



School Board Update



Summary of School Board Committee Meetings Provided by Committee Members

March 2008

Education Committee

submitted by DEBBIE ROLLINS

The Education Committee met on March 11th. The meeting began with a presentation of data on standardized test results. The administration also presented information on the District's obligation to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by No Child Left Behind. The Committee asked the administration questions regarding specific standardized tests including CTP4, ERB Achievement Tests, the Pennsylvania System of Schools Assessment (PSSA) tests, and the SAT Test as well as Adequate Yearly Progress requirements and priority group determination.

Facilities Committee

submitted by PETE MOTEL

The Facilities Committee met on Friday, March 14th. The Committee heard an update on District construction projects and change orders. The fit out of the new administration building in the West Valley Business Center on West Valley Road is nearing completion. It will be ready for occupation this May. In an other matter, at the most recent Tredyffrin Township Zoning Hearing, the District received approval to move forward with the music room renovation project at T/E Middle School.

The District received the recycling bids from the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU). The cost to recycle will be approximately \$5,050 for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. The Committee agreed to accept the bid from the CCIU. The District will now recycle plastic in addition to those items already recycled (aluminum, paper and cardboard).

To promote higher efficiency and energy control within the new administrative building at the West Valley Business Center, the administration is recommending that the District purchase a programmable heating system from Tri-M. This purchase will save the District in heating and cooling

costs. The Committee discussed the heating system and recommended it for full board approval.

Finally, the Committee viewed and discussed the proposed drawings of the construction of a stairway to the home side of the baseball field at CHS. The administration provided a quote of approximately \$12,000 from an approved contractor. The Committee recommended this for full Board approval.

Finance Committee

submitted by BETSY FADEM

The March Finance Committee meeting began with a review from the administrative staff of the previous month's financial reports. Next was a continuation of the topic of providing alternatives to 7th and 8th grade middle school students who may not be participating in after school activities because there is no way for them to get home at the conclusion of these activities. The best alternative identified at last month's meeting was to approach "A Child's Place" to determine if they would be willing to add 7th and 8th grades to their existing 5th and 6th grade after school coverage. The report back from "A Child's Place" indicated that they are interested. The Committee recognized that the students who participate in this program would pay their costs directly to "A Child's Place". District staff will continue the dialogue with A Child's Place.

The next topic was a review of the Transportation Services RFP responses. The administration presented a comparison of the transportation companies. The recommendation was to award the five year contract to Kraft. The Committee agreed to recommend this to the full Board for approval. The administration indicated that the overall cost for transportation has risen since our last contract five years ago and this amount will be reflected in the 2008-09 budget.

The next topic was a fund balance policy. The policy language, for the most part, reflects our current practice for managing our fund balance. It was generally agreed upon that instituting this policy was

valuable. The Committee will review a revision next month after receiving input from Board members.

The administration noted that the District has received numerous written communications on the Senior Tax relief program that had been discussed at previous Finance Committee meetings. A final resolution has not been reached and the topic will resurface in Finance Committee in the future.

Policy Committee

submitted by LIANE DAVIS

The Policy Committee met on March 11th. The Committee recommended the following policies for a first reading by the full Board at the March 24th regular meeting: Policy 5116, Nonresident Students; and Policy 9314, Participation in Public Meetings of the Full Board by Remote Communication Device.

The Committee recommended the following policy for a second reading by the full Board at its next regular meeting: Policy 3340, Purchase Orders; and Policy 8210, Records Management. Although Policy 8210 was recommended for a second reading by the full Board, this policy will return to the Policy Committee for further discussion at the April meeting.

Next the Committee discussed Policy 9131, Nominating Committee. The Committee agreed that changes to the policy were in order. The District solicitor will develop several draft policies incorporating suggestions made by the Committee.

The Committee briefly discussed Policy 1100, School District Communications with the Public, and heard ideas regarding this policy. The District solicitor was asked to revise this policy and the accompanying regulation to reflect suggestions that were made. This policy will be discussed again at the April meeting.

Finally, the Committee discussed Policy 1120, Communication with the School Board, and asked the District solicitor to revise the policy to make it clear that the District receives information from the public and shares information with the public. A draft of this policy will be discussed at the April meeting.

Public Information Committee

submitted by PAT WOOD

Public Information met on Tuesday, March 5. The committee had invited Conestoga's Media Specialist to talk with us about social networking sites. The Committee wanted to explore new ways to reach younger community members in our efforts to both inform about the District and receive feedback. For those of you who might not be familiar with social networking sites, they are collaborative sites where information is exchanged, as compared with wikis or blogs. We discussed sites called Penguin, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, among others, and what age groups seem to currently prefer to communicate on which sites. We also discussed virtual reality at Second Life with avatars, which are creations of people in computerized form in an extensive and varied separate computer world. While there was no decision to use any of these sites for our communication with the public, it was important for us to explore these, to know what is available, and what age groups are using them. It was decided, however, that we would do a Board Talk in the fall on social networking and possibly discuss it at an Interschool Council meeting.

We decided to place our GCA video on SchoolTube, a video sharing site for school information. The District will be able to receive a premier membership with SchoolTube at no cost for one year. We will make a decision at the end of that year whether or not a membership fee would be a good expenditure to further our communication goals.

The new Board Talk introduces our two new Board members and reviews the Olweus anti-bullying program in the schools. It is followed by the GCA video and a public service announcement about the availability in the community for help with the state property tax/rent rebate program.

It was noted that there have been complaints that it is a waste of paper and postage to send more than one letter about the PSSAs to families where more than one student is taking the test. It was explained that legal regulations require a letter for every student.

There have been requests for a school fax number and a school code number in the directory and on the T/E web site for access by those students who apply to programs, especially summer programs, that require these on applications. These numbers can be provided.

The GCA resolution was discussed and it was decided to refer it in final form to the Board for action at the March 24th regular meeting.