

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING,  
BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL  
DISTRICT #225, COOK COUNTY,  
ILLINOIS, SEPTEMBER 30, 1996**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education, School District No. 225 was held on Monday, September 30, 1996 at approximately 7:30 p.m. at Glenbrook South High School, 4000 W. Lake Avenue, Glenview, pursuant to due notice to all members and the public.

The president called the meeting to order. Upon calling of the roll, the following members answered present: Baschnagel, Bubak, Conlin, Goldstein, Isenberg, Lyons, Wulf. Also present: Babington, Brockelman, Court, Freeman, Fuller, Gale, Gross, Herrick, Lacivita, McGrew, Rainier, Schilling, Smith, Taccona, VonBoeckman.

**RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY VISITORS**

No member of the community wished to address the Board.

**BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS**

No Board reports were made.

Dr. McGrew introduced special education teacher at the Off Campus Program Doug Strong. Mr. Strong is a new employee for the 1996-97 school year. The Board welcomed Mr. Strong.

**MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Conlin asked if any Board member wished to have any item removed from the consent agenda for a separate vote. No Board member requested to have an item removed from the consent agenda.

Motion by Mr. Bubak, seconded by Mr. Goldstein, to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

1.) the minutes of the regular Board meeting and closed session of September 16, 1996.

2.) the resignation of the following educational support staff as recommended by the assistant superintendent for business affairs:

**RESIGNATION**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
PAUL, Rochelle	Instructional Assistant	10/4/96	South

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3.) the resignation of the following certificated staff as recommended by the assistant superintendent for personnel:

RESIGNATION

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
SCHAEFER, Lois	School Nurse	11/15/96	South

4.) the appointment and transfer of the following educational support staff as recommended by the assistant superintendent for business affairs:

APPOINTMENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>SALARY</u>
LEVINBERG, Ken (rep. M. Thibodeau and P. Hemesath)	Instructional Assistant and Paraprofessional	10/1/96 10/1/96	North North	\$9.62/hr. \$8.74/hr.

TRANSFER

DI SILVO, Dominic (New position)	LAN Manager	10/1/96	North	\$36,225/yr.
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5.) to approve the salary adjustments for academic attainment as contained in Mr. Lacivita's memorandum dated September 26, 1996, totaling \$36,554.

6.) the issuance of vendor check numbers 125969 through 126464, in the amount of \$2,064,944.02 as listed on the attached check list dated September 30, 1996.

7.) the reissuing of replacement checks and to ratify the issuance of advance checks totaling \$227,863.49, canceled checks totaling \$43,485.45 for a net of \$184,378.04 as shown on the attached supplemental bill list dated September 30, 1996.

8.) the reimbursement of the revolving fund disbursements for the month of August, 1996, in the amount of \$61,911.20, represented by checks No. 070705 through 070966, voided checks No. 070705 through 070709, 070763 through 070770, 070810 through 070818, 070853, 070855 through 070860, 070908, 070911 through 070914, and 070966 and canceled check No. 069358.

9.) the issuance of vendor check Nos. 126646 through 127066, in the amount of \$12,536.48 as listed on the attached check list dated September 30, 1996, excluding voided checks Nos. 126646 through 126647 and 127006.

10.) the issuance of vendor check Nos. 126466 through 126645, in the amount of \$6,424.23 as listed on the attached check list dated September 30, 1996, excluding voided checks Nos. 126466 through 126469 and 126645.

11.) the ratification of the electronic wire transfer for state taxes, and payroll check numbers 134179 through 134480, and 134648 through 134962 inclusive totaling \$935,681.15. With adjustments of (\$4,094.03), the gross payroll for the month of August 1996 was \$931,587.12.

12.) the staff computer purchase program as presented in Mr. Rainier's memorandum dated September 26, 1996.

13.) to accept the gift of \$7,507.43 from the North Suburban Aquatic Club for the Glenbrook North Swimming Program.

14.) to award the contract to provide one year scheduled maintenance service for the radio and TV equipment at Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South to Swiderski Electronics, Inc., 1200 Greenleaf Avenue, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007 at a total cost of \$30,950.

