

CONSTANTINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Constantine, Michigan

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Monday, April 20, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Shuler in the High School LGI at 7:02 PM.

Members Present: John Shuler, Pat Touse, Marilyn Ritzer, Mary Smith, Connie Dalrymple, Chuck Colley and Phil Portinga

Members Absent: None

Moved by Smith and seconded by Portinga to adopt the agenda as presented.

Roll Call Vote: M.R. aye, P.P. aye, P.T absent, C.C. aye, C.D. aye, M.S. aye, J.S. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Portinga and seconded by Ritzer that the consent agenda, including the Regular Meeting minutes of March 9, 2009, Personnel Committee meeting minutes of March 17, 2009 & March 30, 2009, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of March 24, 2009, and bills in the amount of \$535,315.08 for the regular Board Meeting of April 20, 2009 be adopted as written.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Audience with Individuals:

Moved by Colley and seconded by Ritzer to approve the granting of a district endorsed Alternative Education diploma for student Brittany Mae Belvin as presented.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Colley and seconded by Portinga to approve the granting of a Constantine High School diploma to Alternative Education student Cassandra Bowers as presented.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

*Dale Wentela, Alternative Education Director, spoke about both students and Shuler presented diplomas to each.

1. Jean Logan Middle School principal on behalf of Clint Fund, Middle School Science Olympiad advisor, presented the Board with a list of students who participated and their projects. They did well as a team and the students were not able to be present due a track meet this evening. Adam Gifford, High School

Science Olympiad advisor along with students, Kylie Oldenburg, Stephanie Allen and Scott Fulks showed their medals. Gifford expressed his thanks to Fibre Converters for their donation to support the continuation of the program!

2. Frisbie discussed a letter from Mr. Charles Devlin taxpayer concerning some property he owns near Eastside Elementary School and would like to offer the district its use. Frisbie will respond in writing that it is not needed at this time.
3. Frisbie also discussed a letter from Mr. Robert Eagley concerning a proposal for the Canaris Street School. He offered that apartments could be a possibility. Frisbie believes it is not feasible at this time.
4. Nathan Lorenz, High School junior thanked the Board for their support in allowing students to participate in Youth in Government and discussed the group's recent trip to Lansing to participate in a conference.
5. Lisa Dumm, taxpayer asked the Board if there are set policies in writing for new teachers who are attempting to receive tenure. Shuler stated that the Board would not respond to a personnel matter in public. Frisbie will send her the information on school policies.
6. Melissa Michalek, taxpayer asked the Board to address her concerns on a current issue with a teacher that did not receive tenure and how it was handled by the Board. She expressed her support for Mrs. Holly Strawser.
7. Cindy Bingaman, taxpayer and parent of Constantine students was concerned that situations are not being held handled in public as she believes they should. She asked the Board to give this the attention it deserves.
8. Jennifer Taylor, taxpayer whose son is in Mrs. Strawser's class expressed her gratitude to his teacher and the progress he has made in her classroom. She is unhappy about the Board's recent decision to not grant her tenure.
9. Pat Hochstetler, coach and taxpayer asked the Board to look at the ethics and morals of the situation concerning Holly Strawser. He implored the Board as elected officials to uphold these ideas.
10. Leah Parmer, mother of student in Holly Strawser's classroom told the Board that her daughter is excited to go to school every day in large part to Strawser.
11. Wendy Rodewald, taxpayer and parent expressed her support for Holly Strawser and was concerned about the fact that Strawser was not asked to be present at the meeting to discuss her tenure and the issues surrounding it. She asked them to consider this as they go into closed session tonight.

Administrative Reports:

1. Tori Wentela, Curriculum Director reported that the last testing reports will be mailed tomorrow. Scores were submitted to the Board and there were many areas of growth and improvement over last year's scores. She congratulated the teachers. The Technology plan is nearing completion.

2. Kristin Flynn, Eastside Principal announced that this is Volunteer Appreciation Week. There are over 70 volunteers at Eastside alone! She also thanked Alicia Geisler and Mindy Hulse for their hard work behind the scenes in recognition of Administrative Professionals Week. Generous Hands Friday Pack Program has started and backpacks have begun to go out on Fridays for the weekend for identified students at Eastside and siblings across the district. The program can be sustained for the 14 students through the end of the year. Volunteers are always appreciated!
3. Craig Badman, Riverside Principal commended Flynn and Lindsay French for their efforts in the backpack program. Upcoming events include, the Clue Me In competition, the Spring Concert with Choristers, Young Authors at the ISD, and also parent teacher conferences are this week.
4. Jean Logan, Middle School Principal thanked Kathy Messner and Sara Russell for working so hard to make Career Day such a success! They would like to expand even more next year! Character education is also a focus. She is very excited about the growth in the MEAP scores and data. She is looking at ways to improve with her teachers on the areas that need it. Chad Thelen helped come up with a plan for next year. Upcoming Middle School events are, Clue Me In competition, the Mackinac trip, and also the 8th grade commencement on June 1st. . Parents are invited to participate in a new MS Parent-Teacher Organization.
5. Michael Mulligan, High School Principal announced that Grand March for the prom is 3:00 this Saturday in the LGI. Student council will also hold elections and talent show coming soon. The high school is gearing up for graduation. Professional Development took place on writing across content areas. Teachers have now implemented more writing exercises, and have seen a 25% increase on scores. He also expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Grunerts upon their retirement at the end of the school year and wished them well!
6. Mike Messner, Athletic Director also commented that the Grunerts and their special abilities and humor would be missed in the district. There are over 250 students involved in spring sports currently. He congratulated Joe Young and Adam Reed for their 5th place finishes at the State Wrestling Tournament. Tim Baker won his 200th dual meet track and he applauded him for his accomplishment! He recently attended MIAAA Conference and learned a lot. He was also honored to be asked by the SJV to present the Jack Deller All League Captains Award.

