

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BELOIT
January 25, 2011

The Board of Education held its regular meeting on January 25, 2011 at the Kolak Education Center in the Board Room. President Ramsdail called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Members Present: John Acomb, Jessica Everson, Missy Henderson, Tia Johnson, Michael Ramsdail, Shannon Scharmer and John Winkelmann. Also present: Milt Thompson, Superintendent.

Winkelmann moved approval of the revised agenda. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Acomb led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Johnson announced upcoming activities in the district. She announced the success of the jazz bands performing and competing in Purdue. She also announced the open enrollment period for the State of Wisconsin. She then announced the two open house events at BMHS this week for advanced placement courses offered and the high school expo. Johnson announced that the middle schools will be hosting their first expos next month. She also announced the father/daughter dance coming up next month.

Badger recognized Gaston Elementary School, one of eight schools across the state to be nominated for the National 2011 Blue Ribbon Schools program. She then recognized the Kids Against Hunger organizers for their efforts in a city wide effort to package food for the residents of Cameroon in Africa. John Wong shared a slide show of the project including pictures of packaging day and delivery by Paul Mickelson in Cameroon.

Ramsdail opened up the podium for citizens to speak on items not on the agenda. No one came forward.

Thompson introduced Cindy Laube, Coordinator and Fran Fruzen, Administrator for the Even Start Program. Fruzen and Laube stated the purpose of the program, the instructional components, the federal reporting, and targeting those in the most need. Geoff Richards, provided additional statistics related to student GPA in the district after having been in the program and the literacy accomplishments. Laube highlighted accomplishments of the families and members of the program including receiving GED's, college degrees and employment, including in the district. Fruzen highlighted partnerships and the Even Start history. Ramsdail indicated that not only is the program meeting the expectations of the state, the program is exceeding expectations. Members asked about funding. Fruzen indicated that as funding has decreased, programming cuts have been made and that funding for next year is unknown.

Thompson provided a strategic planning update. He summarized what the district is currently doing and what the district is beginning to do in terms of moving the strategic plan forward. He shared plans for an endowment fund, surveying families leaving the district, exploring the health plan and wellness for cost savings, school finance presentations, selecting a programming model to use in renovating the schools. Under Strategy 2, he highlighted creating a brand for the district, an easy to navigate website, administrators more involved in community organizations. He indicated that

Strategies 3 and 4 cover most of the work being done by the curriculum department, special education and student services including professional development, I Can statements, SIT teams in all buildings, and braiding initiatives into core priorities. Thompson stated that Strategy 5 is working to match instructional needs with technology to increase student achievement. He stated that Strategy 6 focuses on family involvement in the schools and getting information out to the families about what is happening in the schools. He also stated that Strategy 7 includes a pilot of PBIS, reviewing and evaluating the pilot as well as expanding the implementation. He also shared that all of the administrators with a few of their staff members were trained in site strategic planning for each school. Members asked about obstacles in the way or ways to assist in moving the plan forward. Thompson indicated that during the budgeting process that members need to remember that there are many aspects of the plan that require funding and should be considered in decision-making.

Thompson then presented the results of the staff survey on the grading policy. Thompson stated that a teacher came forward to discuss the policy after subbing in the district. The teacher stated that he found that the policy forced you to change the way you teach. He stated that the results are broken into all subject areas in total. He also broke the survey into high school and middle school teachers as well as core subjects and elective subjects at each level. The survey asked if the grading policy had an adverse or positive affect on students, the affect on each letter grade, as well as revisions in the policy or returning to the old policy and shortening the window of opportunity. Reviewing the results, the belief at the high school level is that there is an adverse affect of the policy on student achievement, whereas at the middle school level, the belief of the majority is that the grading policy is not adversely affecting student learning. Members stated that this is a great deal of information and needs further discussion. One member felt that perhaps the policy was not implemented correctly or may have been misinterpreted. One member also felt that there should have been a narrative aspect to the survey for teachers to write comments. There was a request to bring the policy back to the policy/personnel committee. Another member felt there were questions of how the policy is being implemented and how well the policy is working. Members recognized the fact that teachers are being asked to make some big changes from the way they have been teaching, some for many years. Thompson stated that he feels the policy has created more collaboration among staff as well as increased discussion on grading and learning.

