

BOARD OF EDUCATION
The School District of Independence

The Board of Education met in regular session Tuesday, March 9, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. in the Large Classroom at George Caleb Bingham Middle School, 1716 South Speck Road, Independence, Missouri.

Members Present: Mr. Blake Roberson, President
 Mr. Ken Johnston, Vice President
 Mrs. Ann Franklin, Treasurer
 Mrs. Susan Jones, Director
 Mrs. Jana Waits, Director
 Mr. Ira Anders, Director
 Dr. Matt Mallinson, Director

Also Present: Dr. Jim Hinson, Superintendent
 Mr. Dred Scott, Mr. Dale Herl, Ms. Sandi Kiehne, Mr. Jason Dial,
 Dr. Gary Hogue, Ms. Cindy Konomos, Dr. Gloria Stephenson,
 Mrs. Nancy Lewis, Mr. Bob Robinson, Mrs. Molly Johnston,
 INEA, PTA, Ms. Kelly Evenson of *The Examiner*, interested
 patrons and staff, and Mrs. Annette Miller.

A moment of silence was observed for children that have been victims of child abuse or neglect.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Blake Roberson, and minutes of the meeting were recorded by the secretary, Mrs. Annette Miller. Mr. Roberson welcomed students from the Truman High School Leadership Class that were in attendance.

Jana Waits made the motion to approve the March 9, 2010 Agenda and all items as presented. The motion was seconded by Matt Mallinson and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Mr. Roberson stated that:

A period of time not to exceed thirty (30) minutes has been allotted to residents of the District and staff at the beginning of the meeting for comments.

The Board is very interested in citizen viewpoints and issues, however, some items are not appropriately addressed in an open session of the Board. Furthermore, some items cannot be considered by the Board in making its decisions. For example, in the case of a tenured teacher termination, the Board must base its decision exclusively upon the evidence presented at a hearing held pursuant to Board policy and law. The Board cannot, by law, consider comments from citizens or staff in making its decision to terminate, or not to terminate, a teacher.

If you wish to make comments regarding the hiring, firing, disciplining or evaluation of individual employees, those comments should be made in writing. Comments about students are not permitted due to privacy rights.

Remarks are limited to five minutes and to one appearance, thus allowing a maximum number of participants in the allotted time period in which citizens are to speak to issues.

Questions directed to the Board will not be answered immediately. All questions will be responded to by an appropriate person within a reasonable period of time.

Mr. Roberson asked if any staff member or patron would like to address the Board of Education.

Michelle Young, 20102 E. 13th Street South, thanked the Board of Education for allowing her to speak this evening. Ms. Young said she was shocked to learn of the Board of Education's decision to terminate a teacher. She said the student was not disciplined for her actions and that none of the school officials knew of the student's past issues. The student was not held accountable. Ms. Young said the teacher was held in high esteem by everyone. She claimed that this action was leaving the door open for students to attack teachers and that it set a new precedent for students to act out in violence. She said the District and Board of Education chose not to set things straight. Ms. Young said the Board of Education does not represent her or the citizens of Independence. She then recognized the terminated teacher by directly speaking to him. She said that because of him, he had changed her life for the better.

He had given the best of everything he had to offer to his students. She wished him the best of luck in everything he plans to do.

Cindy Dow, 3517 Stayton Avenue and 701 Westwood Drive, said she was very saddened when she learned that the Board of Education had decided to fire a teacher that had given over 30 years to this School District. She expressed how she admired this teacher and that she was sad that her children and she had graduated from William Chrisman High School. She stated that this School Board is letting a teacher down and wanted to know where they were when he was attending many of the school and district activities. She said this teacher was found not guilty in a court of law and that this same student had accused a policeman of abuse. It was hard for her to understand how someone could mess up this teacher's life forever and that she would not want that on her conscience. She said that she had trusted the Board to make the right decision for her and her children. She also said that she would pray for the student and for the Board of Education. She said that many people still believe and admire this teacher. She said the Board of Education had made a grave mistake.

