

NEENAH JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education

January 5, 2010

The meeting of the Board of Education was held in the auditorium of the Administration Building on Tuesday, January 5, 2010.

President Scott Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and ascertained that proper notice had been given to the local newspapers and that the meeting had been properly noticed at each of the school buildings. Board members Betsy Ellenberger, Christine Grunwald, Peter Kaul, Christopher Kunz, John Lehman, Larry Lewis, Jeff Spoehr, Scott Thompson, Colleen Zuro-White, student representatives Jon Lang and Noah White (arrived at 7:53 p.m.), and the following administrators were present: Mary Pfeiffer, Superintendent; Victoria Holt, Director of Secondary Education and Human Resources; Kandis Sullivan, Director of Business Services; Steve Dreger, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology; Anne Lang, Director of Pupil Services; and Phil Johnson, Director of Elementary Education. Paul Hauffe, Supervisor of Accounting and Transportation, was also present. Diane Haug was present as Board Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Christopher Kunz and seconded by Peter Kaul to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2009 Board meeting. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Jon Lang...

- stated that work for the State Conference of the Wisconsin Association of Student Councils (WASC) which will be held in April is continuing.
- shared an update to a plan for receiving student feedback through Government classes at Neenah High School.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Pfeiffer stated that she would forego a report due to the length of the meeting.

OFFICIAL ACTION

Motion was made by Christine Grunwald to approve the items under Employment of Personnel (Exhibit 1-A-10), recommendation to employ Stephanie Rahn to fill a teacher vacancy due to a resignation for the 2009-2010 school year, resignation of Russell Oestreich, English teacher at Shattuck Middle School, effective June 30, 2010, and resignation of Kandis Sullivan, Director of Business Services, effective June 30, 2010. The motion was seconded by Christopher Kunz and carried by unanimous vote.

Paul Hauffe, Supervisor of Accounting and Transportation, provided information regarding a recommendation from the Finance and Personnel Committee to finance three Energy Savings Projects (Exhibit 1-B-10). Motion was made by Christopher Kunz to approve the recommendation to proceed with the projects and that the District use a portion of the General Fund balance (up to \$160,000) to pay for the projects. The motion was seconded by Jeff Spoehr and carried by unanimous vote.

Board minutes are available on the district's web site: www.neenah.k12.wi.us

BUDGET PROCESS RECOMMENDATION DISCUSSION

Superintendent Pfeiffer thanked everyone in attendance and explained the budget process to date. Dr. Pfeiffer recognized all budget committee members in attendance and thanked them for their work. Superintendent Pfeiffer led Board members through the Collaborative Budget Process Recommendation 2009-2010 (Exhibit 1-C-10) in detail and Dr. Pfeiffer and District administrative personnel answered questions of Board members. (Noah White arrived at 7:53 p.m.) At 9:00 p.m., President Thompson stated that there would be a five minute break. At 9:10 p.m., President Thompson opened the meeting to questions and comments from the audience and provided guidelines for the process.

OPEN FORUM

Rosanne Rott, 2849 Kellett Road, Neenah, spoke in support of the elementary music program and stated that her family would be willing to pay extra fees for the program to continue.

Gary Lemieux, 1368 Mulberry Lane, Neenah, Neenah High School Band Director and K-12 Music Department Chair, clarified some of the drop in numbers at the middle school level and stated that if instrumental students are successful, they will stay in the program. Mr. Lemieux compared a beginning music student to an egg that is very fragile and needs nurturing in order for it to hatch, grow, and mature into what is seen on the football field and in Pickard auditorium.

Dani Schierl, 7529 Sunburst Lane, Neenah, current UW-Oshkosh student majoring in music education, spoke on behalf of the elementary music program and encouraged Board members to keep the students' musical growth in mind.

Nick Bezier, 1530 Whitetail Drive, Neenah, 11th grade student at Neenah High School, thanked everyone for attending the meeting, thanked Dr. Pfeiffer for her accessibility to staff, students, and community members, stated that it was unfortunate that the District had to cut the German program and that he hopes the World Language Taskforce finds a suitable replacement for the German program, asked that students be allowed to participate in the taskforce, stated that Mr. Ebben was a great help to the Forensics program, and spoke in support of the music program.

Colleen Swanson, 8799 N. Oakwood Avenue, Neenah, spoke on behalf of her mother who is hearing impaired and spoke in support of the teachers in the NJSD, and in particular Mr. Borchardt, Ms. Cattau, and Mr. Kelly, who have had a profound, positive impact on her family.