Geoff Richards reviewed the data from the first term grading under this policy. He compared Term 1 grades from this school year to the previous four years first term grades. The data was separated by school as well as grade level. They reviewed the data as acceptable grades, A's, B's, C's and unacceptable grades, D's and F's. He also indicated that the data was compared by one student demographic, race.

Winkelmann moved to extend the meeting 30 minutes. Seconded by Everson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Grades were also reviewed by special education and regular education students. They were also reviewed by subject area. Ramsdail asked if there was other data members wanted to see in future discussions. Johnson requested data broken down by gender as well. Scharmer requested narrative comments from educators and administrators. Johnson asked for WKCE results and Maps Testing results as well.

Student representative, Madeline West, reported on student activities. She indicated that the expo is happening tonight at the high school. She also stated that she is an open enrollment student from Turner and having attended the expo certainly helped her make her decision to open enroll. She also stated there is excitement about new courses for next school year.

Barbara Hickman reviewed the topics of the November, December and January (E)Quality Committee meetings.

Winkelmann reviewed the topics of the January Finance, Transportation and Property Committee meetings.

Acomb reviewed the topics of the January Curriculum and Instruction Committee meetings.

Henderson reviewed the topics of the December Special and January Regular Policy and Personnel Committee meetings.

Winkelmann suggested postponing the Joint Convention Report. Johnson and Henderson were amenable.

Winkelmann moved approval of the consent list: 1) Bills, Payroll and Cash Position Statement; 2) Special Board Meetings of December 14, 2010, January 4 (2), January 11, 2011; and 3) Regular Business Meeting of December 14, 2010. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Scharmer moved approval of the donation from Michael and Lorna Costello of \$1,000 for band instruments. Seconded by Everson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved approval of the payment of \$55,931 to Blackhawk Technical College for HSED Semester One Services. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved acceptance of the audited financial report for the year ended June 30, 2010. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winklemann moved adoption of the Wisconsin OPEB Trust and approves Graystone Consulting to manage the District's OPEB funds and appoints Associated Trust Company as the trustee of the District's OPEB plan. Seconded by Everson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Acomb moved approval of the new courses and course deletions in the Mathematics Department. Seconded by Winkelmann. Scharmer made a friendly amendment to add the specific names of the courses to the motion. Acomb stated that the new courses are Math for Technical Careers II; Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B. He stated that Geometry Exploration would be deleted. Friendly amendment accepted by Winkelmann.

Johnson moved to extend the meeting 15 minutes. Seconded by Winkelmann. Motion carried.

Motion on new courses and course deletions carried 6-1, with Ramsdail voting in the negative.

Henderson moved approval of changing the title of the Elementary Curriculum Coordinator to Curriculum Director at a salary of \$84,000. Seconded by Winkelmann. Members asked questions about the fiscal savings as well as the posting of the position. McNeal indicated that it is a revamping of the position and the items added to the job description are already being done by the person in the position. The motion carried 4-3 with Acomb, Johnson, and Scharmer voting in the negative.

Winkelmann moved approval of the revised personnel recommendations, Exhibit A. Seconded by Henderson. Members asked clarifying questions that Chris Wesling addressed. Motion carried 6-1, with Ramsdail voting in the negative.

Items for consideration at future meetings included the grading policy.

Ramsdail announced future meetings on Tuesday, February 8, February 15 and the Board Business meeting will be held on February 22, 2011.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Michelle Shope, Board Secretary

Approved at the regular meeting of February 22, 2011

Michael Ramsdail, President