Bill Wilcox, 1607 N. Elsea Smith Road, spoke regarding a teacher's termination. He said the DFS charges had give the Independence School District something to act upon. He said that people need to stop giving into the students. He said when he was in school; he spent more time trying to leave than stay but that this teacher's class was one he loved. He said this decision makes his heart hurt and that it was heart wrenching. He asked God to bless this teacher and his family and that they should continue to fight to overturn the Board of Education's decision.

Mr. Sadler, 131 E. Ruby, asked the Board of Education if they were listening now to what was being said. He said it is a difficult task to protect the students but want to know who was supporting the teachers. He addressed the teacher and stated that people like him were standing behind him (including former students who are now doctors, lawyers, etc.). He said that it would turn the lights out in the community if the District gets rid of this teacher.

Mike Steinmeyer, 12222 Silver Lane, said he moved back from Los Angeles three weeks ago. He said the he was taught morals and principles by this teacher. He wondered if the District and Board of Education are prepared to make a decision tonight that would hinder the career/profession of this teacher. He said that teachers don't get rich in this job and that he has seen schools out of control. He commented that this breaks his heart. He said that Board members ran for the Board because they wanted to make a difference. He also said that he will give every effort and energy for people running against you so they will win. He said don't let this one moment make the difference.

Lanny Coil, 712 Westwood Drive, graduated from William Chrisman High School in 1976. Mr. Coil said that this teacher reaches students that others cannot reach. He said he is a true ethics teacher as well as great social studies teacher. He said the District should hire this teacher to teach the other teachers.

Terry Hill, 208 S. Hardy Avenue, graduated from William Chrisman High School in May, 2009. He asked what example is this suppose to put on graduated students or students that will be graduating from William Chrisman High School. He said this teacher is seriously one of the best men in Independence. He said that he is one of the most amazing people even more so than his dad.

A lady stood up and said that she had driven four hours to attend this meeting to give support to the teacher.

Dr. Hinson explained that the Consent Agenda contained several items. Mr. Herl stated that the Bills for March are significantly higher than usual as approximately \$22 million is directly from the 2009 Bond issue and has been used to pay off a number of lease purchase agreements: 2006 - \$6.2 million for the ESG contract; 2008 - \$4.1 million to Commerce Bank for the western Independence schools upgrades; and 2009 - \$12.5 million for start-up costs for the western Independence schools acquisition. The Consent Agenda Items 5., 6., 7., and 8. are all bids for renovation projects that are part of the Bond Issue improvements.

Jana Waits made the motion to approve the March 9, 2010 Consent Agenda as printed.

Minutes – February 9 and 16, 2010.

Approval of March 9, 2010 List of Bills totaling \$36,355,502.84

Personnel Recommendation #16.

- A. Request to Assume Retirement Status Effective End of the 2009-2010 School Year.
 1. Laura Vernon, YouthFriends Coordinator
- B. Resignation of Certificated Staff Effective End of the 2009-2010 School Year.
 1. Larry Schupp, Math/William Chrisman High School
 2. Ninah Butler, Science/Truman High School
 3. Jessica Maglinger, Elementary/Sycamore Hills Elementary School.
- C. Request for Leave of Absence for the 2010-2011 School Year.
 1. Rebecca Wilkerson, Kindergarten/Glendale Elementary School.
- D. Request to Extend Leave of Absence for the 2010-2011 School Year.
 1. James Myrick, Elementary
4. Approval to Accept the Bid from Multiple Services for a Mailing Machine at Central Office – This machine is used for all District mailings (student schedules, report cards, parent letters, invoices, etc.)
5. Approval to Accept the Bid for Restroom Renovations at Jim Bridger Middle School – This is part of the Bond Issue work that is being scheduled.
6. Approval to Accept the Bid for Restroom Renovations at Randall Elementary School – This is part of the Bond Issue work that is being scheduled.
7. Approval to Accept the Bid for Restroom Floor Tile at Korte Elementary, Randall Elementary, and Jim Bridger Middle School – This is part of the Bond Issue work that is being scheduled.
8. Approval to Accept the Bid for Kitchen Renovations at Christian Ott Elementary School – This is part of the Bond Issue work that is being scheduled.