Upon calling of the roll:

aye: Bubak, Conlin, Goldstein, Isenberg, Lyons, Wulf, Baschnagel

nay: none

Motion carried.

Note: See attached agenda item #4

#### **DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE**

Dr. Conlin stated that Dr. McGrew and his staff will present the proposed class schedule. Following the presentation, the committee will answer Board questions. Time will be allocated at future meetings to answer community member and parent questions regarding the proposed alternate class schedule.

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Dr. McGrew said he would speak briefly because the committee representatives would speak to the various aspects of the schedule. Dr. McGrew stated that committee representatives hope the schedule will be adopted for the 1997-98 school year. There are still some details which need to be worked out. One aspect which will need to be worked out is the bus schedule. Dr. McGrew said he was confident that the bus schedule could be worked out. Dr. McGrew stated the administration would like to get out as much information out as possible via the school TV/radio stations and the school newspapers. Parent advisory group meetings have been held and the administration offered to answer questions of the feeder districts. Simulated schedules will be run in October using this year's schedule against the newly-revised schedule that is being proposed to see if there are any glitches or unforeseen issues, etc. Dr. McGrew is in favor of this schedule change and anticipates asking the Board for a vote on the schedule in the month of December.

Committee Co-Chairpersons are GBS and GBN Associate Principals Pam Taccona and Bill Babington. Mrs. Taccona stated that what is being presented to the Board is not only a product, but a process. The process is not over, but they are merely at one of the milestones in a very long road. The product is the schedule, but it is important in order to understand the schedule, that the process is understood. That process began about 5 years ago and it has been one with healthy dialogue. The members of the committee and others that have worked on the issue have encountered an ambiguous morass of articles, meetings, gains/losses and successes/defeats. The process began with no master plan. No one envisioned what the schedule would look like, just a thought, just a concern. What has emerged is a patchwork of theory, practice, personality and compromise. All through the process the committee has been guided by a quote by John Carroll in his book the *Capernican Plan* when he states, "Be aware that to decide not to change is a decision that what is being done now is better than any other alternative. Be sure that the justification of the present program meets the same standards as applied to proposed changes. While it is possible to change without improving, it is impossible to improve without change." A large number of people have been involved in the process with one overriding goal in mind, a better day for students and staff at Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South. Mrs. Taccona acknowledged members of the committee Bill Babington, Allan Ruter, Sara Majors, Mary Erlenborn, Don Poynton, Barbara Taylor, John Allen and others. Mrs. Taccona stated that the first question that anyone has about change is, "Why?" Mrs. Taccona said Bill Babington will answer that question.

Mr. Babington stated that what is really important is that a group of staff embarked on an endeavor to make a better day and learning environment for students and a better teaching environment for the staff. He stated that dialogue began with staff about five years ago when staff were encouraged to gripe as a kick-off to the vision process. Mr. Babington said what came out of that was a laundry list of things that people didn't like. Two committees started to explore those items, one was a committee exploring schedules named "Time, Time, Time" which was centered on what the staff wanted to do with different time configurations. The second was a committee called "Student Access to the Curriculum" which Pam Taccona chaired which had to do with why kids couldn't take all the classes and maybe didn't like the current schedule that is being followed. It is important to note that people worked long and hard. The committee is coming to the Board to try to make things better. Finding the right schedule is important because if you don't have the right schedule things can't get done. Mr. Babington went through the packet which was provided. Mr. Babington stated for students it centers around the fact that many times students want to take classes, there is a varied curriculum and because of constraints of a 7 period basically and 9 period day running side by side, they aren't able to. Students generally go from class to class for 40 minutes, although some classes are 55 minutes. In a 40 minute timeframe staff cover material and don't have a lot of opportunities to do much in the way of varied instruction. Students are frustrated at the end of the day because they go from class to class to class and their day is very fragmented. It is difficult for students to focus on any one given class at any point in time because of the number of classes and the hectic pace of the day. There aren't many opportunities to assess students in varied ways. Assessment is basically paper and pencil tests which have to be completed in 40 minutes which doesn't allow for much of what the current research indicates we should do in assessing students. Most of the professional organizations are advocating is changing some of our practices. Our staff attend professional development meetings and they come back and are fired up, but the problem is we have a schedule that doesn't allow for much flexibility to implement many of the changes. We started with the idea that once we got a lot of pressure from the various disciplines it would motivate a schedule change, but what we finally realized was if we didn't allow for the new schedule to do certain things, then all of the varied instructional strategies that were being put out there by the organizations couldn't take place. So we have had a change of focus, instead of letting the curriculum motivate a schedule change, we have to make a schedule change so that the curriculum can open up and people can do things differently. Staff would like to utilize activity based instruction, a laboratory approach not only in science, but in various disciplines, deductive exploratory learning versus me telling, not just learning stuff, but learning how to use stuff. We don't have that opportunity in a 40 minute timeframe. Staff don't have many ways to assess students, the opportunity for projects or portfolios for a longitudinal look at what students can do and what they've learned and how they can apply what they've learned really doesn't exist in our current schedule. Finally, the opportunity for departments to meet with each other, to go into each other's classrooms to watch each other or share with each other to try to encourage interdisciplinary work. A committee was formed to study interdisciplinary instruction and it finally disbanded because while they could suggest things,

