

## BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR MEETING

November 13, 2007

The Board of Education of Sycamore Community Unit School District 427 met in regular session on November 13, 2007, in the Learning Center at Southeast Elementary School, 718 S. Locust Street, Sycamore, Illinois.

### ATTENDANCE

Jim Dombek, President  
Dannie Stanbery, Vice Pres.  
Donald Clayberg, Secretary  
Barb King  
Jay Montgomery  
Steve Nelson  
Diane Tyrrell

### OTHERS

Wayne Riesen, Superintendent  
Kathy Countryman, Asst. Supt.  
Luke Glowiak, Assistant Supt.  
Kathy Sloniker, Secretary

ADMINISTRATORS: M. Currie, J. Dargatz, M. Ekstrom, J. Graves, M. Leffler, N. Leifheit, P. Mobile, K. Spiewak, and K. Wesley.

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Hines, (Midweek); A. Armbrust, FGM; K. Countryman, B. Doty, J. Englum, J. Hillmer, M. Kresge, D. Ray, C. Reynolds, J. Terdina, and K. Woodstrup.

- 2.0 ROLL CALL/ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** When the roll was called, the following members were present: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell and Dombek. Tyrrell moved, seconded by Montgomery, to approve the agenda as presented. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.
- 3.0 “THE GARDEN CLUB”:** Mr. Ekstrom, Principal, Ms. Middleton, Ms. Coats, Ms. Majerus, and Ms. Wilgus gave the Board a presentation on the “The Garden Club”.
- 4.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** President Dombek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Several kindergarten and first grade students led the Board in reciting and signing The Pledge of Allegiance.
- 5.0 CONSENT AGENDA:** A motion was made by Nelson, seconded by Tyrrell, to approve the consent agenda as presented, as follows:
- 5.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting October 23, 2007
  - 5.2 Approval of Minutes of Executive Session October 23, 2007
  - 5.3 Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting October 30, 2007
  - 5.4 NIA Resolution for Reduction in Hours of Part-Time Educational Support Personnel Employee
  - 5.5 Health/Life Safety Amendments – Steam Boilers at West & Southeast
  - 5.6 Health/Life Safety Amendment – Window & Transit Replacement at North
  - 5.7 Health/Life Safety Amendments – Window Replacement – West and Southeast
  - 5.8 Health/Life Safety Amendment – Public Address System – North
  - 5.9 Health/Life Safety Amendments – Asbestos Abatement – West and Southeast
  - 5.10 Approval of 2007-2008 Library Grant
  - 5.11 Disposal of Equipment

President Dombek called for a roll call vote on the motion. The following members voted aye when the roll was called: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES - 7; NAYS - 0. Motion carried.

## **6.0 AUDIENCE TO VISITORS:**

- 6.1 Elementary School Report: Mr. Ekstrom reported that a workshop was held on October 26<sup>th</sup> at South Prairie for all elementary buildings regarding RTI. He commented that all elementary schools had a great turnout for Parent/Teacher Conferences. He stated that South Prairie and North collected money and items for TAILS, West collected money for the Pay It Forward House, Southeast made decorations for Safe Passage, West made cards for soldiers recovering at Walter Reed Hospital, and Southeast sent letters to soldiers in honor of Veteran's Day. He noted that South Prairie held student council elections, and Fire Prevention and Red Ribbon Week activities were held. Mr. Ekstrom announced that Southeast had the most participation at the Pumpkin Festival and Ms. Radar's Third Grade Class won best organizational display.
- 6.2 Middle School Report: Mrs. Dargatz reported that the Middle School held a very successful food drive for the Sycamore Food Pantry. She noted that wrestling, basketball, and cheerleading have begun and there is an orchestra concert this evening. Mrs. Dargatz reported that the on-line conference appointments were extremely well received. She commented that each Middle School team has adopted a community service project which include, but are not limited to; the Pay It Forward House, Grand Victorian, DeKalb County Animal Shelter, Hospice, Safe Passage, etc. She explained that today was "Mix It Up Day" at lunch and Mayor Mundy was in attendance. She pointed out that the Explore Exam would be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>.
- 6.3 High School Report: Mr. Leffler noted that he also received many wonderful comments regarding the on-line sign-up for Parent/Teacher Conferences. He noted that they actually received more requests for conferences than they had time for. He explained that they will be reviewing this process for next year to see how they can accommodate additional conference times for parents. Mr. Leffler reported that they have seen a reduction in the first quarter of students removed from class due to tardies and truancy (28 in 2006 and 6 in 2007), which he attributed to the change in the attendance policy. He stated that over 350 students have utilized the testing center. Mr. Leffler highlighted recent student achievements as follows: The girls Cross Country Team placed 9<sup>th</sup> in the State, the Boys Cross Country Team placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the State, The girls Volleyball Team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the State, and Jessica Aldis sang the National Anthem at the State Volleyball Tournament.
- 6.4 Spotlight Segment: Dr. Riesen recognized the Little Red Schoolhouse recipients for the month of October: Sue Hughes, Vickii Jacob, Cathy Reynolds, and Kim Woodstrup. Dr. Riesen stated that because of the many accomplishments of the school district this fall, he felt it would be better for the Board to schedule a Board sponsored recognition night to celebrate all of the accomplishments. It was the consensus of the Board to schedule a special meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 28, 2007, in the High School Auditorium.
- 6.5 Comments from the Public: Mr. Michael Kresge voiced concern that the testing company that was hired by the District's contracting firm to test the new school construction site does not hire union workers.

