

Board Meeting Highlights
Regular Meeting
June 15, 2011

At its regular meeting on June 15, 2011, the Board of Education of Pleasantdale School District 107...

Additional Items to Be Placed on the Agenda

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who provided additional copies for agenda item six.

Consent Agenda

Voted to approve the consent agenda as revised consisting of: regular meeting minutes of May 18, 2011; closed session meeting minutes of May 18, 2011; payment of May payroll/June warrants; prevailing wage resolution; voluntary school insurance; transfer of interest; payment of June 30 warrants; imprest fund custodian; designation of depositories for school district funds; June 2011 personnel report; and report card revisions.

Reports and Discussions:

June Testing Report

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who introduced Dr. John Wick to present a summary of the Gates Reading Test and EXPLORE test scores for the district. Dr. Wick stated that the district currently and in the past, has had very high Gates test scores. The grade 8 EXPLORE scores are the highest ever recorded. In addition, actual EXPLORE scores exceeded predicted scores on all subtests. The district scores consistently higher than the Lyons Township feeder schools average on the EXPLORE, thereby placing our students in more higher level classes. Dr. Wick commented on the Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS). He stated that it is not a reliable evaluation tool and supports the decision of the district to drop the use of the SSIS. Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf reviewed the DIBELS results for Kindergarten and Grade 1. The district had fewer "at risk" readers than last year in kindergarten. By the end of Grade 1, 2-4% of readers "at risk" meets the district goal of having no more than 5% of students in the "at risk" category. Learning.com Technology Skills Assessment scores for eighth graders exceeded technology proficiency standards. Ninety-five percent of grade 8 students met national technology proficiency standards as measured by the Learning.com assessment. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) evaluation data resulted in the following recommendations and conclusions: 1. The Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) has not rendered useful data for decision making over the three years it has been administered. The SEL evaluation committee recommends discontinuing the SSIS survey. 2. Behavioral data collected at the elementary school indicated level 1-3 offenses in grades 1-3 declined from 2009-10 to 2010-11. Behavioral infractions in grade 4 increased slightly. 3. The number of middle school level 2 and 3 behavioral offenses increased from 70 in 2009-10 to 85 in 2010-11. The increase in grade 8 level 2 offenses (10 to 37) accounts for the majority of the increase. The majority of these offenses related to disrespecting substitute teachers. Combined offenses in grades 5-7 actually declined from 2009-10 to 2010-11. The Board requested that data in the future be presented by cohort over time.

Mastery of Learning Guidelines

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who presented the Mastery of Learning Guidelines developed by the Curriculum Council with input from the Parent Advisory Committee, administrators, and all teachers. The purpose of the guidelines is to create appropriate uniformity on how students receive further attempts on assessments (e.g. tests and quizzes) in all classrooms. The Guidelines will be communicated to the parents and posted on the website. Clarification on the definition of "teacher" was discussed. It was the recommendation of the Board to change "teacher" to "grade level/subject area teams." The Board requested that the Curriculum Council review the recommendations coming from the Board at its August meeting regarding parent communication, who makes the request for a further attempt, how is the extra effort proven, consistency across the grades, and removing subjectivity.

Curriculum Assessments

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who reviewed specific examples of grade 8 chemistry and math exams and explained the traditional scoring using the 100 point scale. Assessments will continue to be based off a 100 point scale. The Board requested that the administration explore the capabilities of Skyward to show the breakdown of student scores on assessments regarding the different levels of questions. Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf will bring the Board's concerns regarding notifying parents about the breakdown of scores to the Curriculum Council for review. The Board will be given an update before the first grading period on the implementation of the common assessments. Communication regarding the assessments will be addressed in the Superintendent/Board's goals for 2011-12.

Kindergarten Reading Program

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who is recommending that the 30 minutes per week of Spanish the Kindergarten students receive be replaced with additional reading instruction. Principal Matt Vandercar explained the improvements that are in place for implementation for the 2011-12 school year for Kindergarten reading instruction. This item will be forwarded to the Board for approval at the July Board meeting.

District 2010-11 Goal Status

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who provided a status report on the conditions of satisfaction for the curriculum and communication district goals. The Board requested a copy of the survey results from the alumni survey.

Board of Education Protocols and Impact of Violations

Heard from Board President Leandra Sedlack reviewed Board policies 1:16 and 2:110 regarding protocols of the Board and contacting the press. Board member Scaletta-Nelson submitted a statement to LaGrange Patch identifying herself as a Pleasantdale Board member and criticizing the administration for being "arrogant" and non-responsive to requests to participate in an Honor Flight activity. Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf reviewed emails between administration and Honor Flight organizers showing that the district not only participated in Honor Flight but in fact responded immediately to any correspondence they had received. Board member Scaletta-Nelson apologized to the Board that it was not her intent to speak on behalf of the Board.

Action Item

Voted to approve updating of Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) 2011 norms for the 2011-12 school year; and curriculum assessments with periodic reviews to be determined on a regular basis and such basis to be determined.

Next Agenda

Items for the July Board Meeting: Establish Petty Cash Fund; Summer Academy Update (written); Hiring Status Report (written); Review/Approve Employee and Student/Parent Handbooks; Remedial Program Evaluation; Declassify Executive Session Minutes; District 2011-12 Goals; Approve Kindergarten Reading Program; and Review Personnel (section 5) and Student (section 7) Board Policies.

Open Forum

Heard from a parent who provided to the Board a packet questions which she referenced during the commentary. What is the status of or implementation plan for Standards Based Grading (SBG) in our district? Did the School Board review the Parent Survey feedback on SBG? What did teachers think of the SBG pilot? What is the purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)? If Pleasantdale moves forward on SBG, how will success be defined and measured?

Heard from a parent who expressed gratitude for additional reading specialist time in Kindergarten. She asked whether the enrollment of the Bright Beginnings and extended day kindergarten increased, decreased or stayed the same since the fee increase and if there were any curriculum changes. She personally feels that from what she hears other preschools are doing more than Pleasantdale. She inquired if there is information on the website pertaining to standardized tests administered by the district. She feels that the school is wonderful but there is always room for improvement and that communication should be improved.

Closed Session

The Board met in closed session from 10:10 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. to discuss appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of personnel; contract negotiations; and Superintendent performance evaluation/compensation.

Action Item

Unanimously voted to approve the revisions of the salary matrix for initial placement of new teachers to replace Appendix "A" of the Professional Agreement.

Adjournment

Adjourned the regular meeting at 1:02 a.m. (June 16, 2011).

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be
Wednesday, July 20, 2011
7:00 p.m. in the
District 107 Administration Building