

Board Mtg. BURLINGTON-EDISON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 100 Sept. 28, 2009

The Board of Directors of Burlington-Edison School District No. 100 met on September 28, 2009 in the Board Room of the Administration Office at 7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: President, Liza Bott; Vice-President, Marty Lopez; Members, Mike Dynes, Dick Spink, and Bill Wallace

Staff Members Present: Laurel Browning, Superintendent; Dr. Jeff Drayer, Assistant Superintendent; K.C. Knudson, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jeff Brown, Special Education Coordinator; Joe Stewart, Finance Director; Wanda Hoffecker, Assistant Finance Director, and Vicki Kelley, Deputy Board Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Bott at 7:00 p.m.

This month the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Superintendent Browning.

President Bott asked if there were any visitors to be introduced to the Board. Mrs. Browning introduced Bay View Elementary teacher, Colleen Knutzen, and her mother. B-EHS Head Cook, Toia Hack, was introduced and also *Skagit Valley Herald* reporter, Kate Martin.

President Bott opened the floor to any members of the audience who wished to address the Board. The following addressed the Board:

Jim Anderson
20780 Kelleher Road
Burlington, WA 98233

Mr. Anderson said he was really disappointed that the report locating school sites was not on this evening's agenda. He wanted to know the process by which a community member can put it on the agenda for a future meeting. See his attached comments.

Sarah Spence
1922 Barrel Springs Road
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Attached are her comments.

Mr. Spink moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of September 28, 2009, and the special meeting of September 14, 2009. Mr. Dynes seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Lopez moved to approve the consent calendar. Mr. Dynes seconded, and the motion carried.

Items approved on the consent calendar are as follows:

Approval was granted for payment of warrants subject to review by the Board member designated by the Board President at the end of month. Items covered are the September 2009: General Fund Warrant Nos. 300997 through 301034 and 301036 through 301329; and Associated Student Body Fund Warrant Nos. 301035 through 301035 and 301330 through 301364.

The attached appointments, resignations, and leaves of absence were approved/accepted.

The Board approved the following travel items:

The travel of Tawnya Brewer, ten students, and one other staff member to Mark Morris High School in Kelso, WA on September 25-27, 2009 to participate in a volleyball tournament. Costs for the trip were paid by the Booster volleyball budget. Travel was via school van.

The travel of Bonnie Campbell, 20 students, and 5 chaperones to Ladner, B.C. on October 24, 2009 for an ACTS field trip to study at the George Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Costs for the trip will be paid by the students, and travel will be via school bus.

The travel of B-EHS Principal, Beth VanderVeen, to Washington, D.C. on October 31, 2009 – November 4, 2009 to attend the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Task Force Meeting. Costs for the trip will be paid by NASSP.

The travel of B-EHS staff members, Amy Morrison and Brian Raupp, along with 14 students, and 2 chaperones to Pullman, WA on May 12-16, 2010 to attend the FFA State Convention. Costs for the trip will be paid by the FFA budget and fund-raisers. Travel will be via school van.

The travel of Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, K.C. Knudson, to South Padre, Texas on October 5-9, 2009 to attend an AVID District Director Training (Session 1). Costs for the trip will be paid by the GEAR-UP budget.

The travel of B-EHS staff members, Roger Kinney and George Way, along with 20 students to travel to Bellevue, WA on October 25-27, 2009 to attend the DECA Fall Leadership Conference. Costs for the trip will be paid by the DECA budget and the students. Travel will be via school bus.

The travel of Roger Kinney and George Way along with 20 students to Bellevue, WA on March 4-6, 2010 to participate in the DECA state competition. Costs for the trip will be paid by the DECA budget and the students. Travel will be via school bus.

The travel of B-EHS staff member, Roger Kinney, along with ten students to Louisville, Kentucky on April 22-29, 2010 to participate in the DECA International Competition. Costs for the trip will be paid by the DECA budget.

The following donations were accepted by the Board:

The donation of \$1,000.00 from Tim and Colleen Knutzen to the Bay View Elementary Library Fund. The fund was established in memory of Mrs. Knutzen's father. The donation will be used to purchase books for the school library.

The donation in the amount of \$2,500.00 from the B-E Football Booster Club to Burlington-Edison High School. The donation will be used to purchase football goal posts.

The donation in the amount of \$14,000.00 from the B-E Football Boosters to the B-E Football Program to be used to purchase equipment.

Per Board Policy No. 5420, building administrators shall be evaluated on an annual basis. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, building administrators will be evaluated using a newly agreed upon tool. The Board approved the Administrator Evaluation Tool.

Burlington-Edison School District was approved as a clock hour provider for the 2009-2010 school year.

The Board approved as surplus the following items: miscellaneous furniture, shop equipment, kitchen equipment, a copy machine, televisions, maps, lockers, and textbooks.

President Bott asked the Board if they had any comments. Mr. Lopez commented on how much he enjoyed the first school board tour of the year at Lucille Umbarger Elementary School and the positive things happening at that school. He said the AVID Program is in its first year at LU and that it is an amazing program. Mr. Lopez also commented on an article in the paper about B-EHS grad, Cole Sager, who is now a college freshman and an invited walk-on with the University of Washington Huskies Football Team. In the article, Mr. Sager talked about the education and work ethic he received at B-EHS.

Mr. Spink thanked Dr. Drayer for sending CDs to the Board of the 4000 board policies series.

The minutes that follow detailing the comments from Mr. Dynes, Mr. Wallace, and Mrs. Bott were taken as close to verbatim as possible during this meeting.

Mr. Dynes spoke about the district's property purchase issue as follows:

He explained the momentum leading up to the purchase of the Pulver/Peterson Road property. He stated, "At the time, we were trying to carve out (with the lead from the City) land in a small urban growth area bordered by the river and farmland for a new school site. Every school in our district, except for Bay View, borders on farmland. Development land at the time was going for \$100,000 an acre. The contingency was a big omission, and we should look into this, but the spirit of the Board was to move on it to gain value for the district, not to saddle the community. This is a community issue. Mistakes were made. We had the need for property. Dr. Fotheringham's report documented that. If the zoning was not there, we could own it and farm it for ten years. The current economy has clouded the long-term thinking."

Mr. Dynes said, "It was not the intention of the Board to mishandle it, and we would like to move forward. We need to be careful on how we proceed. No insults! There are 4,000 kids counting on us, and the momentum was there to purchase the property. It is past, done, and we need to move forward. The last thing we want is the State running this school district. I want to be accountable, but at the same time, I have spent between 1000 – 1500 hours in the last four years working on behalf of the district. This is a hard working group, and we want what is best for the district and the community. Contact me. I am in the phone book. We need good, solid communication to proceed. One or two people showing up at board meetings is disappointing. We need better representation month to month. Thanks everyone for coming tonight and contact me to talk about this issue."

Mr. Wallace informed the Board that the Husky Marching Band and cheerleaders will visit the High School on October 9th for the Burlington-Edison/Mount Vernon football game. He said he requested that the band face the home crowd with their backs to visitors.

Mr. Wallace made the following comments about the Pulver/Peterson Road property issue:

"Thank you to the folks who came to this board meeting and those who spoke this evening. We have a serious challenge with non-voted debt. The Board gets this, and it is a priority. This district has faced a challenge to get property for a school site. I have served on the Facilities Study Committee, and one of the priorities was to find property for the growing population of the school district. The Board considered input from the Committee and had professional advice. The Board worked hard to engage the community, and with professionals, the Board made a decision for the community in the best interests of the students and the district. At that time, they felt it was a good decision.

In the past couple of years, and through Dr. Fotheringham's report and through the newspaper, we have learned a lot of what has happened since. Hindsight is 20/20, and we would not make the same decision today. I don't think Dr. Fotheringham's report is the mean to get all questions answered. His report did answer some questions about why it happened. It was important to find out what happened and gather information from the report, but we need to move forward and work with the community to develop workable solutions. We have community members that have contacted us to offer ideas and lend support, and we need to find solutions to address questions and move on."

Mrs. Bott spoke about the purchase of the property as follows:

"Dr. Fotheringham's report did look at "what happened" and how the decisions were made. He gathered background information and talked to the people involved. I appreciate that he analyzed student data on the west side of the freeway, how many live there, and how many we are transporting to other schools in the district. It underscores the need for a site located near those students for a new school."

She stated, “I have served on facilities study committees prior to joining the Board and finding school sites was always a “head scratcher” for us. Dr. Fotheringham also said that the Board had overestimated the support of various agencies and people involved in the decision-making process. We did have support of the City of Burlington. The City included the property in their proposed urban growth boundary, and the City Council adopted a resolution supporting siting a school on that property. We had other decision-makers with their support to site a school on that location. We looked extensively at other sites, and there are no school sites located in the City of Burlington urban growth boundary. The report mentioned that communication between the Board and the Planning Department had broken down. The Planning Department stated that we had “not made our case.” I have difficulty with that response from the Planning Department. Also, we had three bond failures: September 2006, April 2007, and March 2009.”

