

WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Work Session Minutes
March 25, 2008

The Wyomissing Area School District Board of School Directors' work session convened at 6:00 p.m. with President Snyder presiding.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following the pledge, the secretary called the roll of board members.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Barnett, Mr. Althouse, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Hinsey, Mr. Larkin, Mrs. McCready, Mrs. Sakmann, Mr. Portner, and Mr. Snyder.

Administrators Present: Dr. Speace, Ms. Garman, Mr. Ashton, Mrs. Motze, Dr. Moyer, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Simyak, Mrs. Whye, Dr. Pulkowski, Mrs. Mason, and Dr. Larson.

Others Present: Diane Schaeffer, recording secretary, audience members Bill Murray, Pat Barrick, and Richard Geertman.

Mrs. Mason took the roll call. Mr. Snyder welcomed everyone and reported that the board will meet in executive session at the conclusion of the meeting and no action will be taken.

President Snyder reminded the Board that the March 31 Board meeting will take place in the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center all-purpose room at 7:30 p.m.

Principal Mrs. Jamie Whye and teacher Dawn Hart shared a PowerPoint program highlighting several student activities at the West Reading Elementary Center.

Dr. Pulkowski introduced James Comerford, English Department Chairperson, who presented information on the recommendation for new English textbooks and also additions to the 10th grade summer reading list that included *Bean Trees*, *House on Mango Street*, and *My Sister's Keeper*. Mr. Comerford explained that there were no deletions to the list, only additions.

Because Mrs. Mangold could not be in attendance, Dr. Pulkowski presented information on the recommended social studies textbooks.

There were no comments from the public on the agenda items.

President Snyder asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the following board meetings as presented:

December 17, 2007 Special Board Meeting
January 22, 2008 Work Session
January 28, 2008 Regular Board Meeting
February 11, 2008 Special Board Meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Fitzgerald, and seconded by Mrs. McCready to approve the minutes as presented.

Yeas: 9
Nays: 0. Motion carried.

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Personnel –

Personnel liaison Mr. Larkin reported that the group met twice recently and Ms. Garman would explain the status of the Director of Buildings & Grounds position.

Ms. Garman explained that last night Mr. Foley withdrew his candidacy and the district is re-posting the position. Mr. Portner asked if there was a close second being considered. Ms. Garman reported that that person had accepted another position.

President Snyder instructed the Board to pull the approval of Mr. Robert Foley, Jr., from the agenda.

President Snyder asked for a motion to approve Leigh J. Macri, Speech and Language Pathologist, as noted on the agenda.

A motion was made by Mr. Portner and seconded by Mrs. McCready to approve Leigh J. Macri, Speech and Language Pathologist, effective April 29, 2008, M, Step 8, \$51,000, prorated.

Yeas: Barnett, Althouse, Fitzgerald, Hinsey, Larkin, McCready, Sakmann, Portner, and Snyder.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Ms. Garman asked if there were any questions on the personnel report. Mrs. Barnett asked if any additional letters of intent to retire were expected. Ms. Garman commented that she was unaware of any in addition to Mrs. Sabold's and Mrs. Nolan's.

Ms. Garman informed the board of the job fairs that she would be attending during the second week in April.

Curriculum –

Mrs. Sakmann encouraged the board members to attend the WAEF technology event planned for Monday, April 14. She reported that she had met with the liaison group earlier that afternoon and items on the agenda included K-3 literacy program update, Connect Math, summer programs, and Science is Elementary.

Both Dr. Larson and Dr. Pulkowski addressed the rumors that were circulating in the community concerning decreasing the number of AP courses. Dr. Larson said that it is not accurate, in fact, it is just the opposite. Dr. Pulkowski reported that she spoke with the principals and the topic of establishing quarterly parent forums is being discussed.

Dr. Pulkowski reviewed the items on the agenda that had been discussed at the liaison meeting.

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Finance –

President Snyder listed the items on the Finance portion of the agenda which included approval of the Berks Career & Technology 2008-09 budget. He noted that currently 45 students attend the Berks Career & Technology Center which is below projected numbers.

Dr. Speace expressed the opinion that if more parents were to visit the Center and become familiar with the options available, enrollment would definitely increase. She also felt a full-day program for seniors would be valuable.

Dr. Pulkowski provided information on the agreement with Bayridge Consortium. She noted that Dr. Villa an expert in differentiated instruction would work with professional staff for four days in June and October. She also noted that the district received federal access money that will be used to make this world-class training possible.

Mr. Snyder indicated that the ballot question for the referendum will be addressed at the regular board meeting next Monday. The Board discussed Option 5 for the West Reading Elementary Center. Mr. Portner asked if increased costs would be incurred for additional positions if a new building is built. Dr. Larson responded that the possibility exists for additional custodial help but no significant increases in personnel would be needed.

Operating cost increases and the future impact on the budget were discussed. Dr. Larson stated that there would be higher operating costs with Option 4. Architect Doug Rohrbaugh said a retro-fitted building is not as energy efficient as a new building. Mr. Portner asked if having everything new and more energy efficient would mean minimal cost increases. Mr. Rohrbaugh stated that based on today's energy costs, energy consumption would be \$1.15 to \$1.20 per sq. foot but a fuel analysis was not done.

The timelines for both Options 4 and 5 were questioned. Mr. Rohrbaugh indicated that new construction is faster than renovation. If Option 4 were chosen, the former high school would have to be renovated first, the children moved, and then the current building renovated.

Both Mrs. Whye and Mrs. Simyak discussed the benefits to moving the 4th grade students to the West Reading Elementary Center.

Mrs. Barnett asked if the services of a construction manager would be needed. Dr. Larson indicated they are worth their weight in gold, and Architect Rohrbaugh agreed it would be important when they get to that point in the process.