Jenn Mayer, 419 Park Drive, Neenah, stated that she was part of the administrative and personnel budget team and shared that 85% of the District's costs are personnel, asked whether the teachers would be willing to contribute \$100 per month to their health care to save 16 full-time employees, stated that there are several NESPA employees who work 20 hours per week but receive full-time benefits, asked what the District's overall goals are, and stated that she feels the District needs a long-term plan.

Paul Doran, 3440 W. Shady Lane, Neenah, 8th grade student at Shattuck Middle School, stated that he is involved in the AIMS program and spoke in support of the program.

Tom Hanby, 706 E. Forest Avenue, Neenah, thanked the budget teams for bringing forth an unappreciated document and asked questions regarding various areas of the budget report.

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Christy Lang, 744 Dartmouth Drive, Neenah, 12th grade student at Neenah High School, shared statistics regarding standardized test scores for music students and spoke in support of the elementary music program.

Cari Runge, 3379 Voyager Drive, Neenah, questioned what the public's assurance is that the structural deficit will not happen again, stated that she pays \$13,000 per year for health insurance and questioned how the teachers can put the District in the situation it is in, and spoke in support of the District's music program.

Gwen Sargent, 560 Grove Street, Neenah, questioned whether Fund 80 could be used to continue the elementary music program during the school day rather than as an after school program and stated that she feels if the program were moved to after school, there would be students who would not be able to continue in the program.

Victoria Johnson, 3485 DeKalb Lane, Neenah, 6th grade student at Horace Mann Middle School, spoke in support of the Magnet program.

Deb Hasselquist, 3231 S. Hemlock Lane, Appleton, NJSD reading support teacher, spoke in support of the reading support program.

Monica Schoen, 1417 Meadow Breeze Circle, Neenah, NJSD reading support teacher, spoke in support of the reading support program.

Jill Drake, 1085 Reed Street, Neenah, spoke in support of the music program and shared the story of Harriet Schubert who was a strong supporter of music in the schools.

Dave Sebor, 1185 Skyview Drive, Neenah, NJSD guidance counselor, spoke in support of the guidance counselors in the District and stated that they are there for every single student.

Margaret Burton, 486 Sunrise Bay Road, Neenah, thanked Dr. Pfeiffer for the budget process, asked Board members to be careful with the students of the District, questioned whether the Board could buy a little more time to make the budget decisions, and stated that the new revenue enhancement position is long overdue.

Kathy Thompson, 1659 Oakview Drive, Neenah, shared her concerns with the proposed reductions in educational assistants and stated that cutting without a plan is not a good plan.

Herb Numrich, 977 S. Prairie Creek Drive, Neenah, thanked Dr. Pfeiffer for creating the budget process and spoke on behalf of elementary music parents stating that they believe in the program and will not let it die.

Jane Burriss, 2136 Redtail Drive, Neenah, suggested using parent volunteers to help with reading support, suggested raising the co-curricular fees and the fees for middle school and elementary school yearbooks, and spoke in support of the music program.

Bonnie Geldernick Thomas, 628 Maple Street, Neenah, spoke in support of the strings program and the music program.

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Ryan O., 213 Olde Pulley Lane, Menasha, current FVTC student enrolled in IT program, spoke in support of the music program.

Penny Paiser-Wilson, 133 Klompen Court, Neenah, NJSD instrumental music teacher, requested additional time to come up with other options and stated that if the elementary music program were moved to after school, it would leave the students behind who don't have the resources to take after school lessons.

Andrew Hutchinson, 230 E. Irving Avenue, Oshkosh, spoke in support of keeping the elementary music program during the school day.

Jade Burrell, 1026 Pilgrim Road, Neenah, current music therapy college student, spoke in support of the music program.

Barb Lobermeier, 308 Congress Street, Neenah, NJSD AIMS teacher, spoke in support of the AIMS program and of the other programs on the reduction list and invited Board members to visit the AIMS classrooms.

Patti Cox-Weisensel, 527 Chestnut Street, Neenah, spoke in support of the District's music program.

Louise Hildebrandt, 1925 N. McDonald Street, Appleton, NJSD guidance counselor, spoke on behalf of the NJSD guidance counselors and spoke in support of the counseling program.

Amanda Recktenwald, 1306 S. Park Avenue, Neenah, 11th grade student at Neenah High School, spoke in support of the music program and shared a story about a 4th grade student she mentors through the Best Friends after school mentoring program.

Raymond Wolff, 1161 Gillingham Road, Neenah, suggested the Board conduct a systematic analysis during the coming year to share with the public next year at this time and shared that he feels the NJSD retirement benefits are out of line with corporate America and with other school districts.