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there was no way to coordinate all of the different possibilities that exist between disciplines. Students don't have free time and staff don't have free time to meet with them. One of the concerns that existed is how do we establish rapport in 40 minutes with 25 students in a class. How do we individualize the instruction because of the time constraints? Those are all reasons why a new schedule is being examined. Mr. Babington stated the following are things the staff would like to derive from the new schedule:

- We would like students to be able to get help when they need it.
- We want to be able to integrate technology and infuse it into the curriculum.
- We want to not only start, but close lessons. How much can I get done in 40 minutes before the bell rings?
- We want to have projects that have meaning in a longitudinal way, rather than little snippets of stuff given to students.
- We want students to be involved in the lessons. Learners that are doing things rather than just passive learners.
- We want the students to tell us about what they have learned. The opportunity for dialogue in a class period really doesn't exist because of the time constraints of the schedule.
- We want staff to be able to use various instructional models to address the different learning styles of the students in their classes.
- We want students to become more focused.
- We want students to have a less fragmented day.
- We want to develop the relationship between a student and the teacher, not as a giver of knowledge, but as a facilitator and active learner.

Mr. Ruter stated that the vision process has produced many ideas. Of all the ideas, none more profoundly exemplifies the nature of the vision process itself and the quality of collaborative research, dialogue and thinking than the scheduling model which will be presented. In 1991-92 the vision steering committee approved the mission statement and that started the process for district wide long range strategic planning. Later that year, members of the faculty, administration and staff met in dialogue groups which broke staff out of their departments and mixed them with people far from their normal disciplines. They met in groups to articulate what they saw as current realities; that is, statements that at that point accurately described the two schools, both their successes and in their minds, their failures or problems. Among the major issues that were identified by virtually every group at that point was problems with student access to curricular offerings and also faculty concerns about lack of time during the day, particularly at that point for the learning of new technologies and instructional techniques. In 1992-93, these current realities or statements of what they thought the Glenbrooks were about then were evaluated, edited and combined for clarity and they were organized for study by six action groups, two of which considered the issues involved student access to curriculum and faculty concerns about time. At the year's end the action group on student access to the curriculum recommended that

