

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING AND COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION**

January 10, 2011

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, January 10, 2011, was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by President Hollenbeck in the Media Center at Moorsbridge Elementary School, 7361 Moorsbridge Road.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp, and Joanne Willson

Board Trustees Absent: None

Administration Present: Marsha Wells, Superintendent; Denise Bresson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Nancy Haas, Moorsbridge Elementary School Principal; Ric Perry, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; Tom Vance, Community Relations Manager; and Dan Vomastek, Director of Information and Technology Systems

Staff Present: Pam Brouhard, Teacher; Amy Coon, Site Based Decision Making Team; Zac Crouch, Teacher; Nancy Douglas, Teacher; Wendy Grile, Teacher; Kim Grindall, Teacher; Lissa Hartridge, Site Based Decision Making Team; Todd Heerlyn, Teacher; Chelsea Herriman, Site Based Decision Making Team; Cathy Hull, Administrative Assistant; Jennifer Jackson, Site Based Decision Making Team; Lori Kirshman, Teacher; Casey Kirsten, Teacher; Kim Konkel, Teacher; Robin Lentz, Teacher; Kevin Luteyn, Teacher; Jan Lynch, Teacher; Jenni McPherson, Teacher; Julie Mellor, PTO President; Dawn Merasco, Teacher; Nancy Obidzinski-Lum, Teacher; Mary Rogers Teacher; Susan Rumora, Teacher; Robin St. Arnauld, Teacher; Beth Taylor, Teacher; Connie Therkildsen, Teacher; Darcee Thomas, Teacher; Michal VandenBerg, Teacher; Marcia Working, Teacher; Sheryl Zook, Teacher

PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation on the Moorsbridge Elementary School - School Improvement Plan. Principal, Mrs. Nancy Haas, led a discussion of Moorsbridge Elementary's target goals for this year, how they were selected, the key strategies taking place and their plans to evaluate progress. Mrs. Haas and her building chairs responded to Trustee questions.

The Board called recess at 5:58 p.m.

The committee of the whole work session of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, January 10, 2011, was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by President Hollenbeck in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. He welcomed an audience of 25 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp, and Joanne Willson

Board Trustees Absent: None

REPORTS

Superintendent Wells thanked the Principal and School Improvement Team from Moorsbridge Elementary School for their informative presentation.

Superintendent Wells acknowledged the District was in receipt of the signed Confucius Institute Collaborative Agreement with Western Michigan University. She also informed the Board that Chinese and Spanish language programs would be showcased at the January 24th Board meeting.

The Community Relations Manager, Mr. Tom Vance, provided a Balanced Scorecard update regarding plans for stakeholder engagement regarding the District's focus on becoming a top tier District nationally.

Ms. Denise Bresson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction (CIC), and the following teacher members of the secondary science staff: Mr. Dale Freeland, Mr. Jon Taylor, Ms. Kelli Palsrok, Ms. Daniall Poulsen, Ms. Stephanie Wagner, and Ms. Kathy Mirakovits, discussed the review of secondary science curriculum that has taken place. Ms. Bresson and the secondary science staff responded to Trustee questions pertaining to: essential and core classes, State and District requirements, testing, sequencing conflicts, focus groups and encouraged dialogue. It was also noted that arrangements are being made to receive further input from parents prior to a tentative CIC vote on January 26. Superintendent Wells asked that additional thoughts on the curriculum revision proposal be shared with Ms. Bresson.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Hollenbeck opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Seeing no one come forward, President Hollenbeck opened the floor for Board Trustee comments.

Mrs. Kurdys thanked the Administration for the update on the Chinese agreement, thanked all teachers, administrators and parents involved in the Science course revisions, and acknowledged the focus on student safety at the elementary level.

Mrs. Willson advised that she will submit an agenda request with regard to redistricting of attendance areas and sister school transfers.

Mr. Rathburn informed the audience of the preparation underway for the Community High School's entry in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition.

President Hollenbeck opened the floor to Board Committee reports.

Mrs. Kurdys noted the Quality and Scorecard Ad Hoc Committee meeting has been postponed until later this month.

Mr. Rathburn noted the Facilities and Infrastructure Ad Hoc Committee plans to meet on February 1st.

As liaison to the Curriculum and Instruction Council, Mr. Van Antwerp provided an update from the December 15th meeting.

President Hollenbeck shared an article from *Phi Delta Kappan*, dated December 2010-January 2011 entitled "Engage Educators in Order to Achieve the Best Results for Students."

