

WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Work Session Notes – March 8, 2010

The Wyomissing Area School District Board of School Directors' work session convened at 6:03 p.m. in the Community Board Room with President Davis presiding.

In attendance: Board Members Mrs. Bamberger, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Helm, Mr. Painter, Mr. Portner, Mrs. Seltzer, Mrs. Sakmann and Mr. Larkin. Administrators Mr. Robbins, Dr. Pulkowski, Mrs. Mason, Dr. Ashton, Mr. Babb, Mr. Fries, Ms. Garman and Dr. Speace.

Audience included Brenda Phillips, Valerie McVay, Susan Hafer, Michele Fischetti, Laurie Waxler, Michael Gechter, Loni Pottieger, Michele and Tim Hetrich, Lesa Butera, Kevin Martin, and Patricia Sacks.

Following the pledge of allegiance and roll call, Mrs. Davis announced that the Board met in executive session on March 5 for negotiations and also prior to this evening's meeting for personnel reasons and that no action was taken.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Robbins' report included the following items:

- Blended Schools Presentation – Dr. Jon Rednak, regional representative and Tom Brackbill, director of Solanco's virtual academy gave a presentation on Blended Schools, a member-owned and operated on-line K-12 curriculum. Across the state, 140 school districts and 65,000 students are involved in the 160,000 offered courses. Blended Schools was created to offer school districts a less expensive alternative to cyber and charter schools. In addition, it can serve as an alternative education placement, provide summer school options, provide additional high school scheduling options, provide additional world language options, can be used as a dual enrollment option, and can provide on-line enrichment or AP courses. It also offers on-site or on-line professional development. Costs for the program in 2010-11 will be \$10,250 for 100 licenses.
- 2010-11 Budget – Mr. Robbins reviewed the projected expenditures and revenue for the 10-11 budget. Local revenue is 83.6%, state reimbursement is 14.7 %, 27.1 mills, index is .767 of mill or \$611,874. We expect to have \$200,000 less in real estate taxes. We are assuming that Vanity Fair will win their appeal which means their assessment will be dropped \$11 million resulting in \$300,000 lower revenue. Delinquent taxes are down and interest earnings have taken the biggest hit. We are planning for the worst case scenario. Revenue is \$79,000 less for 10-11 and the expenditure side is \$13,000 less than the current budget. The debt service for the WREC project is included in the expenditures side of the budget. No new staff

members are included and there have been no programs added or cut. The governor's budget is still being discussed and is expected to be settled by June 30 because many lawmakers are seeking re-election. The current fund balance is a little over \$2 million. Mrs. Helm commended the staff for the reduction in expenditures and Mrs. Davis said thank you to all administrators for their diligence in making budget cuts. Mr. Robbins stated that the 11-12 budget will be even more challenging than this year because by then the stimulus money will have gone away at the state level. The current and future PSERS rate was discussed.

- Donated money from Taylor Swift – Mr. Robbins indicated that \$20,000 would be used to purchase laptops, \$3,000 for digital reference books, and \$2,000 for a music lab cart. Mrs. Seltzer said that the drama department requested funds for lighting and sound improvements. Mr. Robbins felt that expenditure would not fall under the guidelines she established for the donation. Mrs. Bamberger asked how many laptops are currently available and how the decision was made to purchase additional ones. Audience member Mrs. Phillips said she can attest to the fact that she has trouble securing laptops for a lesson when needed. Mr. Painter suggested the cart and five laptops be named the "Taylor Swift Mobile Music Lab." Mrs. Helm said she would contact the Swifts to get feedback from Taylor and them on the idea.

Finance and Facilities

Mrs. Mason indicated that the amount for budget transfers will be added to the voting meeting agenda.

The Board will be asked to approve the BCIU 2010-11 budget.

The Board will be asked to approve the Berks Career & Technology Center 2010 budget. This reflects a 13.9% increase to our portion of the budget. Mr. Painter asked if this increase was due to the error discovered last year. Mrs. Mason said it was not.

Mrs. Mason reported that she and Brian Boland finished the draft of the agreement with Gilbert Architects and turned it over to them to put in the AIA document. The Board will then receive a copy. The architect, Danielle Hoffer, expected we would have it by the end of the week.

Danielle Hoffer and Scott Adams of Gilbert Architects reviewed the PlanCon documents to be submitted to the state to receive reimbursement. The majority of the money will be spent on renovations including upgrading the plumbing, electric and HVAC systems.

Public comment on the project included the following:

- Q.: Was any consideration was given to providing additional light in the basement areas and could the roof be used as outdoor space for something like a science lab?

- A.: Lighting in all areas will be addressed and besides using the rooftop for mechanical units, safety and accessibility would prohibit its use as outdoor space.
- Q.: Will upgraded systems include wireless capability and provisions for smart board installations?
- A.: Yes, in addition a cable tray will be provided in all hallways to allow for future expansion.
- Q.: How are acoustic issues being addressed?
- A.: Plans call for providing for acoustical treatment in the gym and café as well as installing acoustical insulation to prevent transfer of sound. Also getting rid of ventilators will help.
- Q.: What is the project timeline?
- A.: Documents and design complete by September. Construction will start in December. Students will be back in the building for the 11-12 school year.
- Q.: Plan for additional parking spaces?
- A.: Not sure yet.
- Q.: Where will classes be held during the construction?
- A.: Mr. Robbins is in the process evaluating options – modulars are a last resort. He hopes to have a recommendation in April.

Mrs. Helm requested that the architects review their documents listing the price/sq. ft. because she felt it shows a price much higher than the original estimate.

Mr. Fries reported that we have \$1.3 million in roofing projects scheduled for the summer. This expense is part of the \$5 million already projected and will finish all the roofing projects on the radar. The JSHS also has the same HVAC issues in the old part of the building that WREC has. Mr. Fitzgerald asked if there were any problems as a result of the recent bad weather. Mr. Fries responded that there were leaks, not in the roofing material, but in the pipes. He also indicated that there is a nagging problem with WHEC; the contractor wants to flood the roof to find the problem.

PSBA recommends that we submit a resolution on employee pension reform to legislators. Approval of the resolution will be on the voting agenda.

Curriculum and Technology – no agenda items

Personnel and Policy

Mr. Painter reviewed the personnel items the Board will be asked to approve at the voting meeting.

Two policies provided for first reading: 908 Relations with Parents, and 918 Title I Parent Involvement. These policies are being reviewed and revised prior to our Federal Programs Monitoring in April.

Old Business

Mrs. Davis noted that a negotiations session with the support staff union occurred March 2 and they are in the process of rescheduling a negotiations session with the teachers' union.

New Business

Mrs. Davis asked if there is a policy related to press releases. Dr. Speace responded that although we often call the media or even supply a press release, it is at their discretion whether the event is covered. Mr. Babb said that Channel 69 is very responsive and willing to cover events.

Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.