

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

ARAPAHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER SIX

Littleton, Colorado BOARD OF EDUCATION Minutes of Regular Meeting

February 12, 2009

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
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 January 29, 2009, regular Board meeting. There were none.

MOTION: Ms. Nichols moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 29, 2009, regular Board meeting as presented. SECOND: Ms. Stanish. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Murphy reported that LPS has six National Merit Finalists, one from Littleton High School, two from Heritage, and three from Arapahoe. The LPS Spelling Bee was held on February 2. Seven LPS students will participate in the state competition on March 14. Mr. Murphy said that Heritage and Arapahoe Community College have developed a College Ready program for Heritage students. Euclid teacher Jennifer Phillips participated in a panel discussion at the University of Denver recently that focused on the challenges of education practice and policy in the 21st century.

Mr. Murphy said a team of future scientists from Arapahoe High School (AHS) recently competed in the Colorado Science Bowl sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy. Several AHS students were mentioned in a feature story published by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The AHS boys' varsity soccer team received the All-American Team Academic Award from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

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Mr. Murphy announced that Heritage social studies teacher Tony Hurt was named Colorado Teacher Coach of the Year. He also stated that Heritage senior Kyla Yee is one of eight recipients of the Gatorade Scholar Athlete Scholarship.

Mr. Murphy congratulated the 37 LPS student athletes who signed college letters of intent last week. He also commented on a recent article in *The Villager* newspaper that showcased three former Heritage students who played on the 2004–2005 state championship basketball team.

Board Reports/Requests

Ms. Nichols attended the District Spelling Bee, the Gifted and Talented Advisory Council meeting, and the Circle of Concern Consortium meeting. She also mentioned her involvement with the Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council.

Ms. Chandler attended the Arapahoe High School play, “Fools” and the AHS/Cherry Creek High School basketball game. Ms. Chandler attended an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) funded through support from the Greater Littleton Youth Initiative (GLYI) grant from Littleton Hospital. Staff members from LPS and Douglas County School District as well as community members attended the training. Ms. Chandler announced that the GLYI will meet on Friday, February 13. She also attended the Bridges to the Future panel discussion and noted that Euclid Middle School teacher Jennifer Phillips was a panel member.

Ms. Howell also attended the Bridges to the Future event and commented that it will be televised. Ms. Howell observed a presentation concerning removal of the Arveschoug-Bird statutory spending limit provision and stated there will probably be a bill introduced in the Legislature that should be closely watched. She also participated in a live blog session with Arapahoe freshmen students. Ms. Howell commented that the Colorado’s Math, Science, Technology, Engineering Coalition (COMSTEC) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academies steering committee is broadening its focus to look at a program approach and a state-wide picture rather than a STEM school.

Ms. Stanish attended a recent Littleton Association of School Executives (LASE) social, as well as a social sponsored by the Littleton Education Association (LEA). She attended the Bridges to the Future panel discussion, and the Legislative update with Tonette Salazar held earlier today.

Mr. Colwell attended the LASE and LEA socials and the Legislative update. He also attended the Centennial League swim meet that was held at AHS, and the recent PTO’ Presidents Council meeting.

Citizens’ Requests to Speak to the Board

Mr. Sam Drury spoke about public visibility of LPS student academic achievement progress, specifically the LPS student achievement gap.

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Action

Consent Agenda

Mr. Mike Owens, assistant superintendent of human resources, explained that final elementary staffing numbers will be given to schools on February 13. Elementary principals must report their identified vacancies to the district by February 20. The list of identified vacancies, along with a placement preference form, will go to teachers by Feb 23 with teacher status at Ames and Whitman elementary schools. These placement forms are due on March 2, and principals may begin interviewing and selecting teachers from this group to fill vacancies. Until this process is complete, the district has a hiring freeze for K-6 vacancies.

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, and 1.2 Textbook Approval: Career and Technical Education. SECOND: Ms. Stanish. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

Board Policy Revisions: IKE—Promotion and Retention of Students, and IKF, IKF-E—Graduation Requirements.