Mr. John Terdina addressed the Board stating that his company has certifications in concrete and asphalt testing; however, his constituents do not. He indicated that he wanted the District to receive the best value and he felt that could only be done by hiring certified people to do the testing.

**7.0 COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE/INFORMATION:** Dr. Riesen indicated that these items were included in the packet for the Board's information only.

**8.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Nelson reported from the City of Sycamore's Plan Commission meeting. He stated that the meeting was a workshop session regarding the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that there have been three (3) community meetings to-date with 25-30 people participating.

Dr. Riesen informed the Board that the Policy Committee meeting was cancelled due to a family emergency for Laurel DiPrima. He stated that he would contact her in the next couple of days to reschedule the meeting.

**9.0 OLD BUSINESS:**

9.1 Abatement Process: Montgomery commented that the current abatement policy does not address the District's financial status. Mr. Glowiak stated that the Board has a policy regarding deficit spending and fund balances. He commented that when the district reaches a crucial financial situation, all items affecting the budget should be reviewed, including abatements.

Dombek stated that this policy was created to cooperate with the City in an effort to attract industry to our community and increase the future tax base as well as to protect the district. He commented that, as he reviewed the policy again, he was struck by how well it was put together and it has proved to be a workable policy.

Nelson agreed stating that commercial and industrial growth have long-term benefits. He noted that he was on the Board when the policy was written and felt it was a strong policy. He stated that he would be in favor of reaffirming the current policy.

9.2 Health/Life Safety Amendment-SHS Gym Bleachers: Mr. Wesley reviewed the proposal to replace the high school gym bleachers with the Board. He pointed out the concerns that would be addressed as well as the enhancements that new bleachers would bring to the gym. He noted that 214 seats would be lost with the remodeling; however, portable bleachers could be purchased for the mezzanine to help increase the seating capacity. Mr. Wesley reviewed the costs to demolish the existing bleachers, to replace the main floor bleachers, and to purchase 3 portable bleacher units for the mezzanine with the Board. He also discussed the maintenance costs for the current bleachers as requested by the Board at its October 23rd meeting.

Montgomery stated that the sound system is new, the walls have been painted recently, and the floors have been redone. The bleachers are the only thing left to be replaced and since they were built in 1960, he felt it was time. He noted that he is not in favor of portable bleachers because they are not comfortable. Montgomery further suggested that the home and visitors sides of the bleachers be switched.

Dombek indicated that several people have contacted him asking that the Board maintain the wooden bleachers.

King stated that student safety and ADA compliance are high on her priority list for this project. Tyrrell agreed.

Nelson indicated that the plastic bleachers will last longer and weigh less, which will put less pressure on the floor. He also agreed with the safety concerns, the ADA compliance, and the appearance.

Clayberg moved, seconded by Montgomery, to approve the replacement of the existing high school gymnasium bleachers as presented. When the roll was called, the following members voted aye: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, and Tyrrell. Stanbery and Dombek voted nay. AYES - 5; NAYS - 2. Motion carried.

## **10.0 CURRICULUM**

10.1 Presentation of Elementary School Improvement Plans: Mrs. Currie, West Elementary School Principal, explained the School Improvement Process, the mentoring program and surveys. Mr. Ekstrom, Southeast Elementary School Principal, reviewed mentoring and staff development as well as growth issues. Mrs. Graves, South Prairie Elementary School Principal, discussed data analysis and demographics, and Mrs. Spiewak, North Elementary School Principal, explained the attributes and challenges that each building faces and their goals.

Dombek suggested that the elementary principals give the Board a presentation on the RTI program at a future Board meeting. The Board of Education thanked the elementary principals for their school improvement presentation.

10.2 Presentation of Middle School Improvement Plan: Mrs. Dargatz reported on the Middle School's School Improvement Plan. She felt that the local assessments provide a much more accurate picture of student achievement because they are designed in a familiar format. She stated that they provide another lens for analysis in contrast to the ISAT and Explore data. Mrs. Dargatz stated that the goals for the Middle School include; student achievement, safe and healthy learning, and continue to study and improve middle school philosophy practices, articulate facility needs to the Board of Education, and participate in middle school facility planning process. She pointed out some challenges at the middle school which including the fact that the Middle School did not make AYP because of one subgroup.

The Board of Education thanked Mrs. Dargatz for her school improvement presentation.

## **11.0 FINANCIAL:**

11.1 2007 Tax Levy Resolution: Mr. Glowiak indicated that the Preliminary Levy information for 2007 was included in the packet. A copy of the levy information is hereby appended to and considered a part of these minutes. Mr. Glowiak explained that new construction values for this year are approximately \$12 million dollars less than last year. He explained that the tax rate for the School District would be similar to previous years' rates. He noted that the hearing date for the adoption of the levy has been set for December 11, 2007, and that the appropriate notice would be placed in the Daily Chronicle.

Stanbery moved, seconded by Tyrrell, that the resolution regarding the estimated amounts necessary to be levied for the year 2007 be approved as presented. The following members voted aye when the roll was called: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES – 7; NAYS – 0. Motion carried.

## **12.0 PERSONNEL:**

12.1 Executive Session for the Consideration of Matters Related to the Appointment, Employment, or Dismissal of Personnel, and Imminent Litigation. Tyrrell moved, seconded by Nelson, to go into executive session for the consideration of matters related to the appointment, employment, or dismissal of personnel, and imminent litigation. When the roll was called, the following members voted aye: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES - 7; NAYS - 0. Motion carried.

In at 9:02 p.m. and out at 9:27 p.m.

## **12.0 ACTION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

12.1 Personnel Reports - Motion by Nelson, seconded by Tyrrell, to approve pages 1 and 2 of the non-certified personnel report as presented. The following members voted aye when the roll was called: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES - 7; NAYS - 0. Motion carried.

Motion by Tyrrell, seconded by Nelson, to approve certified personnel report as presented. The following members voted aye when the roll was called: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES - 7; NAYS - 0. Motion carried.

Motion by Stanbery, seconded by Nelson, to approve the contract for the Superintendent as presented. The following members voted aye when the roll was called: Clayberg, King, Montgomery, Nelson, Stanbery, Tyrrell, and Dombek. AYES - 7; NAYS - 0. Motion carried.

## **13.0 Open Discussion/Issues/Observations/Questions** – Clayberg called the Board’s attention to a General Partnership Meeting at KEC on November 29, 2007.

Montgomery suggested that the district survey the schools in our conference to determine if they have an SRO (School Resource Officer) and if so, does the school district pay his/her salary. He also asked the administration to inquire about crossing guards and if the school district is responsible for their salary. Dr. Riesen responded that Mr. Leffler, High School Principal, has included the SRO as part of his goals for this year.

Montgomery voiced concern that basketball and wrestling practice was scheduled during the Girls Volleyball State Championship on Friday.

Dr. Riesen distributed the Joint Conference packets to the Board members and briefly reviewed the itinerary for the weekend. The Board discussed who would attend the various workshops.

Dr. Riesen discussed a groundbreaking ceremony for the new elementary school with the Board. It was the consensus of the Board to hold the groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, November 27, 2007 at 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Glowiak briefly discussed the goals of the 2007 Levy with the Board.

**18.0 Future Agenda Items** – Naming of the Sycamore High School Athletic Complex after Peter L. Johnson

**19.0 Adjournment** – Tyrrell moved, seconded by King, that the meeting be adjourned. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

This meeting was declared adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Minutes approved ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

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President, Board of Education

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Secretary, Board of Education