Superintendent's Update:

Charles Frisbie, Superintendent, updated information on the following subjects;

1. The walnut grove is almost completely cleared according to Dave Horn who has enlisted the help of community members. It is a valuable asset to the district. Thanks go out to Dave Horn for all his hard work!
2. He complimented Messner and how he has handled the Fitness Center budget. As a new venture, they will have \$7000-\$8000 in budget surplus for the start of next year! It is an asset to the district and community.
3. The Stimulus Funding still needs clarification. He along with other school Superintendent are finding it frustrating. There have been no forthcoming on details except that Title I funding will be \$158,000 over 2 years.

4. He also announced that there would be an action item in tonight's agenda to purchase a John Deer lawn mower to replace the 23 year old mower the district currently owns.
5. Budget Recommendations 2009-2010 were discussed. These include nearly \$900,000 in carefully considered cuts for next year. All those who will be affected have been notified already. Those cuts will be finalized at the May meeting. A factor to consider is that there will be no additional funding the next 2 years possibly a drop the third year in the foundation allowance.
6. The technology plan revisions are not complete, but he believes it can transform the district. Many staff members attended the MACUL conference in March and he believes there will be changes in the manner of addressing technology in schools. We will go from shielding our students from technology to opening avenues and student access.
7. Frisbie asked Shuler to discuss the White Pigeon/Constantine shared transportation issue. Currently as a matter of efficiency and to save tax dollars the projected outcome could be \$38,000-\$50,000 in savings to each district. The Superintendents are looking at details along with both Personnel committees.
8. There are possible changes coming for the Michigan School Readiness Program. The program currently services 18 Constantine students at who participate at White Pigeon. We would like to expand the program from 18 to 36 students who would participate at Eastside instead. We do qualify to accommodate this move. The program has cost the district money in the past few years and we could actually make money by moving it to ES.
9. There will be a Staff Survey for Board Review/Comments on district strengths and weaknesses. These are simple yes or no questions.
10. There will be a Headlee Override Community Walk (explanation flyers), on April 25th from 9:30-12:00. All will meet at the Middle School and anyone can participate! Frisbie noted that this is being paid for by the MEA.
11. Finally he updated the gym floor status. We are close to an agreement. The bottom line is that Schelde Sports flooring went bankrupt, and Haro was flooring manufacturer, with Western Assurance Company as bonding agent for insurance. Because we are not happy with the floor condition our lawyers have asked that it be fixed as new to our satisfaction. Haro Flooring would fix it, and Western Assurance would insure it including a 2 year warranty.

Action Items:

Moved by Smith and seconded by Portinga to approve with regret the retirement of Mary Ballagh-Grunert and thank her for her 27 years of service to the district, as presented.

*Every member of the Board commented on how they both affected the students and that they would be missed.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Colley and seconded by Dalrymple to approve with regret the retirement of Fred Grunert and thank him for his 38 years of service to the district, as presented.

*Members of the Board and Frisbie commented on their accomplishments and how much they would be missed.

Voice Vote:

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Smith and seconded by Ritzer to approve the 2009-2010 District calendar as presented.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Smith and seconded by Touse to approve FMLA request of Marge Caid, as presented.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Ritzer and seconded by Touse to approve the leave without pay request of Brenda Bell, as presented.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Colley and seconded by Touse to approve the purchase of a John Deere mower with zero turn and 60" cut from Fillmore Equipment for \$3,595.00, as presented by the Maintenance Director.

*Tom Muckel, Maintenance Director discussed the details concerning the purchase. By using purchased equipment for snow plowing, he was able to not only make the payments but also saved the district an extra \$20,000 this season.

Roll Call Vote: C.C. aye, P.P. aye, P.T. aye, M.R. aye, C.D. aye, M.S. aye, J.S. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Smith and seconded by Portinga to pay Pat Hochstetler \$1200 for Mini basketball as presented by the Superintendent.

Roll Call Vote: M.R. aye, P.T. aye, P.P. aye, C.C. aye, M.S. aye, C.D. aye, J.S. aye

7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Additional Audience with Individuals:

1. Chad Thelen, CEA President, commented on the Headlee Proposal override and how it would affect the community. He is in support of the added revenue that would benefit the district and asked all to participate on Saturday in getting the word out to get it passed after a nine year wait
2. Cindy Bingaman, commented that Mrs Grunert deserves a medal for patience and teaching her son to drive. She wishes them both a long and peaceful retirement!
3. Tammy Oldenburg, parent, expressed her appreciation for the Grunerts and how they recently handled a tough situation on the Disney Band trip to Florida. They are appreciated and truly will be missed!

4. Larry Springer, district mechanic wondered if the Cass County area is being addressed in the Headlee Override Community Walk Frisbie answered that routes in Cass County will be addressed. Dalrymple commented on the fact that most second home owners can't vote as they are not district residents. Chris Stacey, teacher also commented on the issue in Cass County.
5. Pat Hochstetler thanked the Grunerts for their dedication and asked the Board to consider a teacher's reputation in the district and community when discussing Holly Strawser in closed session tonight.

Board Member Items: None

Moved by Colley and seconded by Portinga to go into closed session as requested by Holly Strawser, Eastside teacher, and also to discuss the Superintendent evaluation afterward at 8:40 p.m.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Moved by Dalrymple and seconded by Portinga to come out of closed session at 10:25 p.m.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion Carried

Shuler adjourned the meeting at 10:26 p.m.

Charles Colley
Secretary Board of Education