

October 24, 2011

School Board Education Committee

Centennial Administration Building Board Room

Minutes

PRESENT:

Committee Members: Jane Schrader Lynch, Cynthia Mueller,
and Dr. Andrew Pollock
Board Members: Mark B. Miller, Michael Hartline
Staff: Dr. Cressman, Joyce Mundy
Community: Dr. Bart De Corte, Robert Shaffer, Jamie Dolt, Christine
Bailey Alf, Kevin Krafjack, Jim Boyle

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. There was an introduction of all in attendance.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of September 26, 2011 by Mrs. Mueller, seconded by Dr. Pollock and thus approved.

Bridges On-Line Program through BCIU

Mrs. Mundy reported information on the new Bridges Program. This program is an option for online courses for students taught through a consortium facilitated by the Quakertown School District and the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. The courses are taught by local educators which makes the rigor and quality of the program comparable to Bucks County schools which is unlike other online vendors. Advantages of this could include: blended models that include a hybrid schedule of online options and traditional classes, expanded offerings in areas such as World Language, online programs for current Cyber students in our district, homebound instruction, and options for our 21st Century Learning Lab. The discussion led to a question regarding CSSCA and a request for an update which will happen at an upcoming meeting. Dr. Pollock inquired about the expansion of the program compared to its inception. The high school administration will bring a report as requested.

November 8 – Professional Development Plan

Mrs. Mundy presented on the Professional Development options for November 8, 2011. She communicated that this will be a day that is differentiated for staff depending on the needs of various departments. The district has begun many curricular and technology initiatives that need further follow up and training for staff. The focus at the elementary level will be on Every Day Math, Reading Assessments, and Skyward for special education purposes. The middle level teachers will be working on curriculum mapping,

and the high school is focused on the Getting Results School Improvement Plans. All levels will work with teacher technology trainers to learn the functionality and software options in Promethean Boards and Activinspire software. Mr. Miller inquired about having trainings archived for future use, and Mrs. Mundy said that we would explore that where applicable.

As part of our discussion on Kindergarten as a professional development area, Dr. Pollock asked us to consider bringing Full Day Kindergarten back as a discussion item. The committee did note that there is no disagreement on the merit of this type of programming, but that it remains an item for the Finance Committee in terms of cost. Dr. Pollock asked us to put it on a future agenda so that it remains an item of consideration.

Class Size at the Elementary Level

Mrs. Mundy explained the process and upcoming dates for this Ad Hoc committee which will include all stakeholder groups for discussion on this important issue. The discussion group will look at research, current data on class size in area districts, and our current class size issues in Centennial. Dr. Pollock requested that we have class size numbers available, and Mrs. Mundy affirmed that it would be. Mrs. Mueller asked if parents would know how to get information to the committee. Mrs. Mundy introduced Dr. De Corte who is the parent organizer. He plans to have all regions represented by parents. Discussion opened up to the audience, and the following points were raised for consideration:

- Examine what the impact of inclusionary environments is on class size guidelines.
- Examine what the intention of these cuts would be. Is it to consider equity, is it budgetary, and how will consolidation impact this?
- Consider social outcomes and not just academic outcomes.
- Discussion of current class sizes that are problematic based on parent feedback.
- Has redistricting been considered? The answer was provided that we have, and those maps are available. The transportation director drew these lines with the understanding that we would allow students to remain with siblings.

Dr. De Corte expressed his appreciation for allowing parents to be part of the discussion. We all face the same challenge and have the same goals for children. We look forward to freely discussing all options.

Mr. Miller talked to the audience and asked them to come to the Shared PTO event Thursday, October 27 at 7:00 p.m. at William Tennent regarding the school funding issue and state funding decisions. He expressed the importance for all stakeholders to have a voice in this critical issue.

A parent asked what committee would handle the transition from Longstreth to McDonald. Dr. Cressman noted that in uniting the other schools, the district worked with the home and school organizations so that they could unite the two school communities. Additionally, the administrative team has already begun working on staffing so it is

settled in time for the completion. Dr. Cressman shared that the Operations Committee will be handling a lot of these needs.

Mr. Hartline made a suggestion to poll Willow Dale stakeholders since they have been through the process. The results could then assist in applying solutions to troubleshoot any issues that happened there.

A parent inquired whether there would be dramatic changes at Willow Dale next year in class size. Dr. Cressman clarified that there wouldn't be changes dramatically next year as the school populations have already merged.

The idea of the class size is an emotional, financial and difficult subject, but the Ad Hoc committees will help us to all work together and reach a shared decision.

Our next meeting will be November 28 at 7 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Mueller and seconded by Dr. Pollock. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.