

**MINUTES**  
**McLean County Unit District No. 5**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Regular Session**  
**October 27, 2004**

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District No. 5, McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois, met in regular session on October 27, 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 (entered at 6:07 p.m.), Scott Lay, Meta Mickens-Baker, Martin O'Connor (entered at 6:08 p.m.), Steve Whittington, and Board President Rick Percy. Members absent: None.

**2.0 Closed Session** Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to adjourn to closed session to consider other matters relating to an individual student, the employment and compensation of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, pending litigation, and review of closed session minutes. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Lay, Mickens-Baker, 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 7:07 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, Rebecca Loda from The Pantagraph, Chuck Bartlett, Grethe Armstrong, Tom Peffer, Jeanette Nuckolls, Nicole Standley, Sherrie Leavens, Mary Ahillen, Jessica Thornton, David McMorris, Bernie Green, Susan Hitchings, Stefanie Negley, Henry Walker, Meggan McMillan, John Puzauskas, Chuck Hartseil, Diane Mueller, Darcy Loy, Rich Schroeder, Jerry James, Patrice Hambrick, DeToya Sanders, and others.

**4.0 Pledge of Allegiance** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**5.0 Focus on Students/  
Good News Reports** The following were recognized:

**Focus on Students**

- Jessica Thornton, NCHS Student
- National Merit Scholarship Commended Students from NCHS: Laura A'Hearn, Luke Beasley, Matthew Huddle, Joseph Trimble, and Ellen West.

**Good News Report**

- David McMorris, PJHS Teacher

**6.0 Public Comments** None.

**7.0 Reports/Discussion** 7.1 **Financial Audit Report**  
Altenburg introduced Tom Peffer of Gorenz and Associates, who reported on the District and Mackinaw Valley Special Education Association's financial audits conducted by his firm. He noted that board members had received larger, complete audit reports for the District and Mackinaw Valley and presented highlights of the audits. (Attachment #1)

Peffer remarked that the audit reports were presented in a regulatory format using a cash basis approach. He reviewed the layout of the reports and noted that they included three

letters—one stating Gorenz’s opinion on the regulatory basis, a second one concerning internal controls and compliance issues, and a third one regarding federal programs.

Peffer pointed out that the District’s ISBE financial profile score improved from 2.80 in 2003 to 2.9 in 2004, moving it from the financial profile designation of “financial watch” to “financial warning.”

Audit highlights included a schedule of cash revenues received and cash expenditures disbursed in the Educational, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, and Working Cash Funds for fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004; charts showing 2004 operating revenues and a comparison for five years; a disbursement analysis by object for the Operational Funds for the past year; charts showing 2004 operating expenses and a comparison for five years; and charts showing assessed value, tax rates, average daily attendance, cost per pupil, and Operating Fund balances for the past ten years.

It was noted that over 70 percent of the District’s revenue comes from local sources, with state revenue to the District lagging at 25 percent.

Peffer reported the District has some issues to consider as its reserve funds are declining, its funding comes mainly from real estates taxes, and its assessed value is increasing but not by double digits. He added that its earnings on investments are down, but it still has some strength in its bonding power.

Concerning the state’s allowance for a one-time transfer of available monies from the Transportation Fund to the Educational Fund, Peffer indicated he was not opposed to this type of transfer to help improve the Educational Fund balance.

## 8.0 Action

### 8.1 Accept Financial Audit Report

Altenburg recommended the Board’s acceptance of the financial audit report as presented. Lay moved, Briggs seconded, to accept the financial audit report as presented. (Attachment #2) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, O’Connor, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

### 8.2 Adopt American Education Week Proclamation

Ellsworth read and then moved, Lay seconded, to adopt the American Education Week Proclamation as presented. (Attachment #3) 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 as presented. Ellsworth moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

### 9.1 Approval of the Minutes

- October 13, 2004 Regular Meeting

### 9.2 Personnel Matters (Attachment #4)

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

## 10.0 Reports/Discussion

### 10.1 Board Representative Report

Community Connections Committee (Briggs, Mickens-Baker) – Mickens-Baker reported the committee met on October 25. She indicated a communications plan had been prepared regarding the November 3 town meeting. The plan includes a teaser ad to appear in *The Pantagraph* on October 30 to alert citizens to an informational ad that will also appear in *The Pantagraph* on November 1. The informational ad will include the Unit 5 Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, notice of the November 3 town meeting, online information sources, and contact information for the District. It will also give information concerning the availability of nominating papers for the next school board election on April 5, 2005. Mickens-Baker pointed out that the informational ad was chosen over an insert, as it would achieve maximum distribution at a lower cost.

Mickens-Baker remarked that board member presence would be needed at three upcoming events—the November 3 town meeting at the Laborers’ International Hall in Bloomington from 7:00-9:00 p.m., the December 1 public forum sponsored by the Organization of Chinese Americans at the PJHS IMC from 7:00-9:00 p.m., and the April 11, 2005 second town meeting. It was noted that the Community Connections Committee would next meet on December 7 at 4:00 p.m. at the Unit 5 District Office.

In response to a board member question about the format for the town meeting, Mickens-Baker indicated input on the format would be sought from board members through the Weekly Update. Percy directed the committee to proceed with finalizing the format and informing board and cabinet members of that information prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was suggested that board and cabinet members be dispersed among the audience at the town meeting.

Bloomington Area Vocation Center (BAVC) (Whittington) – Whittington reported he and Boswell attended a meeting of the BAVC Administrative Council and indicated the Center’s director had presented a statewide tuition comparison. He felt the director does a great job in keeping the program affordable for participating school districts.

