

REGULAR MEETING - BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
Minutes
April 20, 2009

Colbeth moved, with second by Gunther to move to Executive Session in Accordance with Wis. Statutes 19.85 (1), (c) for the purpose of discussing performance, compensation, and benefit data of administrators, teachers, support staff, and supervisory support staff employees at 6:00 p.m.. Motion carried unanimously.

Conner moved, with second by Colbeth, to move into open session at 6:37 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of K-12 Education Journey with High School Seniors:

Taylor Dabrowski said he attended St. Anne's School until 5th grade, and felt math was difficult at St. Anne's but when he came to Somerset, it was Mr. Thompson who helped him to understand and excel at math, and has been a great friend to him. Taylor felt he obtained the most character education through Mr. Larson who helped prepare them for future life. He gives his education here at Somerset an A-plus and feels he is ready for college.

Phyllip Vanasse came to Somerset school from St. Anne's. He felt there could be better class selections, but was able to take hard classes which he believes helped to prepare him for the future. He felt the sports were great, with good coaches. Sports provided great experiences to learn discipline and team aspects. He said he didn't like required physical education, especially being actively involved in sports. He felt that he learned and worked hard enough in sports so physical education was not necessary for him; felt phy. ed. got in the way of classes which would have helped him prepare for college. He desired to learn more about cars, basic electronics and felt that there should be more classes. He felt block scheduling made it difficult to get more classes in.

Britni Weise stated she has been enrolled as a student in Somerset schools her entire life. Athletically she felt she was pushed farther than ever before. Having the ability and push from adults was an amazing experience for her. She states classes that she wanted were offered. She has a special interest in accounting and classes for accounting were acceptable and more difficult ones were available to her through WITC. Teachers in middle and high school were very positive and she liked all of them. She felt they gave great support and also pushed her further in her interests.

Kim Clayton stated she felt all the teachers were great and feels overall her time here was well spent. She wished that 8th grade to high school could have been a better transition as she feels she wasn't ready for it as transitioning to high school was difficult. Character education was important, and gave her balance between family and school. In college, she is going to be a cheerleader. Cheerleading in Somerset was a disappointing experience for her due to the issues of keeping a coach. She hopes that something could be done to get a coach who can manage them and will stay with the district.

Shayleen Ottman came to Somerset in middle school. She felt it was hard to make friends there. She thought it was easy to jump into high school and loved the shadowing which was offered. Basic Doc was a class that was difficult for her but feels that it was extremely important for her. She learned many things in this class to help her prepare for the future. She also believes every high school student should have one class with Mr. Walker and feels that what he taught her was extremely beneficial for her. Band and sports were all good experiences for her. She would like to see the district offer: swimming classes, gymnastics, more fine arts and possibly photography. Feels automotive classes would be beneficial as she drives a car and wishes that she knew more of how to take care of it.

Anna DuRand also came to Somerset schools from St. Anne's. She felt she was prepared coming in and feels she is now prepared for college. A minor change she suggests would be to forgo the portfolio's. She has not had any interest in them and feels it would be best to see them incorporated in a class.

Other additional comments from students included: Mr. Thompson teaches college level classes and students felt he is a great asset in math and physics, however some students felt Mr. Thompson is restricted due to classroom space and needing to share classes with other teachers. Also, some students felt ALC classes would be better if offered during daytime hours, not just afternoon/evening.

Moulton read the rules for groups or individuals wishing to be heard. Michael Meyer, representing a local club tennis team, asked to be heard. Meyer stated a boys' tennis team was recently organized by a group of high school students. The team has coaches and uniforms, a schedule of six to eight matches, and is attempting to schedule more tennis matches. Meyer said there are currently 13 students involved in the club. The club has been working with the Parks Department and would like the school to work with the Parks Director to ask that boys' and girls' tennis be school sponsored in the future. The Parks Department is looking at redoing the courts in the Village. Currently the following schools have teams in the conference: Osceola, Prescott and Somerset.

