

WESTERN DUBUQUE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Minutes
Workshop Session
December 05, 2011 – 5:30 p.m.

Call to Order:

Board President Bob McCabe called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. in the Board Room – District Administration Office, Farley, Iowa.

Roll Call:

Present were Bob McCabe, Jeanne Coppola, Mark Knuth, Gary McAndrew, Chad Vaske and Superintendent Jeff Corkery.

Dubuque County Roads – Winter Snowplowing Schedule:

Superintendent Corkery and Bob Hingtgen reported that the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors has notified the area schools that county snowplows will begin to clear roads starting no earlier than 5:00 a.m. on inclement days. Previously road crews began as early as 3:00 a.m. They will monitor weather conditions for severity/time of day and consider adjusting road crew schedules if necessary. They cited overtime costs as the reason for the change. Superintendent Corkery noted that the School District will most likely see more late starts and school cancellations if the roads are unsafe when school buses start their routes. Last year (2010-11 school year) there were 10 late-starts, 1 early-out and 4 days when school was cancelled.

Review of Transportation Routes, School Starting and Ending Times.

Superintendent Corkery noted that the goal would be to have students arriving at their attendance centers no earlier than 20 minutes before school starting time and leaving no later than 15 minutes after the school ending time. He noted that the following factors impact the arrival and departure of the school buses. Some factors can be modified but others are a mainstay of the District.

- a. Attendance center waivers
- b. Location of public and non-public attendance centers
- c. Different starting and ending times of the schools
- d. Needed instruction time
- e. Working hours of employees
- f. Program offerings for special needs students that are not available at all schools
- g. Geography and distances to be traveled within the District

Director of Transportation, Bob Hingtgen discussed and presented information on the following topics relating to the District's transportation operation.

- a. History of routes – 62 in 1998-99 to 36 in 2011-12.
- b. Current scheduling concept that is being used to get the rural and town students to and from their school of attendance.
- c. Solutions that are considered when arrival or departure times are not within acceptable parameters.
 1. Bussing of students directly to their out of area attendance center versus shuttling. The shuttling method transports students to the nearest town or attendance center and then via a bus shuttle transports them to their school of attendance.
 2. Double routing/early-in early-out for high school and middle school students.
 3. Adjusting starting and ending times of schools.
 4. Adding more routes

Attendance Waivers and Boundary Lines:

Superintendent Corkery reviewed the Board policies on attendance waivers and class sizes and their effect on attendance center enrollments. Current year enrollment schedules for each building were shown comparing their enrollments with attendance waiver students and enrollments without attendance waiver students. It was noted that the waivers have worked well and did help to even out class sizes amongst the buildings. He also noted that per Board Policy 501.5A the transportation fee for inter-district busing for attendance center waiver students will be assessed starting with the 2012-13 school year unless the waiver is initiated by the District. The \$450 fee this year is waived by Board policy.

Enrollment numbers and attendance waivers for the Cascade Elementary and Bernard Elementary schools were then discussed. It was noted that most of the students in the newly expanded Bernard attendance center area opted to attend Cascade Elementary this school year. A discussion then ensued on whether the Bernard/Cascade attendance boundary should be revised for next year. Added consideration would be given to the distance to the nearest school along with safety considerations regarding the crossing of highway 151. The administration will further study the issue and a recommendation on potential changes to the boundary line will be made at a later date.

Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) – Future Needs and Financial Impact:

Dave Wegmann reviewed information that was also presented to the Board at the October 25th Workshop meeting. Topics included.

- a. Plant maintenance and equipment needs that would be paid from the District’s PPEL Fund.
- b. District-wide needed building upgrades and improvements.
- c. Required funding options to undertake various projects.
- d. Current and future status of the District’s PPEL and Construction Fund accounts.
- e. Consideration of the issuance of Sales Tax Revenue Bonds or voter approved added revenue for the PPEL Fund or a voter approved bond referendum for major construction.
- f. Costs and options to be considered if the discussions move to a formal public review.
- e. Timetables to be considered if a public vote is going to be undertaken.

After much discussion and consensus, Superintendent Corkery indicated that he would announce at the December 12, 2011 meeting of his plans to share the Board’s ideas with school supporters to gauge their feelings on the concepts.

Adjournment:

Motion by Coppola, second by McAndrew to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm on December 5, 2011.

David A. Wegmann
Board Secretary

Robert McCabe
President, Board of Education