

Dist. 205 Board of Education
May 8, 2006
7:35 pm – 10:45 pm

No Lindberg
Public: 50 Staff: 6 Press: 2
Observer: J. Dorner

Note: There was no cable camera at this meeting, so do not expect this meeting to be televised on Thursday. Apparently, the cameraman forgot, but the audio will be aired Thursday at 2:00 pm on cable channel 6.

The Board had been in closed session since 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of approval of minutes, employment of employee, and collective negotiations.

President DeRonne called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment: A York English teacher and a student spoke against the possibility of Speech being removed as a graduation requirement. Another York Student and his mother spoke of the continuing conflict between Chemistry and Choir at York. A para-professional from York, who is a member of the insurance committee, complained that if there is the expected change in the drug benefits/costs, he will spend 29% of his gross income on drugs. A member of the referenda committee felt that the Board may not be following through on its commitment to the community and may change attendance boundaries. The committee member was concerned that her credibility would be ruined with the community. A parent spoke of an article in the Chicago Tribune on “The Green Roof Goes to Washington.”

Superintendent’s Communications:

A. P. E Waivers: Dr. Morris explained that York (and the Regional Office of Education) had been lenient on the use of athletic waivers during the construction at York and that now the York administration would be following the District 205 policy, which is very similar to the state law. This would limit waivers for Physical Education. A letter to parents will be going out tomorrow explaining the situation.

B. Workshop or Business Meeting: Currently the Board meets the 2nd Monday of the month for a workshop meeting, which is a meeting of the committee of the whole. This meeting has more discussion and usually has less official action taken. The 4th Monday of the month is a business meeting. After some discussion, the Board will discuss the possibility of calling each meeting a Board meeting so that action can be taken at either meeting.

C. Construction Update: Schematics of their additions are at Lincoln, Jefferson and Field. There has been extensive input from staff, but limited input from parents. The Board encouraged more parental input and that the parental input meetings should be consistent among the three schools. (Time, having an architect available at each meeting, etc.) Dr. Morris spoke of his concern about staying on schedule for these three fast track schools, and most of the Board felt that it would not violate the Board’s commitment to the community if an extra month or two is taken. Mr. Spaeth spoke at length about concerns of high enrollment schools (“mega-schools”) like Hawthorne and Lincoln. He read from a memo written by an architect from Wight and Co. about rebuilding Hawthorne School. The memo stated that to build a school that would hold 600 to 700 students (current/projected enrollment of Hawthorne) should be on a parcel of 9-11 acres. Hawthorne sits on 2.4 acres. Mr. Spaeth said that he thought that parents would be interested in this statistic and my consider boundary changes. The Board had another discussion on boundary changes with most of them saying that they had made a commitment to the community to put additions on every elementary and middle school and NOT to have boundary changes. Mr. Spaeth stated that the Board had never made a commitment to the community about boundaries or additions.

An ad hoc facilities subcommittee has been appointed. Mr. Thrall and Mrs. Ostojic are the Board members on this committee. The first round of interviews for architect in the RFQ (request for qualifications) process will take place the week of June 19th with the construction management 1st round interviews taking place two weeks later. Mr. Spaeth expressed frustration with the appointment process for this subcommittee and asked Dr. Morris if there was a policy for committee appointments. Dr. Morris thought there was not a policy and that it was up to the President of the Board to appoint committee members.

Workshop Discussion Topics:

A. Health Insurance Presentation: Two representatives from Euclid gave a presentation on how the District needed to go with an alternate drug plan, increase options for the HMO and PPO plans, adjust contribution strategies and make a strong commitment to wellness. This company will also be holding a health fair for employees in the fall and will be trying to encourage members to choose the flexible spending accounts that are available. Current enrollment if fsa's is less than 10%. Nation-wide, fsa enrollment is closer to 50%. Euclid is paid about \$4,000/month, which equates to an annual savings of over \$100,000 from the District's previous broker. Euclid recommended that the District continue to self-fund.

B. Technology Plan: Dr. Linda O'Connor, the District's technology coordinator, presented the Board with the template that is being used to write the District's technology plan. This plan, once submitted and passed by a peer review group, will be given to the state to hopefully receive about \$96,000 in e-rate funds (reimburses schools and libraries a percentage of their communications – telephone and internet) and about \$4,000 through the Enhancing Education Through Technology program. The technology plan can be changes at any time and but must be approved by the Board before it is sent to the state.

Superintendent's Agenda: The Board approved:

- Adoption of resolution providing for the issuance of general obligation school bonds, series 2006A. Representatives from Hutchenson, Shokey and Early brought the most current Moody's rating for the District, which will remain Aa2, but they have removed the "negative outlook" from the rating. The bonds, which included the \$41,000,000 in construction bonds and refinancing of over \$13,000,000, carry a 4.90% interest rate with all costs included.
- Adoption of resolution authorizing an escrow agreement for the general obligation school bonds, series 2006A. Refunding of the \$13,000,000 worth of bonds that were re-financed need to be kept in an escrow account.

Board Communications:

Mr. Thrall asked about the Speech requirement referenced in Public Comment. Dr. Tom McCann, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, stated that York may request this change, be he has not received this request formally yet.

Action on Closed Session Items: The Board approved Dr. Steven Smith as Principal designee of Hawthorne School for the 2006-2007 school year.

The Board moved to return to closed session for the purpose of collective negotiations. The motion carried.