On behalf of the Facilities Committee, Cranston moved, with second by Colbeth, to approve the plans and bid documents for the North Access Road, Walk/Bike Trail, Lighting and Alt Bids 1 & 2. A conversation was held by the board and Russ Kiviniemi of Cedar Corp. Kiviniemi indicated the motion was only approval for Cedar Corp to go forth with the bidding process. At the March board meeting, the board gave approval of the two (2) options currently in front of them. Kiviniemi indicated since that time, soil boring has been completed and no soil issues have been found. Xcel energy is currently working on several different lighting options and will have options for them to choose from at the next board meeting. Xcel has indicated they are working the district's timeline for completion. Kiviniemi asked what the board would like to do with extra topsoil, indicating they estimate there will be seven to eight thousand extra yards. The board indicated they would like the topsoil stockpiled onsite for possible use in future construction. Kiviniemi said typical construction time on the project will be from 7:00 am to 7 pm daily, and questions if this would interfere with any district activities. Rosburg indicated summer school activities would be affected, however, the district will work to make alternate arrangements. Bids will go out and be opened at the District Office on April 30th, 2009 at 11:00 am. Results from the bid opening will be shared at the May board meeting. Motion carried.

The board recognized State Wrestling Participant Darren Emmeck, son of Mike and Lana Emmeck. Coach Mike Kappers introduced Emmeck and commended Emmeck on his many accomplishments and growth during the past four years of high school wrestling. Emmeck was presented with a certificate of achievement, and thanked the board for their recognition. Emmeck then introduced his parents.

The board recognized International Football Participants Bryan Witzmann, son of Tim and Caren Witzmann, and Darren Emmeck, son of Mike and Lana Emmeck. Coach Bruce Larson introduced Witzmann and Emmeck, stating it was an honor for the two seniors to be chosen to travel to Japan, and discussed some of the highlights of their trip.

The board recognized 2009 Kohl Fellowship Recipient Nancy Klaas, Special Education Teacher. Darren Kern introduced Klaas, stating she has worked for the school district for the past 17 years and has been a tremendous asset, not only to the district, but to the community as she is always helping others in need. Nancy comes to work every day with a wonderful attitude and is always encouraging students to do their best. Nancy was presented with a certificate of recognition from the board.

The board recognized Scholar Athletes Amy Wells, daughter of Karen & Scott Wells, and Michael Meyer, son of Patti & Gerald Meyer. Both students were presented with certificate of achievement awards from board members.

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

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of March 23, 2009 of the School Board
- B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Session of April 6, 2009 of the School Board
- C. Approve payment of March/April Board Bills
- D. Approval of Parental Leave for Eva (Armstrong) Groth for 1 year during the 2009-10 School Year
- E. Approve Mollie Leiser as Long-Term Sub for Early Childhood Spec Educ. for 1 year during the 2009-10 School Year
- F. Approve Jamie Koscinski as .50 FTE Special Education Aide at the Middle School for the 2008-09 School Year
- G. Approve hiring of Brad Nemeck, Summer School Director
- H. Approve hiring of Sandy Nemeck, Summer School Secretary

- I. Approve 2008-09 Spring Coaching Assignments
- J. Approve Family Means Renewal Contract for March 15, 2009 through March 14, 2010 for Employee Assistance Prog.
- K. Approve Interagency Agreement Between Somerset School District and Four Seasons Childcare, Inc.
- L. Approve the Wisconsin Investment Series Cooperative (WISC) Resolution
- M. Approve the 403(b) Plan Resolution Adding Jackson National as a Provider
- N. Approve proposal from Cyclone Fence to install fencing around new soccer field

Motion carried.

