

Dist. 205 Board of Education
June 9, 2008
7:30 pm – 10:40 pm

All Board members present
Public: 3 Staff: 15 Press: 2
Observer: J. Dorner

The Board had been in closed session since 6:00 pm to consider the probable or imminent litigation, collective negotiations, employment of employee, and property acquisition/lease/purchase. President Davy called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Workshop Discussion Topics:

Middle School Task Force Sub-Committee Reports: All subcommittees based their recommendations on the best practice by reviewing literature, the work of the task force and the survey of high achieving schools.

1. Reading/Language Arts: recommended that the current “block” of two consecutive periods of English continue. This would include an integrated approach with regular communication and collaboration. Consistent professional development and regularly scheduled time for the team to plan was also recommended as well as expanding the reading and writing across the curriculum.

2. Unified Arts: recommended that 6th and 7th grade continue with six 6 – week courses (art, computer literacy, family and consumer science, guidance, industrial tech, and music) continue. In 8th grade, four 9-week courses, with guidance required as one and the other three courses would be student chose. Each of the remaining unified arts would have 2 chooses (e.g. in art the chose could be graphic design or three-dimensional design).

3. PLUS Program: This program is for at-risk students and centers on helping these students with their organizational and learning strategies to help with their academic challenges. Recommendations for this program include a consistent (among the 3 middle schools) checklist for entrance and exit, assignment of a District coordinator, training for the teachers and purchase of organizational, study, test-taking and instructional material. Addition of a PLUS field in PowerSchool will allow teachers to better monitor student achievement. PLUS teachers would also like regular meeting opportunities to collaborate.

4. World Language: Currently the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade covers the first high school year of Spanish/French. The subcommittee recommended that this be changed to the 7th and 8th grade. The 6th grade would then be a transition between 5th and 7th grade and is recommended to be a half period. Increased articulation in both middle school to middle school and elementary and high school direction, appointment of a coordinator at the middle school level and possible cumulative assessment/high school credit were also suggested.

Superintendent Communications

Superintendent Krizic presented a year-end review of the educational excellence, operational excellence and stakeholders engagement excellence areas that the District Board and Staff have addressed in the '07 – '08 school year. The full address can be heard at www.elmhurst.k12.il.us/Administration/Superintendent/stateofdistrict.mp3.

Superintendent's Agenda: The Board approved the application of the School Technology Revolving Loan Program.

Public Comment: Nan Loerop, Elmhurst Teacher Council President, thanked her negotiating team and the District 205 administrators and Board members who sat in on the negotiations. They have come to a tentative agreement.

Board Communications: Mr. Spaeth asked if the topics of District-wide ethics and conflict of interest and the District's policy as such could be included on the next meeting's agenda. He said that he had been exchanging emails with Dr. Krizic and Mrs. Davy about this. After a discussion about procedure for putting this on an agenda, Mr. Spaeth moved to include these topics on the agenda. Mrs. Ostojic seconded. During discussion of this motion, Mr. Carlquist said that if there was a problem with the policies, the discussion should originate in the policy committee. Mr. Spaeth, stated that the issue involved the chair of the policy committee and that the chair did not disclose his potential conflict of interest when voting on the insurance broker several weeks ago or when participating in the Teacher's contract negotiations, which includes insurance benefits. Heated discussion about appointment of an ethics officer and a 3-member ethics commission and the Regional Office of Education's opinion or lack of one was held between Mr. Spaeth and Dr. Krizic. Mr. Thrall said that he needed to respond to these "innuendos and baseless charges." Mr. Thrall said that his wife is a Health Aide at Edison and that she is a member of the para-professional union. On the health insurance situation, "Number one, Mr. Spaeth, it is none of your business and number two, we have permanent alternative health and dental insurance" said Mr. Thrall. He continued by saying that he considers his ethics high and above reproach. The motion to include the ethics/conflict of interest topic in the next meeting was defeated 5 no, 1 present (Thrall) and 1 yes (Spaeth).

Action on Closed Session Items: The Board approved the tentative contract between District 205 and the Elmhurst Teachers Council by a 6 to 1 vote (Mr. Spaeth voted no). It should be noted that Mr. Thrall, Mrs. DeRonne, and Mr. Carlquist were the only Board members that addressed this before Mr. Carlquist called the question. The vote to stop discussion was 6 yes to 1 no (Mr. Spaeth).

The Board returned to closed session to consider the employment of employee. Mrs. Davy stated that no action would be taken out of this closed session. The vote was 6 yes 1 no (Spaeth).