

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING,  
BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL  
DISTRICT #225, COOK COUNTY,  
ILLINOIS, MAY 11, 2013**

A special meeting of the Board of Education, School District No. 225 was held on Monday, May 11, 2013, at approximately 8:00 a.m. at Glenbrook North High School Library, pursuant to due notice of all members and the public.

The president called the meeting to order. Upon calling of the roll, the following members answered present:

Boron, Doughty, Hanley, Martin, Shein, Taub, Wilkas

Absent:

Also present: Caliendo, Petrarca (attorney), Petrungaro (attorney), Pryma, Riggle, Siena, Wegley, Williamson

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING**

Motion by Mr. Boron, seconded by Mr. Taub to approve the agenda for this meeting.

Upon calling of the roll:

aye: Boron, Doughty, Hanley, Martin, Shein, Taub, Wilkas

nay: none

Motion carried 7-0.

**RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY VISITORS**

None.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION: DISTRICT INITIATIVES FOR 2013-2014**

Dr. Riggle introduced the district initiatives. A list of initiatives from 2012-2013 was distributed along with a draft of initiatives for 2013-2014.

Dr. Williamson provided a brief update regarding the Student Engagement Initiative and the work that had been completed during the 2012-13 school year. She touched upon the digital learning initiative that had recently been reported to the Board. Dr. Williamson also provided information relative to the study of homework, from which there was not as much progress due to other tasks such as PowerSchool implementation and contract negotiations. The homework initiative will continue into the

next school year and is especially relevant with the expansion of digital learning and Glenbrook South's move to the block schedule.

Mrs. Siena provided an update regarding district initiatives from the business office. She reviewed potential savings as a result of changes made from the retro-commissioning study. This may result in over \$100k savings each year and represents net savings taking into account the cost of the retro-commissioning study.

Mr. Taub asked about the differences in savings between the schools.

Dr. Riggle explained the differences due to the infrastructure of each building.

Mr. Doughty asked if the recommendations from the retro-commissioning had already been implemented.

Dr. Riggle stated that this information was previously brought to the Board.

Mrs. Siena indicated that there was \$146k in savings.

Mr. Shein asked if the district had reduced the amount of printing.

Mrs. Siena stated that printing has been reduced, but with the new copier and printing bid the district will be better able to monitor who is printing and provide an incentive or disincentive to reduce the amount of printing.

Mrs. Hanley stated that even though the initiative was completed, she asked if the district will continue to implement changes.

Dr. Riggle confirmed that the district will continue with this, but this no longer needs to be an initiative.

Mrs. Siena stated that the district will reduce ongoing expenditures as part of a rolling three-year budget reduction plan.

Mr. Martin asked if a new list of budget reductions is being prepared.

Mrs. Siena stated that a new list will be presented today.

Dr. Riggle stated that the position of Assistant Superintendent for Education Services needs to be reviewed as it relates to getting curriculum work done. He referenced Board Policy 1030

that speaks to the importance of coordination between the schools. He suggested that the Board consider moving the responsibility for Board meeting minutes to a recording secretary because this takes time away from curriculum work. The Assistant Superintendent would still serve in the role of Board Secretary, would not be directly responsible for producing the minutes of Board meetings, but would still attend all Board meetings.

Dr. Riggle stated that Dr. Williamson will provide a future update on the student wellness initiative related to gaps identified in looking at trend data related to concussions, mental health issues and increasing numbers of students on homebound tutoring.

Dr. Caliendo provided an update regarding the initiatives in human resources. Ongoing work will be done in the area of student achievement related to teacher evaluation. Evaluation ratings of teachers were implemented this year.

Mr. Petrarca explained that the law requires a joint committee to determine how student achievement data will be incorporated into teacher evaluation. He stated that performance ratings will be used to determine reduction in force; this is no longer based only upon seniority.

Dr. Riggle provided an update relative to initiatives in the area of PR and communications. The mobile version of the website still needs to be resolved. A new mobile site will be launched in August. A survey has been conducted and a report relative to website will be provided in the summer.

Dr. Riggle stated that the district is not yet where it should be relative to key messages. There is a need to establish consistent themes that support what the district believes in. Style guidelines were completed and are being implemented.

