

EMMONS SCHOOL DISTRICT #33
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
August 27, 2009

The following were present:

Dan Jordan, President
Jim Fischer, Vice President (5:45pm)
Laurie Christophersen
Damian England

Michele Poss (6:00 pm)
Michele Reiser
Jackie Zogran
Dr. Robert Machak, Superintendent
Carla Pratt, School Secretary

The president called the meeting to order at 5:38pm.

The Board discussed annual goals for the 2009/2010 school year.

The Board also discussed items from the August 4, 2009 IASB session with Ms. Barb Toney.

The Board called a recess at 7:00 pm.

The Board reconvened open session at 7:15pm.

Also present were staff members Cyndy Thielen, Lisa Lawler, Erich Grauke, Jay Smith, Franci Henderson, Jennifer Wu, Carol Schuettenberg, and Sharon Thode and community member Justine Atkison.

Visitors to be Recognized:

No comments offered from visitors to the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda by Lauri Christophersen. Second by Jackie Zogran. Yes: 7, No: 0.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2009 open and closed sessions by Lauri Christophersen. Second by Jackie Zogran. Yes: 6, No: 0, Abstain: 1.

Motion to approve the minutes from the Self Governing Review of August 4, 2009 by Jim Fischer. Second by Jackie Zogran. Yes: 7, No: 0.

August Bill List:

Motion to approve the bill lists from July and August, 2009 by Michele Reiser. Second by Lauri Christophersen. Yes: Zogran, Fischer, England, Reiser, Christophersen, Poss, and Jordan. No: 0.

Superintendent's Report:

Stimulus Funds:

The Superintendent shared a budget detail submitted to ISBE and details on how the administration chose to spend the stimulus money the district received. The state recommended the money be used for one time purchases. The administrative team completed a "webinar" on stimulus funds on how to use and report on it. The money flows through the state to SEDOL. Emmons will be reimbursed through SEDOL. SEDOL has approved our plan and the ISBE has approved SEDOL's plan.

Parent Petition:

Dr. Machak met with a group of parents of our current 5th grade students. They had a signed petition, which he shared with the Board, regarding their concern about the number of students in 5th grade, the number of students with IEPs, and discipline concerns. Basically, the parents were requesting a 3rd section of 5th grade. Dr. Machak told the parents he would apprise the Board of their concerns. He also let parents know of changes already implemented that should be helpful for this grade. These include the addition of a 5th grade Henry Horner experience, a school wide discipline initiative, and classroom management technique classes planned for all teachers. Dr. Machak has also been working with Mrs. Lawler to determine if there is money in the budget for an additional para-professional to help meet some of these student's needs.

Dr. Machak does not agree that adding another 5th grade class would address the problems of this class adequately, nor does he agree that a class size of 20 or 21 warrants the opening of another section.

Doctor Machak pointed out to the Board that one of the issues brought out by this discussion with parents is that, although Emmons has had an informal policy regarding class sizes for years, there is in actuality, no formal policy that addresses class size.

Dr. Machak recommended that the Board approve a new para-professional position that will spend time in 5th grade. In addition, he recommends that we address the problem of bullying "head on" through the Social Worker's office.

The Superintendent Forums that Dr. Machak offers are opportunities for parents to give feedback and ask questions about things that are of concern to them. It would be good if these parents would attend and participate in a Superintendent's Forum.

The Board asked the Superintendent for some measurements of the progress with behavior and accountability with the addition of a para-professional for this class.

First Days of School:

There has been a lot of positive feedback regarding the beginning of school.

The residency event and the help we have received from Durham in addition to the information we were able to get on the website early has been helpful in making the busing situation better. Students

have been arriving home no later than 4:05pm. The fact that students are not staying after 3:30 waiting for buses has helped decrease after school discipline problems.

Jim Fischer raised a concern regarding the number of students in each seat on buses, even though the number of students on the bus may be legal.

Lunch Program:

The lunch program has been running well. This year we have switched lunch and recess for each group, having lunch prior to their recess time. This has helped to improve behavior during their lunch.