#### 10.2 Discussion of Potential Board Policy Revisions and New Policy

Percy and Briggs led the Board in an interactive discussion concerning suggested revisions and rationale for potential changes to five board policies—2.140 Communications To and From the Board, 2.220 Board Meeting Procedures, 3.40 Superintendent, 4.30 Revenue and Investments, and 4.155 Naming or Renaming of Facilities and School and District Symbols. Also discussed was a requested new policy, 7.275 Orders to Forgo Life-Sustaining Treatment. The following input on the policies was offered:

- Policy 2.140 Communications To and From the Board
  - The suggested revision addresses my concerns in that it makes the delineation between communication to the Board as an entity and to individual board members.
  - The current policy has not been particularly user friendly and has set up some roadblocks to communication, which is an important aspect of the District’s strategic plan. However, to not have a board policy that addresses communication would seem to leave something unfinished.
  - I do not see the need for this policy, as the public already has a right to communicate with me as a board member and hear my thoughts on issues.
  - The word “encourages” in the policy seems awkward to me. I think the intent is to create an atmosphere where people will come to board members, but communications also need to be directed to appropriate contacts.
- Policy 2.220 Board Meeting Procedures
  - It was suggested that a draft of the agenda for the next board meeting be sent to board members 10 days or such period of time as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent before the next meeting,
  - At issue is whether the Superintendent and Board President decide what will appear on board meeting agendas.
  - I think something should be included in the policy about how suggested items find their way to the board meeting agenda. Board members should be able to have items included on the agenda.
  - The Board President should have the authority to decide what will appear on the board meeting agenda. I trust his authority in determining agenda items.
  - I think it is the role of the Board President to meter the content of meetings.
- Policy 3.40 Superintendent
  - I think we already have the ability within the current policy to evaluate the Superintendent twice a year, if desired. There has been some concern about the Board micromanaging. Specifically including in policy that the Board will

evaluate the Superintendent twice a year could cause another Superintendent to wonder about whether the Board is over-evaluating.

- I don't think evaluating the Superintendent twice a year indicates the Board is micromanaging, but rather treating someone fairly.
- A mid-term appraisal can provide an opportunity for feedback. However, I think the annual evaluation should be more comprehensive. I have a concern about a mid-year evaluation creating more work for the Superintendent and Board.
- It is not a standard procedure in the state of Illinois to evaluate the Superintendent twice a year.
- There are sufficient opportunities for a review of progress under the existing policy.
- I recommend the policy remain as is.
- I think it is important for the Board to receive adequate feedback from the Superintendent. I think it is important to have the option to receive feedback. I am comfortable with not changing the current policy.
- Policy 4.30 Revenue and Investments
  - Board members favored including in policies where appropriate "the Superintendent or designee."
- Policy 4.155 Naming or Renaming of Facilities and School and District Symbols
  - Board members favored not including "posthumous designation only" in this policy.
  - Most also favored considering individuals currently employed or directly serving in an elected or volunteer capacity when naming a school/facility.
  - It was felt that an identified process for the naming of a school/facility was important.
- Proposed New Policy 7.275 Orders to Forgo Life-Sustaining Treatment
  - This policy has been requested by the Special Education administration, but is not mandated. Most challenging will be the development of an administrative procedure for such a policy.

Briggs noted that additional suggested policy changes related to recent legislation have just been received from the Illinois Association of School Board's 'PRESS' policy service.

Briggs suggested that the discussion process undertaken at this meeting be continued for future policy development.

### 10.3 IASB Report to the Membership

Ellsworth reviewed 13 resolutions to be voted on by school district delegates at the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Conference in November. Board members offered their input regarding the resolutions to the District's delegate, Whittington, and alternate, Mickens-Baker. The resolutions cover a wide range of topics; i.e., school funding reform, tax caps, the Prairie State Achievement Exam, Advanced Placement scores, verbatim recording of closed session minutes, etc.

## 11.0 Announcements

Announcements made at the meeting:

- Whittington commented that he recently visited with Kelly Rutledge, a teaching assistant at Prairieland Elementary School, in response to her invitation to visit. He also congratulated Dr. Chapman on his induction into the Illinois State University College of Education Hall of Fame.
- Briggs commented that she, Mickens-Baker, Dr. Chapman, Leiseberg, and others from the District recently attended the NAACP banquet where NCHS Student Jessica Thornton was recognized.
- Briggs noted that Carlock Elementary School's Harvest Day event is coming up on Friday.
- Lay commented that he recently had the opportunity to participate at Oakdale School's Family Reading Night. He reported that 185 people were in attendance.

- Lay noted that tonight's board meeting would be the last one covered by Rebecca Loda, a reporter for *The Pantagraph*. He expressed appreciation to Rebecca for her reporting efforts.
- Dr. Chapman also thanked Miss Loda and indicated it had been a pleasure to work with her in reporting District news.
- Mickens-Baker commented that she recently gave a presentation at NCHS on diversity and inclusion.
- Mickens-Baker noted that Glenn Elementary School recently held a Fall Festival. She added that Glenn's Harvest Day event would be held this coming Friday.
- Percy remarked that he hoped the District had a good follow-up system for encouraging its graduates who are interested in teaching to consider Unit 5.
- Percy commented that he was very pleased and impressed by Mickens-Baker's presentations on diversity and inclusion.
- Percy also remarked on the NCWHS football team's many successes during the current season. He hoped they would make it to the state playoffs.

**12.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

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

ATTEST:

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Martin L. O'Connor, Board of Education Secretary