

**CONSTANTINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Constantine, Michigan**

**Regular Board of Education Meeting**  
**Monday, September 11, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by President Jeffrey Zimont in the High School LGIA at 6:58 PM.

Members Present: Jeffrey Zimont, Dale Davidhizar, Chuck Colley, Kevin Brouse, Mary Smith, Jacob Bergh, and John Shuler

Members Absent: None

Moved by Bergh and seconded by Davidhizar to approve the Consent Agenda as presented to include minutes of the August 14, 2006 Regular Board of Education Meeting, and bills in the amount of \$65,051.75 for the general fund.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

**Audience with Individuals:**

1. Beverly Simmons, taxpayer, questioned the current status of donated benches and trees at the new high school. Zimont responded that they are being ordered and blueprints of the design are available in the Central Office for viewing.
2. Tori Wentela, Curriculum Director, provided information regarding MEAP & ACT testing dates and deadlines in BOE Packets. These new changes will have a staffing and financial impact on the district.
3. Dustin Fox, CHS student stated his concerns over the possibility of eliminating the woodshop program. Zimont responded that there is a lot of active participation in the program, and no talk exists concerning its elimination. Taylor commented that an additional section had even been added this year.
4. Delores Culp, organizational leader for the Lucky 4H Club, asked that the Board support 4H participation. She read a prepared statement concerning student activities during fair week and would like students to avoid a negative grade adjustment due to their absence during St. Joseph County Fair. Staffen responded that previous years have had a negative grade adjustment, but current handbook has deleted the negative adjustment. As in previous years, a positive grade adjustment will not occur. Zimont asked for partnering ideas. Culp stated that other schools have a "Saturday School" makeup time. Brouse stated that he was a 7 year member of 4H and understands its importance.
5. Maury Kaercher, MSU Extension Office representative, explained the college's role in 4H participation along with the local school districts, and gave the Board a handout. Constantine has almost 100 students involved, which makes up about 10% of county 4H members. He added that involvement in 4H helps

lay a foundation for student's futures in leadership and communication. Bergh commented that he is highly supportive of credit toward 4H projects, especially if no additional cost is involved.

6. Jan Reed, taxpayer, complimented CPS on the warm welcome she received towards the St. Joseph County Mentoring Program. She explained the high involvement with Constantine students and the importance of mentoring. She is also a Constantine parent with children involved in 4H, and asked that the students aren't penalized for their 4H participation
7. Brett & Donna Outman, taxpayers, read a prepared statement with concerns over their daughter's band participation. They provided copies to the Board. Their daughter would like to drop band at this time due to schedule and personality conflicts, and has not been able. Zimont responded that he would investigate the situation and someone would respond to them soon.
8. Sabrina Hilton, CHS Student, was concerned about the current state and lack of some art supplies in the high school. She would like to know if they can raise funds for these items. Zimont was not aware of the situation, and suggested using the chain of command by starting with CHS Principal Staffen.
9. Jane Stamp-Davis, taxpayer & parent, is concerned about excessive student overpopulations in the middle school. Many classes have an excess of 30 students, while one class apparently has over 40 students. She suggested that even well rounded students would have a hard time in a class this size. She understands it is a balancing act which takes financial finesse, but is asking for help for the students. She commented that the teacher's union protects teachers; therefore the parents have to protect their students. She urged the Board to hire teachers to reduce class sizes. Zimont responded that district is growing by leaps and bounds and some numbers you can't anticipate. He stated that we are in a transition phase, and the topic is being discussed tonight by the Board.
10. Laura Withers, CEA president, wanted to impress upon the board the CEA's desire for a quality contract, and wished to bring contract negotiations to a close.
11. Doug Eby, MS teacher, was concerned about the middle school locker situation. His son's locker, plus with many others, are broken. He brought the situation to the Board in May and wondered why it is taking so long to address the problem. Zimont responded that the lockers are on order and reminded him of the volume of projects being addressed currently.

**Action Items:**

Moved by Davidhizar and seconded by Bergh to approve the hiring of a kindergarten teacher, Jeremie Coplin, at BA Step 0, and a high school special education teacher, Laura Telsworth, at MA Step 4\*, as presented by the administration.

\*Taylor added that Telsworth will replace Bill Robertson who was approved for the position at last month's meeting, but declined the position at Constantine.

Roll Call Vote: J.B. aye, K.B. aye, M.S. aye, C.C. aye, J.S. aye, D.D. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Brouse and seconded by Bergh to approve the hiring of Julie Staffen in the Central Office, as presented by the administration.

Roll Call Vote: D.D. aye, C.C. aye, K.B. aye, M.S. aye, J.B. aye, J.S. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Bergh and seconded by Colley to approve the slate of fall coaches as presented by the Athletic Director and the administration.

Clint Fund	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls BB	Step 3
David Barney	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls BB	Step 4
Tim Baker	MS Head FB	Step 5
Chad Thelen	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade FB	Step 5
Jeremie Coplin	MS FB Assistant	\$500
Mike Sellers	Head Golf	Step 3
Jerry Burgess	Asst Football	Step 1
Rick Bush	MS Cross Country	Volunteer

Roll Call Vote: D.D. aye, J.S. aye, K.B. aye, M.S. aye, J.B. aye, C.C. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Bergh and seconded by Shuler to approve Danilo Beligano as a full time bus driver, Lorinda Thomas and Paul Syzinski as full time substitute bus drivers, as presented by the Transportation Director and the Superintendent.