The motion was seconded by Ann Franklin and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Hinson reported that the State Legislators are on break at this time. He sees two main legislative items: tax credits and open enrollment. The District sets enrollment numbers at each grade level at each school as part of the staffing plans. The proposed legislation would allow students from other districts to attend if the district's projected enrollment doesn't meet the established numbers. It would be up to MSHSAA to determine if these students could participate in activities - not just sports. The administration will follow these carefully. He is still forwarding the Fiscal Notes to the Board for their review and information. He said that some of the requests are very arbitrary based on the cost issue to the District. He would oppose proposed legislation bills unless they would benefit the District.

Dr. Hinson stated that the District needed to make up six inclement weather days which would make the last student attendance day June 2 and the last teacher attendance day would be June 3. He also explained that Christian Ott Elementary and William Chrisman High School had missed school on January 14 due to a City water main break. This day will need to be made up on Friday, April 30th for students and staff at these two schools.

Ken Johnston made the motion that the Board of Education approves adjusting the 2009-2010 School Calendar to add six days at the end of the school year, due to inclement weather, making June 2nd the last student attendance date and June 3rd the last teacher attendance date. The Board of Education also approves scheduling Friday, April 30, as an attendance day for students and staff at Christian Ott Elementary School and William Chrisman High School, as the make-up day from school being cancelled on January 14th. The motion was seconded by Jana Waits and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Hinson discussed the Adoption of Codes Regarding Building Issues. He said these bid specifications would greatly assist the District in establishing codes and contractor qualifications for renovation, remodeling, and construction projects. This proposal mirrors what the City of Independence uses successfully.

Ira Anders made the motion, second by Ann Franklin, that the Board of Education approves adopting the codes for entering into contracts and contractor qualifications as part of the School District's bid specifications. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

The School District of Independence Foundation, Inc. has reviewed their current By-Laws and is recommending changes that need to be made. The Board of Education needs to approve any By-Laws changes of The School District of Independence Foundation, Inc.

Ken Johnston made the motion that the Board of Education approves the recommended changes to the By-Laws for The School District of Independence Foundation, Inc. as presented. Susan Jones seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board of Education. (Pages 10348-10356)

Dr. Hinson discussed the proposal of an Early Retirement/Separation Agreement for certificated staff. He said that the last one the District offered was seven years ago. Due to decreasing revenue for next year, this proposal would encourage veteran employees to take early retirement. The District needs to eliminate expenditures by millions of dollars. This incentive would provide additional financial consideration to those certificated employees eligible. The District staff was surveyed several weeks ago regarding this incentive proposal. The administration has talked with INEA and the Uni-serve Director. The proposal is for certificated teachers to receive 50% of their teaching contract over a five year period of time. This amount would vary for each employee and they would have the option of using the money for health insurance, TSA, or cash over the five years. This is 50% more than INEA had proposed as their amount was \$25,000. Under this proposal, unused sick leave days would be reimbursed at the amount of \$100 per day. This may be received in a cash allocation or a payment schedule over the five years. Financial advisors will be available to help staff decide their best investment avenue. Most of the positions that are vacated by these staff members will not be filled, which will cause some restructuring. The administration would like to not have any non-renewals of certificated due to financial issues. This information, if approved by the Board of Education, will be sent out to all certificated employees in PSRS by video and e-mail immediately.