Business Services Manager Robert Avery reported on the Governance Committee Meeting held April 6, 2009. The committee reviewed board transportation policies EEA/Student Transportation Services, EEAB/Bus Routing and Scheduling, and EEAB-R/Bus Rider Pick-UP and Discharge Point Guidelines, and the impact of a second entrance on bus routes. Avery presented transportation policies noting a benefit of implementing the current policies would eliminate one entire bus route resulting in a savings of approximately \$45,000 per year. The area in question is currently serviced by one and one-half (1 ½) bus routes. The walk paths will alleviate any hazards. No change in the current district policy was necessary to make a request for a determination. A determination request has been sent to St. Croix County, which will notify DPI of its decision. DPI will then notify the district.

Avery also gave a report on budget planning for 2009-2010 to include staffing requests. No new needs were previously identified, however one request was recently brought to the attention of the Business Services Committee. Pupil Services Director Kern is requesting that the school psychologist position, which is currently a half time position, be increased to full time status. Kern will report later in the meeting on this topic. Avery also reported on the technology bid and financing needs approval this evening. Gunther questioned why HP was the only vendor. Avery advised this topic will also be up for further discussion a little later in the meeting.

Rosburg reported on current enrollment numbers, with enrollment slightly increasing by two students to 1,595. Rosburg also discussed the upcoming Board Retreat to be held on Monday, April 27, 2009. The focus of the retreat will be reporting out of the 2008-2009 district goals, followed by establishment of goals for the 2009-2010 school year. Rosburg then discussed board officer positions and advised that board members contact Witzmann to let him know what committees/assignments they may want to be a part of for the 2009-2010 school year. Board members also need to indicate to other board members if they are interested in a position as a board officer. The officer assignments will be discussed and will be voted on at the retreat.

Cranston gave an update on CESA 11. She indicated the annual meeting will be in Turtle Lake on June 1st. She will be attending and representing the district.

Board members then gave an update on community involvement. Cranston has been attending baseball and softball games, and has noticed more spectator involvement/participation. Colbeth reported she attended the Empty Bowls project and said she was impressed with the talents, level of motivation and the experiences of all involved. Rosburg visited with a community input group at Sophia's and said Dr. Rutscher, veterinarian of the local animal hospital, would like to become involved with middle and high school students to coach them regarding classes they would need to take if they choose to enter the veterinarian field. Dr. Rutscher indicated he is willing to hire and mentor students in this field. Avery invited the community to an upcoming show at the Phipps, featuring his brother's artwork.

Business Service Manager, Robert Avery presented a finance/budget update. Regarding the issue of property tax receipts discussed last month: At that time he had indicated some concern about uncollected property taxes and the impact of that on cash flow this summer. Avery said he did some additional research and shared with members how the process works. Summarizing the process, Avery indicated that, with the tax formula in place with area municipalities, if—because of a downturn in the economy—tax payers are unable to pay their property taxes this year, it will not negatively impact the district's fiscal position as the municipalities pay the district what is owed at that time, not what is collected. The municipalities then do a chargeback to invoice the school district on whatever was paid to the schools but not collected from the tax payers.

Avery then addressed staffing requests. He said the Business Services Committee endorsed the inclusion of staffing requests into the budget building process as part of the governing parameters being used to define the budget. At this time, only one such request is coming forward for Board consideration due to the high demand/low supply of individuals certified in this area. The remaining requests will be presented for approval when the preliminary budget is submitted in June. With respect to site budgets, Avery states the first draft of the 2009-2010 District budget is being assembled and will be brought to the Board for informational purposes at the May meeting. Avery asked if it was possible to delay the Business Services Committee meeting until May 11th as additional time will be necessary to assemble all information, stating there may be some adjustments made in May, but consideration for endorsement by the BSC and approval by the Board will take place in June.

Avery indicated fencing proposals for the new varsity soccer fields are in and information is included in the "Consent" portion of the agenda. Avery then reported on the mid-day Junior-Kindergarten transportation, stating changes made to the routes have been successful. Avery added that there were no complaints coming into the district office, the number of calls regarding service issues have dramatically decreased, no behavioral reports in the elementary office, and the buses were completing the routes to enable all students to fully participate in the program.

