

**Beaver Dam Unified School District
Board of Education Proceedings**

October 22, 2007

The regular meeting of the Beaver Dam Unified School District Board of Education was held on the above date at the Educational Service Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Mark Kirst. Board members present were: Bev Beal-Loeck, Kathie Berkvam, Nate Dassler, Jean Hill, Marge Jorgensen, Mark Killingsworth, Mark Kirst, and Laurie Propst. Absent: Dave Uttech.

President Mark Kirst led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jorgensen moved, Propst seconded, to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting on September 17, 2007, and special meetings on October 1, and October 8, 2007 as presented.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Mr. Kirst welcomed visitors.

There were no requests from members of the public to participate in the public comment session.

Propst, at the request of the President, announced the board may move into closed session following the regular meeting in accordance with State Statute 19.85 (1) (c) to discuss the status of support staff and teacher negotiations, and the employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The meeting will reconvene into open session for the possible transaction of business and adjournment.

Killingsworth moved, Jorgensen seconded, to adopt the agenda as presented.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Dr. Donald Childs, Superintendent, presented a field trip request for the High School Cognitively Disabled/Severe (CDS) students to travel to Disney World in Florida for a week in February 2008. The trip is of no cost to the district. Approval of the trip is recommended contingent upon arrangements and chaperoning acceptable to the Director of Pupil Services and with no cost to the district.

Meg Sekel, High School CDS Teacher, shared the values and benefits the trip will provide for the students. Students Klara Armstrong and Zach McLain presented the objectives of the trip. They thanked the Board for considering their trip request.

Propst moved, Hill seconded, to approve the field trip request for the High School CDS Students to travel to Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Mr. Don Patnode, High School Principal, presented a report on the block schedule and advisory program as the high school transitions into the block schedule. The data compared to the same period of time last year shows an increase in the average daily attendance, and decreases in habitual truancy, student behavior referrals and unexcused absences. Grade distributions are similar with fewer students receiving failing grades. The grades and activities code changed in 2007-08 to require students to pass all classes to be eligible to participate in co-curricular activities. During the first few weeks of the school year, 17 students were ineligible, which if the same code applied last year, a total of 34 students would be ineligible. The Wisconsin Covenant Pledge is new this year and targets 9th grade students who pledge to prepare themselves for higher education, being good citizens, and graduate with at least a “B” average. A total of 78 students have signed the pledge. He also shared feedback from the Student Advisory Board, comprised of students, and progress of the Daily Advisory Team, comprised of teachers.

The board requested another update on the block schedule and advisories during the year.

Mr. Patnode said he would like to give another report at the end of the first semester as more data is collected.

Questions were asked regarding obtaining class offering and time information and the purpose of the daily advisory.

The course description book is available on the High School web-site. He also explained that the premise of the advisory period was to provide students daily interaction with an adult/teacher in the building once a day and to establish a climate to build relationships with students. The advisory provides an avenue to meet the needs for students without reducing instructional time. The grade check day of the advisory period allows for a periodic checking of student’s progress.

A question was asked as to what were included in the flex day activities.

It includes a variety of activities to support team work. The activities are guided by staff members and give students a way to release energy and work on team building skills. It is also allows for an academic flex, where students can opt out of the activity to receive academic assistance.

Appreciation was expressed for the information that was shared and a comment was made that the block schedule appears to be working.

Dr. Childs presented a recommendation to approve the Youth Options course requests for the second semester of the 2007-2008 school year. It is understood that, to the extent allowed by law, students who drop or fail an approved course will be required to reimburse the district for any expense incurred for the course in question.

Propst moved, Beal-Loeck seconded, to approve the list of Youth Options courses for the second semester of the 2007-08 school year as presented.

Questions were asked regarding the requirements to take academic courses and earning high school credit

The only requirement is that the course is one not offered by the district and that it meets the pre-requisite requirement of the college. The student earns high school and post-secondary credit.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Dr. Childs, presented a recommendation to approve the early graduation requests as presented.

Questions were asked regarding the current credit requirement for graduation, past requests, why these students are requesting early graduation, and if they were advised to do this.

The current credit requirements are 23 for seniors and 22.5 for juniors. The board previously discussed changing the requirements, but deferred to take action.

There have been requests in the past, although they were not historically brought before the board for action. These students will have completed their academic program by the end of the 1st semester of their senior year and have requested early graduation consideration as allowed by board policy.

A comment was made that the district should discourage early graduation. It is disturbing that credits aren't set high enough to keep students in school for four years. Programs need to be strengthened so that students can't complete high school in 3½ years.

The administration presented a recommendation earlier this year to change the graduation requirements, but board tabled it.

