

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2012
7:00 PM
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.

Approve Agenda: Cranston moved, with second by Connor, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

President Witzmann thanked all for coming, stating the board wanted to make the subject of employee handbook salary compensation as transparent as possible. He said the board has also appreciated feedback from the group that has been working with the HR Committee. Witzmann indicated the HR Committee wanted the full board to discuss this subject of the handbook. He stated that the board would recognize audience members if necessary. Witzmann stated Superintendent Randy Rosburg and Middle School teacher Lorri Baillargeon will tag team and share the compensation issues brought forward from the HR Committee as a presentation this evening. Witzmann stated the board will need to decide how staff will be compensated.

Rosburg presented the main teacher headings and what will be discussed this evening, stating the board will need to discuss main areas such as step movement, lanes, credits, curriculum planning, special projects compensation, alternative movement, and special writing. Rosburg also presented support staff topics the board will need to address in the next several months. Baillargeon thanked the board for this opportunity tonight, stating the teachers appreciated the opportunity for input.

Employee Handbook/ACT 10: Rosburg explained what the Employee Handbook (EH) is and its replacement of Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

Teacher Compensation/Teacher Salary Schedule: Rosburg presented several options in this area along with a sample of the district's teacher salary schedule from 2011-12. He also reviewed a Draft 2012-13 Salary Schedule.

Traditional Step and Lane Pay Scale Incorporating PDP: Baillargeon explained that teachers who are licensed after 2004 are required to complete a Professional Development Plan (PDP). Teachers licensed before 2004 are required to take 6 credits. Baillargeon indicated that a pay scale such as a traditional step and lane scale, would incorporate the Initial Educator, Professional Educator, and ME License Renewals.

Values—Performance Merit, Incentive Compensation: Rosburg stated this area of compensation would be above and beyond the salary schedule, and there would be several options in how this could be done.

Draft Compensation Framework: Rosburg showed samples of what a framework may look like and how they would be measured for performance areas, indicating this model does not tie into student achievement or wages, nor did it create competition amongst teachers. Rosburg added that student achievement comes through the Supervision and Evaluation Model which will reflect whether or not a teacher is struggling.

Supervision and Evaluation Model: Rosburg indicated the existing Supervision and Evaluation Model works well however, performance indicators need to be infused into the model.

Concerns: Baillargeon voiced several concerns with the models as presented by Rosburg, including a concern with financial and administrative burdens for the district, complexities and complicated performance measurements, teacher evaluations, and student achievement ties to performance-based compensation, which is only compensated at a CPI rate. Baillargeon added that with the current Supervision and Evaluation model, not every teacher is evaluated in a detailed manner every year. She also stated teachers would like to continue with the traditional compensation steps and feel a committee could be formed to conduct a trial run for the framework compensation as presented by Rosburg. Witzmann asked for clarification of financial burden for administrators. Rosburg stated that burden is still unknown, however, Middle Border Superintendents will be meeting later in March with Ken Deakman of Slipka-Deakman Associates to review a teacher performance software model.

Support Staff: Rosburg stated WASB legal counsel suggested the district remain with an hourly rate of pay for this group of employees.

Rosburg summed up the presentation stated the EH may come before the board for approval in April or May, and the compensation portion will need to be a part of that handbook, which needs to be in place by July 1, 2012.

Witzmann and other board members thanked Rosburg and Baillargeon for their work and presentation. Witzmann stated he wants to be sure the board looks at teacher performance and not student performance tied to teacher performance. Witzmann stated effective teachers positively affect student performance, and said the board and strongly supports the continued growth of teachers. Rosburg stated he will ask other districts if they are including performance-based compensation and will report back to the board.

Rosburg stated several compensation options for the district would be to stay with a 2% CPI/ U option to freeze and have an across the board wage increase, or allow teachers to move to the next step and the remaining dollars could be used to increase base wage, or the board could budget a dollar amount and put dollars aside for wage compensation. Rosburg stated the board will need to determine a solution that will work. Witzmann stated he would like to see the district test an option for a year or two to make sure the district is moving in the right direction.

Rosburg asked if all teachers should receive an equal wage. Moulton asked for feedback from the teachers in the audience to this question. Several comments included concerns about incentives for getting and retaining younger teachers, different types of living expenses for new teachers versus veteran teachers, expenses for continuing education, and required credit expenses. Some in the audience felt traditional steps and lanes are better for planning for teachers, the Supervision and Evaluation model has an incentive to keep teaching job in this district, look at ways to expand and promote a positive work environment, aim at establishing a competitive salary and focus the rest on culture, and encourage teachers to complete their Master's program to foster a positive ripple affect not only for students, but also other teachers. Members in the audience also asked the board to be careful when providing incentives so that collaboration amongst teachers, and not competition, creates a great teaching culture. Some felt incentive awards to PLC teams based on their work may be a good teacher incentive. Some also felt teacher prep time was equally important to pay wages to allow teachers the resources to continue to do great work.

Connor stated he would like to see models of what other schools are doing. Rosburg said that at present, there are not many other unique models from other school districts, but he will look into that.

Rosburg asked the board what administration can do for them to help provide the information the board needs to move forward in crafting compensation language. Witzmann stated the board will need to continue to meet on this issue and place their plans on the table. Witzmann said the Human Resources Committee is nearly finished with the employee handbook, so the compensation pieces will need to be completed to include in the handbook, and that the goal is to complete this with existing board members.

Witzmann stated he would like to see Middle Border Conference comparisons, which Rosburg stated he can get at the next MBC superintendents' meeting. Board members would like Baillargeon and Rosburg to continue to meet amongst themselves and other teachers to continue to look at compensation options. Witzmann stated that it was not intentional that the board did not address support staff language at tonight's meeting, however, the teacher compensation framework is more complex, and the goal was to discuss that issue first, and then discuss the support staff language. Witzmann stated the board greatly appreciates what support staff does to assist teachers and students in the district.

Witzmann indicated the board has two upcoming opportunities to discuss compensation language, and will do so at a special session and during the regular session on Monday, March 19, 2012. Witzmann ended tonight's meeting thanking everyone for coming, stating the board is fully aware of staff efforts and the wonderful things that are happening in the district for kids, and the board does not want to change that.

Colbeth moved, with second by Cranston, to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. Motion carried.

Tim Witzmann, President

Catherine Cranston, Clerk