Matt Mallinson made the motion that the Board of Education approves the Resolution Approving Early Separation Incentive Plan and Appointing Authorized Agent for Execution of Early Separation Agreements as presented. The motion was seconded by Ira Anders and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Mr. Robinson shared information about upcoming Bond Issue projects. He stated: Thomas Hart Benton bids will be in with the evaluation and can be presented at the next Board meeting for approval; Truman High School's project bid will be in by the end of April; the design work at Van Horn is almost finished and the bid should be ready the first of April to bring to the Board; Blackburn's design work on the gym project has been completed; bids for Luff will be back by the 15th of April; and William Chrisman High School's design work is also finished and bids will be due the end of April. He said the District is working with the City and Blue River Community College on the access to the new elementary school in the east and should be ready in May. The District is still working on a location for the new elementary school in the west and currently is evaluating a possible second site.

Dr. Hinson shared information on the District's budget and trying to project revenues for this year and also next year. He said that he is trying to follow what is happening in public education and that the District is dealing with a significant loss of revenue. He explained that Proposition C, state sales tax, is distributed on a per pupil basis to school districts and that revenue continues to decrease. The District could be down \$1 million in Prop C compared to State's receipts one year ago. The District estimated a loss of approximately \$6 million in Assessed Valuation revenue due to the County's reassessment last year. The District is projecting that the Assessed Valuation will stay flat for this coming year as it is not a reassessment year. The District is down \$3.6 million from a year ago with Assessed Valuation. Utilities will cost the District approximately \$500,000. Two other issues that the District knows about and has to consider as part of the budget preparation are what the employees' health insurance premiums will cost for next year and the percentage goes up by .5 percent for PSRS and PEERS (retirement system) for next year and this will cost the School District about 1/2 million dollars. The District has already been told that we will have a 2% reduction in funding from the Foundation Formula. We do not know if this is the only reduction or if there will be more. We have heard that additional cuts possibly could be somewhere between 4% and 8% for next year. The District does not anticipate any new revenue at the Federal level. The financial news is very bleak. The administration has to determine how to have a balanced budget with this information and the projections of cuts in revenue. The District is hoping that the retirement incentive will help with reducing expenditures. Two items that will help the District get a lot closer on cutting expenditures and maybe attain the goal of our needed reductions are: the retirement incentive and the move from two middle school planning periods to one planning period. Dr. Hinson said this is not the ideal situation, but it will create a significant financial impact. April 2nd is the deadline when employees need to notify the Human Resources Department of their retirement decision. The District will need to decide which positions have to be posted and what positions can remain open.

Those positions will be posted in the District for voluntary transfer requests first and then determine if others could fill those positions. The goal is not to have non-renewals due to financial reasons. The administration will have to make these decisions on April 13, so staff can be notified by April 15 that they have a job for next year. This may involve some restructuring of staff positions.

There being no further information to come before the Board, Matt Mallinson made the motion, second by Ken Johnston, to adjourn the meeting and go into executive session for legal, real estate, students, and personnel issues at 7:35 p.m. The motion was approved as follows:

Ayes: Blake Roberson
Ken Johnston
Ann Franklin
Susan Jones
Jana Waits
Ira Anders
Matt Mallinson

Absent:

Secretary

President

BOARD OF EDUCATION
The School District of Independence

The Board of Education met in special session Friday, April 2, 2010, at 8:00 a.m. in the Large Conference Room at Central Office, 3225 South Noland Road, Independence, Missouri.

Members Present: Mr. Blake Roberson, President
Mr. Ken Johnston, Vice President
Mrs. Ann Franklin, Treasurer
Mrs. Jana Waits, Director
Mr. Ira Anders, Director
Dr. Matt Mallinson, Director

Member Absent: Mrs. Susan Jones, Director

Also Present: Dr. Jim Hinson, Superintendent
Mr. Dred Scott, Mr. Dale Herl, Dr. Gary Hogue, Mr. Jason Dial,
Mr. Bob Robinson, Mrs. Molly Johnson, and Mrs. Annette Miller.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Blake Roberson, and minutes of the meeting were recorded by the secretary, Mrs. Annette Miller.