The comment was made that these students have met requirements as set forward by board policy and the board is obligated to honor their request.

A remark was made that some students are just not happy in high school and want to get out. Students should get the most out of high school, but it's not for everyone.

It was requested to review the graduation policies at the next regular monthly board meeting.

Propst moved, Hill seconded, to approve the early graduation requests for the following students: Marie Fett, Andrew Flannery, Monica Haima, Brooke Kuhn, Rebecca Schmidt, and Leah William.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Dr. Childs and Mr. Paul Buchholz, Buildings and Grounds Coordinator, presented a report regarding district facilities, including an update on the completion of the HVAC conversion at Jefferson Elementary School. They provided an overview of the list of deferred projects totaling over \$15M and shared a list of the dates each building was constructed or received additions/remodeling. Over the past 8 years, the maintenance budget has decreased by 60%, while area of responsibility has nearly doubled and maintenance positions have been reduced. A recommendation was presented for the district to develop a strategic maintenance plan with input from staff, community, and board members and to present a process to the board at the December regular board meeting.

It was commented that it makes sense to have a strategic plan, but with \$15M in projects it needs to also be a long-range plan.

A request was made to create a list of the most urgent items and conditions of items.

A comment was made that the plan could include more funding to address some of these items: not all \$15M but perhaps a couple hundred thousand.

Dr. Childs explained there are provisions in the budget to establish funds for these items.

A remark was made that the board is responsible for these items and needs to stay on top of them.

A request was made for a prioritized list of items along with the dollar amount of each item.

A question was asked as to where the growth in square footage was.

There has been no interior growth since 2001. The roofing plan ceased in 1986 and the amount of roof maintenance has doubled since.

A request was made to list the amounts as an annual amount.

The goal is to ultimately get everything into a scheduled cycle and budget it from year to year. Buildings are built to last 50-60 years and everything in the building will not last the same amount time. Items need to be put on a steady replacement schedule and life cycle costs need to be part of the facility cost.

Mr. Buchholz thanked the board for approving the Jefferson project. It went extremely smoothly and the HVAC system is operational and running. There are a few minor items to finish and the project will be fully complete at end of October.

Questions were raised regarding whether employees did some of the work, if the project interfered with classroom preparation, and requesting a tour of the facility.

The work was completed by contractors. The project did not interfere with classroom preparation. Teachers were allowed in their rooms the week before school started and all rooms were ready and decorated by the first day of school. A tour will be scheduled for early November.

Dr. Childs presented a recommendation to approve and accept the following bids as presented for snow removal for the 2007-2008 school year: Johnnie's 66 for Prairie View, Trenton, South Beaver Dam and the Charter School lots and playgrounds; Prairie Lawn Care for sidewalks at Jefferson, Lincoln, Washington, Wilson and the Middle School; and VZ's Trucking for Jefferson, Lincoln, Washington, Wilson, the Middle School, ESC, and the High School lots and playgrounds.

Propst moved, Killingsworth seconded, to approve the snow removal contracts for the 2007-2008 school year as presented.

The motion was adopted by the following vote: *Ayes* – Berkvam, Dassler, Hill, Jorgensen, Killingsworth, Kirst, Propst, and Beal-Loeck –. *Noes* – None. Absent: Uttech.

Dr. Childs shared information regarding the lease/purchase of a new phone system. He shared the advantages of a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system, including the elimination of long distance charges and most of the phone lines. Removal of the analog phone lines and the elimination of the cost of phone calls will save approximately \$5,000 per month. He recommended approval of a new phone system through Heartland Business Systems for an amount not to exceed \$65,500/year for a period not to exceed five years.

Questions were asked regarding the final cost, the savings calculation, monthly fees and other costs.

The difference in the final cost paying over the five years is a finance charge of approximately \$30K over 5 years. The analysis of the phone systems realized a savings by eliminating the costs associated with phone lines plus the elimination of the monthly maintenance fee. After 5 years, there is a monthly maintenance/software fee of approximately \$9,700 per year that is built into the contract. In addition, there is a \$20K incentive built in to the contract that will provide equipment for video conferencing, which will reduce travel and the amount of time staff will need to be out of the building for meetings.

Hill moved, Propst seconded to approve the lease/purchase of a new phone system through Heartland Business Systems for an amount not to exceed \$65,500/year for a period not to exceed five years.

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* – Dassler, Hill, Jorgensen, Killingsworth, Kirst, Propst, Beal-Loeck, and Berkvam. *Nayes* – None. Absent: Uttech.

Dr. Childs presented a request to retain CESA #6 to provide website management for an amount not to exceed \$10K for the year. The funds are included in the 2007-08 budget. CESA #6 will give the district approximately 10 hours of services per month.