Update on Building Use and AED:

As of July 1, 2009, a law has gone into effect requiring all groups using public buildings to have access to an AED and someone qualified to use an AED on site. Dr. Machak has been communicating with District #117 to see how they are revising their building use forms and policies. He has received word that a new law was passed that excludes schools from having to have someone on site qualified to use an AED after school hours. This change, however does not go into effect until January. Until that time, the district will need to amend the building use policy and forms.

Technology Update:

Erich Grauke, Director of Technology, shared the summer's technology problems with the Board which resulted in the need to purchase new items.

Three major incidents occurred that resulted in new purchases. The telephone system crashed a few days prior to Mr. Grauke's start at Emmons. The cause was tracked to a sugary liquid that had been spilled in the phone system hub. The voice mail system and hub had to be replaced because of the damage incurred.

A couple of days later, the main server went down. This is the server which stored the teacher files, special education files and internet routing. A component inside the server failed. Because there had been no backup, help was needed to retrieve the data. A backup solution is now in place.

About a week ago, perhaps from a storm, a power outage happened and the server went down again. This time, the hard drive that holds the windows operating system failed. The old server was manufactured by Gateway Computer Company. That company has since sold the server part of their business, and our warranty for the server is no longer good. A new server was purchased. The new server can run multiple operating systems. This cuts down on electricity and the cost of multiple servers. The old server can still be used as a backup to the primary server. A new UPS supply was also purchased for the new server so that it will be more protected in the case of power interruption or surges.

Treasurer's/Business Report:

Mrs. Lawler presented the 5% tracking report. Other than expenses for replacing the phone system and a computer server, all items are where we would expect them to be.

Mrs. Lawler reviewed the tentative budget for the 2009/2010 school year with the board.

SEDOL:

Jackie Zogran can no longer be the representative to the SEDOL board. The next meetings are scheduled for Sept. 2, December 2, March 3, and June 1. Laurie Christophersen volunteered to represent Emmons on the SEDOL board, but is unsure whether or not she can attend the September meeting.

Goals reports:

The goals committees are in the process of developing Board goals. They will be presented at the next meeting.

Policy Update Committee:

The Board held a first reading on policies 2:770 b, 2:260, and 2:260 ap2.

Facilities Committee:

The Facilities committee scheduled a tentative parent landscaping day for Sept. 26, 2009. The plan includes planting fall bulbs for a spring bloom, mulching plants for fall and changing the mulch by the roses and geraniums. We are also planning to dig up the geraniums and try to keep them to reuse next year.

Correspondence:

The Board received a letter informing them that Melonnie Hartl was accepted into the National Science Teacher Academy Fellowship, which is a mentoring program. The Board will invite Melonnie to the next meeting to give us more information.

The Board received a letter from the County Clerk stating that Emmons will no longer be a voting site. They will be combining our site with Faith Lutheran Church.

New Business:

Motion to approve a new para-professional position for the 09/10 school year at a starting salary of \$9.50/hour by Michele Poss. Second by Damian England. Yes: Fischer, England, Reiser, Christophersen, Poss, Zogran, and Jordan. No: 0.

Motion to approve the tentative budget for the 09/10 school year by Michele Reiser. Second by Laurie Christophersen. Yes: England, Reiser, Christophersen, Poss, Zogran, Fischer, and Jordan. No: 0.

Motion to approve the revised building usage request form by Michele Poss. Second by Michele Reiser. Yes: 7, No: 0.

Motion to approve the proposed 09/10 meeting dates by Jim Fischer. Second by Michele Poss. Yes: 7, No: 0.

Visitor Participation:

Mrs. Wu shared with the Board that she thought class size should be a consideration when dealing with discipline problems. She also reminded them that Jim Williams may be of help to kids by hearing his message again, and his spending more time with the current 5th grade.

Motion to move to Closed Session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, and collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more class of employees by Michele Reiser. Second by Michele Poss. Yes: Reiser, Christophersen, Poss, Zogran, Fischer, England and Jordan. No:0..

The Board moved to Closed Session at 10:02pm

The Board reconvened Open Session at 10:42pm.

Motion to adjourn by Lauri Christophersen. Second by Jackie Zogran. Yes: 7, No: 0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carla Pratt
School Secretary

President

Date

Secretary