

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BELOIT
April 27, 2010

The Board of Education held its regular meeting on April 27, 2010 at the Kolak Education Center in the Board Room. President Ramsdail called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

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

Everson moved approval of the agenda. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Acomb led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Johnson announced upcoming activities in the district. She announced that the BMHS Destination Imagination Team took first at their competition this month and will now compete at the Global Competition. BMHS Jazz Band at the Bob Kames Jazz Festival earning them the honor of performing with the Gordon Goodwin Big Phat Band. The Annual Hall of Fame was held last Friday and honored Dr. Sudkamp, alum from the high school. This Friday, the City of Beloit Arbor Day celebration will be held at Beloit Memorial High School beginning at 9:00 a.m. along the river, behind the school. The district is planning fun events for students including the third annual father/son event which will be held on May 15th. She also congratulated Sam Carter, Robinson Elementary Principal on the birth of his baby girl. Winkelmann indicated that the Hall of Fame was a wonderful ceremony for Dr. Sudkamp and that he received many wonderful phone calls from citizens in attendance with how well the students behave and how great the ceremony comes off.

Ramsdail asked board members to consider holding the Board meeting on May 18th instead of May 25th. Acomb pointed out that the meeting would fall on the same night as the CESA 2 meeting. He also pointed out that Memorial Day is not celebrated until May 31st. Ramsdail decided that the meeting would not need to be moved to the earlier date and will keep it at May 25th.

Ramsdail opened the podium for citizens or delegations to speak on items not on the agenda.

Shirley Williams, 2170 Hayfield Lane, she began by congratulating those who were re-elected to the board. She also stated that she has worked with the Beloit College Help Yourself Program. She asked that board members please do what is right for our children when making difficult decisions.

Thompson began the superintendent's report by referring to the progress the district is making. He then introduced Steve McNeal who presented information that was shared at a day of celebration with our elementary educators on April 14th. The information also included secondary information. McNeal began by explaining RtI's (response to interventions) and PLC's (professional learning communities). He highlighted where the district was, where the district is now and where the district is going. Tracy Donich, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator assisted McNeal in his presentation. She highlighted what is being done at the elementary level currently. She also highlighted information for grades 9-12. She indicated that the district is focusing on co-teaching district wide. She also provided what has been happening in reading K-5. McNeal highlighted what is happening at the 6-12 grade levels in Reading. He also shared what is happening in K-5 Math. Donich highlighted where the district is heading. She indicated that all of the curriculum is online K-12, work will continue with PLC's and RtI's.

She highlighted where the district is going in reading and language arts as well as math. McNeal indicated that the district had tremendous growth in many areas tested and in some areas tremendous growth. He also indicated that anyone can go to the Department of Public Instruction's website and under the WINS portion see the districts data for any of our schools. He shared charts showing our progress. McNeal highlighted some of the schools that had a personal best this year. This is their best scores ever for a particular school. He also highlighted schools that had an increase of 20% or more; then schools with over 15% increase in same grade level.

Milt Thompson presented an update on meetings he has been having with teachers and departments on the grading proposal. He thanked everyone for their rich conversation and feels he will be bringing forward a better proposal because of these conversations and teachers' suggestions.

Daniel Luebke, senior at BMHS, gave the student report. He highlighted information from the track team, baseball team, boys' tennis team, girls' soccer, boys' golf for their great achievements this spring season. He also indicated that the Nightingales performed at Whitewater a few weeks ago and received high accolades. He also indicated that AP tests will be held in the next few weeks. He also stated that there has been much discussion at the high school on the grading policy. He indicated that there has been much concern with the late grading and students turning in work very late in the term or semester. He also indicated that the tree planting ceremony will be held on Friday at 9:00 a.m. He wanted the board to be aware of one concern, which is class size for the coming school year. Winkelmann asked Luebke to find out if students and teachers would rather have class sizes of 30 with diverse curriculum or smaller class sizes with less diverse offerings. Luebke stated that he feels the diversity is valued.

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

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

Henderson reviewed the topics of the March Special and April Regular Policy and Personnel Committee meetings.