Dr. Riggle stated that this is related to the goal of increasing taxpayer exposure to official messages. Key communicators have been identified. Village entities were pulled in for a seminar on crisis communications. Revised crisis communication plans were implemented and work was done with sender districts. Dr. Riggle stated that more intensive work will take place on June 4 relative to crisis communication.

Mr. Thimm provided an update in the area of technology. There has been a focus on disaster recovery and system enhancements. HP servers were replaced by Dell servers and storage where staff and student data and applications reside. The district will build-out infrastructure to insure that we are always online with our applications.

Dr. Riggle stated that the robustness of redundancy was enhanced in the area of internet access. Capacity will be seven times what it is now in planning for the future. There should be 100 MB available for every 1000 students and staff.

Mrs. Hanley asked if costs are reduced from sharing internet capacity with other entities.

Dr. Riggle stated that this was being done.

Mr. Thimm explained how this is affected by timing of contracts of the sender districts and the impact on purchasing power in driving vendor prices down.

Mr. Boron asked if this sharing with feeder districts will provide the ability to integrate 8<sup>th</sup> grader information into our system.

Dr. Riggle stated that this will help with the integration of health records in the future.

Mr. Shein asked if there had there been testing of redundancy.

Mr. Thimm stated that when some servers have had to be shut down and restarted there was no noticeable difference among the staff.

Dr. Riggle shifted to district initiatives for 2013-2014. He stated that these can be discussed and revised, but the intent was not for this to occur today. Dr. Riggle provided some detail regarding these initiatives. Some of the proposed initiatives will be brought to the Facilities Committee that will not be human dependent.

Mr. Boron asked if a facilities study needed to be done at the Off Campus building.

Dr. Riggle stated that there are not the same concerns. The design of that building was very thorough.

Dr. Riggle stated that an enrollment study is being done with the help of Dr. Schilling. This will be brought to the Facilities Committee.

Dr. Riggle stated that tenants will move out of 3801 West Lake in 2014. The administration will have worked on a redesign with the architects.

Mr. Boron stated that there will be one tenant remaining and asked if the district will have to build around that person. He asked if it makes sense to buy them out of their lease.

Dr. Riggle stated that was suggested three years ago and the individual could be approached again.

Mrs. Siena stated that the 3801 building is not efficient and needs upgrading.

Mrs. Siena reviewed a long-range cost containment plan on health insurance.

Dr. Riggle reviewed initiatives in curriculum and instruction. He stated that there needs to be a discussion of academic program review. By policy, 20% of curriculum is reviewed every year and this will feed into the common core initiative. There needs to be more Board discussion in this area.

Dr. Riggle reviewed the proposed initiative regarding staff engagement. When staff are engaged in the worksite this benefits student engagement. Our product is based upon human endeavors and building relationships, how people feel about their jobs and view themselves as a professional. This year the district did not participate in the Chicago workplace study, but was nominated again by a staff member

Dr. Caliendo described Applitrack changes to arrive at a more uniform process for hiring people. Dr. Caliendo explained changes to Applitrack.

Dr. Caliendo stated that human resources will be involved in the health insurance initiative.

Mr. Martin asked about the staff morale survey that was done last fall.

Dr. Riggle stated that the district can build on the data from the Workplace Dynamics if we want to in the future.

Mr. Martin asked if this fall the process will start again.

Dr. Riggle stated that the district will come back to that in the fall.

Dr. Riggle stated in PR/Communications an update of a plan will be brought to the Board. There will be a review of the work done in the last three years. The district will look at better means to communicate district initiatives to the community and staff.

A wellness and technology overview was provided by Dr. Riggle. The district needs to make coordinated efforts in looking at data storage. Dr. Riggle gave examples of things that need to be brought forward in a uniform fashion.

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Mr. Doughty asked if the condition is that the district has the data, but needs to store it differently.

Mr. Thimm provided examples of the limitations of data storage and retrieval. If the old hardware fails we need to establish a framework for data storage.

The Board discussed issues of record retention.

Mr. Shein asked that the administration provide record retention guidelines to the Board.

Related to technology initiatives, Dr. Riggle stated that assistive technology needs to have the support systems to provide training and installing of applications.