teacher time be reconfigured and more flexible. Two, that parents and students be more involved and better educated about the scheduling process. Third, that alternative scheduling models be investigated and perhaps even piloted in years to come. And, fourth, the concept of a trimester schedule, three equal academic terms, be thoroughly studied. This concept was studied and it was determined that it would not be pursued further. At year's end, the action group on Time! Time! Time! recommended that a scheduling committee be formed to conduct research and to make specific recommendations on alternative scheduling models. In 1993-94 the recommendations from the six action groups were recombined into smaller, more tightly focused project management groups charged with making specific recommendations to the superintendent and the Board of Education. By mid-year the scheduling group had decided not to pilot an alternative scheduling model during the second semester for reasons of logistics. Specifically, reasons of digestion and nutrition. The committee couldn't figure out what to do about lunch periods. At the year's end, the same scheduling group recommended that for the short term in the following year that a pilot schedule be enacted in which half of all classes begin on Tuesday and the other half on Wednesday and for the long-term that research and evaluation of other scheduling models be continued, including block scheduling and other notable models. In 1994-95 the associate principals in charge of curriculum formed a committee of faculty, instructional supervisors, administrators and parents to further study the issue of scheduling. One of the first things the committee did was to decide not to pilot any proposed alternative schedules during that school year. They felt that we hadn't done enough study at that point and that the logistical problems for a short-term pilot would be such that both students and faculty would not feel invested enough to make the pilot, not just successful, but valid for future study. The committee also collected and discussed all sorts of print and video research on the organization of time during the school day and also many members of this committee attended several meetings of a group known as the Joint Consortium of Block Scheduling. Later that year, the scheduling committee established criteria for evaluating major scheduling models used nationally, including our current modular schedule. There are ten issues involving time which were applied to all major scheduling models and answered them looking at the models in comparison with each other, including our current modular schedule. 1.

1. Classroom time. Does this model provide classroom time fostering curriculum of depth and breadth within and between subject matters?
2. Out of classroom time. Does this model provide regular out of classroom time for students and students, students and teachers, and teachers and teachers to discuss academic, co-curricular and/or professional issues?
3. Student load. Does this model provide students with challenging, yet manageable academic workloads with varied, yet meaningful co-curricular opportunities?
4. Teacher load. Does this model provide teachers with manageable workloads in terms of numbers of students, classes, preparation, and other assignments?

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5. Teaching/learning styles. Does this model enable students to employ and students to experience teaching strategies and learning activities of varied form, duration and complexity?
6. Subject matter needs. Does this model accommodate particular needs of individual subject matter such as facilities, nature and frequency of homework, assessment, ability grouping and retention and reinforcement learning.
7. Student scheduling options. Does this model enable students to evaluate and chose appropriately among scheduling options as they relate to co-curricular and out of school opportunities or demands?
8. Exceptional student needs. Does this model provide time for teachers, administrators and staff members to identify and accommodate the exceptional needs of transfer, ESL, special education, at-risk and gifted students?
9. Curriculum and professional development. Does this model provide regular time for teachers, administrators and staff members to engage in curriculum and other professional development activities?
10. All school special events. Does this model provide periodic opportunities for all school concerts, athletic assemblies, speakers, mandated tests and guidance sessions with minimal disruption of classroom time?

Mr. Ruter stated that in the application of these criteria to all schedules, our own schedule faired rather poorly. Later that year all-school hearings were conducted at both schools where testimony, opinions and concerns were solicited from our colleagues from all departments. Feedback was reported back before year's end. The first thing the vision committee did in 1994-95 was to reach consensus to implement a new schedule if at all possible in the 1997-98 school year. Later in the year the committee conducted an extensive survey of literature yet another time, hosted a video conference with nationally-known scheduling guru Robert Lynn Kennedy, attended several other conferences and had many different discussions with the practitioners. A team of teachers and administrators from both the schools visited and evaluated schools around the country employing both a block schedule sometimes called 4 by 4 and an A/B or alternating block schedule. Consensus was reached last year that any new scheduling model for our high schools be shaped by the theory and practice of intensive block scheduling. The committee then focused its research and evaluation discussion on three specific models, a 16 mod hybrid model, a fifteen mod hybrid model and a 4 by 4 intensive block model. Before year's end, a general preference among many members was indicated for a sixteen mod hybrid model with the two other scheduling models receiving some support also. The committee requested that district administrators conduct some feasibility studies of the three models above in order to assess short-term and long-term implications of adopting any one of the schedules. Finally, three broad goals and six specific precepts were developed to guide the final adoption of the scheduling model. This year a steering committee composed of the superintendent, the two principals and other building administrators was formed to begin investigating

the implementation of a new scheduling model. Subcommittees were formed to begin addressing specific issues that derive from this new model and meetings began with the Glenbrook Education Association (GEA) to discuss the new schedule and its implications for the Professional Negotiations Agreement.