Ms. Connie Bouwman, assistant superintendent of learning services, said that administration recommends approval of the policies as presented.

Ms. Chandler said she appreciates the work of all stakeholders in revising these policies. Ms. Nichols stated that the Gifted and Talented Advisory Council also expressed appreciation for these policy revisions.

MOTION: Ms. Howell moved that the Board of Education approve Policy IKE—Promotion and Retention of Students, and IKF and IKF-E—Graduation Requirements as presented this evening. SECOND: Ms. Chandler. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

Quarterly Financial Report

Mr. Scott Myers, chief financial officer, presented the district's quarterly financial report for the period ending December 31, 2008. He noted variances between balances and percentages for this period as compared to those of the prior year. He said that the district is typically at a low level of general fund reserves at the end of the calendar year because annual property tax revenue is received beginning in March. He reminded the Board that it authorized the district to participate in the state's interest-free loan program, and the district anticipates borrowing from this source in February to meet expenses. Loans will be repaid by June 2009.

Mr. Myers stated that staff is watching the budget closely and financial operations are comparable to historical financial patterns.

Mr. Colwell thanked Mr. Myers and his staff for their diligence.

MOTION: Ms. Stanish moved that the Board of Education approve the quarterly financial report for the period ending December 31, 2008, as presented. SECOND: Ms. Nichols. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

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Discussion

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Update

Ms. Lucinda Hundley, assistant superintendent of student support services, reviewed the implementation history for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and thanked the Board for its support of embedded time in the school year calendar. She stated that administration is committed to accountability as PLCs and embedded time continue to be integrated in district schools. She noted that schools have used the two-hour time slot appropriately and fully. She said schools have communicated with parents regarding the late start schedule, and are working to help parents understand how PLCs affect their students. Ms. Hundley said that data collection is ongoing and remains a work in progress. Ms. Hundley presented information about the absentee rate among teachers and students on late-start Wednesdays compared to other Wednesdays, noting that absence rates are lower on late start days for both groups. Ms. Hundley commented that while data regarding the PLC process is available including setting goals, collecting and using data to inform instruction, and identifying and sharing effective strategies, outcome data about student achievement is slower in coming, and this was expected. Administration believes that the PLC model will lead to positive outcomes in student achievement. Ms. Hundley noted that administration is seeing changes in behavior among teachers about the way instruction is delivered and changes in expectations about student learning.

Ms. Bouwman reviewed how the Board's Strategic Plan and the district's 90 percent goal are tied to school improvement. She reviewed the PLC initiative, the Pyramid of Intervention, and the Universal Literacy Framework, which are the vehicles for achieving the district's goals. Because of the interconnectedness of these strategies, it is difficult to identify causation among these important elements of the instructional process. She further explained that PLC work is becoming part of the norm among school staffs.

Ms. Bouwman described how the process of instruction, using these integrated instructional strategies, unfolds in classrooms across the district. She introduced Mr. Greg Sumlin, principal of East Elementary School, and his leadership team: Connie Foster, assistant principal, Sara Green, instructional coach, Gina Maestas, literacy specialist/instructional coach, and Heather Meeseey, literacy coach. Mr. Sumlin reviewed the writing goal that is part of East's school improvement plan, and the leadership team described how PLC work at East supports this student achievement goal at all grade levels.

Ms. Howell remarked that she is impressed with the PLC work and the progress the East staff has made. She especially noted the level of organization demonstrated by agendas and other documents that were presented. Ms. Nichols commented that she appreciated the "language" of PLCs: "here's what, so what, now what."

Ms. Stanish, as well as other Board members, commented that the Pyramid of Intervention chart with students' names written on sticky notes and posted on the chart is an excellent visual representation of the importance of focusing on individual students. Ms. Chandler said the information presented demonstrates a sense of teamwork and buy-in by the staff at East.

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Ms. Chandler asked Mr. Sumlin to comment about how East families have adjusted to the late start days. Mr. Sumlin said the occurrence of students arriving early is less and less frequent as time goes on. If a student does arrive early, it is sometimes possible for the School-Age Child Care program to assist, and occasionally parents must be called to pick up a student who arrives early.

