

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET  
August 6, 2007**

President Allison Klis of the Somerset Board of Education called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Allison Klis, Tim Witzmann, Marie Colbeth, Mike Connor, Catherine Cranston, Brian Moulton and Sharon Germain. Also present: Randy Rosburg, Jan Carlson, Rick Lange, and Cherrie Wood.

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

District Administrator Randy Rosburg led the discussion pertaining to 2007-08 student enrollment and space accommodations. As of August 2, 2007, 1559 students were enrolled, however Elementary School Principal, Cherrie Wood, stated that six additional students had enrolled since the date of the report and registration papers had been sent out for four others. Enrollment at the end of the 2006-07 school year had been 1492 students.

Capacity at the Elementary School is 625 students. As of the time of the meeting, enrollment was at 680 students. The Junior Kindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade class sizes are already at 26-28 students. High School capacity is 400 students and enrollment is currently at 439 students. The Alternative Education program can only take 16 students at a time, thus the building will remain over capacity during the regular school day. Students enrolled in Youth Options courses are still in the building for most of the day, so they must be included in the enrollment count. The Middle School Capacity is 480 and current enrollment is at 446.

Rosburg presented the 2007 Census Report for municipalities in St. Croix County. From April 2000 to July 2006, the five municipalities included in the Somerset School District grew an average of 39.1%. The Village of Somerset, which lies entirely within the Somerset School District grew by 44.28%. Board Vice President asked whether the number of building permits obtained within the district was available. Rosburg agreed to seek this information. Board Clerk Sharon Germain reported that the Village of Somerset is considering a reduction in the Impact Fees that are currently assessed on all new developments. Rosburg had spoken with Pete of Preferred Builders, the developer who owns the property to the south of the district campus. They have delayed plans to develop the property due to a drop in the real estate business. Per the owner, that property is available for sale to the district.

Preferred Builders also owns the property on the northwest corner of Sunrise Drive and Kohler Drive. Many residents assume this property belongs to the district. Per the Village Public Works Committee, the property is slated to be turned over to the Village at some point in the future. Rosburg obtained written permission from Preferred Builders to use the property, at no cost, for school programming until it is turned over to the Village. The district will have to provide proof of insurance and assume all liabilities.

Discussion on acceptable class sizes ensued. If enrollment increases, the only alternative is to increase class sizes unless sections are added. Wood reported that the only remaining available rooms which could be converted to classrooms in the Elementary School are the two computer labs. The board inquired as to whether replacing the computer labs with mobile laptops would negatively impact programming. Wood reported that the labs are used differently and at different times depending on the grade level. She also stated that converting the computer labs to portable carts would be better than trying to do the same with art or music programming.

Wood reported that her recommendation for addressing the enrollment at the current time would be to add classroom aides in both Junior Kindergarten sections and possibly an additional aide or certified teacher at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. If an additional teacher is hired, the staff and administrators would be responsible for determining how the classes would be managed. Rosburg reminded the Board that with each additional section, the core facilities and specialty classes will also be affected.

Information on portable classrooms was presented, including sample photos and costs. Board members stated that if forced to choose, they would rather invest in additional staff at this time rather than buildings. A timeline of at least three months would be needed should they decide to go with portables. Board members expressed mixed feelings about whether to consider portable classrooms. The 2005-06 facilities task force had recommended the district consider portables only as a last resort. Concerns were raised about the costs to install, rent and maintain portables, the potential impact on programming, and the placement of portables on campus.

Witzmann moved, with second by Cranston, to authorize the administrative team to hire additional staff in grades JK and 4, to accommodate increased enrollment. Motion carried unanimously.

Witzmann moved, with second by Colbeth, to authorize administration to purchase additional mobile computer labs if existing Elementary School computer labs become classroom space. Motion carried unanimously.

Middle School Principal, Rick Lange, reported that the Middle School needs are not as urgent as the Elementary School at this time. There are two rooms which could possibly be converted to classrooms in the future. Classroom aides could be hired to assist teachers if class size becomes an issue. He will wait to see what the actual enrollment is at the start of the school year before requesting additional staff.