Mr. Ruter stated that the schedule that is going to be presented is a hybridized creation that seeks to accommodate the needs of as many stakeholders as possible, students first and foremost, but also teachers, administrators and parents. Mr. Ruter stated that the schedule has derived from five years of hard work that has sought to include everyone who chose to join in the effort to create a blueprint for the use of time that will, the committee thinks, propel the Glenbrooks out of the 1990's into the new millennium with both vigor and rigor.

Mr. Babington addressed the specific scheduling goals and the precepts developed to determine the actual schedule. The goals and precepts were applied to any schedule and what came of the iterations.

Goal #1 - Maximum opportunity for students to take classes that is manageable and focused. A day that is less hectic, better for students and the ability to get the help they need to learn the material and feel comfortable in the various subjects they are taking.

Goal #2 - Employment of a rich variety of teaching strategies. Allowing for the equity of the particular needs of individual subject matter departments. The ability to teach in a variety of ways and appreciate that each discipline has specific needs. That we would have the ability to assess students in a myriad of ways, that we would have the ability to allow staff to plan with each other and observe each other teaching. The end result would be an improved classroom environment for both staff and students.

Goal #3 - We could wait for the curriculum to motivate a schedule change or we could say that the schedule might be a catalyst for new curricular growth, interdisciplinary planning and professional development among staff. We will have subject matter revision, professional development and hopefully all school environment, not only all school programs. Studies have indicated that when people have moved to different schedules you see an invigorating new look at the schools. A different attitude exists and studies have indicated that most schools show that even if they weren't solidly behind the schedule change, there is a 90%+ acceptance by students and staff after a year or two of the new schedule.

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Mr. Babington stated that those are the goals for a new schedule. The precepts that the committee wants a schedule to meet are some definitions and specifics that fit with the goals. Manageable student load to the committee was that students would take no more than five classes on a given day. They might be taking more than five in a semester, but no more than 5 in a given day. That's a key shift for most of the students who are taking anywhere from a minimum of 6 because of board policy, but 7 or 8 possibly in a given day. The schedule would be coherent and logical and easily understood, meaning we won't have a 9 period day running concurrently with a 7 period day. All of the blocks that are bumping up against each other would be evened out. The opportunity for multiple course formats, yearlong courses meeting every day, intensive block taking a year and shrinking it into a semester or semester into a 9 weeks, alternate day and interdisciplinary courses. We want a schedule that has everything, that's the Glenbrook way. We're not coming to the Board saying we need more staff, we need more money. We should be able to accomplish what we want with the schedule that doesn't require a lot of extras. Finally, each school has had a lot of dialogue about implementing an Advocacy Program. Research now states that one of the greatest innovations that you can put into a school is the meaningful adult contact between every single student in your school on a daily basis.

Mrs. Taccona presented the background of the current schedule. She stated that it was a remnant of flexible modular scheduling that existed in the 1970's when it was truly flexible. We have currently a 28 mod day, with each mod being 15 minutes. Although it was flexible many years ago, our schedule is no longer flexible, it is cumbersome. Some courses are 40 minutes, some are 55 minutes. What exists is a 7 period and 9 period day running concurrently. It is a 28 mod day of 15 mods. If a student takes a 4 mod class, it bumps up against two 3 mod classes. So, that was one of the issues the committee addressed when they talked about student access to the curriculum and they hoped a new schedule will address.