Ms. Howell asked what the East staff is most proud of in terms of PLCs, and Mr. Sumlin responded that the leadership team meets weekly to review data, and data are used to guide instruction. Ms. Stanish asked how parents are informed about PLC work. Mr. Sumlin said communication is primarily through the newsletter, with a minimum of two or three articles per year. He said the PTO is also a good communication vehicle, and parents learn about intervention strategies informally and through conferences. Ms. Chandler asked if parents routinely attend conferences, and Mr. Sumlin responded that about 97 percent of parents attend, and East has a goal of 100 percent attendance. Some of the strategies East uses to encourage conference attendance include early notification and providing translators for all languages spoken by East families. Teachers also make follow-up calls, and face-to-face communication is a priority.

Ms. Howell asked how East compares to other district schools in PLC work.

Ms. Bouwman responded that East stands out because of their commitment to individual students. She further commented that all schools are doing well and in general are further along than expected. Ms. Hundley remarked that East has a “no excuses” approach and believes all kids will learn.

Course and Textbook Adoption: Arapahoe High School

Ms. Susan Dalton, curriculum coordinator, presented a request from Arapahoe High School to add a new mathematics course, Survey of Advanced Mathematics. This course is designed for students who have completed Algebra II and require more experience with higher level mathematics prior to entering the Trigonometry/PreCalculus course. The textbook proposed for the course is *Mathematics in Action: Algebraic, Graphical, and Trigonometric Problem Solving*, by the Consortium for Foundation Mathematics published by Addison-Wesley, 2008. Ms. Dalton explained that this text will be the primary resource for the course, but the entire book will not be used. The proposed course and textbook have been reviewed by the Arapahoe math department, instructional council, and school accountability committee, as well as the district mathematics council. Ms. Dalton introduced AHS math teacher, Michelle Crookham who responded to questions from Board members.

Ms. Stanish asked if this is a year-long course, and Ms. Crookham responded that it is. Ms. Nichols asked how the need for the course was determined. Ms. Crookham said that there is a significant number of students who successfully complete Algebra II, but are not ready for a trigonometry course and need a fourth year of mathematics for college entrance. This proposed course will help these students prepare for first-year college mathematics courses and avoid a remediation course.

Ms. Howell complimented the AHS staff for providing this course. Mr. Colwell asked if the course is primarily for seniors, and Ms. Crookham responded that it is

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exclusively for seniors who have passed Algebra II. Mr. Colwell asked how many sections of the course will be offered, and Ms. Crookham responded that two sections will be offered during the first year of implementation, but that could increase based on demand.

Ms. Chandler asked how the textbook will be used. Ms. Crookham said that with the purchase of at least one classroom set of the text, the publisher will grant permission to copy some of the exercises and these will be compiled into a packet for each student.

Mr. Colwell thanked Ms. Dalton and Ms. Crookham for their presentation.

This item will return for action on February 26.

Course and Textbook Adoption: Littleton High School

Ms. Dalton presented a proposed course and textbook from Littleton High School. The course title is "Top 20," and the proposed textbook is *Top 20 Teens: Discovering the Best-Kept Thinking, Learning, and Communicating Secrets of Successful Teenagers*, by Bernabei, et al., 2nd Edition published by Top 20 Press, 2006. Ms. Dalton explained that Brian Powers, LHS counselor is a certified Top 20 trainer, and he presented the program to the LHS staff. All agreed it was an important course for students. This is an elective course open to all students, although some students will be invited to participate. Ms. Dalton stated that the course and textbook have been reviewed by the LHS accountability committee, and it meets the guidance and counseling curriculum standards and objectives. Ms. Dalton said the LHS PTO supports the new course and will provide monetary support.

Ms. Nichols asked what the grade level is for the course, and Ms. Dalton responded it is open to all students with priority given to students who especially need to learn skills taught in the class. Ms. Chandler asked if grades are given in the class. Ms. Dalton responded that grades will be given. She further noted that teachers must be trained by Top 20 before they can teach the course. Mr. Colwell asked about alignment with a specific curriculum area, and Ms. Dalton said it is not attached to any of the core curricular areas and is categorized under communication in the Infinite Campus system.

