

BOARD NOTES

OCTOBER 28, 2008

The regular meeting of the school board was held on Monday, October 27, 2008 in the Central Office with Rich Shail, Bernie Baltes, LuAnn Schwingendorf and Shelly Goethals present. Al Williamson was absent. Dr. Bender was also present.

Rich Shail reviewed the guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

The board adopted the agenda as presented.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION

- Allison Middlebrook presented information on the Student Services and Guidance Program at Olive Elementary School. The role of the Student Services is to insure student guidance standards are met with each grade level. The role is also to meet with students who have identified social or emotional needs.

Allison also asked Andrew Kenfield and Jonathon Visek to speak about the Tiger Time Mentoring Program. Volunteers come in and work with students.

Bernie said exposing the students to careers at this age is very commendable. He feels the mentoring is a great program.

- The Board recognized Olive Elementary School who was recently selected as a Four-Star School. Dr. Bender said he understands what this is like to be honored by the State. Sherry Bailey said this solidifies what she knows about her staff and students. It takes everyone in the building for them to get this - this is not just the staff and student's award. It is for the whole community. The award is based on high attendance rating, demographics and test scores. Sherry said she could not be more proud of this award. This is the second time Olive received this award.

Dr. Bender said it was great having everyone here from Olive to share in this, which included secretaries, custodians, teachers and assistants. Rich Shail presented a certificate to Sherry Bailey. Sherry said it also takes great leadership to be able to do the things we can do. We have a great board and superintendent to help achieve this.

- Rich Shail said this School Board was also recognized by the Indiana School Boards Association as an Outstanding School Board and was presented with a plaque last Tuesday at the ISBA Conference. Rich said this award truly belongs to Bernie Baltes because it is based on earned points for attendance at state functions at the state and national level. There is no one more dedicated than Bernie Baltes. He got us to where we are today. He is our mentor to this board.
- There was a presentation by Steve Hartz who is a supplier for Honeywell and owner of Value Tool and Engineering. Mr. Hartz talked about an opportunity for our school corporation to participate in a skilled trades program called the Apprentice Academy working thru Vincennes University. They offer programs for students at the school corporation. Currently, South Bend School Corporation has 27 students enrolled in their program. They provide technical careers to schools. They offer six credits per year which could also apply towards an apprenticeship. This is an approved program through the Department of Labor. Businesses help with a trade and it helps with graduation rates for those students who would not necessarily stay in school. The schedule is flexible - Monday - Friday - two hours per day. The opportunity is for full time or half time. They also have adult education training as well.

Rich asked what is required from us. Is it available for next semester or do we have to wait until next year? Mr. Hartz said bussing is one issue. South Bend brings their students to them. Scheduling is the biggest issue. Next semester is fine if you can work out the scheduling. He would like to talk to the counselors and bring them to the facility so they know what to expect. The cost is \$2,500 per student. There is no financial support. They did receive a technical grant, but that was used for equipment. You can use the Perkins Grant to help fund this. They are working with Donnelly's office to get some grants.

Bernie asked who the instructors are. Mr. Hartz said they have one Vocational instructor and the others are industry instructors. Dr. Bender said in this setting, you only need a teacher of record. If you have 6,000 hours in industry, you would qualify to teach there. They also have dual credit programs. Dr. Bender asked if any of these programs are tied in with Ivy Tech. Dr. Bender will get the information to the counselors at the high school. Bernie said Ed Bartos talked about the future of education and he stated that in the near future, 20% of our businesses will require a four-year education. Bernie would be in favor of this program.

- The board approved the Consent Agenda as follows:
 - Minutes - September 15th and September 26th. (Dr. Bender said you will note that we have shared the minutes in draft form until they are officially approved by the Board.)
 - Financial Reports
 - Claims
 - Payroll
 - Personnel as follows:

CERTIFIED

- Resignations/Leaves
 1. Deanne Gonzalez - Spanish Teacher - NPHS - Leave of absence beginning November 10, 2008 and continuing for 12 weeks (February 2, 2009)
- Employment
 1. Zane Cooper - Temporary 4th Grade Teacher - Prairie View Elementary - Approximately December 5, 2008 - April 10, 2009
 2. Julie Cinal - Temporary Interdisciplinary Teacher - Middle School - September 29, 2008 thru January 2, 2009.
- Employment - Extra-Curricular
 1. Jeff Meinhard - 6th Grade Boys Basketball

NON-CERTIFIED

- Leaves/Resignations/Terminations
 1. Linda Stevens - Food Service - NPHS - Terminated effective October 8, 2008
 2. Mary Jeske - ATSE Coordinator - Terminated effective September 25, 2008
 3. Katie Bates - Bus Driver - Leave of Absence - October 3, 2008 - January 7, 2009
 4. Connie Benninghoff - Cafeteria Manager - Rolling Prairie - Resignation effective October 31, 2008
 5. Robert DeMeyer - Bus Mechanic - Leave of absence beginning October 27, 2008 and continuing for approximately 8 weeks.
 6. Mary Youngblood - Bus Driver - Leave of absence beginning November 3, 2008 and continuing for approximately 3 weeks.
- Employment/Transfers
 1. Lori Bailey - Co-Lunchroom Assistant - Rolling Prairie (3 days per week) effective immediately
 2. Dawn Ortega - Co-Lunchroom Assistant - Rolling Prairie (2 days per week) effective immediately
 3. Sarah Nelson - ATSE Coordinator - NPHS/MS
 4. Joyce Collins - Cafeteria Manager - Floater - Transfer to Cafeteria Manager - Rolling Prairie Elementary School effective October 31, 2008
 5. Beth Eigenmann - Cook/Dishwasher - NPHS - Effective immediately