Questions were raised regarding the cost, the goal, the reason for the change, current responsibility, and training.

The cost is not to exceed \$10K. The individuals who designed the webpage now work for CESA #6. The goal is to have consistency and interactivity on each school's webpage and provide improved access and information for parents. They would ensure that the content is current, is useful to parents, and navigation is the same from page to page. The contract would be evaluated at the end of the year.

Currently, there is staff at the High School, Middle School, ESC, and some elementary schools maintaining their individual webpages. The contract with CESA #6 will provide training for staff members on any topics the district authorizes.

A remark was made that the high school and middle school are doing fine and it seems to be working. It should stay the way it is. It was asked if there was someone in the district to work on the elementary school webpages.

Clarification was requested regarding the meaning of “doing fine.”

The Middle School and High School are doing a good job, but consistency is needed with elementary schools.

A comment was made that other quotes should be obtained. Board policy requires multiple quotes for items over \$15K, but \$10K is close enough.

A remark was made that it is difficult to keep information updated on a website. The district has always struggled to communicate with the public and this provides an avenue for it. The cost seems reasonable.

A question was asked if personnel will do the maintenance once the contract ends.

Some staff will do it, but also need to have someone with time available to do it.

Killingsworth moved, Beal-Loeck seconded, to approve an agreement with CESA #6 for website management in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for the 2007-08 fiscal year.

A comment was made that other bids should be obtained and it was asked if there are any students involved with web design.

Students would require adult supervision.

A remark was made expressing a dislike of no-bid contracts. It is offensive. Multiple quotes should be obtained since it is taxpayer’s money.

It was stated that there was a reason board policy was set at \$15K for obtaining bids.

The motion failed by the following vote: *Ayes* – Killingsworth, Kirst, Propst, and Beal-Loeck. *Nayes* – Hill, Jorgensen, Berkvam, and Dassler – None. Absent: Uttech.

Under the rules of parliamentary procedure, a tie vote is a failed vote.

Dr. Childs stated information will be brought back to the next regular board meeting.

Ms. Jorgensen, Chairperson of the BDEA Negotiations Committee, stated there was nothing to report.

Ms. Berkvam, Chairperson of the BDSSA Negotiations Committee, stated there was nothing to report.

Mr. Killingsworth, Chairperson of the Administrative Compensation Committee, stated there was nothing to report.

Propst moved, Jorgensen seconded, to approve the following retirements or resignations:

- a. Sheila Kouse – Special Education Teacher Assistant – Washington Elementary School

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Jorgensen moved, Dassler seconded, to approve the following leave of absence requests.

- a. Heidi Graff – Third Grade Teacher – Prairie View Elementary School (Family Medical Leave 12/15/07 – 3/31/08)
- b. Jamie Soto – Special Education Teacher – Prairie View Elementary School (Career Development 1/2/08 – 2/1/08)

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Propst moved, Hill seconded, to approve the following appointments:

- a. Michelle Kirsh – Career Center Tutor – High School
- b. Kourtney Nitschke – Teacher Assistant – Washington Elementary School
- c. Heather Chavez – Teacher Assistant – Lincoln Elementary School
- d. Kit Ulman – Vocal Music Assistant – Middle School
- e. Jocelyn Sell – Special Education Teacher Assistant – Middle School
- f. Thea Frank – Eighth Grade Computer Science Teacher – Middle School (BA, Step 1) (LTE – 61 days)
- g. Kristin Carlson – Elementary Food Service Worker – Washington Elementary School

It was asked if the Teacher Assistant at Lincoln Elementary School and the Vocal Music Assistant were positions approved at last month's meeting, if the approved positions have been filled, and if all of the other positions are replacements.

The Vocal Music Assistant position was approved last month and the Teacher Assistant position was not one of the new ones. There is no current need to fill the positions approved at last month's board meeting. All of the other positions are replacements.

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* – Jorgensen, Killingsworth, Kirst, Propst, Beal-Loeck, Berkvam, Dassler, and Hill. *Nays* – None. *Absent*: Uttech.

Mr. James Orlenko, Director of Human Resources, provided data to support the addition of a maintenance position. He reviewed the increase in work orders, overtime costs, comparisons to other districts, and national average data. The projected salary and benefits for the position for the remainder of the school year is \$41K. If the position started on July 1, 2007 it would be \$59K.

Questions were asked regarding the type of work orders, the reason for the increase, and the flow of work orders during the year.

Work orders include a wide variety of items, from fixing leaks to moving equipment. There is no particular reason for the increase in work orders. It could be due to older buildings, more students, and the fact that athletics take time to maintain. The number of work orders are steady throughout the year. There isn't time of the year that is slow.