Darren Kern, Director of Pupil Services, reported on ELL activities, indicating development on the Plan of Service for the 2009-2010 school year. He also reported that Destination Imagination teams participated in the state competition this past weekend, with teams performing very well. Kern stated there were many new participants this year and it was a great learning experience for all. The Music listening Competition will take place this spring; Somerset may be a "host school" for this event. Somerset will participate in the Friendship Games on May 15th in Clear Lake. Kern also addressed the changing student profile in special education, indicating an increase in mobility of student population (70 students moving in and out) at 35%. Kern said 15% of student population has a mental health diagnosis. There is a significant increase in the number of students whose basic needs are not met and an increase in the level of aggression, verbally and physically, toward students but also staff. Kern noted the role of a special education teacher has become complex leading to teacher "burnout". Many of the staff in special education perform roles of many agencies. For example, teachers also work with families on meeting basic needs of student, parenting assistance, housing, food, corrections, etc. Kern advised many changes, issues and challenges will be presented to the district in the next few years and he and his staff are attempting to stay out in front of the challenges to make changes to create solutions for these issues proactively. Kern is attempting to partner with State, County, local, homeless shelters, etc. to collaborate on solutions to what is inevitably forthcoming.

Ron Berg, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, was unable to attend this evening's meeting. Rosburg stated Berg did submit a monthly report which is found in the board packet, and any questions pertaining to the report can be addressed with Mr. Berg at a later date.

Johanna Smith gave a student council update. She notes that preparation for prom is advancing quite nicely. They have 45 students who have signed up to go and eat at the Lake Elmo Inn prior to prom and anticipate possibly several more.

Shawn Madden, High School Principal, reported on character education, beginning with the Student of the Month recognition. The recipients were nominated by our high school staff members based on demonstrating "Qualities for Life" in one or all of three areas such as: reliability, resourcefulness, and respect. In the area of community involvement, Madden notes the 3rd Annual Community Day will be held on Friday, May 1, 2009 from noon to 3:00 p.m. with a rain date scheduled for Friday, May 8, 2009 from 8:30-11:00a.m. Somerset high school students, staff, in conjunction with the village of Somerset will be involved in a variety of activities to clean up and beautify the school campus and local community areas. Madden also stated the Healthy Choices Day and the Mini Film Festival was held on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. Each student had the opportunity to sit in on lectures the topics were as follows: bullying and domestic violence, corrections/in-mates, staff health and nutrition game show and public health. At 7:00 pm the Media Center came alive, with 13 mini films submitted by the Student body. Creativity and technology came together as 52 students created thought provoking, humorous, and conversation starting topics. Several topics were covered that students felt addressed today students. The evening came to an end with an inspirational talk by Karyn Bye Diets, Olympic Gold Medal and Silver Medal Hockey Player. Additionally, the Senior High School Empty Bowls Project team hosted an event

to raise awareness about local and world hunger on Thursday, March 26th. Over 100 ceramic bowls were created by students, staff, and school board members for this event. Guest speaker, Kathleen Brown, from Elmwood, shared her experiences in a remote Ugandan village during a mission trip there last year. Somerset Community Members, school staff and students also donated handcrafted items for a Silent Auction which brought in over \$500.00. T-shirts and canvas shopping bags, imprinted with a design created by senior, Holly Germain, were also on sale during the evening. The 2009 Empty Bowls Project brought in over \$1600 which will be divided between the food shelf at Grace Place in Somerset and Heifer International. In response to "Tornado Awareness Week," the Somerset School District will be participating in a statewide drill that will be held on Thursday, April 23, 2009. Also, Administrative Professionals' recognition Day is Wednesday, April 22, 2009, Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week is May 3-9, 2009.