- Employment - Extra-Curricular
 1. Kara Mamazza - 5th Grade Boys Basketball - Rolling Prairie
 2. Kevin Macias - Assistant Wrestling - Middle School
 3. Craig Kuta - Head Girls Golf - NPHS
 4. Craig Kuta - Head Boys Golf - NPHS
 5. Charlie Evans - 8th Boys Basketball
 6. Jane Slater - 5th Grade Volleyball - Rolling Prairie - 2nd Coach
 7. Greg Hulbert - Audio/Visual Club - NPHS

Bernie asked about the Oselka retainage and wondered if there will be enough money to finish the project. Keith Dennis said we still have enough retainage there. Oselka received a progress payment for work they have already done. There is about \$65,000 set back. We have enough money to keep their interest.

REPORTS

- Federal Policy Seminar Update

Dr. Bender recently attended the Federal Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. which was sponsored through a grant from the DOE and I.U. University. The purpose of the seminar was to acquaint educators with the processes at the federal level. They first met with Dr. Sue Ellen Reed to determine what their goals were. They all agreed they needed a growth chart for NCLB as well as looking at the drop-out rates at the high school. They met with Senators Lugar, Bayh and Donnelly. They also visited the Department of Education. Dr. Bender feels that department has lost touch with what is happening in schools. Some issues being discussed at the federal level is Merit Pay and teacher quality and vouchers. Washington, D.C. is giving bonuses to teachers and taking away tenure in exchange. Dr. Bender said we are going to see some major changes in education with the election. He would like to thank the board for allowing him to participate in this seminar.

Dr. Bender said he would emphasize to the union that we have to go and make our voices known to the legislators. Bernie wanted to thank Dr. Bender for doing this.

- Superintendent's Report
 - Dr. Bender would like to recognize Sherry Bailey and Olive School for a job well done regarding the recent bank robbery in New Carlisle. The staff did well. He felt we did the best we could in handling the situation.
 - The School Messenger System will go into trial mode in about two weeks. We will let the board know how this goes. There will be a mass notification to everyone.
 - At the recent ISBA regional meeting, we were told the forecast looks very dismal for finances through 2010. We could go into a freeze.
 - Board received a report from the Center for Education.
 - Received the graduation report for New Prairie United School Corporation for 2007-2008 school year which is 91% - a little drop from last time. Dr. Bender does not know how that stands state-wide. He still feels it is good. However, we will see a drop when Core 40 comes in. We are working on areas of concern now. New Prairie was the second lowest in the state in Math last year. We have to change to make it better.
 - Dr. Bender advised that Clara Clark was selected as the national High Schools That Work representative.
 - The board received a list of outstanding book rental fees as of October 15th. We have an outstanding balance of \$323,000 over several years. It is \$146,000 for this year alone. We are still financing the program to recover from overdue textbook fees. He wants the board to be aware of the number of people who have not paid which has grown over the years. Once this process of past-due collection begins, the board will receive the calls from the community. You have to be ready to handle these calls. We will be giving the parents a 90-day period to get it paid. We will also offer credit card payments. Shelly asked if people receive a personal letter requesting the payments or is it a generic letter. Sherry said they receive five letters to people specifically.

Dr. Bender said they will receive the letter advising them what they owe. We will take payment plans. If they moved or are now on free/reduced, we will look at this. We are working on some contractual issues with the company now. It could be December or January before the letters are released. Dr. Bender will notify the board when the letters are sent out.

- Tax Bill and Time Lines

Dr. Bender reviewed the cash flow over the next several months. LaPorte distributed \$1.8 million advance that did not come from the property tax monies. The state allowed the release of these monies because LaPorte City was in a financial bind. We received \$129,000 from St. Joe. LaPorte estimates mid November before we receive our monies from them.

We will also make application to the bond bank. We do not think we will need to borrow, but we have this window that we must apply just in case. It will not cost anything to apply.

Dr. Bender said with our current projections, he feels a little better with our cash flow.

- One Care Street Survey

Dr. Bender indicated there are 17 schools in the MASE Trust and all corporations were asked to participate in this survey - for which they would receive a \$20 gift card. Anthem provides this survey as part of a wellness program. New Prairie is second to last in responses. By not responding, it could have a negative affect on our rates.

- The board received a copy of the certified absences by pay period since the start of school. This is for information only. This was presented to Meet & Discuss. At this time we are averaging two days per person absent since the start of school.