Mr. Colwell thanked Ms. Dalton for the presentation.

This item will return for action on February 26.

Math Implementation Update

Ms. Bouwman explained that the district's revised math curriculum was implemented in fall 2006, and this presentation focuses on achievement data during the second year of implementation.

Ms. Ann Summers, secondary math resource specialist, presented elementary math Colorado Student Achievement Program (CSAP) results, comparing the past three years of data. She noted the scores have remained relatively steady, indicating no dip in scores due to implementation. Ms. Summers presented results of the

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elementary teacher survey regarding math implementation. She noted that a majority of teachers rate themselves as “secure,” the highest rating on the survey rubric, as it applies to implementing the math curriculum. Ms. Summers also reviewed information that indicates a majority of principals see teachers as “secure” in the implementation process. Ms. Summers said that the focus can now shift from the implementation process to a focus on meeting the needs of struggling students and thereby closing the achievement gap in math.

Ms. Summers reviewed middle level CSAP results, noting there was very little dip in scores for the general population of students following implementation of the math curriculum. She further noted that LPS scores follow typical state trends, and administration is watching a downward trend in math scores for students with disabilities. Middle school teacher surveys and principal observations follow those of elementary teachers and principals and indicate a high level of confidence in teaching the math curriculum. The middle school focus can now shift to closing the achievement gap.

Ms. Summers reviewed high school CSAP results, stating that administration is particularly concerned about the scores for students with disabilities. She reviewed student enrollment in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate math courses and results of college entrance exams. The focus areas for high school include instructional technology, increasing options for fourth year math courses, and closing the achievement gap.

Ms. Howell expressed concern about declining scores at middle level. Ms. Summers noted that she regularly works with individual teachers, and there are some optional professional development opportunities available. Ms. Nichols asked what kind of professional development teachers want, and Ms. Summers said that coaching in classrooms is preferred over more general group sessions.

Ms. Chandler requested cohort data for math CSAP results. Ms. Stanish said that some middle school students were not exposed to this curriculum in elementary school, so it is still early to draw conclusions. She further noted that the math curriculum was implemented one year later at tenth grade. Ms. Summers said that LPS ranks first or second on math CSAP among metro area districts.

Ms. Howell asked how long it will take to see improvement in scores at the high school level. Ms. Summers said high school teachers need more training in good instructional practices, and training will be offered in summer 2009. Mr. Colwell asked if Heritage and Littleton high schools have fourth year math course offerings similar to the proposed new course at Arapahoe that was presented this evening. Ms. Summers responded that the other high schools have adjusted existing courses to serve students’ needs for fourth year math options, and teachers continue to search for additional options.

Ms. Chandler expressed appreciation for the goal of continuous improvement. Ms. Howell said she appreciated the efforts administration and teachers are making. She asked how middle school parents of gifted and talents students are adjusting to the revised math curriculum. Ms. Bouwman responded that these parents have had

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some difficulty with implementation. She stated that administration knows the program has not been implemented with fidelity in order to accommodate parent concerns, and this is an area in need of work.

Ms. Stanish commented that during a math update to a PTO group, the focus was on continuous improvement. Ms. Howell requested percentages for the middle school teacher survey responses and principal input ratings.

Ms. Howell asked about next steps. Ms. Summers stated that it is important to move to the level of the individual student, and implement the middle level program more consistently across the district. Ms. Nichols expressed appreciation for the efforts and dedication of staff to implement the revised math curriculum.

Future Agenda/Adjournment

Mr. Murphy distributed a draft agenda for the February 26, 2009, Board meeting. Action items include 2009–2010 Capital Reserve Fund Facility Projects. Discussion items include Early Childhood Education: The Village Update, Course and Textbook Adoption: Arapahoe High School, and Attendance Boundary Adjustments. There will also be an insurance report.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Colwell

President

Sue Chandler

Secretary

ks (3/13/09)