

MINUTES
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #10
BOARD OF EDUCATION
March 10, 2008

Members Present: Joseph Arcuri, Catherine Bergstrom, Jeanne Doerr, Beth Duffy, Paul Omichinski, Phil Penn, Ray Sikora, Karen Sullivan

Absent: Barbara Gilbert, Elaine Schiavone

Also Present: Alan Beitman - Superintendent
David Lenihan - Business Manager
Michael Landry – Assistant Superintendent
Dave Troiani – Student Representative

- I. Call to Order - The regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting was held at Lake Garda School library, and was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chairperson Paul Omichinski.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance - The Pledge was recited.
- III. Communications, Resignations – At the last meeting, Janet Burritt of Harwinton brought to the Board’s attention the fact that a door near the high school gym leaked in cold air and possibly was not the correct door, per specification. A. Beitman reported that a temporary fix has been made, and a permanent one will be made sometime in the spring. He also said that radon testing has indicated a slightly elevated level in three rooms in Lake Garda School. A contractor has been hired and remediation was completed at a cost of just under \$6,000. The Building Committee received an award from QBS in recognition of the guidelines and procedures it developed and used in choosing the architectural firm and construction management company for the building project.
- IV. Consent Agenda – A **motion** to approve the minutes of the regular BOE meeting of 2-11-08, Community Relations meeting of 2-25-08, Ad Hoc Committee meeting of 3-4-08, and financial report of 2-29-08 was made by R. Sikora and seconded by B. Duffy. Corrections to the regular BOE meeting of 2-11-08 include under Item III, second paragraph “Superintendent announced the District’s intent to create an Education Foundation.” “A Beitman followed up with Katherine Heinz, a parent concerned about the LSM summer reading list. M. Landry and G. Gadue are reviewing the procedure for possible changes, specifically making notations on the list identifying books containing graphic language.” Page 3, Item C. 3rd sentence “The purpose of the committee is to create a proposed policy ... Page 3, 2nd paragraph, last sentence should read “... money to pay the salary would come from elimination of other positions.” B. Duffy stated she should have been identified as absent in the 2-25-08 Community Relations meeting minutes.

A **motion** to approve, with corrections, above listed meetings was made by R. Sikora and seconded by B. Duffy. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- V. Student Representative Report – Results of the student survey (regarding administration) should be ready for the April BOE meeting. Students returned from the trip to Spain and no problems were reported. The Model UN team is leaving on Wednesday for New York City. The boys and girls basketball teams made it to their respective tournaments but then lost. The health fair will be held

this Wednesday. On March 20th, there will be a trivia night sponsored by the National Honor Society, and on March 28th the Student Council will be having a talent show.

- VI. Public Participation – Art Johansson of Burlington stated that Burlington’s Grand List shows an increase of 1.6% and that the Burlington’s Board of Finance was budgeting an increase to the education cost sharing

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grant of only \$100,000 over last year. He said the proposed increase to the education budget will mean over a one mil increase to taxpayers. He recommended a budget increase of no more than 3.5%

P. Penn asked what a 1.5 mil increase would be in tax dollars. Art will get back with an answer. P. Omichinski asked what mil rate would a 3.5% increase translate to, and that would be $\frac{3}{4}$ mil. The town has not completed its budget yet.

Deborah Olson, a LSM booster club representative, requested that there be no cuts to sports or uniforms.

- VII. Business –

- A. Special Services, Curriculum and Instruction Information for Estimate of Expenses for 2008-09.

Special Services - Linda Carabis stated two goals of Special Ed. include increasing literacy (met the goal of 80% last year and set a goal of 85% for this year), and improving the quality of support services. Some highlights of the Special Ed. PowerPoint presentation include 303 students identified as Special Ed. (or 10.5%) and 32 identified as gifted (or 1.1%) Districtwide. She discussed the various programs available to students such as Kids in the Middle, homework clubs, crisis intervention, Odyssey of the Mind, etc. A discussion of the Odyssey of the Mind program revealed that there has been a decrease in participation due to student disinterest and lack of volunteers. At one point there had been 11 groups but now there are 4. Cost in Spec. Ed. transportation has decreased (-16.60%) due to more use of district vehicles as opposed to using outside contractors and vendors, a more expensive alternative. P. Omichinski asked if a cost analysis could be done showing what the district paid to outside vendors and what it pays in-house for these services.

There was discussion on “Excess Cost.” Expenses exceeding four and one half times what it would cost to provide for a non-special ed. student can get reimbursed from the State. D. Lenihan added that the State does not always reimburse at 100%, the percentage can fluctuate from year to year due to the State budget.

The proposed Special Ed. Budget for '08-'09 is \$3,948,621, which is an increase of \$8,469 or .21% over last year’s budget.

Curriculum – M. Landry gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Curriculum Budget which includes salaries, training, costs for testing, supplies, and textbooks.

The proposed Curriculum Budget for '08-'09 is \$342,061, which is an increase of \$17,109 or 5.27% over last year’s budget.

Technology – Leigh Ponte presented information on the District’s technology needs which encompasses computers, laptops, hardwire and wireless technology, licensing, and support services.