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Bond Projects:

Musical Instrument Purchases for Central and Northern High Schools. The Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Ric Perry, provided details regarding the recommendation to authorize the purchase of musical instruments for Central and Northern High Schools from Washington Music Center, Wheaton, Maryland, at a cost not to exceed \$69,133, from 2008 Bond Fund #1. Dr. Perry, the band instructors from Central, Mr. Pat Flynn, and Northern, Mr. Josh Bartz, and intern, Ms. AnnMarie Welton, responded to Trustee questions pertaining to the District providing band instruments, aging equipment, repairs, donations, quality of certain brands, funding mechanisms, postponed purchases and capital outlay.

Furniture, Furnishings and Equipment Purchases for Central and Northern High Schools. Dr. Perry shared background on the recommendation to purchase furniture, furnishings and equipment for Central and Northern High Schools from the 2008 Bond Fund #1. Dr. Perry, Mr. Eric Alburtus, Central High School Principal, and Mr. Jim French, Northern High School Principal, showcased student furniture samples that were evaluated and responded to Trustee questions regarding the subsequent recommendation.

Building and Site Sinking Fund Pool Sand Filter Bid: The Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, discussed the recommendation to accept the proposal from B&B Pools of Livonia, Michigan, for the purchase of new sand filters for each of the swimming pools for the sum of \$65,025. Mr. Noverr noted this purchase would be funded from the 2010-2011 Building and Site Sinking Fund.

The Board called recess at 8:20 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 8:27 p.m.

Future Financial Considerations:

Debt Levy. Mr. Noverr provided projections for the future debt levy and potential millage rate issue for 2012 and 2013. Trustee discussions pertained to a millage rate adjustment rather than an increase, a county perspective on the projections, historical information, new schools attracting more students to the District, Building and Site Sinking Fund repair schedule, funding from the Bond, contingency funds, discussion of the prioritized Bond list, difficult decisions and the crucial proposal language.

General Operating Fund Update. The Business Manager, Mrs. Karla Colestock, presented an overview of the first amendments to the 2010/11 budget. Mrs. Colestock and Mr. Noverr responded to Trustee questions pertaining to EduJob allocations, fuel purchases, development of assumptions for planning use, and the State Revenue Estimating Conference being held January 14.

EduJob Act Funds. Mrs. Colestock led a discussion about the process utilized to consider use of these funds as part of the overall budget discussion. Trustee discussion pertained to the amount of funding, carrying a balance forward as a safeguard, the decision making process, possible cost savings, and focus group feedback.

Enhancement Millage Resolution. Mrs. Kurdys shared meeting minutes from Parents for Public Schools regarding District communications for the millage renewal election. Superintendent Wells noted the Board's focus will be on expanded engagement with stakeholders for crucial feedback. Trustee discussions pertained to: voting at the January 24th meeting on the millage renewal, addressing the debt levy, developing realistic budgets, cost analyses, and reaction to the community survey conducted by the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency regarding the millage renewal.

Facilities Master Plan Process. President Hollenbeck discussed a draft overview of the process the Board and Administration anticipates will be followed during the Master Facilities Planning Process. Mr. Rathburn, Mr. Van Antwerp, and Mrs. Willson volunteered to serve on this Task Force with Mrs. Kurdys serving as an alternate member.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion offered by Mr. Van Antwerp, seconded by Mr. Howe, that the Board of Education remove from the table the recommendation to purchase 153 netbook computers from Trivalent Group, Inc.

Motion carried by a vote of 6-1.

Motion offered by Mr. Van Antwerp, seconded by Mr. Howe, that the Board of Education approve the recommendation to purchase 153 netbook computers from Trivalent Group, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$98,732.43, proceeds coming from 2008 Bond Funds #1 and #2, as presented.

The Director of Information and Technology Systems, Mr. Vomastek, responded to Trustee questions regarding tracking software to support computer usage, historical data on repairs, upgrades

at the remaining elementary and middle schools, planning in the Bond cycle and budget, data evaluated for the purchase, input from building Principals, media specialists and teachers.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-2.

Motion offered by Mrs. Kurdys, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education remove from the table the selection of Tower Pinkster architectural firm to assist with the Facilities Master Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mrs. Willson, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve the selection of Tower Pinkster architectural firm to assist with the Facilities Master Plan process and authorize the Superintendent or her designee to authorize the contractual agreement accordingly, as presented.

President Hollenbeck indicated the Administration would review the contract at the Board level before it is finalized.

Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary