

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

ARAPAHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER SIX

Littleton, Colorado BOARD OF EDUCATION Minutes of Regular Meeting

January 14, 2010

Call to Order

President Bob Colwell called the meeting to order at 6:30 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
Mary Nichols, Assistant Secretary
Lucie Stanish, Treasurer

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 December 10, 2009, regular Board meeting. There were none.

MOTION: Ms. Howell moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 10, 2009, regular Board meeting as presented. SECOND: Ms. Nichols.
AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Murphy announced that Heritage High School science teacher Brett Wamsley is participating in the Australia New Zealand Educator Exchange (ANZEE) program. He said Arapahoe senior Emily Haller has been selected to the 2010 All-State band, choir, and orchestra. Mr. Murphy congratulated Emily on this very unique and rare accomplishment. Mr. Murphy said that Pete Parrett, executive director of Littleton Soccer has been selected to the Colorado Youth Soccer Hall of Fame.

Mr. Murphy expressed congratulations to a number of student athletes who have been honored by the *Denver Post*. Mister Jones, LHS senior and Shane Opitz and Mitch Greibel, HHS seniors were named to the All-Colorado football team. Jones, Opitz, Greibel, along with Logan Steppan, HHS senior, were also named to the 4A All-State football team. Davis Gunter, Arapahoe senior was named a 5A All-State football team honorable mention. Mitch Greibel, Heritage senior was named 4A All-State football player of the year, and Mike Greibel, Heritage football coach was named 4A All-State football coach of the year. Cortlin Couture, HHS student, and Noah Gaumer, LHS student received an honorable mention.

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Mr. Murphy said Heritage High School has partnered with Arapahoe Community College to offer college credit to HHS students through the College Ready program. During the first semester of operation, 136 students received credit for business and Latin classes, and another 45 students are scheduled to take Latin II through the program.

Board Reports/Requests

Ms. Nichols attended a Colorado School Finance Project meeting and an Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council meeting. She attended a Greater Littleton Youth Initiative (GLYI) meeting in place of Ms. Chandler. She attended the LPS Transitions Program “Music and Muffins” presentation, and presentations by East Elementary fifth graders. Ms. Nichols also attended the LPS Board and Littleton City Council breakfast meeting, as well as the Gifted and Talented Advisory Council (GTAC) meeting.

Ms. Chandler attended the student assembly at Goddard Middle School featuring Denver Broncos football player, Eddie Royal, and the ribbon cutting ceremony for the climbing wall at Goddard. Ms. Chandler attended a GYLI meeting where Diana Holland and Brian Vogt were honored. She said GLYI is entering its second decade and continues to provide Blueprint programs to LPS schools.

Ms. Howell said the Colorado General Assembly began its 2010 legislative session today. She attended a meeting with Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) legislative representatives and said the group will meet weekly during the session. Ms. Howell is also a member of the South Metro Chamber of Commerce legislative action committee. Ms. Howell attended the Continental League music festival, which included selected members of high school bands, orchestras, and choral groups. She attended the Goddard climbing wall ribbon cutting, the fifth grade student presentations at East, and the breakfast meeting with the Littleton City Council.

Ms. Stanish attended the ESC holiday luncheon and the breakfast meeting with the Littleton City Council. She attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the climbing wall at Goddard, and the science presentations by East fifth grade students.

Ms. Stanish commented that the Continental League music festival held at Boettcher Concert Hall was a wonderful event. She attended an LPS Foundation (LPSF) executive board meeting and said the board is discussing the best use of its funds to support LPS.

Mr. Colwell attended the ESC holiday luncheon. He attended the “Music and Muffins” presentation by the LPS Transitions Program students and the Goddard assembly with Eddie Royal. He spent time at Wilder when actress Melissa Gilbert was there, and spoke at the Wilder PTO meeting about the budget. He also attended the breakfast meeting with the Littleton City Council.

Citizens’ Requests to Speak to the Board

Mr. Sam Drury spoke on educator effectiveness and distributed copies of a Colorado Department of Education (CDE) resolution in support of educator effectiveness.

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Action

Consent Agenda

Mr. Colwell asked if there were items that needed further discussion. There were none.

MOTION: Ms. Stanish 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 School Accreditation Recommendations. SECOND: Ms. Howell. AYE: Chandler, Colwell, Howell, Nichols, Stanish. MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

Discussion

Strategic Budget Recommendations for the 2010-2011 School Year

Mr. Colwell said the Board will discuss the budget recommendations it received on December 10, and further Board discussion will take place in a workshop formation on January 21, 5:30 pm, and during the regular Board meeting on January 28. He commented that it is difficult to have these discussions because state-level decisions that affect the district's budget will not be known for several months. Mr. Murphy stated that the district has additional information about the state's budget shortfall since the Board received budget recommendations on December 10.

Mr. Scott Myers, chief financial officer, reviewed the projected state budget shortfall for the current fiscal year as well as FY2010-11 and FY2011-12. He compared shortfall amounts for each year as projected from the June, September, and December 2009 economic forecasts, which show increasing shortfalls.

Mr. Myers reviewed recommendations from the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) presented on January 8, 2010 for FY2009-10 and FY2010-11. He summarized the impact of the JBC recommendations by stating that the on-going deficit for LPS could be \$9 million, which is \$1.5 million more than projected following the Governor's recommendations in November 2009. Mr. Myers commented on other factors that will affect the budget in 2011-2012, which include provisions of Amendment 23 that will sunset and the sunset of Referendum C. He stated that there will be no state general fund maintenance of effort required for Amendment 23, and the federal stimulus funds will be gone as well. In addition, the General Assembly could lower the School Finance Act (SFA) funding. Mr. Myers said there are no more protections for K-12 funding left at the state level beyond FY2010-11.

Mr. Myers reviewed Colorado economic indicators for 2009 and stated that while economists say the recession is over, the recovery is likely to be very slow, and Colorado's economy is undergoing fundamental changes.

Mr. Colwell asked for a review of budget cuts made during the past two years, and Mr. Myers responded that the district has cut \$6 million over two years. Mr. Colwell said the Board has tried to keep cuts away from the classroom, but that is no longer possible. Mr. Murphy commented that he has never seen budget shortfalls of this magnitude during his career and this is new territory for the state and for school districts. He said there doesn't appear to be positive news regarding the budget in the

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near term. While these are difficult times, Mr. Murphy said that LPS is a great district. He thanked the Board and the community for their work in making tough decisions.

The following citizens signed up to speak:

Marj McDonald, principal, Sandburg Elementary School and Littleton Association of School Executives (LASE) president stated that LASE is willing to support the Board's budget decisions.

Ken Moritz, Heritage principal stated that the principals will speak with one voice. They support keeping quality teachers in classrooms and are willing to take a salary freeze to keep teachers.

Ron Booth, Arapahoe principal, said that administrators are willing to take an indefinite pay freeze, and asked the Board to ensure that LPS students come first.

Mr. Colwell thanked the LASE board members for their leadership and for their offer. He stated that the sacrifice must be shared by all employees. Ms. Howell said it is good to have the backing of the principals.

Kelly Perez, LPS parent, addressed cuts to the literacy specialists stating that literacy is an essential skill for all students.

Alex Perez, LPS graduate, said the district should not cut the math specialist and stressed the importance of math and science curriculum.

Tammy Harimon, Newton parent, stated that the International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Newton should be maintained as it enhances the reputation of the district to have IB at all three levels. She stated that she lives out of district and chose Newton because of the IB program.

Julie Lacey, a Newton teacher and IB coordinator, spoke in support of the Newton IB program and said the district needs to come together to find a solution to the budget issues.

Karey Finch, a parent with two students at Newton and two students at Lenski, said the Newton community supports the district and will help lobby for furlough days, give up a day of parent/teacher conferences, and drive students home from after-school activities in order to save the Newton IB program.

Natalie Sandstrom, seventh grade student at Newton, said the IB program helps students learn communication skills and make connections with others. She said it helps her to see different perspectives.

Carrie Warren-Gully, Newton parent, spoke in support of the Newton IB program.

Brad Meyer, Arapahoe teacher and LPS parent, said the budget recommendations lack cuts of administrators housed at the Education Services Center (ESC). He said there have been staff increases to departments at ESC since the last mill levy, and the district must be more forward-thinking and look at the long term.

Erin Gaskins, IB coordinator at Field, said staffing needs to remain at current level to maintain the IB program.

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Elizabeth Bolton, Field parent, said she chose Field because of the IB program and families who optionally enroll at Field cite the IB program as the reason. She said the Board has made a big investment in IB and urged the Board to find another solution to the budget deficit.

Alissa Rousch, Field parent, asked the Board to look at the long term impact of eliminating the IB program.

Deb Beckman, Field parent, asked the Board to keep the IB program. She will write to her state legislators and support a mill levy.

Korina Padilla, Field parent, is the PTO treasurer and came to Field from out of district because of the IB program. She said eliminating the program would negatively affect the school's culture.

Maya Walker, former Field student and current sixth grader at Goddard, said the IB program shaped her as a person.

Joan Hitchens, Arapahoe art teacher, commented that the Board has a daunting task. She urged the Board to save teacher positions. She said she read an article in YourHub.com about cuts that mentioned art, music, and physical education.

Amanda Crosby, Arapahoe teacher, said she hopes the district can maintain its unique programs and great teachers.

Jackie Price, Arapahoe teacher, said it is important to review the district's values and vision and not just survive but to thrive and shine above competitors. She asked the Board to be forward-thinking.

Anne Smith, Arapahoe teacher, said she did not want to see larger class sizes and asked the Board to place a priority on classroom teachers.

Mr. Colwell thanked the speakers and said the Board has also been thinking about some of the issues brought up by the speakers. He noted that the budget situation is very grave. Mr. Colwell explained that the 2010–2011 budget will not be approved until June, but the Board must give direction to administration in order for staffing decisions to be made.

Ms. Nichols thanked Mr. Myers for the information about the overall recovery time from the recession, noting it is important to realize this will be a slow recovery process. Ms. Nichols also asked for clarification about state supplemental funding for higher pupil counts and at-risk students. Mr. Murphy remarked that this is the first time he can recall that the state has not approved a supplemental budget request for this purpose.

Ms. Chandler asked for information about a possible mill levy election. Mr. Myers responded that the district could ask for up to \$13 million, which equates to 10 mills. He commented that it might be very difficult to pass an election of that magnitude. The first opportunity to seek a ballot measure is November 2010, and the effects of a successful election would have no impact on the 2010–2011 budget. Mr. Myers further noted that a mill levy election will not solve the large shortfalls the district is facing over the next few years. Mr. Murphy said the district must poll the community

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to determine citizens' attitudes about a mill levy election before the Board can consider such a strategy.

Ms. Howell asked for an explanation about how per pupil revenue (PPR) is used. Mr. Myers explained that the entire PPR amount does not go directly to schools as a small portion is used for overhead costs, such as central administration, and to support special education costs. Ms. Chandler noted that overhead costs continue to rise, which is an important factor that citizens may overlook.

Ms. Chandler asked about options to reduce transportation costs. Mr. Kirk Madsen, assistant superintendent of operations, responded that if all transportation was eliminated, with the exception of required transport for special education students, it would result in a saving of about \$2 million. He said increasing the walking distance does not result in much savings, and the elimination of middle school late bus runs would save about \$80,000. Mr. Madsen said that all bus routes were reconfigured last year and the transportation system is now more efficient. Mr. Murphy said the big change in transportation that resulted in greater efficiency was the change to staggered start times at elementary schools. He commented that due to increasing PERA costs, the Board may need to compare costs for district-run transportation versus outsourcing at some future time. Ms. Howell commented that changes to bus routes in Douglas County have caused some parent concern in Douglas County. Ms. Howell asked if one middle school could choose to eliminate the late bus, and Mr. Madsen responded that the Board would probably want to maintain uniformity among the middle schools.

Ms. Stanish expressed appreciation for the ideas mentioned by community members. She said she wants to further investigate the district subsidy for athletics and activities. Ms. Stanish stated that these areas are often supported by booster clubs, and the district does not have information on the level of financial support from the booster clubs. Ms. Chandler asked for the number of students who participate in athletics and activities.

Ms. Howell asked how many more students it would take to offset a \$6 million budget deficit, assuming no additional costs. Mr. Murphy responded that about 1,000 students would generate approximately \$7 million in PPR with no additional teachers or staff members.

Ms. Stanish requested further discussion about how the district will meet the learning needs of students if the literacy support is reduced. Ms. Bouwman responded that the level of literacy support service will be reduced. Ms. Stanish asked if the district's Universal Literacy Framework (ULF) will help fill the gap. Ms. Bouwman responded that the district's focus is on literacy and the goal of the ULF is to increase the skill level of all teachers so less tier 2 and tier 3 instruction is needed. Mr. Murphy said the effects of staff reductions may not be immediate, but over time there will be some effects. He further noted that reductions in the learning services department at ESC will affect staff development for teachers.

Ms. Stanish asked about district support for special education, and Ms. Hundley responded that 72 percent of costs for special education come from local, not federal funding. Ms. Stanish commented that the public isn't always aware of the costs associated with unfunded mandates such as special education.

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Ms. Chandler asked for clarification about reductions to the weighted staffing formulas. Mr. Owens explained that full-time equivalent (FTE) reductions vary by building due to changes in enrollment. If enrollment drops, a school experiences a greater reduction in FTEs. He further noted that class size will be impacted by the reduction. Ms. Howell asked about the process for making staffing reductions. Mr. Owens said it is a building-based procedure with reduction of probationary teachers first. He also noted that reductions at one building could affect probationary teachers at other schools. Mr. Owens said that weighted staffing reduction decisions must be made soon, because of statutory rules and because of the complexity of the process. Mr. Owens commented that most districts have not implemented a Reduction in Force (RIF) process, and it has never been done in LPS, although the collective bargaining agreement provides direction should it become necessary.

Mr. Colwell asked for a breakdown of costs associated with the \$355,000 reduction to IB programs at Field and Newton. Mr. Owens responded that costs at Field equate to 2.8 FTEs, or \$140,000 and \$5,800 for annual IB fees. At Newton, additional staffing equaling 4.3 FTE totals \$215,000. Mr. Owens further noted that Littleton High School also receives additional support for the IB program, and enrollment increased dramatically following its implementation. Mr. Colwell commented that the \$355,000 represents four percent of the total reductions. Ms. Howell asked why the IB programs at Field and Newton were placed on the list of recommended reductions and asked if other schools receive support for special programs. Ms. Bouwman responded that Centennial receives FTE support to provide an extended day to accommodate the fine arts program. She further noted that Centennial draws 145 out-of-district students, while Field draws 50 out-of-district students.

Mr. Colwell said that one of the values the Board applied to the school closure decision was to avoid subsidies to schools, and a subsidy for IB programs conflicts with this value. Ms. Stanish stated that it is difficult to justify these subsidies for IB and it is important to be equitable. Ms. Howell said the unknown factor is the number of students these two schools may lose if IB is eliminated. Ms. Nichols asked about the importance of offering IB at all grade levels, and asked for information about the number of Field students who attend Newton. Ms. Stanish asked if the IB program could be modified so momentum is not lost should future funding become available to restore the program.

Ms. Howell asked if students at other schools receive instruction that incorporates some of the IB principles. Ms. Bouwman responded that all schools incorporate many IB principles, including the service component, and the quality pedagogy that is inherent in IB. She noted that IB is a very structured, complex program.

Ms. Chandler asked for more information about the ESC operations and whether additional recommendations have been identified. Mr. Murphy responded that the potential additional reductions have not been fully analyzed by administration and further recommendations will likely not be prepared in time for discussion on January 21.

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Ms. Stanish asked about staff furlough days, and Ms. Hundley responded that the recommended three furlough days do not impact student contact time, but they do impact the teacher contract days.

Mr. Colwell stated that the district cannot protect teachers given the magnitude of the deficit. He said 25 percent of the cuts during the past two years affected only three percent of employees, mostly at ESC.

Mr. Colwell asked for clarification about the option of eliminating an item from the list of recommended reductions, and Mr. Owens stated something else would have to replace any item removed. Mr. Colwell asked where an additional \$1.5 million would come from should the deficit grow as projected. Mr. Owens responded that weighted staffing cannot be reduced any further.

Mr. Colwell asked what decisions administration needed to continue with the staffing process. Mr. Owens stated that direction is needed in the following areas: (1) weighted staffing formula; (2) reduction of literacy specialists and instructional coaches; and (3) what latitude schools have to reduce staff in specific curricular areas that do not impact graduation requirements.

Mr. Colwell asked about the number of teachers who will retire at the end of the school year. Mr. Owens said the deadline for teachers who plan to retire is January 15, and he will send a final list to the Board.

English Language Acquisition (ELA) Program Update

Ms. Lucinda Hundley, assistant superintendent of student support services, stated that the Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA) is given annually in January to measure the development of English language skills for students whose primary language is not English. She noted this is the fourth year this assessment has been administered. Ms. Hundley introduced David Patten, English Language Acquisition (ELA) program coordinator, who provided information about the CELA testing protocols. He noted that all Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Non-English Proficient (NEP) students, grades K–12 must be tested and the process is labor intensive.

Mr. Patten explained that CELA is an annual accountability tool for measuring student growth toward English language proficiency, and Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) were created within the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to measure the effectiveness of ELA programs funded through the federal Title III program. The AMAO has three targets established, and LPS met two of the three targets, missing the target of 60 percent of NEP and LEP students demonstrating growth on the CELA test by one percentage point. Mr. Patten noted that this is excellent data and the district can be very pleased with these results as some districts do not meet any of the three targets.

Ms. Chandler commented that the ELA program is one of the federally mandated programs that is managed by staff at ESC and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Ms. Bouwman remarked that in addition to the coordinator position held by Mr. Patten, the assessment office is involved in CELA testing as

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well. Mr. Patten commented that CELA testing is a smooth operation in LPS schools.

Mr. Colwell asked where the results of CELA testing are reported, and Mr. Patten said student results are provided to parents of these students.

Ms. Chandler said she appreciated the success of this program. Ms. Stanish commented that this is another data point that comprises a body of evidence for student achievement in LPS. Ms. Hundley expressed appreciation for the ELA staff members, and Mr. Murphy complimented staff members for their ongoing efforts to maintain accountability and focus.

Mr. Colwell thanked Ms. Hundley and Mr. Patten for their work with ELA students and the positive message about student achievement.

Future Agenda/Adjournment

Mr. Murphy distributed a draft agenda for the January 28, 2010, Board meeting. Discussion items include Strategic Budget Recommendations for the 2010–2011 School Year, and Power-Up Writing Grant Report.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Colwell
President

Sue Chandler
Secretary

ks (2/3/10)