



PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 4, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School

PRESENT: Dan Egan, Vice President
Ginnie Farrell, Secretary
Sue Adler
Kenneth M. Bruce
Anthony Owens
Alexandra Streznewski

Dr. Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard
Jeffrey Honeywell, Esq.
Bill Hogan
Kathleen Culligan

Absent: Dr. Rose Brandon, President

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Members of the audience were welcomed and thanked for taking the time to attend the meeting.
- The Mission Statement was read.

Mr. Egan noted that Dr. Brandon is unable to be here this evening. Mr. Egan will conduct the meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Opening of school

Welcome everyone to the opening day of the 2014-2015 school year. It was a tremendous day where I was able to witness firsthand the exuberant faces of our youngest learners, assist middle school students with the lunch rush, and watch the high school freshmen work their way through the maze to figure out the location of their classes were, and if their locker might open. The best news of the day is that this freshmen class has signed up to participate in after school activities, clubs and other connections in the largest number ever. We know that if we can keep students connected to their schools we dramatically increase their chance for graduation.

Two days ago staff reported for Convocation, an annual gathering of all staff to honor our Golden Apple as well as Chrystal Apple Award winners, welcome from the Board of Education as well as listening to me to rally them toward another year of excellence. I am thankful to First New York Federal Credit Union and Christy Smith, Vice President of Member Services for providing the breakfast for over 1400 staff members.

Falcon football at UAlbany

The start of the new school year brings the start of another season of competition for our student-athletes. All of our varsity and JV teams are in full swing, and the modified teams are preparing for their seasons.

As you know, all of our teams are playing an independent schedule this school year following the breakup of the Big 10. We're still competing against most of the same teams without the official conference affiliation, and our teams will be eligible for sectional playoff competition as they would in any other season. Section 2 plans to realign for next school year and I will keep you informed of those developments.

One upcoming highlight of the fall sports season is the Albany High football team's first home game on Saturday, September 13. The University at Albany's beautiful new stadium will be the site for that game against Schenectady. It will be the first time Albany High has played Schenectady in seven years, and we are hoping for a large crowd at UAlbany to cheer the Falcons to victory. So save the date – Saturday, September 13, Falcon football at UAlbany. Game time is 7 p.m.

Falcon 5K reminder

Another upcoming date to mark down on your calendars is Sunday, September 28. That's the date of the second annual Falcon 5K and Fun Run in Washington Park. The Falcon 5K is put on by the Albany Booster Club, and they do a fantastic job organizing a wonderful community event. Last year, more than 500 runners and walkers participated, and I know it will be a huge success again this year. You can visit albanyboosterclub.org to register, and we also have links to that information on the district website, albanyschools.org.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Ellen Roach addressed the Board regarding professional development in the District. Two contract on the agenda this evening show costs that are above fees provided by local consultants. Test scores do not indicate significant improvement using these contractors.
2. Edith Leet addressed the Board regarding the efforts of the Focus Churches in the area who have donated supplies to our schools. Approximately 300 students were provided backpacks and each school was provided two boxes of supplies, including the District Office. Mrs. Leet congratulated the District on the contents of the 2014-15 school calendar.

INFORMATION

Cycle of Curriculum Review

Dr. V introduced Karen Bechdol, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, who gave a brief presentation on the process of aligning Curriculum and Assessments to the Common Core Learning Standards in the District. Following this presentation to the Board, the plan will be brought to a committee of stakeholders for further input and revision, at which time a final plan will be submitted to the Board for review. Ms. Bechdol also provided a draft schedule of content/program review. This is also subject to change as the committee explores and decides upon the best plan and schedule. The Curriculum Coordinating Council will be established by mid-September.

Ms. Bechdol advised the plan has been constructed based upon Policy #4200 Curriculum Management. The review included the purpose, process, structure, membership and their responsibilities, and information related to the Subject Area Vertical Teams, their membership and responsibilities. The review cycle supports the systematic review, allocates resources over time, engages teachers and administrators in reviewing curriculum content deeply on a regularly scheduled bases, supports sustained implementation of curriculum before next review, supports yearly monitoring and responsive revision on the off-cycle years and establishes criteria for reviewing curriculum aligned to the district vision and State standards. Ms. Bechdol concluded the presentation with the timeline for the next steps.

- I didn't see where there would be opportunity for community input into the curriculum. Is there no place for community input?

