

Board Meeting Highlights

Regular Meeting February 17, 2010

At its regular meeting on February 17, 2010, the Board of Education of Pleasantdale School District 107...

- **Board of Education Student Recognition**

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who commended 7th grader Samantha Cohen for her community service through the Northwestern University Civic Weekend Program and her continued work collecting and delivering 51 presents to families at the homeless shelter. Board Member Mark Mirabile introduced the 8th grade conference championship basketball team. Board Member Beth Tegtmeier introduced the 7th grade Math Team that took fourth place in the Latin School Math Competition. Students present received a Certificate of Recognition from the Board.

- **Additional Items to be Placed on the Agenda**

Heard from Board Member Karen O'Halloran who requested the addition of an agenda item to discuss her as an OMA designee. Board President Leandra Sedlack asked if there was consensus to add this agenda item. The full Board consented to the additional agenda item.

- **Open Forum**

Heard from a parent of a current kindergartener who questioned if there was a limit to class size as she was concerned about the potential large class sizes for grade 1 next school year.

Heard from a parent of a current kindergartener who also expressed concern regarding the class size for next year's 1st grade. The parent inquired whether a fifth section would be added if necessary.

Heard from a parent who claimed she discussed the suggested Bright Beginnings program with past Board members regarding its creation and implementation. She suggested that the program be discontinued if it operated at a loss. She also stated she had not received a response to an email she forwarded to the Board.

- **Consent Agenda**

Unanimously voted to approve the closed session meeting minutes of January 20, 2010; payment of January payroll/February warrants; continuation of busing for St. John of the Cross students; electric payment option for parents; and February 2010 personnel report.

Reports and Discussions:

- **Review of Fee Based Programs**

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who presented to the Board the recommendation from the Finance Committee for raising Bright Beginnings and extended day Kindergarten fees by 3% per year beginning the 2011-12 school year. The Board had requested financial scenarios for increases from 2% to 6%. Board Member Karen O'Halloran felt that the costs for the program including district subsidies are becoming too high for the taxpayers and that the Board might want to consider not having the programs thereby reducing the tax rate and giving the money back to taxpayers. Board Member Mark Mirabile requested clarification from Board Member O'Halloran of her intent to potentially eliminate Bright Beginnings. Specifically, he asked whether her intent was to reduce the tax rate. Board Member O'Halloran responded her intent would be to reduce the tax rate and return money to taxpayers. Board President Leandra Sedlack reminded the Board that the posted agenda item pertained specifically to fees for the years ahead. A discussion of whether to continue the programs in the future was outside the listed agenda item. An action item regarding a 3% fee increase starting in 2011-12 will be placed on the March 2010 Board agenda.

- **Calendar Committee**

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who presented to the Board the preliminary calendar for the 2010-11 school year. The only notable change from the 2009-10 calendar is that the January institute day will be held on the Friday before the Martin Luther King holiday rather than the Tuesday following the holiday. The change was made to honor teacher requests to avoid a three day week following a two week winter break.

- *Math Remediation Status Report*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who discussed the math remediation program (Action Math) at the elementary school which was implemented in winter of 2009 in grades 1 to 4. ITBS data for current grade 4 and 5 participants indicates that the majority of Action Math students benefited from this remediation program as 3rd and 4th graders. One item that is being monitored at this time is transportation to the before school program and whether providing transportation is an issue that the Board might want to discuss in the future. The middle school Math Lab program was implemented in fall 2009 in grades 5-8. Students with math remedial needs attend math lab in lieu of Spanish. Board Member Patti Essig questioned the process from “graduating” from the Math Lab program. Superintendent Fredisdorf informed the Board that once students reach grade level proficiency, they are moved out of the program.
- *Preliminary Staffing Recommendation*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who presented the preliminary staffing recommendations for the 2010-11 school year at this time. The number of teachers and instructional aides were presented to remain the same for the next school year. Enrollment changes will be monitored closely and staffing levels may need to be adjusted accordingly. Revised demographic projections are expected from Dr. John Kasarda in the near future. The revised projections will be useful to estimate future class sizes.
- *Follow-up to Town Hall Meeting*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf regarding the February 3 Town Hall meeting. Positive comments were forwarded to Dr. Fredisdorf regarding the information that was presented at the meeting. Board Member Rick Rigley felt that the follow up meeting for the 7th graders was helpful to decipher the information that was presented during the Town Hall Meeting. Board Member Karen O’Halloran felt that the Promethean Board would be useful to incorporate into the parent meetings as well. Board President Leandra Sedlack requested that the Board revisit the topic of having a Town Hall meeting in June.
- *Governance and Planning (sec. 1)*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who reviewed with the Board the policy changes for section 1.13. There was only one policy with minor changes. The Board will vote to approve the policy change at the March Board meeting.
- *Job Share Proposal*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who recommended that the grade 1 job share arrangement be continued in 2010-11 pending sufficient parent interest. Feedback from parents with students currently enrolled in the job share classroom has been positive. The next step will be to hold parent informational meetings to assess whether there is sufficient interest to offer the option again in 2010-11. If interest exists, the Board will be asked to approve the extension of the job share proposal at a subsequent meeting.
- *Park District Before and After Program*
 Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who expressed to the Board that the program has been very beneficial to students and parents and gives his full recommendation that it be continued. The Park District had requested a doorbell by the gym and paid for installation. The Board will vote to approve the continuation of the program at the March Board meeting.
- *OMA Designee*
 Heard from Board President Leandra Sedlack who questioned Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf about the purpose of having additional OMA designees. Superintendent Fredisdorf suggested that, at a minimum, there should be an OMA designee who is an employee so that there would be accountability and someone available for questions. Dr. Fredisdorf informed the Board he had already take the required training and was officially an OMA designee. Board Member Karen O’Halloran expressed her interest in being a designee so that she could be more informed as to how the Open Meetings Act worked. Board Member Lisa Houk expressed interest as well. Board Member Mark Mirabile felt that adding the Open Meetings Act webinar training to the agenda for the Board Retreat may be beneficial.

- Next Agenda
Items for the March Board Meeting: Approve Governance and Planning (sec. 1) Board Policy; Adopt FY11 School Calendar; Re-employment of Non-tenure Personnel; and Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers; Financial Auditing Request for Proposals; Approve Pleasantdale Park District Before and After School Program at Elementary School; Approve Annual Board Report to the Community; Approve Fee Increases for Bright Beginnings and Extended Day Kindergarten; Appoint Board Negotiator; Appoint Additional OMA Designee; Discussion of Items for Future Agenda Items (Bright Beginnings/Extended Day Kindergarten Cost Analysis, Future Continuance of Bright Beginnings and Extended Day Kindergarten, and Review of Extended Day Curriculum); and Report on Costs of Action Math (written).
- Open Forum
Heard from a parent who addressed the enrollment for kindergarten and questioned how fees were calculated for students who did not begin at the beginning of the year. She also commented on the Action Math program stating that transportation is an issue on snow days since it was hard to get her daughter to school on those days. The parent also expressed that her daughter felt Action Math involves too much sitting and more engaging activities would make it more interesting for her. She also feels that the community should be asked about what they would like for Bright Beginnings and Kindergarten options.
- Closed Session
The Board met in closed session from 9:19 to 11:00 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations and appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of personnel.
- Action Items
There were no actions after closed session due to lack of motions.
- Adjournment
Adjourned the regular meeting at 11:02 p.m.

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be
Wednesday, March 17, 2010
7:00 p.m. in the
District 107 Administration Building**