Roll Call Vote: J.S. aye, K.B. aye, J.B. aye, M.S. aye, C.C. aye, D.D. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

\*Taylor discussed staffing levels at the Middle School and Riverside, particularly at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade levels. The current building numbers are; Eastside 388, Riverside 297, Middle School 381, and High School 490. If the Alternative Ed program can count a possible 25 FTE's, that would total 1581 students. Last year's projection was for 1550 students, with only a \$175 State Aid increase. He stated that now we have confirmed a \$210 increase per student. The net effect is \$270,000 in additional revenue to the district. The cost of three new teachers is \$154,800, and would be covered by these increases. He recommended to the Board that they post a Middle School Social Studies teacher, and a 4/5<sup>th</sup> grade split teacher at Riverside. This would include the previously approved hiring of Jeremie Coplin at Eastside, for a total of 3 new teachers. The Board responded that is was OK to post jobs.

Moved by Davidhizar and seconded by Smith to approve participating resolution for the annual Michigan School Readiness Program, as presented by the Superintendent.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Davidhizar and seconded by Bergh to approve the \$74,820 donation for the track replacement, as presented by the Athletic Director and Superintendent.

\*Mike Messner, Athletic Director discussed the generous donation by Steve Banks of Bank's Hardwoods to CPS for athletic projects that need attention at Constantine. He has started with the track restoration and is considering upgrading the former CMS wrestling room into a school/community fitness center at the Middle School.

Roll Call Vote: D.D. aye, C.C. aye, K.B. aye, M.S. aye, J.B. aye, J.S. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Colley and seconded by Smith to approve the 2 year contract agreement with the CEAAA, as presented by the Superintendent.

Roll Call Vote: M.S. aye, J.B. aye, J.S. aye, D.D. aye, C.C. aye, K.B. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Davidhizar and seconded by Bergh to approve Saturday, September 30, 2006 for the Fall Board Retreat in the CHS Media Center, with the stipulation that invitations are sent, as suggested by the Board of Education.

\*There was much discussion between the Board and audience concerning the use of a facilitator (Kent Roberts) at a cost of \$3000.00 for three meetings at Constantine.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Bergh and seconded by Smith to approve Davidhizar and Zimont as designated Voting Delegates [no others yet for Alternates] to the 2006 MASB Fall Conference on November 9-11, 2006.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

Moved by Bergh and seconded by Brouse to approve the Orlando, Florida/Walt Disney World Spring Break trip request for the CHS Band for April, 2007, with the stipulation that appropriate trip paperwork is completed, as presented by Marge Caid and the Administration.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

**Discussion Items:**

1. Taylor gave the Board the latest enrollment numbers and other information on a good start to the new school year.
2. Taylor gave an update of the State Aid Operating Loan. Fifth Third Securities was the lowest bidder, at a 3.994 % interest rate. Zimont stated that he had no personal gain or involvement in the process, as he is an employee of Fifth Third Bank, but only at the branch level.
3. Taylor gave a maintenance project update. The new sidewalk at the HS bus loop is working well. The LCD wall screens have been ordered, but are not in yet. The LCD project is almost complete, with a few minor cable issues. Maintenance is working to wrap up loose ends. The partial removal of the stage at ES for cafeteria space is working well.
4. Taylor presented for discussion the approval of an “Instant Alert System”. It is a Honeywell product that utilizes various types of contact that can be used for an emergency, early dismissal, school cancellations, or general school information. This product would speed up communication to parents and replace much of the flyers and mailings that are now necessary. Taylor has discussed the pros and cons of the system with other county schools currently using the program. The cost is based on student enrollments, which for CPS would be \$5,425.00 per year with a three year agreement that includes training, installation and tech support. There is no charge for calls. It does take 6 weeks to process, and comes highly recommended by Deputy Marc Pashby of SJCISD Homeland Security.
5. Taylor discussed the anticipation of the SJCISD contracting out substitute teachers. By using such a system through the ISD, there have been approximately 10.5% cost savings to other districts. There is a decrease in payroll costs for MPSERS, plus savings in accounting, processing W2’s, and time spent. It could amount to over a \$12,000 per year savings to CPS.
6. Taylor added that the October 9, 2006 regular meeting of the Board will take place at the Mason Township Hall at 7:00 PM. He suggested that the Board move the November meeting to Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> or the 20<sup>th</sup> in order to avoid a conflict with the home girl’s basketball districts.
7. Taylor also reminded the Board of tomorrow night’s St. Joseph County School Board Association meeting at Mendon.

**Additional Audience with Individual:**

1. Doug Eby, teacher asked about the change for student insurance. Lisa Pointer-Seidner, Business Manager, responded that the district spent \$18,000 last year on duplicate coverage for student insurance. The district currently has a policy for Property/Casualty/Liability, and does not need a supplemental plan, plus we also have catastrophic coverage.
2. Seth Parker, MS Principal, thanked the Board and Superintendent for the approval of hiring an additional MS teacher tonight. He stated that it is a positive step towards resolving many scheduling conflicts. Craig Badman, Riverside Principal, agreed as he is receiving a new teacher also.
3. Karen Elmore, taxpayer, asked how CEA negotiations were going and what was holding up the process. Zimont stated that another session would take place tomorrow at 5:00 PM, and negotiations are generally not open for public discussion. A fact sheet, however, is available at the Central Office.

**Board Member Items:**

Moved by Davidhizar and seconded by Bergh to go into closed session and return for the purpose of discussing SEIU and CEA bargaining status at 9:25 PM.

Roll Call Vote: C.C. aye, K.B. aye, M.S. aye, J.B. aye, J.S. aye, D.D. aye, J.Z. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

President Zimont brought the Board out of closed session at 10:05 PM.

Moved by Brouse and seconded by Davidhizar to adjourn at 10:20 PM.

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent  
Motion Carried

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Kevin Brouse, Secretary  
Board of Education