



Centennial School District Education Committee of the Board

Meeting of December 8, 2008

Minutes

Attendance:

Board

Thomas Hezel**
Mark Miller
Michael Monaghan
Cynthia Mueller
Thomas Reinboth
Jane Schrader-Lynch*
Joseph Simpson**

Administrators

Michael Devitt
Jennifer Foight-Cressman
Sandy Homel
Susan Klyman
Eileen Poroszok
Robert Reed

Staff

Mary Corcoran
Deborah Freedman
Judy Hoffman
Cheryl Lyman

Community

Leigh Lieberman
Barbara Patrick
Robert Shaffer

* Chair

** Committee member

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Schrader Lynch called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

Mr. Simpson moved to approve the minutes from November 24, 2008. Mr. Hezel seconded the motion. The minutes were approved in a vote of 3-0.

WTHS CLASSROOMS FOR THE FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Mrs. Cheryl Lyman and Mr. Robert Reed were in attendance to provide implementation updates regarding the Classrooms for the Future (CFF) Grant and the Skyward Student Information System.

Mrs. Lyman and Mr. Reed demonstrated the Classroom Performance System clicker units through a PowerPoint game in which our Directors enjoyed participating. These clicker units are being used in the CFF classrooms and are extremely popular with the students who like the new level of playful engagement with course content.

Mrs. Lyman, CFF Coach, reported that twenty-eight teachers volunteered to become CFF teachers and take the required professional development course. Mrs. Lyman has been attending all required coach training sessions and has been providing professional

development through Professional Wednesdays, holding monthly meetings for participants, and attending department meetings.

Mr. Reed reported that there have been over 10,000 hits on the Skyward Family Access parent portal since it was activated in November. The Technology Department has fielded 89 e-mails and over 500 phone calls from parents requesting technical support. Mr. Reed commented that parent reception of the new system has been overwhelmingly positive.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch praised Mrs. Lyman and Mr. Reed for their efforts and thanked them for attending.

BCIT/GWYNEDD-MERCY COLLEGE DUAL ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

The Dual Enrollment Agreement was removed from the table. Mr. Hezel made a motion to move the dual enrollment agreement to the Board. The motion failed, 3-0.

Directors Schrader Lynch, Hezel, Monaghan and Simpson all indicated support for the district to pursue other university partnerships for our students.

REVIEW OF DATA FOR SIX-PERIOD DAY AT WILLIAM TENNENT HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. Eileen Poroszok and Dr. Michael Devitt were in attendance to present additional data regarding the 6-period day. Dr. Devitt suggested a hybrid or modified block schedule comprised of thirty-, sixty-, and ninety-minute periods. This schedule would provide shorter blocks of time for courses, such as test preparation, and longer blocks of time for courses such as art or science. Music courses would be scheduled at the end of the day to prevent other course conflicts. It was pointed out that during the next contract negotiations, Directors may wish to pursue a more flexible teaching day so that afternoon and evening courses might be offered.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch inquired how such a schedule would mesh with the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology (MBIT) schedule. Mr. Hezel was pleased with the possibilities of the new schedule and requested that Dr. Devitt develop mock schedules for students with various interests, including: music, athletics, MBIT, and various AP pathways. Dr. Foight-Cressman commented that families should be advised as early as elementary school on the various opportunities available at William Tennent High School so that they might begin planning. For example, guidance should be provided in middle school to ensure students have the appropriate background in mathematics to pursue advanced math and science courses at the high school.

UPPER MORELAND SCHOOL DISTRICT VISIT

Director Mark Miller, Mrs. Sandy Homel, Mrs. Susan Klyman and Dr. Jennifer Foight-Cressman visited Upper Moreland School District to study the way in which the District has configured their elementary schools. The group reported the following information.

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In Upper Moreland School District (UMSD), the building organization is structured as follows: grades K-2 (primary), grades 3-5 (intermediate), grades 6-8 (middle school), and grades 9-12 (high school). The district now provides full-day Kindergarten. The primary and intermediate buildings are connected. The elementary and middle school buildings are all on the same campus. Student enrollment is approximately 3,000 students, or roughly half ours in Centennial.

In UMSD, this configuration makes a great deal of sense. The community was very divided in terms of socio-economic "haves and have-nots". The Board and administration wanted to bring all the children under one roof to bring the community together. Now that the schools have been consolidated, children who start as Kindergartners now travel together as one cohort and graduate together thirteen years later.

UMSD has realized economic savings in terms of building maintenance and the cafeteria service. From the start, Directors and administration agreed not to decrease staffing, but rather to maintain appropriate adult-child ratios in all areas. For example, there are still two principals, separate offices with secretarial staffing, and two nurses.

Dr. Foight-Cressman commented that Springfield School District has developed a K-1 Literacy Center that was designed by Burt, Hill.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch suggested that Dr. James Capalupo, Superintendent of Springfield School District – Delaware County and, Dr. Robert Milrod, Superintendent of Upper Moreland School District, be invited to a future Education Committee Meeting.

Mr. Hezel made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Simpson. The motion passed, 3-0. Mrs. Schrader Lynch adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and wished everyone a very happy holiday season.