It was asked why a maintenance position was being requested instead of a custodial position, which costs less. Also asked if all the examples of work are custodial.

There is a need for both a custodial and a maintenance position. The maintenance position is being requested since it was eliminated a few years ago. The work examples given are orders that occur district-wide, from building to building, not within buildings.

A remark was made that the district would save money by paying overtime rather than adding a position.

A question was asked regarding the current status of staff.

The department was reduced by two positions and staff was laid off 2 hours each week.

It was asked if a reinstatement of the 2 hours would help and if overtime can be refused.

A reinstatement of the 2 hours would help, but there is still a lot of work to do. Need to be careful not to burn out employees on too much overtime. Staff can refuse overtime to a point. In addition to the staff reductions, the amount of summer help has been reduced over the past couple of years from 8 workers to 6. These workers help with everything related to grounds and custodial work.

A comment was made that it may be cheaper to keep the overtime and hire more college students.

College students are available for only a short period of time. They begin summer employment at the end of the school year when students are no longer in the buildings. There is a retired person who mows lawn from May through October.

A remark was made that the board was told last month that position would be at \$50K and now its \$59K. It is difficult to support it.

The salary was an approximation at that time and when it was actually calculated, it came to \$59K.

Mr. Dassler requested to further discuss district personnel in relation to the request in closed session and act on it in once reconvened into open session.

Dassler moved, Jorgensen seconded, to table action on the maintenance position request until after closed session

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Dr. Childs presented a proposal for exempt staff compensation for the 2007-2008 school year. Administration recommended adoption of the proposal, but recognizes that the board may wish to further discuss it and act on it at the next regular monthly board meeting.

A request was made to take time to review the compensation information and take action at the next regular monthly board meeting.

A comment was made that the information was given to the board a few days prior to the meeting.

It was remarked that was not enough time to make a decision.

Dr. Childs explained that administration has tried to operate by giving the board the information one month and request action the next month. They were just attempting to avoid a further delay with exempt staff compensation.

Propst moved, Jorgensen seconded, to table action on the exempt staff compensation until the regular board meeting in November.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Mr. Andrew Sarnow, Director of Business Services, provided an overview of the 2007-08 budget. He explained that the state budget is not a final budget yet and the implications of it on school districts is unknown. If the budget presented significantly changes, it will be brought back to the board. The deadline for setting the levy is November 6th. The budget is balanced in accordance with state statutes and laws. The budget is \$1.5M in the black. There are needs within the district that will need to be addressed and allocation of these funds will need to be determined. He recommended approval of revenues for all funds of \$42,809,073; expenditures from all funds of \$41,278,587; and a local levy of \$12,692,852 with an estimated mill rate of \$8.11 per \$1,000 of equalized value.

Killingsworth moved, Dassler seconded, to adopt the 2007-08 budget as presented.

Mr. Sarnow answered questions regarding detailed budget items.

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* – Killingsworth, Kirst, Propst, Beal-Loeck, Berkvam, Dassler, Hill, and Jorgensen. *Nayes* – None. Absent: Uttech.

Propst moved, Hill, seconded, to approve the payment of financial claims (Voucher #6 and #7, Net Payroll, Payroll Related Voucher, Payroll Taxes, WI Retirement, WI Retirement-Adjustment, WI Retirement-Admin. Annuity, Credit Card, and Insurance) for a total of \$2,722,362.29 (A listing of these vouchers can be found in the Accounts Payable Check Register.)

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* –Kirst, Propst, Beal-Loeck, Berkvam, Dassler, Hill, Jorgensen, and Killingsworth. *Nayes* – None. Absent: Uttech.

Propst moved, Hill seconded, to move into closed session.

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* – Propst, Beal-Loeck, Berkvam, Dassler, Hill, Jorgensen, Killingsworth, and Kirst. *Nayes* – None. Absent: Uttech.

During the closed session, discussion was held regarding negotiations and personnel items. No action was taken during closed session.

Propst moved, Berkvam seconded, to reconvene into open session for transaction of business and adjournment.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Dassler moved, Propst seconded, to approve the addition of a 1.0 FTE maintenance position.

A request was made to provide quarterly updates on work orders, including the types of work orders.

The motion was approved by the following vote: *Ayes* – Beal-Loeck, Dassler, Hill, Killingsworth, Kirst, and Propst. *Nayes* – Berkvam and Jorgensen. *Absent*: Uttech.

Propst moved, Killingsworth seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 p.m.

(Mark Kirst)

President

(Mark Killingsworth)

Clerk