

**REGULAR MEETING - BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
December 15, 2008
Minutes**

Board President Tim Witzmann called the regular meeting of the Somerset Board of Education to order at 7:01 p.m. Roll call was taken. Members present were Tim Witzmann, Brian Moulton, Catherine Cranston, Marie Colbeth, Mike Connor, and Robert Gunther.

President Witzmann administered the Oath of Office to appointed member Marin Hansch.

Cranston moved, with second by Moulton to approve agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Witzmann opened the meeting for groups or individuals wishing to be heard. No one came forward.

Chair Witzmann stated the Positive Recognition portion of tonight's agenda was a nice opportunity to honor the district's state band and choir participants. Band Director Andrew Emerson introduced State Honors Band participant Alexandra Butler and gave a brief background of the WMSA organization, stating Ali is a second-year participant in the program. He said Ali was also honored by being chosen to play in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Board member Colbeth presented Ali with a certificate stating she was an excellent representative of Somerset schools and the community. Ali thanked the board and introduced her parents.

Choir Director Rachel Erickson introduced Honors Choir participants Katie Carlson, Gina Hanzlik, Jessica Lammers, and Johanna Smith. She stated they were all truly talented individuals who have represented Somerset very well throughout the state, and who will go far in their lives. Erickson stated it was an honor for these students to be invited to sing at the WASB Conference in January. Board member Colbeth presented each of the students with a certificate, telling them what a good job they have done, and thanked Erickson and Emerson for a great choir and band program. The students thanked the board for the recognition and introduced their parents.

Meeting recessed at 7:15 p.m. and was reconvened at 7:31 p.m.

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

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of November 17, 2008 of the School Board
- B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Session of December 1, 2008 of the School Board
- C. Approval of Minutes of the Special Session of December 8, 2008 of the School Board
- D. Approve payment of November/December Board Bills
- E. Approve recommendation to increase Diane Baillargeon's hours to 10.5 hours per week
- F. Approve hiring of Dawn Spafford as the District Census Taker for 2009 at a cost of \$2,325.00
- G. Approve winter coaching assignments for the 2008-09 season
- H. Approve recommendation of two students to attend Certified Nurse's Asst. course at WITC as a Youth Options Class

Motion carried unanimously.

Board member Moulton then reported for the Facilities Committee with regard to a second driveway entrance to the campus. Moulton stated there is a concern about potential traffic in the Meadows development, which the committee is reviewing. Rosburg stated a local vendor gave an approximate cost of \$160,000 to install a gravel driveway. He said he is currently trying to locate a tree pulper to pulp trees that were recently removed. Money from the pulped trees would be used to relocate about 30 existing trees at a cost of approximately \$3,000; some of the relocation time will be donated.

Moulton reported the school district took an energy survey through Xcel Energy which compared Somerset Schools to other same-size schools; Somerset's results came out well, with the bulk of costs generated from heating and interior lighting. Rosburg will have alternative energy data for the Facilities Committee to review in January. Focus on Energy suggested the district work on energy assessments first before looking into energy alternatives/rebates.

Moulton then reported on the Community Survey results and highlighted some of the issues such as the community support for smaller classroom sizes. He stated results showed 51% of respondents would support a \$10,000,000 referendum, which may mean the community might support additions to buildings, though 49% of respondents felt the district should do nothing in the way of additions or buildings at this time. Witzmann agreed that, with the community's value of lower classroom sizes, the district may need to look at alternatives for additional space. However, enrollment numbers decreased slightly last month and, unless the housing market changes, the district may not see a lot of movement into the area. Colbeth said she interpreted the survey results differently, stating it looked like the district had not thoroughly informed the public of options related to portables or additions. She felt the public would support adding more staff, and said the number of teacher/student ratio should be addressed first and foremost. Rosburg stated administration is looking for direction from the survey results for next year, based on enrollments for each building. He said the administration team will be working with enrollment and space numbers, and will present their findings to the Facilities Committee in January.

Moulton stated the Facilities Committee reviewed the need for brick repair at the middle school, and that waiting to do the repairs in spring versus during the winter months would result in a cost savings. Board members wondered if the repair should wait until spring, or if there would be more damage during the winter with freeze/thaw conditions. Rosburg stated he spoke with the contractor about the concern to wait until spring, and the contractor felt there would be no significant heaving of the bricks before spring.

Rosburg presented current enrollment figures stating enrollment is down a bit where some class sections increased and some decreased; numbers will continued to be monitored. Committee meetings tentatively scheduled for January will be Facilities, Business Service, Governance and possibly Human Resources.

Board Member Cranston reported for the CESA Board, stating the WI Transition Project organization presented information regarding a software program intended to track students with disabilities after graduation for post secondary education and/or jobs follow-up.

