

BOARD OF EDUCATION
The School District of Independence

The Board of Education met in a Work Session Tuesday, March 3, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. at Sugar Creek Elementary School in the Gymnasium, 11424 Gill, Sugar Creek, Missouri.

Members Present: Mr. Blake Roberson, President
Mr. Ken Johnston, Vice President
Mrs. Susan Jones, Director
Mrs. Jana Waits, Director
Mr. Ira Anders, Director

Member Absent: Mrs. Ann Franklin, Treasurer

Also Present: Dr. Jim Hinson, Superintendent
Dr. Henry Russell, Dr. Brian Mitchell, Ms. Sandi Kiehne, Mr. Dred Scott, Mrs. Nancy Lewis, Mrs. Kelly Evenson of *The Examiner*, interested patrons and staff, and Mrs. Annette Miller.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Blake Roberson, who stated the purpose of the work session was to hear presentations on District programs.

Dr. Hinson introduced Dr. Sharon Byrd, principal of Sugar Creek Elementary School. Dr. Byrd welcomed everyone and expressed her appreciation for hosting the Board of Education's Work Session. This is her tenth year as principal of Sugar Creek Elementary School.

Mr. Stan Salva, Mayor of Sugar Creek, welcomed everyone to the City of Sugar Creek. He stated how proud the city and community are that their schools are now part of the Independence School District. Mayor Salva said this is truly making a difference for the Sugar Creek community.

Dr. Hinson shared that he was notified by the City of Sugar Creek Administration, that if they were notified of what streets were on the school bus routes, then those streets would be given first priority for snow removal during inclement weather. This was the first time that a City has offered these services to the School District.

Mr. Roberson announced that the William Chrisman Boys Basketball team and the Truman High School Girls Basketball team would be playing in the sectionals at St. Joseph on Wednesday evening, March 4.

Dr. Hinson introduced Jennifer Walker, Director, and Erica Smith, Assistant Director of Youth Development and Education. Jennifer stated that this was the sixth year for the program and she reviewed the Program's Goals. She explained the two levels of services: elementary is Kids Safari; and middle school is Latitudes. Erica handles the day-to-day operations and monitors the program budget. They work with each principal regarding specific needs at the individual schools. The 21CCLC Program links before & after school programs that have defined intentions (not babysitting) for the programs. Jennifer reviewed student achievement measurements and how comparative data is utilized to monitor the success of well-balanced programs. There are numerous clubs for K-8 students. She discussed how Parent Ratings and Student Ratings are used. She also highlighted two programs the District is partnering with Dr. David Katz, Director of Yale University's Prevention Research Center: Nutrition Detectives- teaches 5 simple nutrition rules (students and families learn to make better food choices) and is taught by Physical Education teachers as part of the health curriculum; and ABC for Fitness that allows for 30 minutes of additional aerobic exercise in the students' school day. Initial evaluation results indicate a 33% reduction in the number of children receiving medication for ADHD and a 17% decrease in asthma issues. They are currently working on program funding through applying for another grant (three years). A partnership is also being developed with the Hy-Vee Stores that will support the Nutrition Detectives program.

Sandi Kiehne, Assistant Superintendent, shared information on how Title I funding focuses on interventions to address specific areas of need at each participating school. Schools qualify for Title I funds/programs based on their free/reduced lunch count which has to be higher than 40% to receive assistance. Fastt Math is a new and intense intervention that works to build students' math skills. Future plans include refining implementation of AIMs Web, Fastt Math and additional interventions, as well as evaluate the need for additional interventions to support student progress. Dr. Hinson stated that all of

the elementary schools have 40% or higher free/reduced lunch percentages with the exception of Blackburn with approximately 33%, therefore, Blackburn is not eligible for Title I services. Fairmount Elementary School averages between 80-90%.

Dr. Hinson addressed that the Stimulus Package specifies funds for Title I. He said that States will take some of the money before it comes to school districts and that none of the restrictions are being changed for Title I requirements. We still do not know how much or when money will come to the District, it could possibly be \$1.2 million. He said to remember that it can only be spent at schools that qualify at the 40% or higher free/reduced lunch percentage.

Title IIA Program is directed at increasing student achievement through improving teacher and principal effectiveness with high quality professional development and evaluating/decreasing class sizes in grades K-3.

Title III Program focuses on English Language Learners (ELL). DESE provides the guidelines for ELL students' qualifications and the District submits the number of ELL students each October. The program works with the students to improve their English proficiency so that they can achieve academically and meet the Show-Me Standards. These students are also required to take the MAP test and the LAS Links Assessment. Students in the country less than one year do not take the communication arts test but do take the math and science tests (MAP). DESE will allow interpreters to read the tests this year, but interpreters are extremely expensive and the tests are extremely long so the District is working through these issues. Currently, there are 368 students which includes high school students. The District has discussed partnering with organizations/groups to provide assistance as interpreters (speaking foreign languages). Dr. Hinson said that ELL is a subgroup on NCLB and that the District has to meet proficiency or higher on the tests that this subgroup takes in order to meet AYP. Students may not be fluent in English but they have to be tested as part of this subgroup. Ms. Kiehne explained that some children are confused with trying to understanding the different languages and meanings of words. The District receives \$157,000 to fund these services.

Title IVA Program (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act) supports programs that prevent violence in and around schools and the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. This year the District has implemented the Character*plus* initiative as a PreK-12 character education program and is using Title IVA funds for this purpose. Dr. Hinson stated that the District is required to report all incidents related to illegal use of drug or alcohol issues to the State.

Dr. Hinson highlighted the District's "Go Green" recycling program that was launched on Monday, March 2. Green bags including information about the program were provided for each of the Board members. All funds raised through the recycling program will go to each school. Monthly tracking reports will be shared with the Board regarding the programs progress. The District is working to communicate the "Go Green" program to the community in order to gain their support.

There being no further information to bring before the Board of Education, a motion was made by Ken Johnston, second by Susan Jones, to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. The motion was approved as follows:

Ayes: Blake Roberson
Ken Johnston
Susan Jones
Jana Waits
Ira Anders

Absent: Ann Franklin

Secretary

President