

MINUTES
McLean County Unit District No. 5
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Session
December 8, 2004

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District No. 5, McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois, met in regular session on December 8, 2004, at approximately 6:00 p.m. at the District Office, 1809 West Hovey Avenue, Normal, Illinois.

1.0 Roll Call Members present: Gail Ann Briggs, Tom Ellsworth, Scott Lay, Meta Mickens-Baker, Martin O'Connor, Steve Whittington, and Board President Rick Percy. Members absent: None.

2.0 Closed Session Briggs moved, Ellsworth seconded, to adjourn to closed session to consider the employment and compensation of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, pending litigation, and review of closed session minutes. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Also present: Superintendent Dr. Alan Chapman, Assistant Superintendent of Operations/Human Resources John Pye, and Clerk of the Board Cindy Prescher.

3.0 Return to Public Session At approximately 7:10 p.m., Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to come out of closed session and return to public session. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Also present: Chapman, Pye, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum/Instruction Jim Braksick, Executive Director of Secondary Education Bruce Boswell, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer Tod Altenburg, Prescher, Meghan Leiseberg, Cathy Greene, Mark Otto, Julie Basting, Britta Armstrong, Jeanette Nuckolls, Michael Gallagher, Steve Barr, Steve Ryan-Fouts, John Puzauskas, Grethe Armstrong, Kay Schroeder, Rick Hoepner, Beth Sennett, Linda Chizmar, Dan Lamboley, Robert Knight, Sandi Arnold, Elisa Beneze, Greg Beneze, Carol Beneze, Chuck Bartlett, Jerry James, David Hays, Pam Hays, Rich Schroeder, Sue Herriott, Randall Middleton, Michelle Steinbacher from The Pantagraph, Marvis Custer, Holly Villhauer, Carol Johnson, Jennifer Kelly, Chuck Hartseil, Chris Knight, Crista Gilmore, Scott Lubbers, Eric Manual, Tom Eder, Dan Lamboley, State Representative Dan Brady, and others.

4.0 Pledge of Allegiance The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

5.0 Public Hearing on Proposed Tax Levy For Year 2004

Altenburg reported that the proposed tax levy amounts had not changed since the November 10, 2004 board meeting. He indicated that estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2004 would be \$61,347,409. In addition, Altenburg stated that \$9,538,717 would be automatically levied by the County Clerk's office for the Bond and Interest Fund. It was reported that the total tax rate was estimated to increase about \$.04 to \$4.47, due to rising costs for liability insurance and the charging of costs for Tort-qualifying expenditures for job descriptions related to the principals. Altenburg pointed out that the recommended levy amount and the amount to be expended were two different amounts, with the levy amount being that certified with the County Clerk's office. After the assessor establishes the equalized assessed valuation (EAV), he indicated the tax rate would then be applied and calculations done to obtain the actual extension. Altenburg reported that the Truth in Taxation notice was published in *The Pantagraph* on November 28, 2004, which included the date and time of the public hearing on the levy

and the proposed amounts to be levied. In response to a board member's question about the impact of the tax rate increase on homeowners, Altenburg remarked that for a home with a value of \$150,000, the increase would amount to about \$21 per year. He also noted that a 6 or 7 percent increase in EAV is projected. There were no questions from the audience regarding the proposed levy. The hearing officially ended at 7:30 p.m.

**6.0 Focus on Students/
Good News Reports**

The following were recognized:

Focus on Students

- Crista Gilmore, NCHS student
- National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists from NCHS
- NCHS and NCWHS IHSA Scholastic Achievement Award recipients and Big 12 Scholar Athletes – Fall 2004
- Illinois State Scholars from NCWHS

Good News Reports

- "The Prowl" video journal produced for NCWHS by two NCWHS students, Scott Lubbers and Eric Manual, and NCWHS teacher, Loren Baele
- Partnership between Unit 5 Art Department and Normal Public Library
- Jennifer Kelly, Anne Libert, Ryan Short, and Holly Villhauer, NCHS teachers
- Gifted education resource boxes created by Gifted lead teachers and IMC specialists

7.0 Public Comments

None.