Lori Murphy, 416 Kittiver Court, Neenah, spoke in support of the District's music program and shared some stories of what students in the NJSD music program are doing.

Bridget Recktenwald, 1306 S. Park Avenue, Neenah, spoke in support of the music program, the guidance counselors, and the gifted and talented program.

Amy Monka, 928 Otter Avenue, Oshkosh, NJSD supportive reading teacher, reminded Board members of the strides the District has made through RtI and expressed her concern with the proposed cuts to staffing positions.

Amy Nasr, 3620 Park Lane Drive, Neenah, stated that she volunteers in the schools because she cares about the children in the District and implored the Board and the union representatives to buy more time to come up with a plan that will not hurt the children of the NJSD.

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Ann Cattau, 1135 Manor Drive, Neenah, NJSD guidance counselor, thanked Dr. Pfeiffer for the budget process, stated that many of the things mentioned in the budget process are things the District does not have a plan for yet, and spoke of the impact NJSD guidance counselors have on the students of the District.

Steven Schwoerer, 935 Bridgewood Drive, Neenah, questioned whether money would be freed up if the energy savings projects were put in the capital improvement account rather than the general fund account and asked whether the District is still under a rate increase cap.

President Thompson declared the open forum closed at 10:40 p.m.

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD CONSIDERATION OF OPEN FORUM ISSUES

John Lehman answered the questions related to capital improvement and revenue caps.

Superintendent Pfeiffer thanked everyone in attendance and those who spoke to the Board. Dr. Pfeiffer explained the use of Fund 80 as it relates to the elementary music program and stated that the fees were related to the high school yearbook and not to the middle school yearbook.

President Thompson and Board members requested additional information related to 1) the significance of the reductions to their particular areas; 2) specific plans to cover gifted and talented, reading support, and AIMS reductions; 3) the plan to provide the elementary music program through Fund 80; 4) the fine arts and practical arts programs at the middle schools; 4) a middle school house structure analysis; 5) the total cost of conferences as a district; 6) the music numbers and providing a year-to-year trend; 7) the World Language Task Force; 8) comparables regarding elementary music programs; 9) the difference between the budget committees' recommendations and the final administrative recommendations; 10) providing a prioritized list of all of the options presented; 11) the reason there weren't more co-curricular reductions suggested and the use of volunteers for co-curriculars; 13) separate lists of recurring and nonrecurring costs; and 14) separate lists of reductions and revenue enhancements.

At 11:00 p.m., President Thompson announced a short break to allow everyone to move downstairs to the Board room. At 11:08 p.m., the meeting reconvened in the Board room.

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Motion was made by Christopher Kunz to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2009 Finance and Personnel Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Peter Kaul and carried by unanimous committee vote.

Chair John Lehman stated that the next Finance and Personnel Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair Grunwald stated that there would not be a need for the Curriculum and Program Development Committee to meet in January.

Chair Christine Grunwald reported that she and Steve Dreger, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, attended a meeting with some of the administrators at Neenah High

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School and had a discussion with regard to concerns of Board members over staffing, enrollment, and increasing class sizes in core areas.

Chair Grunwald stated that she plans to attend the Neenah High School Automotive Advisory Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 at 3:45 p.m.

Chair Grunwald reminded Board members of the invitation to the Neenah High School Manufacturing and Engineering Academy open house to be held on Thursday, January 7, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 128.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board Clerk Christine Grunwald presented the names of candidates and their placement on the April 6, 2010 Board of Education election ballot and stated that the following individuals are certified to fill three (3) three-year terms on the Board of Education: Christine Grunwald, John Rimmel, Jeff Spoehr, and Christopher Kunz (Exhibit 1-D-10).

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

President Thompson reviewed the list of future agenda items. Mr. Dreger stated that the Overall Technology Plan Update would be presented at the Board meeting on Tuesday, March 2, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

President Thompson announced that it would be necessary to adjourn the regular meeting and to subsequently reconvene in closed session. Motion was made by Peter Kaul to adjourn and that the Board reconvene in closed session according to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(c) for the purpose of approval of minutes of the December 15, 2009 closed session meeting, NEA negotiations discussion, and discussion of specific personnel. The motion was seconded by Jeff Spoehr and carried by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:13 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board reconvened in closed session at 11:16 p.m. for the purpose of approval of minutes of the December 15, 2009 closed session meeting, NEA negotiations discussion, and discussion of specific personnel.

ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

Motion to adjourn was made by John Lehman, seconded by Jeff Spoehr, and carried by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:14 a.m.

Diane Haug, Board Secretary