Ramsdail indicated that he, Acomb and Scharmer attended the National School Board conference in Chicago. He stated that he attended a session about online board packets. He also attended sessions about increasing student achievement in minority students and a father presence in students' education. His most informative session was an early bird session that he attended about looking at how we view education from a customer service perspective with students and families being the customers. Acomb shared that he felt the conference was very informative. He felt speakers were sharing eye opening information. He also feels that the district needs to look at proficiencies and are we graduating students with the tools they need for success. He attended a session about how to lower the district's drop out rate. He also attended a very informative session about bullying and cyber bullying. He also attended sessions on building a culture of trust, response to intervention, Doug Reeves and his presentation on high expectations for students, coaches as colleagues, team teaching, etc. and education foundations which may be able to be a source of income for the district. Scharmer thanked her fellow members for allowing her to go. She attended a session on how to make your school board rock, system of teacher induction for creating a quality education, keep music education strong, district accountability system – not your father's strategic plan, from boardroom to classroom. She feels that Beloit is a great district making great strides. She also feels we have more great strides to make.

Winkelmann moved approval of the consent list: 1) Bills, Payroll and Cash Position Statement; 2) Special Board Meetings of March 23, March 25, April 6, April 13, April 20 workshop and April 20; 3) Regular Business Meeting of March 23, 2010; 4) Donations from Altrusa International of Beloit, Surs Basketball Club, Stateline Community Foundation – AED and Stateline Community Foundation – Youth Service Day and 5) DPI grant Proposal: Beloit Asthma Initiative. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

John Kaminski presented information on the New Directions program. He stated that at semester there were 78% of students who already received 2.25 credits or more. Students need 4.5 credits to receive sophomore status. He presented data on achievement by ethnicity as well as the special education population. Grade distribution information was shared for all the grades that were given last semester. He also pointed out that the male students are not performing as well as female students. He indicated percentages of students receiving a 2.0 GPA or higher by ethnicity and special education population.

Scharmer questioned how the program is working when the highest percentage of grades are F's. Acomb indicated that the data shows that 52% of freshmen have a 2.0 percentage and 31% are failing. He asked what the goals were and where the district is trying to go. Kaminski indicated that the biggest goal is to have students graduate and be successful in life. Scharmer also stated that the board did not want to hear that there is no data from previous years and what the real cost is to continue the program when the first year cost over \$600,000. Kaminski shared that the Achieve 3000 reading level average for students in the applied classes has gone from a 5th grade level average to a 6th grade average level. Winkelmann indicated that there is data in Skyward and the data needs to be mined and aggregated if you want to aggregate the transfers in and out. He does not buy that the data is not there and we need to start again with a baseline. Kaminski indicated that one of the reasons that the district went to the freshman model was to provide more minutes of instruction in the core areas. Winkelmann also questioned how students get to the high school if they can only read at a 5th grade level or 6th grade level.

Scharmer moved at 9:00 p.m. to extend the meeting by 30 minutes. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously.

Board members continued to share their concerns and thoughts on this topic of the 9th grade academy. Members also talked about teaching to the WKCE test. McNeal clarified that teachers are teaching the curriculum which is aligned to the state standards. Scharmer talked about how the district can keep putting large amounts of money into a program that does not seem to be working when the board is considering budget cuts for next year. Kaminski indicated that he believes the students can continue to achieve and excel more than they have already. He also indicated that the 9th grade staff are not satisfied with the data either, but they are taking steps, perhaps baby steps at improving.

Jennifer Zart, social studies teacher, addressed the board as well. She feels that there has finally been some consistency in the administration of the program and feels that progress is being made. She highlighted what would be missing if the academy was not renewed. She stated that the academies are like families and the academy meeting time would be lost. The staff also meets as a subject team and has common assessments and planning times. She feels that programs like lunch and learn, credit recovery programs, link crew, lunch time tutoring are working for students. She feels this has been a great step forward and losing it would be a tragedy. Kaminski talked about the volunteers from the community and college who are coming in to work with students. He feels that

they are trying their best and yes, would like to see the numbers improve. Mark Smullen, interim principal, addressed the board on this topic as well indicating that successes being seen at the elementary and middle school level with RtI are being addressed at the high school level this year.

Winkelmann stated that he recognizes the hard work that people are doing. He did state that it is really hard to see what we are doing with students and where we are at today.

Winkelmann moved to table this item since a budget discussion is coming shortly for the board members. He also asked for better data. He also is looking for a recommendation from the team after hearing board members comments. Seconded by Scharmer.