8.0 Action

8.1 Adopt Certificate of Tax Levy for Year 2004

Altenburg recommended Board approval of the Certificate of Tax Levy for Year 2004. Lay moved, Ellsworth seconded, to adopt the Certificate of Tax Levy for the Year 2004 as presented. (Attachment #1) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.2 Adopt Resolution to Abate Taxes

Altenburg indicated that as a result of the March 2000 building bond referendum, the recommended resolution would abate \$1,525,000 back to the taxpayers, whereby the District utilized Capital Development Board (CDB) proceeds within the Site and Construction II Fund to abate property taxes levied for the Bond and Interest Fund. It was noted that the District had received all proceeds from the CDB and that Altenburg was working with First Midstate Bank on an updated schedule based on the amounts abated over the years to the taxpayers. Briggs moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to adopt the resolution to abate property taxes levied for the Bond and Interest Fund by the amount of \$1,525,000. (Attachment #2) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.3 Certify the Need for Fire Prevention and Safety Funds

Randy Middleton of Middleton and Associates presented a 10-year Safety resurvey for Fairview Elementary School, the first 10-year Safety survey for Pepper Ridge Elementary School, and an amendment to the 10-year Safety resurvey for Chiddix Junior High School. Certification of the need for Fire Prevention and Safety Funds in the amounts of \$93,450 for Fairview, \$92,100 for Pepper Ridge, and \$65,580 for Chiddix, was recommended. Ellsworth moved, Lay seconded, to certify the need for Fire Prevention and Safety Funds as presented. (Attachment #3) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.4 Action From Closed Session

Lay moved, Briggs seconded, to approve a military leave for the employee discussed in closed session. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to approve 2004-2005 salaries and benefits as amended for administrators (except psychologists and social workers), technology personnel, occupational and physical therapist assistants, grant personnel, and custodial/maintenance

and transportation exempt personnel. (Attachment #4) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.5 Approve Rules and Regulations for Use of District Facilities

Chapman presented a document that would change the previous rules and regulations for use of District facilities in that it would expand the possibility for use of the swimming pools at the two high schools by groups other than school groups and the Normal Parks and Recreation Department. He stated that if the Board approved the document, Attorney Robert Fleming would draft an application that would incorporate these rules and regulations and an appropriate fee structure that would basically allow the District to expand the use of the two facilities. He recommended approval of the presented document. Lay moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the Rules and Regulations for the Use of District Facilities as presented. (Attachment #5)

Board members had questions and offered suggestions on the rental of the pools for moneymaking purposes; whether the same rules and regulations for groups would apply for an individual; higher limits of insurance for commercial enterprises than, for example, church groups; differentiation between commercial enterprise and not-for-profit or children/teenage groups; personnel costs; personal property/injury issues; whether the presented document would be incorporated as a policy; and whether all the major issues pertaining to facility use had been addressed.

Chapman stated Fleming would advise the Board on appropriate and inappropriate events and would help draft an application for facility use that would be in the District's best interest in regard to liability and protection. He stated that he was comfortable with moving forward on this matter. Board members indicated they were ready to vote on the presented document.

Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

9.0 Consent Agenda

Chapman reviewed the Consent Agenda and recommended its approval. He noted that under Staffing Needs the Administration was recommending the addition of two security monitor positions (one at each high school), which would be funded through a Safety grant and the addition of a speech therapist position due to the need for more services for additional students. Chapman also highlighted the retirement of the director of elementary education, Cathy Greene, in June 2006. Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

9.1 Approval of the Minutes

- November 10, 2004 Regular Meeting

9.2 Personnel Matters (Attachment #6)

9.3 Payment of Bills and Payrolls (Attachment #7)

9.4 Treasurer's Report (Attachment #8)

9.5 Overnight Trips

- NCWHS overnight trip requests for Drama and Speech teams (Attachment #9)

Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O'Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

10.0 Reports/Discussion

10.1 School Report Cards From ISBE

Braksick reported that after some delay the Schools Report Cards were finally received this week from the Illinois State Board of Education. He noted that typically they were received prior to December, but they were received later this year as the state went to great lengths to make sure the data entered and reported was as accurate as possible. Braksick indicated the District's report cards would be available on the Unit 5 website on Monday, December 13. Hard copies will also be available to the general public on

Monday at any of the District's schools. Braksick remarked that at one of the board meetings in January he would present a testing report and trend information.