In the absence of High School Principal, Shawn Madden, Rosburg reported on the request to hire aides to provide supervision in the high school computer labs. Lange confirmed this would also be beneficial at the Middle School.

Colbeth moved, with second by Witzmann, to authorize administration to hire classroom aides at the Middle and High Schools to supervise students in the computer labs. Motion carried unanimously.

Business Manager Jan Carlson clarified the state funding formula. The district receives 1/3 funding each year for new students. The 2007-08 budget was determined based on flat enrollment, therefore, since enrollment has grown, the additional funding will cover the expenses of the additional staff to be hired.

Earlier this year, Rosburg had asked for guidance from the Village Board regarding adding another entrance into the campus. In conversations with Village Board members, he understood their preference would be to place an entrance directly across from Sarah Lane on Sunrise Drive, thus creating a 4-way intersection. In order to do this, the district would have to purchase one or two of the parcels which lie to the north of our existing campus. Rosburg directed the Board to an overview map of the school district property and identified the owners of three adjacent parcels. Per Wisconsin Statutes, the Board would have to seek approval at the annual meeting if they wish to purchase any additional land during the school year, even if the purchase could be made without a referendum.

Discussion ensued in regard to the future facilities and grounds development on campus. Board member Mike Connor noted that since 1995, the district had built two new school buildings, but had not added any athletic fields even though more athletic teams have been added and physical education classes have also increased. It was agreed that any future development would require at least one additional entrance. Board members requested a written statement from the Village Board, identifying acceptable locations for another entrance into the campus. Information pertaining to any known plans to develop the property or roads surrounding the district property will also be sought.

Board members debated on when and how to begin planning for future school buildings and whether the community would support such plans. Factors such as the economy, next year's elections and rising gas prices could have an impact on community support. Board members agreed that effective two-way communication will be crucial to gaining community support. Increasing the number of 'alternative' programs available to all students would help to address facility limitations in the short-term. This could include online programming, 'after hours' classes and a broader spectrum of course offerings, to name a few. The Alternative Education teacher position was increased from .5 FTE to Full-time this fall to address this need. Another option discussed would be to rent additional space off-site as is currently being done for the 1-2-3 Time for Me Preschool program.

Board President Allison Klis stated her belief that an Intermediate School is needed in the district in the near future. Others agreed the need to build another school is eminent, but not sure the community is ready to support it. Connor warned that the timeline for adding a new building is 2-3 years. If the Board waits too long, he felt the Elementary School could be faced with severe overcrowding. Some members were hesitant to move too quickly without full support of the community.

The Board reviewed the recommendations brought forth by the administrative team in February and those items that have been addressed, including the replacement of rooftop units at the Middle School, moving the preschool program off site, and adding the alternative education program. Also the Middle School food service area will be renovated next year and the Board is considering the addition of another driveway. Board members agreed that it is important to communicate to the community the positive things that have been done to maintain and improve facilities in the district.

Witzmann summarized the discussion by stating the Board was not in the position to support a referendum in the very near future. This topic will be readdressed in October by the Facilities Committee and possibly the full board. The principals will report on conditions and enrollment in their buildings at the monthly Regular Sessions.

President Klis recessed the meeting at 8:38 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

Germain moved, with second by Witzmann, to move into Executive Session in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(c) for the purpose of discussing compensation and benefit data of administrators, teachers, support staff and supervisory support staff. Upon roll call, all members voted yes. Meeting moved into Executive Session.

Board discussed and held previous decision to deny pay out of 14.5 excess vacation days to a staff member.

Board reviewed health insurance analysis prepared by JA Counter & Associates, comparing Health Partners plan with WEA Trust plan. Discussion was held in regard to benefits and negotiations with the administrators, teachers, support staff and supervisory support staff.

Witzmann moved, with second by Marie, to move to Open Session. Upon roll call, all members voted yes. Meeting reconvened in Open Session.

Colbeth moved, with second by Moulton, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.