Curriculum & Instruction Director Ron Berg reported that math materials are being reviewed by the Math Committee and will be adopted in March. He said recent results of MAPS testing has now allowed teachers to begin to put students into flexible groupings according to the test results. He also reported with regard to the district's Strategic Plan stating that, with help from CESA, 16 career clusters will be rolled out to all staff during the second semester. This will enable staff to work with students in planning future education and careers.

High School Principal Shawn Madden reported on the Empty Bowls Project, and introduced choir instructor Rachel Erickson to present the project before the board this evening. Erickson stated students have been hard at work with research and application on the project and are working toward the March 26th Empty Bowls Project event, which Erickson invited board members to the attend. She said staff will meet with community partners in the following week to ask for their assistance with the event.

Student Council Member Johanna Smith reported on student happenings at the high school, including a holiday talent show contest which was generating a lot of excitement and support. She went on to report

Student Council is sponsoring a holiday giving tree where they have asked students and staff to donate food, clothing, or toys to the giving tree, which will help those less fortunate. She said classes are also working on holiday spirit by competing with each other to create the most festive homeroom door, with winning homerooms receiving prizes. Winners will be chosen this week.

Madden went on to recognize and congratulate the November Students of the Month. He stated the current eleven banners of Character Education that have been displayed throughout the building are getting a bit frayed and worn, so art department students will be involved in updating the banners. Madden thanked art instructor Becky Olson for her support. He stated the recent Blood Drive was successful, with 90 students donating.

Rosburg introduced middle school teacher Sara Eichten, stating Eichten has been filling in for Somerset Middle School Principal Rick Lange during his absence the past couple of weeks. Rosburg stated Eichten has done an amazing job in this capacity. Eichten reported that the November 26th in-service day for teachers was very productive. She said Kate Rorabeck and Mary Johnson talked with staff about suicide rates, noting that the state of Wisconsin has a high rate of teenage suicide. Staff also looked at MAPS results, and thematic units were further developed. Over \$1,200.00 was raised for Penny Wars. Staff will also be shopping for five needy families through Secret Santa Salvation Army. She reported the high school choir students performed for middle school students today. Also, student council is sponsoring a trip for students to the Mall of America on December 22nd during the holiday break.

Elementary Principal Cherrie Wood reported on elementary character education, which is focusing on what we do for other people; she said teachers have students reading about real people in history and what they have done for others. Students are also donating to the local food shelf. Kindergartners had fun looking for their gingerbread men, 4th graders went on a field trip to the MN Zoo last week in conjunction with their studies. The third graders held their annual Iditarod, which fits with the science and social studies curriculum and helps with outside exercise. Kindergartners will have their annual program this week, and the board was invited to attend. High school band students performed for the elementary school today, and the children enjoyed it very much.

Business Services Manager Robert Avery reported on cash flow update, stating the day after the chart was finalized, the district received over \$2 million in state funding. Avery said school lunch prices will be need to be increased January 1; Avery explained it was clear that if the district did not increase lunch prices, it would lose money on food service funds throughout the year. He also reported some routine budget amendments will be coming up in January and will be brought before the January Business Services Committee for formal adoption of the full board at their regular January meeting. Avery went on to report the 403(b) implementation had gone smoothly, stating the IRS had recently announced they will delay requirements for several months, but the district is in place already. Avery ended his report stating he'd sent correspondence to the governor regarding QEO and received a response from one senator who has invited Avery to speak before the Senate Education Finance Committee. Avery stated the letter was not representative of the board, but was intended to help with future considerations of education finances. Witzmann stated the board appreciated the insights from Avery, which helps them to understand finance operations more clearly.

Pupil Services Director Darren Kern reported on the ELL Access testing schedule, stating the test results address ELL students to eventually exit them out of the ELL program once they've met certain score criteria. Kern also reported the Special Education Self Assessment report was finalized and submitted. He stated his team felt the assessment was a good learning tool and the process highlighted how much paperwork and detail is involved in this area. He said the assessment is on a five-year cycle.

Rosburg presented a beautiful print which was awarded to the district as a Coordinated Services Team nomination. This award recognized Somerset Schools' partnership with other area organizations. Rosburg stated each of the districts involved received this award, and that Somerset Schools were honored to receive it.

Board members discussed the need to increase current school lunch prices. Avery stated this will help the district break even with regard to food services as the district has not raised school lunch prices in three years. Board members discussed their reluctance to raise lunch prices, but agreed there was a need to do so. Colbeth moved, with second by Cranston, to increase lunch meal price by \$0.20 cents. Motion carried unanimously.

Cranston moved, with second by Colbeth to approve the 2009-2010 High School Course Offering Book. Motion carried unanimously.

Colbeth moved, with second by Connor, to accept the revisions in Policies JHCA Use of Automatic External Defibrillators and JHCA-R Automatic External Defibrillator Use Guidelines. Members stated they were happy that various staff were involved with reviewing the policies, and encouraged training of use of defibrillators with coaches. Motion carried unanimously.

Cranston moved, with second by Gunther to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Tim Witzmann, President

Catherine Cranston, Board Clerk