Madden added that the graduation ceremony will be held on Sunday, June 7, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the high school gym. He made a request to the board for volunteers to assist with the distribution of diplomas. Volunteering are Moulton and Hansch. Madden also requested volunteers to assist handing out diplomas to graduates of the ALC program which will be held on June 8th, 2009 at 5:00 pm in the Multi-purpose room. Volunteering were Conner and Hansch. Colbeth questioned the payment/distribution of leftover class funds. Madden indicates that the class is typically given \$250 to purchase items they need for the class picnic and the class then decides on a donation to the school. Colbeth would like to see the amount that remains with the class determined by a percentage based upon student enrollment believing this would be a fairer way to establish the amount and the students could purchase more prizes to give away at the class picnic. Madden indicates he would like to continue with past precedence of the class continuing to receive the set \$250.

Middle School Principal, Rick Lange, reported the middle school faculty reviewed the three middle school goals and summarized progress made on each goal. The board will receive a draft of the goal results at the board retreat. On Thursday the middle school will participate in the state-wide tornado drill at 1:15 p.m. in awareness of Severe Weather week. Middle school students raised nearly \$800 for the American Heart Association during the Hoops for Hearts day on April 9th. The middle school is currently engaged in MAP testing for grades 5-8. Upcoming events at the middle school include an immunization clinic on May 1st for students in grades 5, 18, and 11 to receive their state required shots, Student of the Month Breakfast on May 5th, Middle School Talent Show the morning of May 8th, and World Day celebration on May 29th where students will share the outcomes of their thematic units.

Colbeth moved, with second by Cranston, to approve the technology lease plan with financing by Providence Capital Network/MMF. Cranston questioned bids. Avery explained that HP has developed a relationship with one of the district's vendors, making it easier for them to negotiate a larger discount over time. Prices overall are better than State contract pricing. The pricing is subsidized by the government. Motion carried.

Moulton moved, with second by Hansch, to approve the placement of the metal Spartan sculpture in front of the high school. The board asked if there were any pictures. Rosburg said the teacher who applied for and received funding for this project, Becky Olson, brought in a large cardboard model which is currently in the art class. Rosburg stated he will snap a picture of it and share it with all. Rosburg advised the sculpture will have a concrete slab base and will be mounted in front of the high school. Motion carried.

Moulton moved, with second by Colbeth, to approve SDS Architects to create, let, and collate bid specifications for exterior brick work repairs for the three school buildings. Rosburg indicated the district was aware of issues at the middle school and, to be cost effective, will review the masonry status of the other two school buildings while SDS is working with the middle school. Given the technical nature of defining the specifications and scope of work, the district is requesting approval to work with SDS Architects to write the specifications and oversee the bid process for these repairs. This motion gives SDS the opportunity to come in, review and create bids to find out what the costs are. Motion carried.

Hansch moved, with second by Cranston to approve the gender-based format for 5th grade. Cranston questioned the WKCE scales data. Seventeen students were in the same gender class the first year it was implemented. These 17 students are retested each year; some of them have continued in same gender classes, but some have returned to mixed classes only to return to same gender classes again the next year, making it difficult to test and

make absolute comparisons. The same gender class will only be offered in the 5th grade next year. Teachers report student soft skills are showing large increases, with consistent increases in independence and willing to try new ideas or take risks in their learning. Detentions in the boy's classes have decreased. Overall, there have been very positive responses by parents and the community. Motion carried.

Colbeth moved, with second by Hansch, for the approval of health care policies. Motion carried.

Moulton moved, with second by Gunther, to approve the retirement of Somerset Middle School Principal Rick Lange effective January 15, 2010. Motion carried.

Moulton moved, with second by Cranston, to approve the hiring of Sara Eichten for Somerset Middle School Principal effective January 18, 2010. Motion carried.

Colbeth moved, with second by Hansch, to approve the increase in the school Psychologist time from .5 FTE to 1. FTE for the 2009-10 school year. Motion carried.

Cranston moved, with second by Connor, to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Motion carried.

Tim Witzmann, President

Catherine Cranston, Clerk