in 2008-2009 Technology budget.*

Discussion of Internet Safety Curriculum – 2009-2010

Deb Pitts, Director of Instructional Technology, reviewed with the Board members that in July 2008 the State mandated school districts to offer an Internet Safety curriculum beginning with the 2009-2010 school year to students in grades three and up. The purpose is to inform and protect

students from inappropriate or illegal communications and to encourage school districts to provide education about Internet threats and risks.

The draft curriculum is based upon the key components of the CyberSmart program and correlates with the objectives set by the Special Education Safety Step program. Safety and Security and Ethics and Cyberbullying are the two themes, which guide the CyberSmart curriculum framework.

Ms. Pitts shared the focus of the Internet Safety framework is to teach young children that personal identification should not be shared online without permission and to follow the rules of a respected adult when working on the Internet. The program also considered the power and responsibilities of online activities and incorporates the District's CHARACTER COUNTS! program.

The Board of Education thanked Ms. Pitts for her presentation.

Dr. Joy mentioned on May 21, Sarah Migas from the Attorney General's office presented an Internet Safety program to Parker Junior High students. Students Rhea Moore and Charles Odom, who were student principals for a day, visited with Dr. Joy and shared their thoughts on the Internet Safety program.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends moving approval of Internet Safety Curriculum to meet the State mandated Public Act 095-0869 concerning education forward to the June 8, 2009 Board of Education meeting. There is no cost for this curriculum.*

Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons seconded by Mr. Sifner to go into executive session to discuss matters related to personnel 5ILCS 120/2 (c)(1).

Voice Vote:

Aye: Moore, Sifner, Simmons, Odom, Dreyfuss

Nay: None

Absent: Crater, Marks

Motion Carried.

The Board of Education went into executive session at 8:50 p.m.

Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons seconded by Mr. Sifner to return to open session.

Voice Vote:

Aye: Sifner, Simmons, Moore, Odom, Dreyfuss

Nay: None

Absent: Crater, Marks

Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 9:09 p.m.

Adjournment

The agenda was exhausted, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Dr. David Dreyfuss, President

Ronald E. Moore, Secretary