

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL SESSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2011
LEARNING CENTER CONFERENCE ROOM
Minutes**

Board President Tim Witzmann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken. Present were board members Tim Witzmann, Brian Moulton, Catherine Cranston, Robert Gunther, Mike Connor, Marie Colbeth and Marin Hansch.

Colbeth moved, with second by Connor, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Moulton moved, with second by Colbeth, to approve the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approve winter coaching/advising assignments

Motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent Randy Rosburg introduced Bill Foster, President of School Perceptions. Mr. Foster provided an overview of the Community Survey, which his company prepared in conjunction with Somerset School District to assist with data gathering efforts from the community. Rosburg stated he met Foster at last year's education convention in Milwaukee; Foster's company was highly recommended by other school districts, including Glenwood City.

Foster provided a high-level overview of the Community Survey results, indicating the school district received 493 responses—both on-line and on paper. Foster broke out the various respondent groups into "All Residents," Non-Parents," "Parents," and "Staff." Board members agreed the district needs to expand communication efforts due to several areas that were marked "Not Sure." Board members also recognized that the "Non-Parent" group provides a challenge for the school district.

Foster said several results rose up that were very clear including support from all respondent groups for the campus location and having all buildings on one campus.

Non support of a referendum was also very clear from the "Non-Parent" group. Satisfaction of communication from the "Non-parent" is low, and Foster indicated the board may want to use this as a leveraging point for more communications with this group.

Foster compared Somerset School District's survey results with other school district surveys, stating research has found that staff attitudes regarding their school district is very important since school staff are typically the first line of communication with the community. Foster stated research also indicates the community feels the people that have the most credibility in school districts are janitorial staff. Foster stated there are different ways the district may create staff satisfaction.

Foster stated there is a clear need for more classroom space in the school buildings however, if an election was held today, a referendum would not pass. Foster said the survey provided the community with seven building options, but did not indicate what the district was thinking about doing and did not test a price point under \$22 million. Foster indicated the district may have had a more favorable response in this area of the survey if the options had been constricted so that the community could better understand what the district wants or needs to do.

Some board members were concerned about responses from the survey that indicated there was not support for “any” referendum, and felt the board needed to look at other options such as year-round schooling and internet class options which had favorable results in the survey.

Foster recommended the board consider a referendum that would address smaller and more critical maintenance needs of the district such as the middle school boiler, as that garnered favorable survey responses as well.

Foster ended his recommendations by stating other results of the survey indicates the district should enhance communication with the Non-parent group, share its community survey results externally, and engage more with staff. People are much more likely to support the district if they understand what the district does. Foster reminded the board that the recommendations laid out tonight were done to provide a framework for the BOE to work with and adjust.

Board discussed the timing of the surveys and communication of results. Foster indicated some districts send out surveys every year or more. Rosburg stated the district will need to go through a cycle of planning, dissemination, acting and measuring before it can submit another survey to the community.

Colbeth moved, with second by Cranston, to move to Executive Session in Accordance with Wis. Statutes 19.85 (1), (c) for the purpose of discussing performance of a staff member and benefit data of a supervisory support staff employee. Motion carried unanimously.

Tim Witzmann, President

Catherine Cranston, Clerk