The proposed Technology Budget for '08-'09 is \$480,825, which is an increase of \$10,037 or 2.13% over last year’s budget.

Due to time constraints at the February BOE meeting, Athletic Director Dave Tanner was asked to postpone his presentation until this meeting. He reported that the main accounts for the Athletic Department are uniforms and dues/fees to participate in various athletic events, and uniforms. D. Tanner discussed the difficulty in trying to come up with an equitable uniform cost per student. Each sport is

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unique and the needs of the athlete are unique. His goal is to convince the various sports teams to agree on using a few select vendors so as to obtain better uniform discounts.

B. Final Review of All Programs and Superintendent’s Summary and Recommendations for Estimate of Expenses for 2008-2009. Since the original proposed budget, Superintendent has made adjustments. The original proposed budget presented was:

4.45%	\$33,161,428	“Turn-Key” Estimate of expenses
<u>.34%</u>	\$ 107,600	for necessary improvements
4.79%		total projected increase (as of February 4, 2008)

Revised Budget

4.20%	\$33,081,628	“Turn-Key” Estimate of Expenses decreased by \$79,800
<u>.41%</u>	\$ 131,200	in necessary improvements/adjustments by \$23,600
4.61%		total increase “to date” (March 10, 2008)

Any suggestions on cuts or additions should be forwarded, via e-mail to D. Lenihan or A. Beitman.

- C. Discussion of Excess Snow Days for 2007-2008 School Year. A **motion** to move this to Action items was made by B. Duffy and seconded by R. Sikora. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- D. Discussion of Community Meetings Regarding the Budget. After the final budget review on Monday, March 17, 2008, Board members are encouraged to make arrangements to visit various community groups in an outreach effort. C. Bergstrom will e-mail list of organizations to members.
- E. Discussion of Long-Term Lease of Weaver Property. P. Omichinski presented a proposal to lease space from a resident near LSM. The property consists of 7 acres of which 3.5 are

usable. It would be used as an overflow parking lot during Fall and Spring events. The school parking lot can only accommodate 500 vehicles. It would not be used during the winter. Work including landscaping and laying down gravel estimated to be approximately \$40,000 - \$50,000. This has not been added to the '08-'09 budget. The lease would be for 25 years with escalation every 5 years.

VIII. Action -

- A. Completion of Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Audit and Refund of Operating Surplus to Towns. A **motion** to table this item, until the March 17, 2008 meeting was made by B. Duffy and seconded by P. Penn. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- B. Extension of Transportation Contract with All Star Transportation. D. Lenihan reported that overall service is good and recommended extending the contract with them for another two years (June 30, 2010). A **motion** to approve extension of contract was made by R. Sikora and seconded by K. Sullivan. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries
- C. Discussion and Approval of New Course – Spanish V, Level II. Forty students have expressed interest in taking this course. A **motion** to approve Spanish V, Level II was made by R. Sikora and seconded by B. Duffy. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.

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- D. 2nd Reading of Revised Combined Policy #1250, #1250A Parent/Guardian Observations, Lunch Visitations. A **motion** to approve the 2nd reading was made by B. Duffy and seconded by R. Sikora. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- E. 2nd Reading of Policy #1340 Access to School Procedures and Materials to be deleted. A **motion** to accept the 2nd reading was made by P. Penn and seconded by K. Sullivan. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- F. Approve the Call of the Public Hearing for April 7, 2008 to discuss the district budget. A **motion** to approve this item was made by B. Duffy and seconded by R. Sikora. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.
- G. The District has had five snow days with one snow day remaining before it will need to either take away from April vacation or add days in June. After much discussion, it was decided that if there are more snow days than the allotted six, they would be made up in June, thus extending the school year. A **motion** to approve this item was made by B. Duffy and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed. Motion carries.

IX. Board Committee Reports

- A. Facilities and Grounds Committee – Nothing to report.
- B. CREC Committee – Nothing to report.
- C. Curriculum Committee – Next meeting 4-23-08.
- D. Technology Committee – Staff skill levels continue to increase.
- E. Building Committee – Nothing new to report.

- F. Community Relations Committee – Met at the end of February; discussed E-News. Next newsletter contingent upon hiring of new Communications Specialist. Reviewed website and discussed what needs to be updated. List given to M. Landry. Next meeting is scheduled for 3-26-08.
- G. Ad Hoc Committee – Met last week and set goals and objectives and are looking at what parents and the district pay for activities. Next meeting is scheduled for 3-24-08.

The Board Retreat is scheduled for April 5, 2008. E-mail suggestions for topics should be sent to P. Omichinski.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting was made by R. Sikora and seconded by C. Bergstrom. All in favor none opposed. Meeting ended at 11:00 pm.

A final review and BOE vote on the budget is scheduled for Monday, March 17, 2008, 7:30 pm at Har-Bur Learning Center. The public hearing on the District Budget will be held at LSM cafeteria on April 7, 2008 at 7:30 pm.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting will be held on April 21, 2008 at 7:30 pm at Harwinton Consolidated School.

Raymond Sikora, Secretary