Scharmer indicated that she struggles with continuing the program with the numbers being seen and spending the taxpayers' dollars. She did indicate that she trusts that staff care about their students and are working hard to help every student. She did state that she does not understand why the items indicated as a loss would have to go away. Acomb asked for data on Maps testing for the freshman as far back as it goes. Johnson indicated that she has many questions and offered to email them to Mr. Smullen. She highlighted her questions. Henderson indicated that she too would like to see results of the Maps testing.

Acomb moved at 9:30 p.m. to extend the meeting by another 30 minutes. Seconded by Winkelmann. Motion carried unanimously.

Ramsdail shared his thoughts about tabling the item and cautioned the board about the complexity if the board would move to not renew the program with scheduling, staffing, etc.

Motion to table carried 5-2 with Ramsdail and Johnson voting in the negative.

Winkelmann moved approval of the bid from Finley-Dencker for the cube van as presented and the bid from Finley-Dencker for two cargo vans as presented. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved approval of the purchase order with Technology Resource Advisors Inc for 32 computers for Budget in the amount of \$18,272, the purchase order with Technology Resource Advisors Inc for 30 computers for McLenegan in the amount of \$17,130, the purchase order with Core BTS Inc. for Norton antivirus for the district in the amount of \$18,894, and the purchase order with Skyward for annual license fees for the district in the amount of \$63,685. Seconded by Everson. Motion carried unanimously the members present.

Acomb moved approval of the purchase order with Houghton Mifflin for Soar to Success Kits in the amount of \$20,550.42 and the purchase order with Achieve 3000 for KidBiz & TeenBiz licenses in the amount of \$249,462 over the next three school years. Seconded by Everson. Winkelmann questioned committing spending from future budgets. McNeal indicated that by committing for the three years, he was ensured a further \$30,000 savings in addition to what he has already negotiated. He stated that if the motion would be for only one year, the board would have to add an additional \$10,000 to the price. Thompson indicated that he feels the long term commitment is the way to go since it is working and we are award winning in this area. Acomb indicated that he likes the program especially for the transition for 6th grade students. Motion carried 6-1 with Ramsdail abstaining.

Winkelmann moved approval of extending the banking services contract with Blackhawk Band through June 30, 2011. Seconded by Everson. Motion carried 6-1 with Acomb abstaining.

Winkelmann moved approval of the Strategies for Active School Grant proposal. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously.

Acomb moved approval of the planning of the Beloit Entrepreneurial Academy charter high school. Seconded by Johnson. Kevin Miller presented information on this charter high school. He indicated that there is a high likelihood that the funding would be received for the planning process. Winkelmann addressed concerns with funding, but indicated that he would not recommend the funding formula as previously used for charters. He can support this with this caveat. Scharmer talked about the proposal being self-sustaining and that the board would be looking at data, goals and charter graduates compared to BMHS graduates. Miller indicated that there are lessons that have been learned from the other charters and that there have been changes to the grant requirements like a detailed budget showing self-sustainability and others. Motion carried 6-1 with Ramsdail voting in the negative.

Acomb moved approval of the Youth Options applications for first semester 2010-11. Seconded by Henderson. Winkelmann indicated that about one-third of the anticipated cost ends up as the actual cost. Motion carried unanimously.

Henderson moved approval of the revision and layover of Policy 143 Official Board Representatives for first reading. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously.

Henderson moved approval of the revision and layover of Policy 431 dc Compulsory School Attendance for first reading. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously.

Henderson moved approval of the revision of Policy 432 RULE 1 New Student Placement Guidelines for final reading. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously.

Henderson moved approval of the revision of Policy 432 RULE 2 In-District Transfer Guidelines for final reading. Seconded by Scharmer. Motion carried unanimously.

Winkelmann moved approval of the personnel recommendations Exhibit A. Seconded by Henderson. Acomb questioned educators who leave for a year of career exploration are they guaranteed their position when they return. Cabelka clarified that they are guaranteed a position, not necessarily their previous position. Motion carried 6-1 with Johnson voting in the negative.

There were no items for consideration at future meetings.

Ramsdail announced future meetings on Tuesday, May 4, May 11 and the Board Business meeting will be held on May 25, 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Michelle Shope, Board Secretary

Approved at the regular meeting of May 25, 2010

Michael Ramsdail, President