

Board Meeting Highlights

**Regular Meeting
September 20, 2006**

At its regular meeting on September 20, 2006, the Board of Education of Pleasantdale School District 107...

- **Budget Hearing**
Held a budget hearing on the 2006-07 school district budget (7:01-7:13 p.m.). Business Manager Catherine Chang outlined expenditures and revenues, and answered questions posed by the Board. The Board then acted unanimously to approve amendments to the tentative budget and the FY07 school district budget as presented.
- **Consent Agenda**
Unanimously approved the consent agenda consisting of the regular meeting minutes of July 12, 2006; regular meeting and closed session minutes of August 16, 2006; payment of August payroll and September warrants; and the FY07 Application for Recognition of Schools.

Reports and Discussions:

- **Middle School Construction Update**
Kyle Merrill of Gilbane provided the Board with a written report on the status of the middle school construction project. Within the next few weeks, areas to be addressed are underground site utility work, the gym foundation followed by preparation for the classroom additions. The new driveway and parking lot sub-base and grading will be completed for use as a staging area for the new gym. Immediately upon completion of asbestos abatement (beginning September 22), the 1929 building interior demolition work will begin.
- **Timekeeper**
Board member Mark Mirabile volunteered to be the timekeeper as a means to keep the Board on task and adhere to the time allotments listed on the agenda for discussion items.
- **Superintendent/Board of Education Goals**
Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf addressed the two versions of Superintendent/Board of Education Goals contained in the Board packet: (the revised goals containing Board input from the August 16, 2006 Board meeting and the new version submitted by Board President Sandra Hannan). Specifically, Dr. Fredisdorf made the following points:
 - expressed appreciation for the work of various Board members in advancing new ideas
 - described many of the ideas as cutting edge, very exciting, but untried in education
 - endorsed a methodical approach to investigating the ideas, stating that we need to do a few things well, rather than many things poorly
 - cautioned against experimenting with tax dollars on ideas that are untested in the field of education (e.g. statistical model, cost accounting in cost centers). Unsure of benefit gained versus cost in terms of staff time, consultant fees, etc.
 - diverted time and effort would take away from top priority items
 - a. improving student achievement per academic targets
 - b. completing the middle school project on time
 - c. completing Board policy revisions
 - d. Board of Education self-assessment

- expressed hope that it wasn't the intent to adopt all of these ideas for implementation this school year because it would divert time and financial resources from the educational program

Dr. Fredisdorf said that when draft goals were submitted for discussion at the August meeting, it was his firm belief that these were the most powerful goals to advance the district's mission; that the goals were agreed to by Ms. Hannan; that he addressed the concerns articulated by Board members; and, that the amount of work could be completed in a year's time. He requested that all Board members list priorities, concerns, and ideas on how to move forward with an appropriate decision-making process. To bring closure to 2006-07 Superintendent/Board goals, he suggested the following:

- develop a rubric with criteria used to assess how each Superintendent and Board goal will contribute to the mission and objectives
- determine how many goals can be managed effectively and completed in one year
- determine how the Board will conduct an evaluation of its own functioning
- clarify measurement questions to the most essential the Board needs to have addressed
- develop a final recommendation for the October Board meeting

As a starting point, Dr. Fredisdorf requested the Board approve the Rating Criteria for Academic Testing at the September meeting.

Ms. Hannan expressed that she would have difficulty adopting the Rating Criteria until further research on the criteria can be conducted.

Board Member Patti Essig expressed concern that the most recent draft of goals was advanced as being from "the Board" when, in fact, they reflected conversations of some Board members. She expressed disappointment in the tone of the correspondence toward the superintendent and the most recent version, stating that it did not represent her views as she had no input into the process.

Ms. Hannan suggested that the Superintendent's review process be modified because the process utilized this year did not allow the full Board an opportunity to provide input in the development of goals for the upcoming school year.

The Board further discussed whether it would be best to form a working committee to refine goals or to hold a special meeting of the entire Board. A poll of Board members resulted in a consensus to accomplish this task as a full Board at a special Board meeting. The use of a facilitator was suggested to assist the Board in developing rubrics. Mark Fredisdorf will contact Larry Huggins to get available date(s) to accomplish this task. The special meeting will most likely be scheduled late in the afternoon or very early evening.

■ Protocols

The Board began a review of its protocols adopted in April 2004 using the following criteria:

- Do all Board members share the same understanding of each protocol?
- Do all Board members agree that each protocol remains essential for optimum Board functioning?

Protocols 1-7 were reviewed and protocol #3 was deleted. At its October meeting, the Board will review protocols 8-10. In addition, the following points will also be addressed:

1. Are there other protocols that would further enhance the effectiveness of the Board?
2. What processes will the Board use to assure that each protocol is followed?

▪ Proposed Board Officer Roles Policy

Board Member Leandra Sedlack initiated discussion of this item saying that the listed Board secretary duties were delegated to the recording secretary. She wanted to make sure that policy indicated the Board secretary could be paid for his/her services and the recording secretary could be paid for performing the duties delegated by the Board secretary as has been our practice.

In response to a suggestion that officer duties be more specifically described in Board policy, Board Member Barbara Lamb suggested that additional duties not be put in writing so that future Boards of Education will have the flexibility to assign duties in ways that meet their specific needs and abilities.

Ms. Hannan stated her thoughts that continuity within Board officer positions could be beneficial to the effectiveness of the Board of Education. She advanced the idea of serving staggered terms so that all Board officers would not be new to their positions.

▪ Staff Compensation and Recognition

Ms. Hannan initiated discussion of the new TRS laws that have affected the Board's ability to exercise the merit pay clause of the negotiated contract with the Teachers' Association. Ms. Hannan suggested this was a good time to evaluate merit pay. Dr. Fredisdorf said a new TRS-related bill is waiting the Governor's signature and thought the Board's review should wait until the bill is signed into law. Dr. Fredisdorf asked that the Educate and Motivate Committee (from Strategic Plan), submit alternate staff motivation ideas to the Board for consideration. Retirement bonuses and merit pay will be placed on the January 2007 agenda for Board discussion.

▪ Board Input to Core Planning Team

Superintendent Fredisdorf solicited Board input for the Core Planning Team's annual meeting in October. Ideas advanced were:

1. Summarizing and publishing a set of minimum criteria to go with each objective.
2. Review measurements and advance its opinion of the measurements.
3. Realigning report cards/grading system to correlate to the district's mission and objectives.
4. Addressing community culture and its affect on the accomplishment of the district's mission.
5. Scrutinizing the home portion of the SEL program as a method to leverage community culture.
6. Shift in demographics of the district – notable increase in lower income residents – do we need to be proactive?
7. Considering whether changing demographics may have an impact on achievement of the mission.
8. Are strategic objective measurements still relevant for attaining 2008 strategic goals?

The Board will have additional time to advance items for consideration by the Core Planning Team.

▪ Actions

- Unanimously approved the MACC Environmental bid of \$88,920 for asbestos abatement in the 1929 building.
- Approved the Rating Criteria for Academic Learning 2006-07 as presented.
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▪ Next Agenda

Construction update (written report) technology plan overview; elementary/middle school improvement plans; approval of Superintendent/Board of Education goals; review of school board policies; continuation of protocols discussion

- Closed Session

Met in closed session (9:47-11:20 p.m.) to consider information regarding (1) appointment, employment or dismissal of personnel, (2) Superintendent's evaluation, and (3) student discipline.

Adjournment

Adjourned the regular meeting at 11:21 p.m.

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be
Wednesday, October 18, 2006
7:00 p.m. in the Pleasantdale Middle School Library**