The new schedule is a 16 mod day. Each mod is envisioned to take 25 minutes. Mrs. Taccona stated the courses would be 50 minutes in length and run the course of a year. Mrs. Taccona stated for purposes of describing the schedule the blocks would be referred to as small blocks and large blocks. A small block class would be 50 minutes running throughout the year similar to what a lot of the courses are doing now. The only difference is a course may now be 40 minutes or 55 running throughout the course of the year. Large block courses would be approximately 100 minutes in length and done in a more intensive format. They could be done in a format where a student would take one course for a semester or it could be on an alternating day basis (A day/B day). What is unique about the proposed schedule compared to the old flexible modular schedule that we have, is we have common breaks; whereas in the old schedule we had a lot more schedule lockout. A GBS freshman student would probably have homeroom for the first two mods. For the first semester the student would go for four mods which is approximately 100 minutes to an English class. Then

the student would go for 2 mods or 50 minutes to his math class, followed by a lunch period, followed by a science class, followed by PE and mods 15-16 would be another yearlong small block class which might be an elective or a foreign language. Mrs. Taccona described a sophomore, junior, and senior student schedule.

Mr. Babington addressed the schedule options that Glenbrook North is examining. He stated that some of the current student schedules were migrated into the block schedule for demonstration purposes. Mr. Babington described a variety of student schedule configurations for the Board.

Mrs. Taccona reviewed the teacher assignment for the Board. Teachers are currently assigned 2/3 of a 28 mod day or 20 mods or 5 classes. A foreign language teacher under the proposed schedule would teach 5 classes in a year. The difference is the impact of a large block might have on a teacher load. An English teacher would teach three large blocks the first semester and the second semester would teach 2 large blocks. Throughout the year the teacher would have 5 classes which is the same number of classes the teacher has under the current schedule. The difference comes when you look at the total number of students the teacher is dealing with on a daily basis. In a day first semester that teacher will see 78 students, in a day in the second semester that teacher will see 52 students. Some teachers would teach large and small block classes. The committee sees this is advantageous in developing relationships. Over the course of the year the teacher will still have the same number of students, they are just managed in a different way.

Sara Majors described the benefits the block schedule would have for students. The proposed schedule will allow students to take the same kinds, same number of classes, but not all at once and the students will have a better, more relaxed day. She would prefer to have students take four academic courses, but only two per day which is more like the students will experience on a college campus.

John Allen stated that the current schedule does not provide enough time for students to experience the quality and depth of learning that a 90 minute class period would allow. Increased classroom time will allow teachers to get to know their students better and if they know their students better they will know how to help their students learn. Mr. Allen stated that he visited schools in Utah where students are on the block schedule and could not find one student who thought the longer classes in block schedule was bad.

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Don Poynton reviewed benefits of the block schedule from a teacher's perspective. He stated that a block schedule would provide the opportunity to have students demonstrate an understanding of concepts in class before they are sent home to do homework. Large blocks should result in the teaching faculty having a large block time to do a major retooling in curricular development. The block schedule would allow teachers to change instruction to create an interactive learning community. The block schedule would allow time for cooperative teamwork and alternate assessments. The longer class period will allow teachers to get to know students better and address student grievances and foster a climate of civility.

Mr. Court shared the plans to testing the proposed schedule after October 1. A model schedule will be used taking all the courses students are currently enrolled in now and putting them into various configurations that were discussed this evening and see if the schedule works. The committee would like to maintain what we value and enhance the overall delivery system for our students and produce a better day for students and faculty and staff. Between October 1 and November 1, we should have an answer if all the things we talked about can fall into place.

Mr. Babington reviewed instructional strategies needed in a block schedule. Classroom management skills may be different in a block schedule, building relationships and a climate of civility. Mr. Babington stated that whether we go to a new schedule or not, these are important things to talk about.

Dr. McGrew recognized two community representatives who served on the committee, Kate Katz and Karen Roloff and other parents who are not in attendance.

Dr. McGrew asked Dr. Conlin if the Board would like to schedule a meeting to answer Board member questions on the block schedule. Dr. Conlin polled the Board and consensus was to meet on October 7 at 7:30 p.m. to answer Board member, parent, community and media questions. Board members were asked to submit their questions in advance to Dr. McGrew or Mrs. Taccona.

Note: See attached agenda item #5

#### **REVIEW AND SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING**

Dr. McGrew conducted a review and summary of the Board meeting.

