

REGULAR MEETING - BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
November 17, 2008
Minutes

Board President Tim Witzmann called the regular meeting of the Somerset Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken. Members present were Tim Witzmann, Brian Moulton, Catherine Cranston, Marie Colbeth, Mike Connor, and Robert Gunther.

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

Witzmann read the procedures for the "Groups or Individuals Wishing to be Heard" portion of the meeting. No one came forward

2008-09 Somerset School District Staff of the Year were presented during the Positive Recognition portion of the meeting including the following:

Elementary Principal Cherrie Wood introduced Elementary School Teacher of the Year, Stacey Helder-Pevan. Wood said Helder-Pevan, a first grade teacher, started teaching kindergarten at Somerset in August of 2003 before transferring to 1st grade. Helder-Pevan received her Masters of Education Degree within the past five years. Helder-Pevan said she was honored and shocked at the recognition, and that it meant a lot to her. She thanked the board and her family.

Middle School Principal Rick Lange introduced Carol Zinter as Middle School Teacher of the Year. Lange stated Zinter came to Somerset in 2003 from Prescott School District. Zinter serves on several committees and has been instrumental in teaching information regarding the holocaust to middle school students. Zinter stated she was honored and appreciative of the award and thanked the board members for their recognition.

High School Principal Shawn Madden introduced Teacher of the Year, Dean Hoff. Madden stated Hoff has taught high school math in Somerset for ten years, is involved with two curriculum committees, and coaches football and track & field. He and his wife have three children. Madden said Hoff is a dedicated and professional a true role model. Hoff thanked the board saying it was an honor to be chosen, then introduced members of his family.

On behalf of Pupil Services Director Shawn Madden, Rick Lange introduced Nancy Klaas as the Special Education Teacher of the Year. Lange stated Klaas has been teaching in at Somerset schools for 22 years, teaching in the special education program for all of those years, and all of them at the Middle School. Rick stated Klaas works with some of the most challenging students, and does so with much care and compassion. Klaas thanked Lange and the board, saying Somerset has been her home for 22 years and the staff has been like an extended family.

Business Services Manager Robert Avery introduced Support Staff Employee of the Year Mary Timm. Avery stated Timm, who has an associate's degree in accounting, has been an employee of the district since 2003, and provides important behind the scenes operations of the district. She works hard to give students and staff the resources they need for a successful outcome. Avery said Timm is a consummate professional and provides superior customer service for staff members. Timm thanked the board for the honor and recognition.

Tim Witzmann thanked everyone stating they make a difference in the lives of students.

State Cross Country Participant Monica Emerson was recognized for her participation in state Cross Country. Coach Diane Belter said she had the privilege of coaching Monica first in Track & Field. Belter said Emerson was easy to coach, always doing what the coaches ask of her. Emerson placed 70th out of 150 athletes at the state level. Emerson thanked Belter and the Board then introduced her parents. Witzmann presented her with a certificate and congratulated her on her success.

Meeting was recessed at 7:20 p.m. Meeting reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

Colbeth moved, with second by Moulton, to approve the following consent items:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of October 27, 2008 of the School Board
- B. Approve payment of October/November Board Bills
- C. Approve Abbiegail Bohatta for the position of 1.0 FTE High School CD Teacher for the 2008-2009 school year
- D. Approve transfer of Erin Leisz Baillargeon to position of .50 FTE Bilingual Aide for the 2008-09 school year
- E. Approve Cori Wienke for position of Special Education Aide/Driver for 5-7 hrs/day for the 2008-09 school year
- F. Approve early graduation requests
- G. Approve Vendors for 403(b) Plan

Motion carried unanimously.

Cranston reported on the recent meeting of the Teaching & Learning Committee as well as the presentation and first reading of the 2009-10 High School Course Offering Book, stating any questions regarding courses may be directed to Madden. Witzmann said he was encouraged by the rigor that has been added to classrooms.

Colbeth reported for the Governance Committee, stating that the committee reviewed two policies related to health care including Policy JHCA regarding "Use of Automatic External Defibrillators." Athletic Director Brad Nemec will talk with other AD's and coaches for their input on having this policy as a requirement. Policy JHCA-R regarding Automatic External Defibrillator Use Guidelines was reviewed to set up a procedural checklist when an injury is incurred.

Moulton reported for the Facilities Committee with regard to the results of the "Community Survey of Facility Needs." Rosburg stated 3,300 surveys were sent, with 11% returned. Witzmann noted there was obvious strong feedback that came out of the results, saying the decision to go to referendum in February, 2007 and results of the October, 2008 survey indicate the state of the economy came into play during this time. Witzmann said survey results compel the district to look for other solutions during the short term. Rosburg asked building principals to look at numbers in the survey with regard to what respondents thought were acceptable student numbers per classroom. Board members would like to present this information back to the community. Rosburg said the general results will be reported in December district newsletter.

Moulton said the Facilities Committee discussed a second entrance/exit driveway for the campus; the location of the driveway is behind the elementary school and would connect to Martell Street in the Somerset Meadows. Committee discussed gravel vs. blacktop for preferred driveway surface, with gravel being the less expensive, or use of recycled blacktop, to cut expenses. Gunther will look further into recycled blacktop. Rosburg said he spoke with Bob Crotty from the Village of Somerset and Rob Jones from Cedar Corp. Rosburg said it was suggested the district also meet with the Meadows developer since an additional entrance could create more traffic in that neighborhood. Avery noted that, with a new entrance, the Meadows development would no longer receive bus transportation since it would be within walking distance of the school. Avery said the district would also look into DOA grants and rebates related to roadway for help in funding. Board asked Rosburg to look into this further and present numbers to the board.