Braksick stated that, generally, the report cards were positive with scores, in most cases, above state averages. It was reported that none of the schools were identified for school improvement according to the AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) specifications for the No Child Left Behind Act.

Due to the participation rate for LEP (Limited English Proficient) students being incorrectly reported, the report card initially indicated the District did not make AYP in reading. Braksick stated that the information has now been corrected, and the report card would be updated to indicate the District did make AYP in reading. He added that the District did achieve AYP overall and has not been identified as needing school improvement.

Braksick reported on two areas of concern. He reported that for some areas of disability the District did not have enough students to qualify for a subgroup, as it pertains to AYP determination. While the problem has appeared at Normal Community High School, Braksick stated that it was also a District and statewide problem. He remarked that the District would continue to look at ways to bring up test scores appropriately, but added that it would be a challenge. It was noted that a second area of concern was that Kingsley Jr. High did not make AYP in two math subgroups. Braksick indicated the building principal is aware of this and has made adjustments in the school's improvement plan to achieve AYP in those areas.

Braksick emphasized that the School Report Card was only a part of what is done in the District, but is not how we define what we are all about in Unit 5.

10.2 Tiered Busing Transportation Report

Pye presented a report on a three-tiered transportation system, which he indicated was in follow up to a similar report presented last April by the Unit 5 Citizens Advisory Council. He remarked that a committee further investigated the feasibility of a tiered transportation system and its impact on the District. Pye publicly acknowledged the committee members and their contributions to the investigation and report. It was indicated that one of the goals was to maximize transportation resources of the District by providing a cost effective plan for providing efficient, safe, and reliable transportation for the students of the District. Another priority was to try to minimize the wait and ride times for students as they travel to and from school. In developing a recommendation, Pye stated that the committee looked at a three-tiered system whereby one bus would make two or three runs each morning and afternoon to a school site. With a this type of system, he indicated there would need to be a sufficient amount of time between those runs to allow buses to pick up students and bring them to their designated sites as well as take them home.

If the District were to adopt a three-tiered system, Pye indicated it would necessitate the District moving to different starting and ending times for the schools. This was an issue that the CAC previously looked at extensively, and Pye acknowledged that committee's efforts as well. He stated that the CAC report was utilized as a reference during the recent investigation. Pye reported that various starting and ending times were considered for each of the buildings. He pointed out that length of the school day must be taken into consideration, as the high school level has a 7 hour and 15 minute day, the junior high level has a 7 hour and 12 minute day, and the elementary level has a 6 hour and 45 minute day. Both positive and negative aspects of moving to a three-tiered system were considered, in addition to sleep studies, and the impact of such a change on education, extracurricular activities, and child care for students.

The committee recommended the following starting and ending times for the various levels: (1) high school level – 7:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m., (2) junior high level – 8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m., and (3) elementary level – 9:00 a.m.-3:45 p.m. With the adoption of this type of transportation system and the proposed starting and ending times, the committee felt one

of the issues that would have to be addressed would be early dismissals and late starts. A key factor to this type of change would be communicating it to the District as a whole. Pye stated that the District could possibly save \$440,000 by moving to a three-tiered transportation system. Cost savings could come from reduction of the District's bus fleet by 22 buses (\$220,000 savings), a reduction in insurance costs (\$22,000 savings), and a reduction in drivers (\$207,000 savings). Other savings could come from a reduction of fuel and maintenance costs; however, Pye noted that the buses used would be traveling more miles each day. Further, he pointed out that while costs may be reduced in some areas, they could increase in others due to moving to the tiered system and adjusting the starting and ending times of the school day. For example, additional area staff may be needed and a different approach may be needed to provide professional development for elementary staff. Schedule B and general supervision at the buildings are other areas that could be impacted by the change.

It was reported that the committee felt there would be less travel time and school bus waiting time for most students, with the move to a tiered system. Approximately 65 buses would be needed for regular education students. In addition, approximately 25-30 buses would be needed for special education students. Pye stated that about 12-15 spare buses would also be needed. Concerning before and after school programs at Unit 5 schools, it was felt that the change would have little impact on those programs. Other childcare providers, agencies, and businesses might have to adjust their schedules with a change to a tiered system. Pye remarked that the committee did not view these challenges as insurmountable, particularly as neighboring Bloomington District 87 already operates on a tiered system.