Jana Waits made the motion to approve the April 2, 2010 Agenda and all items as presented. The motion was seconded by Ken Johnston and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Hinson and Mr. Robinson explained that the playground installation at Blackburn Elementary School for the Early Childhood Center would be provided through Head Start Program funds. The District's bid specifications were in compliance with Federal requirements for this project.

Matt Mallinson made the motion, second by Ann Franklin, that the Board of Education approves acceptance of the bid from Constructive Playthings for playground equipment, installation, and fall zone at Blackburn Elementary School for a cost of \$22,671.00 to be purchased with Head Start grant funding. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

The Administration is recommending amending the Early Separation Incentive Plan (ESIP) based on teachers involved with summer school and other instructional classes. As their retirement would not take effect until July 30, the Separation Plan will be amended to stipulate that. Also, all employees participating in the Plan will be paid for all accumulated sick leave, regardless of the caps included in Board Regulation 4320, at the rate of \$100 per day for each day of unused sick leave accumulated as of the date of retirement.

The motion was made by Ira Anders that the Board of Education approves the amendment to the Early Separation Incentive Plan (ESIP) for 2010 as presented. The motion was seconded by Jana Waits and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

As work progresses at the Independence Regional site, it is necessary to approve bids for the Data Center Renovation and Abatement Work prior to Phase 3 construction work. This work will allow the District to move the Data Center from the Palmer building to the IREC location. The District's work timeline will need to be coordinated with the City in conjunction with the installation of the fiber ring.

A motion was made by Ken Johnston, second by Jana Waits, that the Board of Education approves acceptance of the bids for work at the Data Center; abatement work at a cost of \$420,000.00 from Major Abatement; and renovation work at a cost of \$443,121.00 prior to Phase 3 construction at IREC. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

The Board discussed the Dress Code issue. Mr. Anders stated that he had supported declining INEA's grievance relative to dress code for certificated staff. He stated that something needs to be sent to principals clarifying the Board's position that principals are to meet with their leadership team or building staff and decide this issue prior to their building's handbook being printed for 2011. He said that he acknowledges that building principals have specific responsibilities as the building leader but that this issue is something that staff can be involved in the decision making process.

Mr. Anders made the motion that the superintendent shall give a written notice to all building administrators directing them to have a meeting with their building leadership committee or with their teaching staff for the purpose of collaboratively developing any building teacher dress codes for the 2010-2011 school year and before being included in their 2010-2011 building teacher handbooks. The motion as seconded by Ann Franklin.

Dr. Hinson asked if this might be a negotiation issue as part of the working condition for teachers. Dred Scott stated that he knows some of the principals have already met with the building leadership team or staff on this issue. He also said that if principals are not doing this in an open collaborative process that the Administration needs to know. Mr. Roberson said that this is getting into micro-managing and he knows this is not what the Board intends, and said this would take it out of Dr. Hinson's and Mr. Scott's realm. He does think that they need to follow up to see how many principals have already met and when other principals' meetings are scheduled. Dr. Hinson said that he would be glad to send out a memo to the building principals/administrators listing his expectations (written protocol for each of buildings 2010-2011 handbooks) and a time frame in which the meetings should be held. He will send it to the Board on Monday for their review.

Based on the Superintendent's response, Mr. Anders withdrew his motion and Mrs. Franklin withdrew her second. It was the consensus of the Board that the Superintendent will send a memo to the principals regarding meetings they are to conduct with their staff/leadership team to discuss the dress code issue.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board of Education, Ken Johnston made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 a.m. The motion was seconded by Ira Anders and approved as follows:

Ayes: Blake Roberson
Ken Johnston
Ann Franklin
Jana Waits
Ira Anders
Matt Mallinson

Absent: Susan Jones

Secretary

President