Moulton reported on the energy audit with solutions, stating the elementary building's energy efficiency is in good shape, and the middle school will be soon with the new system. All of the systems at the middle school are on the same computerized system as the other buildings. A variety of different energy audits are available for the district to look at. The district will look at proposals for other energy alternatives such as solar, wind, etc. once the results of the energy audit are complete.

Superintendent Rosburg reported on current enrollment numbers, stating enrollment remained flat with the start of the school year. Rosburg reported tentative committee meetings scheduled for Monday, December 1, 2008 include the Facilities Committee to discuss a second driveway, and a possible Governance Committee meeting. He stated interviews for the vacant board seat were tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 1 starting at 5:30 p.m. with six individuals being interviewed for 30 minutes at a time. Board members want interviews done in one evening, with a decision made the same evening. They asked to have three questions sent to the candidates and have the results returned before the interviews so they could view them prior to the interview.

Cranston provided a CESA 11 Update report, stating the majority of CESA board time was with an audit involving the Headstart Program. CESA board will become more jointly involved with Headstart. Cranston stated Somerset is one of the only consistent districts on the board with over 25 years of representation. Board members agreed it was important to continue to be involved with the CESA board.

Witzmann stated winter activities are coming up and encouraged members to attend these activities to give them a chance to talk with community members. Connor commented that the Veterans Day program at the high school was received very well.

Alternative Education Instructor Matthew Steffek provided an overview of WI Virtual School Program. He stated a representative from WI Virtual school presented to students on October 16. Steffek said there are currently two to eleven students involved in the virtual program and growing interest every day. Some students are taking courses that are not offered at Somerset including Latin and Digital Photography. Steffek explained his role in the virtual school program was that of advisor, however, students ultimately are responsible for themselves. He stated the Virtual School "Dashboard" has been created as an easy way for students to view their progress. Parents also have access to the dashboard. Steffek anticipates seeing more growth in virtual school as students and parents become more comfortable with the concept.

High School Principal Shawn Madden provided a building update, recognizing the Character Education students of the month. Madden reported on sections of each grade and average number of students in classes, stating they are working on short term solutions and looking forward to next year. Madden said the young veteran that presented before high school students during the November 11th Veteran's Day program did an outstanding job. The Drama Department did a wonderful job on their play production of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Coluseium," with a large turnout at all production dates.

Middle School Principal Rick Lange reported was the first year in many that WKCE testing was not held on November 11, enabling middle school students to participate in a Veteran's Day program where they listened to the same speaker from the high school. Lange thanked Ron Berg for organizing the program and appreciated his contribution. Lange invited the members to attend the December 11th middle school band and choir concert. He also reported on current classroom numbers, stating there are less student issues and a better climate and atmosphere due to having more 7th & 8th Grade teachers on staff. Lange also reported the stand-up desks were getting a lot of press, with 5th Grade teacher Pam Seekel answering many calls for interviews.

Elementary School Principal Cherrie Wood said elementary staff continue to work on standards and how the district assesses them; new report cards will be develop from this work. Barbara Barnes was on hand during the November in-service, continuing her follow up work with teachers on thematic units. Wood stated that the elementary building is quite full, and that staff continue to look for creative ways to use space. She said staff and students are doing a wonderful job.

Business Manager Robert Avery reported on the district's monthly cash flow. He said the district's in its third year of transportation contract with Safe-Way Bus Company, noting the district will need to make a decision about whether it would like to extend the contract for another year or bid out busing services. He is in contact with administrators and key people about their recommendations and opinions on how the bus company is doing, and will provide more information on that next month.

Director of Pupil Services Darren Kern was unavailable. Rosburg reported on behalf of Kern. Rosburg stated speech pathologist Laurie Lasure's Life Skills program continues to be a great opportunity for the special education students ages 14-21 to work on skills in the five required areas of transition. These skills will help the students be prepared for life after high school. Self Assessment of the department continues, with results of the assessment showing the department is in compliance in most all areas. The Self-Assessment Ad Hoc Committee will meet on November 24, 2008 to develop the activities and training the district will complete to correct any areas out of compliance.

Director of Curriculum & Instruction Ron Berg was unavailable. Rosburg shared Berg's report stating that in the curriculum area, math committees at all three buildings continue to meet regarding benchmarks and materials, with final decisions regarding math materials to be made by Feb. 1st, 2009. The elementary science committee will meet to revise and expand elementary science benchmarks. The November in-service will focus on two areas: (1) improving instructional themes and (2) to have either team or grade level discussions about flexible grouping of students or differentiating lessons based on student MAPS (Measures of Academic Progress) scores in reading, math and science. In the area of assessment, WKCE testing concludes next week. The elementary assessment committee continues to work on a draft of what a final report card will look like next spring and the middle school assessment committee is meeting regularly to discuss what best assessment practices are.

Colbeth said the Governance Committee had a second reading of Policy IIBH Virtual School. Colbeth moved, with second by Connor, to approve IIBH Virtual School Program Policy adding the word "program" to the policy which is the only change to that policy. Motion carried unanimously.

Colbeth moved, with second by Cranston, to approve Boys Soccer as a WIAA District Athletic Program. Witzmann said it was exciting to offer another opportunity for kids in the fall to participate. Motion carried unanimously. Witzmann asked Rosburg to pass along to Brad Nemec their appreciation for his work and taking on the process, working with the community to make it a community effort.

Colbeth moved, with second by Gunther, to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried.