

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## ARAPAHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER SIX

### Littleton, Colorado BOARD OF EDUCATION Minutes of Regular Meeting

March 18, 2010

#### *Call to Order*

President Bob Colwell called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Education Services Center, 5776 South Crocker Street.

#### **Present**

Bob Colwell, President  
Renée Howell, Vice President  
Sue Chandler, Secretary  
Lucie Stanish, Treasurer

#### **Absent**

Mary Nichols, Assistant Secretary

#### **Others in Attendance**

Connie Bouwman, Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services  
Lucinda Hundley, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services  
Kirk Madsen, Assistant Superintendent of Operations  
Scott Murphy, Superintendent  
Mike Owens, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Colwell asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the February 25, 2010, regular Board meeting. There were none.

MOTION: Ms. Chandler moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the February 25, 2010, regular Board meeting as presented. SECOND: Ms. Stanish. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 4-0.

#### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Murphy announced that Goddard Middle School eighth grader Robert Spofford will compete at the National Math Counts competition. He placed fourth in the state competition. Heritage High School junior Carissa Ortega and Heritage vision specialist Nancy Knight will travel to Sierra Leone this summer to help build a dormitory for blind children. Carissa is gradually losing her vision, and Ms. Knight has been working with her for many years. Mr. Murphy said that Kyle Hanson, Heritage senior, has been selected to compete for cash scholarships from the Coca-Cola Foundation. Mr. Murphy also announced that Tom Roberts, Arapahoe senior earned a very high score on the American Mathematics competition, AMC 12 and qualifies to compete in the American Invitational Math Exam.

Mr. Murphy thanked Mr. Bill Yeager from the Littleton Elks Club for the club's financial support of LPS Veteran's Day activities during the past five years.

Mr. Yeager presented Mr. Murphy with a check for \$1,500 that will support the 2010 Veteran's Day activities.

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## **Board Reports/Requests**

Ms. Chandler attended the Greater Littleton Youth Initiative (GLYI) meeting and stated that Guy Grace, LPS security and emergency planning director was the speaker. She said GLYI is considering an additional meeting in June to begin planning for the upcoming school year. Ms. Chandler also attended the Legislative Update for Board members earlier today.

Ms. Howell attended the Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC) meeting, which was held at the Education Services Center. She attended the combined meeting of the District Accountability Committee (DAC), ETAC, and the Special Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) to hear a legislative update presented by Tonette Salazar, district lobbyist. She attended the Legislative Breakfast hosted by DAC at the Capitol on March 15, and the Legislative Update for Board members. She attended a town hall meeting with Representative Joe Rice and Senator Linda Newell, and plans to attend a town hall meeting with Representative Spencer Swalm.

Ms. Stanish attended a fundraiser at Littleton High School that featured the Buffoons a cappella singing group. Proceeds will go to Craig Hospital. She attended the Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council breakfast meeting, the GLYI meeting, and the Legislative Breakfast at the Capitol. Ms. Stanish also attended the combined DAC, ETAC, and SSAC legislative update meeting, as well as the Legislative Update for Board members. She attended several LPS Foundation board meetings. The Foundation is planning the Spirit dinner on April 17 and is looking for annual sponsors. Ms. Stanish announced that Powell Middle School will have a fundraiser at the Chipotle Restaurant at Dry Creek and University on March 29.

Mr. Colwell spoke at the Highland Accountability Committee meeting. He attended the DAC meeting and the Legislative Update for Board members. Mr. Colwell attended the musical "Bye Bye Birdie" at Heritage High School, and looked in on the Heritage girls basketball game that was in progress during the musical.

## **Citizens' Requests to Speak to the Board**

Allyson Anderson, Littleton High School student spoke about a Civics class assignment, stating that she will receive credit for speaking at a Board meeting.

## ***Action***

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Colwell asked if there were items that needed further discussion. Mr. Mike Owens, assistant superintendent of human resources, explained that Meredith Henry, who is on the employment list, has been employed since September 2009, but her licensure verification has just been received, thus the delay in bringing her name to the Board for approval. Ms. Howell recognized Ms. Mollie McDonald, director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, for her service to the district. She will retire at the end of the 2009–2010 school year. Mr. Colwell recognized Ms. Sharon Boyd, executive assistant to the Board and Superintendent for her 20 years of service to the district. She also retires at the end of the current school year.

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MOTION: Ms. Howell moved that the Board of Education approve the recommended consent agenda numbered 1.1 concerning Personnel Recommendations with the additions made this evening. SECOND: Ms. Chandler. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 4-0.

## *Discussion*

### **Fiscal Year 2010–2011 Budget Update**

Mr. Scott Myers, chief financial officer, reviewed current legislative and financial issues related to the 2010–2011 budget. He said that Ms. Tonette Salazar, district lobbyist, indicated that the March economic forecast due out March 19, is expected to be as good as or slightly better than the December forecast. Mr. Myers said the School Finance Act (SFA), HB 10-1369, was introduced in the House this week. It sets SFA funding at \$5.438 billion, which mirrors the Governor’s proposal last November and represents a 6.3 percent cut from Amendment 23 full funding.

Mr. Myers also noted that this is the figure used to develop the LPS budget balancing strategies that were presented to the Board in December. Mr. Myers explained that the anticipated “funding cliff” for school finance in FY 2011–2012 remains probable because the federal stabilization funds will no longer be available.

Mr. Myers explained the lost revenue to LPS in terms of Per Pupil Revenue (PPR). If SFA fully funded K–12 education according to Amendment 23, the LPS PPR would be \$7,014 for 2010–2011. Under the Governor’s proposal, which is also in the current SFA bill, LPS PPR will be \$6,571, a difference of \$443 per student. This is a \$6.7 million loss of revenue; when the declining enrollment loss of \$0.7 million is added, it is a total of \$7.4 million lost SFA revenue. Mr. Myers added that the LPS budget reduction of \$7.5 million also includes lower projected local revenue and Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) increases. Mr. Myers said that unemployment claims are higher than in past years. Mr. Owens stated that costs from these claims are growing due to staffing cuts, and they will continue to grow with additional staffing cuts for 2010–2011. He noted that other school districts are facing similar high unemployment claim costs.

Ms. Howell asked for the dollar amount of PPR loss for 2009–2010, and Mr. Myers said he will get that information to the Board via email. Ms. Howell asked if the district had ever seen an SFA increase as high as the current loss of 6.3 percent.

Mr. Murphy responded that the highest he can recall was approximately five percent, although most years the increase is much smaller. Ms. Howell noted that making up for this loss will not be easy and will take a number of years. Mr. Murphy added that inflation will likely go up over the next 12 to 18 months, which will drive up ongoing costs, and that the statutory employer contributions to PERA will continue to rise as well.

Mr. Colwell commented that the district is still about \$600,000 short for the 2010–2011 budget. Mr. Myers responded that the finance office is working on final budget numbers and he hopes the remaining deficit will be less than \$600,000. He added that administration will provide further information to the Board in April, with additional budget balancing strategies presented on May 13 if needed.

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Ms. Howell asked if the March forecast is better than anticipated, will any increase be made to K–12 funding. Mr. Myers responded that he does not anticipate any increase.

Ms. Chandler thanked Mr. Myers and his staff for their work to stay abreast of financial issues and to disseminate information to the public. She also expressed appreciation for the extra care the district is taking to review expenditures carefully. Ms. Stanish commented that as schools finalize their weighted staffing plans and share them with their community, the public will begin to have a better understanding of how the staffing cuts affect their school. Mr. Colwell stated he was pleased that the district started discussions about the 2010–2011 budget early as it has helped to keep the community informed. Ms. Howell remarked that the visits made by administration to school accountability committees last fall helped the district gather ideas and provided information to the community early in the process.

Mr. Murphy expressed his thanks to staff and all employees who have been involved in the budget planning and preparation. He commented that part of the leadership role is to be guardians of morale, and the impact of budget reductions will hit different people at different times.

### **2010–2011 Enrollment Projection Update**

Mr. Myers reviewed current student enrollment projections for 2010–2011, noting this is critical information for schools as they prepare their staffing plans for the upcoming school year. The projected overall enrollment is 15,473, which is 48 students lower than the 2009–2010 actual of 15,521. Elementary projections show a decrease of 36 students, middle schools show an increase of 18 students, and Littleton High School shows a decrease of 37 students, with Arapahoe and Heritage high schools remaining at current enrollment levels. Due to five-year averaging, the average funded pupil count is projected to decrease 120 student full-time equivalents (FTEs). This enrollment decrease is the smallest decline for LPS in the last several years, and the district may be close to a low point in the declining enrollment cycle. Mr. Myers compared current projection for 2010–2011 to actual enrollment in 2009–2010 by school and by grade level.

Ms. Howell asked if increases in student enrollment affected five-year averaging. Mr. Myers responded that there is a chart on the district web site that compares the five year average funded pupil count with the actual student count. He also noted that the district is not locked into five-year averaging, but could use two- or three-year averaging.

Mr. Colwell asked if there are any changes to out-of-district student enrollment. Mr. Myers said that Powell Middle Schools is showing a strong non-resident enrollment. Ms. Howell asked if projections for Field Elementary and Newton Middle School are being affected due to the loss of the International Baccalaureate programs at these schools. Mr. Myers responded that there is no indication that these schools will lose students. Ms. Chandler asked if private schools have had any effect on enrollment. Mr. Murphy commented that it is possible LPS could see an increase in students from neighboring districts as well as from private schools.

Mr. Colwell thanked Mr. Myers for his work on staffing projections.

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## **Board Policy JICI—Weapons in Schools**

Ms. Lucinda Hundley, assistant superintendent of student support services, presented proposed revisions to Board Policy JICI—Weapons in Schools. She explained that changes in federal law prompted these proposed revisions. She further noted that as a condition of receiving federal funds, the policy must align with current federal laws. Ms. Hundley reviewed the proposed changes to the policy, which include referral to law enforcement of any student who brings a firearm to school without authorization of the school or district administration. Another significant change includes language about a firearm facsimile, which states a student must receive prior authorization from school or district administration to possess a firearm facsimile, and failure to obtain prior authorization violates the policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Ms. Chandler commented that this new language is appropriate and asked about the implementation process. Ms. Hundley responded that she will meet with principals to develop guidelines to operationalize the policy so it will be consistently applied in all district schools. Ms. Stanish asked if the Student Code of Conduct will be updated, and Ms. Hundley responded that the Colorado Department of Education requires that the weapons policy be updated by April, and updates to the Code will be done over the summer.

Mr. Colwell thanked Ms. Hundley for the proposed policy changes. This policy will return for action on April 8.

## **Building Capacity Update**

Mr. Kirk Madsen, assistant superintendent of operations, provided an update on the district's school building capacity. He explained that several factors prompted the review of building capacity including: 1) weighted staffing formula changes; 2) repurposing two elementary schools; 3) relocating district programs; and 4) eliminating school programs. Mr. Madsen stated that the calculation used to determine school capacity does not include specialized spaces or space used for district programs, but does include portable classroom space. The 2010 facility usage is 85 percent for elementary buildings, 70 percent for middle schools, and 87 percent for high schools. Mr. Madsen stated that there is no financial efficiency to be gained through a school closure at this time. He said that additional transportation would be required and there are no schools with enough available space to accommodate a large influx of students.

Mr. Madsen also reviewed the facility use review criteria developed by the Facility Use Task Force and provided some additional background information about several schools that currently meet the review criteria although administration does not recommend a facility use review for any district school. Mr. Madsen provided information about the use of portable classrooms at several schools. He stated that portable classrooms are inspected annually to ensure they are safe and pose no health concerns. He said administration would consider eliminating a portable classroom if it posed a health or safety concern, or if it required a capital investment of \$5,000 or more and the school's enrollment could be accommodated within the main building.

Ms. Howell asked how portable classrooms are currently being used. Mr. Madsen said the portables at Field are being used as classrooms, and two of the portables at Highland house the School-Age Child Care (SACC) program and one is a teacher

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workroom. Ms. Howell asked if any of the portables are beginning to cause health and safety concerns. Mr. Madsen responded that several are approximately 30 years old, which is near the average life expectancy. Mr. Colwell asked if the district would consider relocating a portable, and Mr. Madsen responded that some of the portables at Field are newer and could be relocated. In response to a concern expressed from an audience member, Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Madsen to inspect a ramp to a portable at Field.

Ms. Howell asked if it is still a possibility that an LPS middle school could be recommended for closure. Mr. Murphy said it is possible, but the three remaining middle schools would be very full.

Mr. Colwell stated that this capacity update reinforces the decision the Board made to repurpose two elementary schools at the end of the 2008–2009 school year. He thanked Mr. Madsen for the update.

### *Future Agenda/Adjournment*

Mr. Murphy distributed a draft agenda for the April 8, 2010, Board meeting. Consent agenda items include Head Start Grant Application, Board Policy JICI—Weapons in Schools, and Multiple Copy Literature List. Discussion items Course/Textbook Adoption, Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budget Update, School Improvement Process Update, and Summer School-Age Child Care (SACC) Program Update.

MOTION: Ms. Stanish moved that the Board of Education meeting adjourn.

SECOND: Ms. Chandler. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Stanish.

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Colwell  
President

Sue Chandler  
Secretary

ks (4/12/10)