#### **DISCUSSION/ACTION: BOARD COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Petrarca introduced his colleague, James Petrunaro.

Mr. Petrarca described the manual prepared by the law firm relative to Board member training. Anybody newly elected, re-elected or appointed is required to go through training in education labor law, accountability and fiduciary responsibilities. Training must take place in the first year and the district must post on its website the names of the members who have completed training.

Mr. Petrarca reviewed student record retention guidelines relative to permanent and temporary records. He explained that the district must petition the local records commission each year in order to destroy records.

Mr. Petrarca stated that all Board members must take an oath of office that encourages free expression while respecting the rights of staff and students. Board members must render a decision only by majority vote. There have been a lot of cases where individual board members were acting outside of the group. Board members are required to abide by the majority decision of the Board. There is an IASB code of ethics that applies to personal conduct of Board members.

Mr. Petrarca stated that there can be problems of Board members communicating via e-mail. These e-mails are subject to FOIA even if using personal e-mail. What matters is the nature of the communication relative to school business. Internal communication is subject to disclosure under FOIA; however, there are exceptions to FOIA.

Mr. Petrarca suggested a chain of command for communication through the Board president or superintendent.

Mr. Petrarca referenced the FOIA statute. He described public records - that these are very broadly defined in Illinois. These are all records related to transaction of public business. He suggested that Board members assume that everything and anything Board members create is subject to FOIA.

Mr. Petrarca stated that exemptions to FOIA are permissive, but not mandatory.

In response to Board member questions, Mr. Petrarca gave some examples.

The question of archiving e-mails was raised.

Dr. Riggle stated that the district archives all e-mails. This includes the account that the district gave Board members.

Mr. Petrarca stated that opinions of the Attorney General are not the law, nor are they binding.

Mr. Doughty asked about Open Meetings Act (OMA) provisions.

Mr. Petrarca stated that if more than two Board members are communicating at the same time then this is a violation of OMA. Mr. Petrarca stated that one-way communication is not a problem. He reviewed various examples.

Mr. Petrungaro clarified that Board members can't use the superintendent to pass on messages that would constitute a broader conversation in violation of OMA.

Mrs. Wilkas asked if personal e-mails can be FOIA'd.

Mr. Petrungaro confirmed that this was the case.

#### **DISCUSSION/ACTION: VENDORS/RFP PROCESS**

Mr. Petrungaro defined RFP's and RFQ's and stated that in general terms these are used to invite vendors in and get opinions. These are usually part of the bidding process.

Mr. Petrungaro reviewed the types of contracts that have to be bid. Some contracts are exempt from this process, but the Board may still want to bid them.

He stated that any contract with of greater than \$25k has to be bid. Boards can have a policy that lowers that limit. Projects can't be split up to be exempt from the \$25k rule.

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Mr. Petrungaro stated that the district has to bid insurance and provided some examples.

He stated that the Board is bound to accept the lowest qualified bid. The district first needs to determine if a bidder is qualified and then consider price.

Mr. Petrungaro reviewed exceptions to the bidding statutes and highlighted types of contracts that schools often bid.

Mr. Petrungaro reviewed a process for ranking proposals submitted for bid and gave examples of a RFQ or RFP approach.

Dr. Riggle asked about common problems that emerge when working with vendors.

Mr. Petrungaro explained any type of "insider trading" related to the public bid process. Once bids are announced, there is usually a pre-bid meeting to provide more information on the specifications. After this meeting if the specifications are to change, this has to be done publically and the district can't engage in individual communication with vendors.

Mr. Petrarca stated that Boards who want to show a preference for local vendors can present issues because it is not allowed to accept bids just to keep dollars local. If a bid is outside the range of the rest of the bids sometimes a vendor is awarded the bid and there can be problems after that.

Dr. Riggle stated that all bids are thoroughly vetted before they come to the board.

Mr. Petrarca stated that sometimes in pre-bid meetings information can come to individuals which gives the impression of some perceived advantage. The district has to be careful in the communication loop with bidders. It is a Class 4 Felony to convey information outside of bids. Board members cannot contact a potential bidder and provide more information.

Mr. Taub suggested if the district went out for bid on everything, this provides additional transparency.

Mr. Petrungaro stated that it is not practical to bid everything, especially things under \$25k.