Mrs. Barnett stated that the tax increases must be explained to the residents.

At the conclusion of the discussion, President Snyder stated that the Board will be asked to approve a resolution on Monday to move forward with Option 5 and borrow \$37,563,169 with \$5.8 million of that amount for facility projects. A new breakdown of the additional facility projects was requested and will be supplied in the next Board packet.

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Mrs. Mason addressed the Board on refinancing the 2003A bonds as was presented by Mr. Phillips from RBC Capital Markets to the Finance liaisons.

At 8:00 p.m., the Board recessed for a five-minute break.

When the meeting resumed, Mrs. Mason presented information on the Forecasting Model.

School Activities & Athletics – No agenda items.

Technology – No agenda items.

Superintendent's Office –

Dr. Larson reported that a special education teacher at Wyomissing Hills who is a graduate student at Alvernia College, has requested permission to survey the teachers to explore their perceptions on inclusion of students with autism in the general education classes. The board had no objections.

Dr. Larson explained that Mr. Helm had fulfilled all the stipulations to request that lacrosse be approved as a club sport. Documents were included in the Board's packets to assist with their decision.

Mrs. McCready indicated the Board will put the recommendation on next week's agenda to approve club status for lacrosse. She noted that it will function in accordance with policy 122 guidelines for a two-year trial basis and reviewed to see the impact and determine its future.

Dr. Larson explained the proposal received from the Berks County YMCA to operate a before and after-school child care program at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center.

Dr. Larson announced that Susie Derr, high school English teacher, was recommended for the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program. She has submitted paperwork for approval to participate in the 3-week program in October 2008. The district would have to assume substitute costs. After some discussion, Mrs. Garman was asked to research if approval was required by the Board at next week's meeting.

New Business –

Mrs. Barnett stated that progress was not being made in reviewing old policies and clearly administration was not following the volunteer policy.

Dr. Larson explained that the increase in volunteer requests to work with children in programs such as "Watch Dogs" resulted in the need to process paperwork quickly to ensure the safety of the children and resulted in the elimination of 3 or 4 volunteers because of findings on the clearance reports. Dr. Larson indicated she would review the policy.

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Old Business – None.

Public Participation –

Mr. Richard Geertman stated he is concerned about choice of Option 5 because it is the most expensive option. He also asked why the modulars at West Reading are used but not at the Hills building.

Dr. Larson responded to his question and explained that the Department of Education gives money to build or renovate schools and they won't allow use of the modulars by students after the work is completed.

Dr. Larson said she will be making presentations to the public so they can see the figures in the 2009-2010 budget.

President Snyder noted that after a five-minute break, the Board would meet in executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Upon motion by Mr. Portner, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Corinne D. Mason
School Board Secretary

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PERSONNEL REPORT

- I. Approve Professional Staff Retirements:
 - a. **Maureen R. Nolan**, Secondary Science Teacher at the JSHS, retirement effective the end of the 2007-08 school year.
 - b. **Patricia A. Sabold**, Elementary Teacher at WHEC, retirement effective the end of the 2007-08 school year.

- II. Approve Support Staff Termination – **Krista Mazur**, Special Education Instructional Aide at WHEC, effective February 26, 2008.

- III. Approve Support Staff Appointments
 - a. **Jessica Hole**. Full-time Special Education Instructional Aide at WHEC, 35 hours/week at \$9.75/hour, effective April 1, 2008.
 - b. **Robert C. Sanders**, part-time Van Driver, at \$9.46 per hour, effective April 1, 2008.

- IV. Approve/Ratify FMLA:
 - a. **Charmaine Beck**, Transportation Secretary, a family and medical leave of absence effective March 18, 2008, until approximately March 26, 2008.
 - b. **Michelle Kersikoski**, Elementary Teacher at WREC, a family and medical leave of absence effective March 4, 2008 until approximately March 10, 2008.
 - c. **Julie Miller**, Custodian at the JSHS, a family and medical leave of absence effective March 17, 2008 until approximately March 21, 2008.

- V. Approve FMLA/Child Rearing Leave – **Kendall Babiarz**, Elementary Teacher at WHEC, a family and medical leave of absence and child rearing leave, effective on or about June 8, 2008, until the end of the first semester of the 2008-09 school year.

- VI. Ratify/Approve Support Staff Unpaid Leave Requests:
 - a. **Susan Bennett**, ESL Instructional Aide at WHEC, unpaid leave March 4, 5, 6, and 7, 2008.
 - b. **Amanda Johnson**, Elementary Teacher at WHEC, unpaid leave October 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 13, 2008.
 - c. **Lisa Lamp**, Cafeteria Worker at the JSHS, unpaid leave February 29, March 3, 6, and 7, 2008.

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- d. **Annemarie Melcher**, Teacher's Instructional Aide at WHEC, unpaid leave February 25, 26, and 27, 2008.
 - e. **Sheila Nastro**, Crossing Guard at WREC, unpaid leave April 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2008.
 - f. **Jennifer Noll**, Receptionist Monitor at WHEC, unpaid leave March 25, 26, 27, 28, 31 and April 1, 2008.
- VII. Approve **Mary Rebecca Freymoyer** to complete Spanish translation of PTA booklet at a stipend of \$425.00.
- VIII. Ratify Supplemental Athletic Appointment effective the 2007-08 school year -**Timothy Hetrich**, JH Track 2nd Assistant Coach, 22.25 points, \$1,791.
- IX. Approve Supplemental Athletic Volunteer Appointments effective the 2007-08 school year:
- a. **Fred Hierl**, JH Track
 - b. **Steven O'Neil**, SH Track
 - c. **Andrew Siggins**, SH Track
 - d. **Michael Webster**, SH Track
- X. Approve additions/deletions to substitute list:
- XI. Approve additions to district volunteer list.