- General Construction Update

- Keith Dennis said we will be doing a third installation of bleachers at the Middle School on Friday
- Back boards in the gym will be delivered on Friday
- There is an issue with the floors in the locker room and floor in the academic student floor. The gray color is emerging. They will have to strip off and reapply the color.
- We are having a problem with the dishwasher in the cafeteria. The machine cannot keep the temperature at the state mandated code of 160°. They have replaced almost everything in the machine. He feels it is time to replace the machine itself. It is a code requirement.
- Three of the boilers did not fire up last week. They had determined it was a spring that needed replaced. We have not had any problems since replacing that.

- Roof Leaks - we think we have all of them resolved.
- Still waiting on the handicapped academic lockers to be fixed. We cannot get them to work.
- Released escrow to Dodd and Gaitlin. They finished the punch list. Also paid all of Ryans money for the sprinkler system.
- Still waiting on the energy rebate. The building was not enclosed until May. They used large gas heaters, but the meters were not working. No one had to pay for the gas bills. We have asked Ziolkowski to share that money with us.
- Detention Basin - Most of the grading has been done. Waiting for the structure which should be here by Wednesday. Engineers thought it was a balanced project and we would not need fill dirt. We have a lot of fill sitting there. Not sure whether we should level it and seed it or leave it as is. Shipping cost is more than it is worth.
- Forced Main - Received proposal on the Embarq bill. We met with the attorneys. Oselka said if we gave them a ten-foot path, they will build the main. Embarq will charge us \$47,000. They will need about four weeks and then Oselka can get started. Weather should not be a factor. Bernie asked if Oselka is sharing any of the cost. Keith said our attorney will address this issue. Bill told them to get the project done and we will determine who is responsible. We need to get a forced main in. Oselka indicates that they had idle equipment sitting there that cost them money.
- Keith presented the board with a summary of the budget so they can see where we are on the project. That is what we will propose for the HVAC project at the high school.
- Indiana Bond Bank

Dr. Bender advised that we will apply just in the event we would have to borrow. We are not planning on this at this time.

Dr. Bender said we did make an application for the excess levy. The State has said they understand and they see no issue of getting the money and they do not feel we have to make the trip to Indy.

ACTION ITEMS

- There was a motion to approve the second reading and adoption of board policies #1200, #1214, #1231, #3231, #3430.01, #4430.01, #6520, #8310 and #9800. Bernie Baltus made a motion to remove Board Policy #3231 regarding publications by professional staff members until NEOLA can look at this. Bernie has concerns that if a staff member writes a publication, etc. according to this policy, they have to relinquish all royalties. Bernie does not agree with this. Bill Kaminski has tried to research this issue to see how

many do this. Dr. Bender said this has come about throughout the state because of monies spent on professional development. Some people have capitalized on this and created their own consulting firms. The idea behind the policy is to not allow individuals that are employees of the corporation to benefit from taxpayers. How much that would be an issue at New Prairie is debatable. That is the piece of the policy. As a responsibility to taxpayers, we would not want members to benefit from the tax dollars because of monies that were provided to them. Bill Kaminski agrees. A number of corporations have adopted this. Bernie would like to clarify the items that Phil discussed. Bill will get clarification.

- The board approved the agreement with Embarq for \$47,702.
- The board approved the agreement with Fanning/Howey to provide services to design an HVAC system for High School East. There was discussion on the percentage fee that Fanning/Howey will charge. Fanning/Howey agreed that they mismanaged the drainage problem at the middle school. Due to this mismanagement, they agree to absorb some of the cost for the re-design by lowering their percentage rate for the HVAC project by 1% - charging 10% of the project cost which is \$993,000. The board and superintendent appreciate the honesty and integrity of Fanning/Howey thru this process.

DISCUSSION

- School Calendar - 2009-2010

Dr. Bender reviewed the proposed calendar for the 2009-2010 school year. This option was presented to the Meet & Discuss team. The team favored this calendar which included about five snow make-up days. Because Good Friday falls on April 2nd and Spring Break begins on April 5th, we have also included April 2nd as a holiday. Dr. Bender advised the Meet & Discuss team that this is a one-time occurrence because of the way the holiday falls. There was concern with absences on that day because many people would be planning trips, etc. It would also be difficult to fill that day with substitutes. Good Friday is also a paid holiday for some non-certified groups. We will review the calendar with the administrative team and bring the calendar back for approval.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Bernie Baltes gave an update on the ISBA conference he recently attended.
- LuAnn Schwingendorf will be attending a seminar at Century Center on Wednesday regarding drop outs.

- Shelly Goethals would like to take a tour of New Prairie East to see how they are utilizing that building. We will schedule that for the November meeting.
- Dr. Bender said we will be having a lot of issues that we need to think about in the future. We need to think about our “glass being half full.”
- Rich Shail said earlier in the meeting he recognized Bernie Baltes for his dedication as a board member, but did not want to short-change LuAnn and Shelly who were also recognized as a dedicated board member. Bernie said “you people make it a pleasure.”

The next meeting is scheduled for November 24th at 6:30 p.m.