It was acknowledged that moving to a three-tiered transportation system might have some implications in bargaining with some employee groups. The change could have an effect on impact bargaining, bargaining successor agreements, in addition to affecting scheduling/planning time, Professional Development Academy (PDA) structure, supervision, meeting time, and working hours.

Pye noted that the committee felt strongly about the need to establish a timeline for implementation, if the Board would approve moving to a three-tiered transportation system. If approved in January, February and March would be devoted to route development, administrator review of those routes, and staff, parent and community notification that the District would be moving to the new system. In April, trial route runs would take place. Final route revisions would be done in May and June. Parent notification of bus routes would begin in July. New routes would begin in August 2005.

Pye felt it was important to note that moving to the new system would not be a "cure all" for the issues and problems the District has experienced in transporting students. He felt it would provide for better management of the District's resources and safe and reliable transportation for students.

Board members had concerns about the response of parents, teachers, and staff to changing to a tiered transportation system and desired feedback and to be able to field issues before approval by the Board. Other concerns they had were in regard to the potential for disruption/turmoil, schedule changes, changing of drop-off/pick-up points, whether there would actually be shorter ride times for students, contract issues, daycare issues, and the elimination of '0' hour for high school students. Board members also desired further information on the "total" estimated cost savings, other school districts that have utilized a three-tiered transportation system, what the alternative times might be for meetings and PDA, and a two-tiered system. Pye noted that the committee did look at a survey of LUDA (Large Unit District Association) districts of similar size that have tiered transportation systems.

Board members commended the committee for its report on the three-tiered transportation system, but desired more study and input on the matter. It was suggested that if a change is made to a tiered transportation system, not everyone will be totally

happy, but it most likely will not be as bad as some thought it would be during the discussions.

Chapman remarked that more work would be done on the topic and a supplemental report will be brought back to the Board at the January 12 regular board meeting.

10.3 Board Representative Reports

Community Connections Committee (Mickens-Baker/Briggs) – Mickens-Baker reported that a public meeting hosted by the Asian community was held on December 1. She noted that six organizations came together to host the meeting, which she felt was positive with good questions. She complimented the administrative teachers and staff who attended the meeting.

Mickens-Baker indicated that the NAACP was also interested in hosting a similar public meeting with the District. She stated that a planning meeting would be held on December 15 to develop a program.

It was reported that the Unit 5 Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) met on November 17 at Carlock Elementary School. CAC study committees are making progress on their study topics for this school year. The first study reports will be presented at the January 19 meeting of the CAC.

The next meeting of the Community Connections Committee will be held at December 14 at 4:00 p.m. at the District Office.

Mickens-Baker reminded the public that a school board election would take place on April 5, 2005. Three seats will be filled. Nominating petition packets are currently available at the District Office. The period for filing of petitions is January 18-25, 2005.

Discipline and Medication Committee (Mickens-Baker) – Mickens-Baker reported she had been attending the meetings of this committee. A philosophy statement is in the process of being drafted for the Board's consideration. The statement will summarize the intent of the District's discipline policies and help guide policy development and the administration in the future. Mickens-Baker indicated the committee would meet tomorrow on the philosophy statement and would hold another committee meeting in January.

Mickens-Baker reported that she and Chapman attended the grand opening of the new Children's Discovery Museum in Normal. She felt it was an excellent facility and indicated educational programs are available for schools at the museum or in school buildings.

Mackinaw Valley Special Education Association Council (Ellsworth) – Ellsworth reported he was unable to attend the last Council meeting, but indicated he would be able to attend future meetings of the Council at least until April.

IASB Corn Belt Division (Ellsworth) – Ellsworth reported he and Briggs attended the December 5 IASB Corn Belt Division meeting in Fairbury. He stated that it was a good meeting, and he presented a report of the Resolutions Committee at the meeting.

McLean County Regional Planning Commission (Lay) – Lay reported that the Regional Planning Commission met last week to review a number of proposals. He remarked that a new slate of officers was elected at the meeting, with Don Fernandes elected chair and Lay elected vice chair of the Commission.