We absolutely need to have parents and students involved. In the plan we talk about parent input as we move forward. The will be made more specific in the plan.

- I would like to put a pitch for CTE to get real consideration. CTE has not been a coherent curriculum. Parents have complained when their kids have gone to Abrookin for one class have had a difficult situation in the building in terms of classes not being run, and no syllabus. It's a long time coming for them to get it. This should be a priority.

This is actually here for 2014-15. It's in alignment with the 20/20 Vision. The research indicates that 60% of future jobs are going to require a one or two year certificate training program, and only 20% will require a four year college degree. It is vitally important that we look at this program. Outcomes should be very clear. This is a vision of Dr. V and the folks at Abrookin.

ROUTINE CONSENT

Mr. Egan noted that Routine Consent will include a revised copy of the Proceedings of 8/21/14, and offered a motion to add an additional listing of HR items. Mr. Egan presented the following items for approval: Proceedings of Meeting 8/21/14; Human Resource Items; Treasurer's Report (6/30/14 & 07/31/14); Budget Transfers under \$10,000; Budget Transfers over \$10,000; Appropriation Status Report (06/30/14 & 07/31/14); Real Property Tax Adjustments; Revenue Status Report (06/30/14 & 07/31/14); Central Treasurer's Report for Extra Classroom Activity Fund (06/30/14 & 07/31/14); Grant Financials; Authorization to Enter Into Contracts; and the Committee on Special Education, Subcommittee on Special Education, and Committee on Pre-School Special Education. Ms. Streznewski seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Ms. Streznewski made a motion to approve Routine Consent Items as presented. Mr. Owens seconded the motion. Ms. Streznewski set aside the proceedings of 8/21/14. Ms. Adler set aside the addendum of HR listing, Northeast Associates in Rehabilitation, LLC, The Leadership and Learning Center – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co., Hudson Valley Community College – Smart Scholars, E-Research & Management, Inc. – dba Educational Legacy Planning Group, The Center for Educational Leadership, and the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA).

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion absent those items set aside.

Motion passed.

Mr. Egan called for a motion to approve the proceedings of August 21, 2014. Motion as made by Ms. Streznewski and seconded by Ms. Farrell.

The Board voted 4 ayes, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions.

Ms. Streznewski and Ms. Adler abstained.

Motion passed.

Mr. Egan called for a motion to approve the addendum to the Human Resources listing. Ms. Adler made the motion and Ms. Farrell seconded. Ms. Adler questioned item #6 indicating two substitutes listed as uncertified. Ms. Culligan stated that the preference is always to hire certified subs. However, that is not always possible. The District is required to have teachers with a Bachelor Degree at a minimum in the classrooms. There would be empty classrooms without placing uncertified teachers when necessary. The District supports those teachers in obtaining certification. This is an ongoing process.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Mr. Egan called for a motion to approve the following contracts previously set aside. Northeast Associates in Rehabilitation, LLC, The Leadership and Learning Center – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co., Hudson Valley Community College – Smart Scholars, E-Research & Management, Inc. – dba Educational Legacy Planning Group, The Center for Educational Leadership, and the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA).

There was no second to the motion.

Board Committee Reports

Ms. Adler advised the Governmental Relations Committee will be bringing forward the revised charge of the committee.

Board Member Items

Ms. Farrell asked for information related to the enrollment process for Pre-K on a future agenda. There were five Board members interested in this topic. This topic will be scheduled on a future agenda.

Ms. Farrell also noted that there is interest in receiving a report on summer school, including a follow-up on how those students are doing (data wise), following that experience. Ms. Adler also asked for some reference to the prior summer school report to see if there has been improvement. There were five Board members interested in this topic. This topic will be scheduled on a future agenda.

Ms. Adler noted that there was an in-depth review of Special Education in the District, along with a number of deficiencies. She is now interested in a follow-up report related to that review, indicating where the District was at the time of the review and where is it now. There were five Board members interested in this topic. This topic will be scheduled on a future agenda.

Mr. Egan requested a management review of Central Registration, along with suggestions for improvement. There were four Board members interested in this topic. This topic will be scheduled on a future agenda.

Other Business

Ms. Farrell noted with the start of school, she is suggesting that the District develops some consistency in providing school supply lists on the website to facilitate purchases for parents throughout the summer. Presently some schools provide the list at the end of the year and others provide the list just prior to the start of the school years. Ms. Farrell is calling for consistency throughout the District.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Owens made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Adler seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.