Mr. Petrarca stated that Board members should not have any connection to bidders.



Mr. Martin suggested that since this presentation time counts as part of required Board member training, he asked the administration to provide other information relative to required training.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION: EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD FOR ADDITIONAL COSTS**

Dr. Riggle stated as the district is looking at a variety of initiatives and change, this will bring additional costs. He asked the Board about things that the administration should keep in mind when changes bring additional cost.

Mr. Shein stated with the change in schedule at GBS there was a substantial cost piece which should have been front and center with long-term implications.

Mr. Shein commented that the Board often takes time discussing spending money that has already been approved in the budget.

Mr. Doughty stated that he wants new ideas brought forward and wants to hear of ways to improve. He doesn't want to say no to new initiatives; however, the administration needs to be conscious of protecting taxpayer interests. Price is part of the consideration. The administration has found ways to save money.

Mr. Taub stated that this is an excellent school system and spoke of preserving intergenerational equity. He asked if the Board is committed to this and committed to extending opportunities for students. He stated that he would like to see the administration cost out an expansion of the Academy.

Mrs. Wilkas stated that she is assuming that initiatives will cost some money to do. She stated that the process is important to her and the administration has methodically considered initiatives. Mrs. Wilkas stated that she did not know if people felt that an added cost for block schedule was not presented. She stated that the same would happen if Academy were expanded. She stated that as long as the administration carefully considers all of the options, the Board can decide if they want spend the money. The administration should show that the initiative will benefit the students.

Mr. Martin stated that recently the administration has done a good job and the system is working very well.

Mr. Boron stated that Mrs. Siena does well in managing finances and each year the district ends up with a budget surplus. He stated that sometimes there is an issue with truth in labeling such as in the digital pilot. In that case, the Board subsidy

was shown, but reductions were applied in which case the district would still have copier savings regardless of the digital pilot.

Dr. Riggle stated that this was not an attempt to deceive. The administration showed possible sources of money that reduced the cost. The reduction in the technology budget is real. The administration was trying to be helpful, not trying to deceive.

Mrs. Hanley stated that it helped to see the source of funds.

Mr. Shein asked if Board members felt that they are getting enough and the right kind of information. He summarized that it sounds like, in general, that people are happy with the information that they are getting.

Mrs. Siena suggested that the tentative budget time is where specifics of anticipated increases in spending would be determined.

Mrs. Siena explained that there is old money in reserves for future student needs because of increasing enrollment and facility needs. The new money from the tax levy and repurposed money is already accounted for in the budget.

Mr. Shein stated that switching money around in the budget does not matter to the taxpayer.

Mrs. Siena stated that it does matter how money is shifted around in the budget.

Dr. Riggle stated that the administration wants to give enough information early and often.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS**

Dr. Riggle distributed revised agenda for an upcoming Board meeting with some new topics. He reviewed changes in the agenda with the addition of student trips.

Dr. Riggle distributed the New Trier parent letter related to their expanded iPad pilot.

Dr. Riggle distributed the college reports from last fall. The Board discussed the timing of college reports and National Clearinghouse data.

Mr. Taub asked for clarification regarding college readiness. He suggested showing measures of college readiness.

Mr. Shein stated that Oakton is extending more opportunities for dual credit and concurrent enrolment.

**MOTION TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION**

Motion by Mr. Boron, seconded by Mrs. Hanley to move into closed session at approximately 11:24 a.m. To consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity; collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees (Section 2(c) (1) and (2) of the Open Meeting Act).

Upon calling of the roll:

aye: Boron, Doughty, Hanley, Martin, Shein, Taub, Wilkas

Nay: none

Motion carried 7-0.

The Board returned to open session at 12:10 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Doughty, seconded by Mrs. Wilkas to adjourn the meeting at approximately 12:10 p.m.

Upon call for a vote on the motion, all present voted aye.\*

Motion carried 7-0.

\* Boron, Doughty, Hanley, Martin, Shein, Taub, Wilkas

CERTIFIED TO BE CORRECT:

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PRESIDENT - BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SECRETARY - BOARD OF EDUCATION

**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS:**

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Monday, May 13, 2013 7:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting (**GBN Library**)