Beyond the Books Educational Foundation (Briggs) – Briggs reported that the Foundation would be making its recommendation and taking action on the amount to be awarded in grants this year. Grant applications will be due around March 5. Grant information will be forthcoming to building principals after the January meeting

Board Policy Review Committee (Briggs) – Briggs reported the Committee would meet next week on additional policies for consideration as a result of the Board’s discussion several meetings ago about policies, as well as other information received.

10.4 1st Reading: Proposed Board Policy Revisions and New Policy

- Policy 2.220 – Board Meeting Procedures
- Policy 4.155 – Naming or Renaming of Facilities and School and District Symbols
- Policy 6.260 – Objections to Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs
- Policy 6.340 – Student Testing and Assessment Program
- Policy 7.272 (New) Orders to Forgo Life-Sustaining Treatment

Briggs reported that due to some personal issues and a death in her family she was unable to provide board members with a report on proposed policies until this meeting. In the interest of time, she asked board members to read the report and respond to her with any input on the proposed policies.

10.5 Enrollment Update

- Enrollment – November 30, 2004
- Enrollment Comparison – 11/03 to 11/04

Pye reported student enrollment as of November 30 to be 11,395. He noted that class size continues to remain constant and growth is continuing at the elementary and high school levels. It was reported that there was a slight decrease in enrollment at the middle school level. Overall growth remains at about 3 percent. Pye indicated he expected to see some shifting in enrollment as people make moves over the winter break. Percy requested a report be provided to board members on available classrooms within the District.

10.6 Parent-Teacher Conference Day Report

- Elementary Schools
- Secondary Schools

Braksick and Boswell reported on the number of parent-teacher conferences held on November 12, 2004 at the elementary and secondary levels. (Attachment #10) Braksick noted that about 5,800 individual conferences were held on the 12th at the elementary level. Boswell noted that in addition to individual/group conferences, telephone and email conferences also took place. He reported that the number of conferences held at secondary level was greater than in previous years.

10.7 IASB Conference Report

Board members reported on their attendance at the Illinois Association of School Boards’ conference held in November in Chicago. They offered highlights of the various sessions they attended on such topics as financial management and budgeting, board policy development, communication strategies, school board accountability, and monitoring and reporting district performance, inclusion, educating non-affluent children, S.B. 750, school funding, long-range planning, school board leadership, etc. In follow up to one of the sessions she attended, Briggs indicated it was suggested in one of the sessions she attended to wait to conduct a Board self-evaluation until after seating of the new Board after the school board election. She also indicated that feedback on the IASB conference was sought at the December 5 Corn Belt Division meeting. Board members felt the conference was very worthwhile and provided opportunities to network with other board members and educators.

11.0 Announcements

Announcements made at the meeting:

- Altenburg thanked the Board and Cabinet for their sympathies extended on the death of his mother-in-law.
- Braksick remarked that he had met several times with the Unit Five Education Association (UFEA) calendar committee. Further discussions on the calendar will take place after the first of the year. Several drafts will be developed for the Board’s

consideration. In response to a board member's question about whether a multi-year calendar was being considered, Braksick indicated that the committee would do some long-range planning in its discussions.

- At the high school level, Boswell commented that they were gearing up for 2005-2006 registration. He indicated that by the end of December the Course Description Handbook would be distributed to the schools.
- As this was the last board meeting in 2004, Whittington extended holiday wishes to all.
- Chapman remarked that last evening he had the opportunity to travel to O'Fallon, Illinois to give a presentation on moving from one to two high schools. He noted that a second individual presented on staying with one large high school. He felt their community forum was a nice opportunity to share information about Unit 5 and multiple opportunities.
- O'Connor also extended holiday wishes to all.
- Pye expressed appreciation for the opportunity to attend the IASB Conference. He felt it was a wonderful experience and indicated he was able to participate in a number of sessions and interact with board members and educators from around the state.
- It was noted that a Board Work Session would be held on January 18.
- Percy asked board members to respond to him on whether they felt it would be better to wait until after seating of the new Board to conduct a Board self-evaluation. June has been suggested for the self-evaluation meeting.

12.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Richard B. Percy, Board of Education President
Community Unit School District No. 5
McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois

ATTEST:

Martin L. O'Connor, Board of Education Secretary

Approved: _____
(Date)