Mrs. Bott went on to say, “I believe that we listened very carefully and respectfully to voters after the first two bond failures, and we waited nearly two years to put another bond measure on the ballot (smaller scope of work and significantly reduced financial impact to taxpayers). The Board makes decisions well before bond elections (e.g., filing dates, etc.). Had we known the economy would continue its precipitous downhill slide, I don’t think we would have run the last bond. We made a decision to purchase the property, and it was not an easy decision to make. We deliberated in Executive Session for three years and understood we were taking a risk and thought the risk was worth taking. With the information I have today, I would not have made that decision. As others have stated, I am more than ready to look forward and work with the community to find solutions. In our current financial situation, we have debts to pay and also have unhoused students. We have enrollment data for the last eight years, and we have had many portables located throughout the district that puts stress on existing facilities. I suggest the following: (1) figure out how we will engage the community and come to an understanding on how to move forward; and (2) send a letter on behalf of the Board to our district patrons.” She stated the Board has a couple of ideas on how to take input (e.g. community meetings, focus groups). The other Board members agreed a letter was a good idea. Mrs. Bott will draft a letter for the Board to review at the next work session. Also, the Board will come up with some action steps.

Following are additional comments from Mrs. Bott:

“I went to the football game last Friday night; we arrived early to get a good seat and the stands were already filling. I sat down with my Dad who played football on the field over 60 years ago, and we were sitting in stands that were built in the 1960s with community donations. We listened to the band play, the team in Blue and Gold was warming up, the cheerleaders were cheering, and soon the NJROTC walked across the field with the colors. A football player stepped out of the lineup and sang the *Star Spangled Banner* a cappella. The dance team performed at half time. It was a beautiful autumn evening and looking out to the West and the sun setting, I was awestruck. It reminded me why I do this job. It is about community, not about hidden agendas. I feel strongly about programs and opportunities we do have for our students through the work of our Board and administration. We care deeply about the future of our students. I would not do anything to jeopardize those programs or opportunities for students.”

Finance Director, Joe Stewart, presented the monthly Fiscal Report and answered questions from the Board. He also updated the Board about this year’s enrollment. He stated that our current FTE enrollment is 3,775.03 students, which is 25 FTE over the budgeted FTE, and that the district anticipates a slight increase in October.

The district received a small repair grant in the amount of \$35,450.00 (\$28,800 for the cafeteria roof and \$6,650 for the wood shop). OSPI requires that the Burlington-Edison School District authorize the signatures of persons who will be signing documents relating to the Small Repair Grant projects and that all public work requirements will be met. Mr. Wallace moved to adopt Resolution No. 770/Small Repair Grant, and Mr. Lopez seconded. Motion carried.

The Board Policies Committee met and reviewed the Community Relations/4000 series of the board policies. Mr. Dynes moved to give first reading to the Community Relations/4000 series as recommended by the Board Policies Committee. Mr. Spink seconded. Motion carried.

The Board Policies Committee met and reviewed the Personnel/5000 series of the board policies. Mr. Lopez moved to give first reading to the Personnel/5000 series as recommended by the Board Policies Committee. Mr. Spink seconded. Motion carried.

Board Policy No. 6115/Staff Recognition I incentives is a new policy that the Board reviewed in their packets for September. It formalizes current practice and places limits on amount spent for staff recognition and incentives. After discussion, the Board requested that the last paragraph of the policy referencing recognizing non-staff members be deleted and a separate policy be created for them. Mr. Spink moved to give first reading to Policy No. 6115/Staff Recognition/Incentives as amended by the Board. Mr. Lopez seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Lopez moved to approve the travel of Ryan Wallace and Cameron Munro to Portland, Oregon on October 7-8, 2009 to attend an Assessment Training Institute. Mr. Dynes seconded. Motion carried with board member, Bill Wallace, abstaining. Costs for the trip will be paid by GEAR-UP (TVOV-SKY). Travel will be privately owned vehicle.

The Board scheduled their next work session for Monday, October 12, starting at 5:30 p.m. in the District Office Board Room.

The next Board tour of the year is scheduled for Friday, October 23, 2009, from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. at West View Elementary School.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, October 26, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the District Office.

Mr. Dynes will go over the warrants this month.

Mrs. Browning reminded the Board to meet her at Auxiliary Services on October 1st to travel to Bellingham for a WSSDA Regional Meeting. Board members, Liza Bott, Bill Wallace, and Marty Lopez will attend.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Mrs. Bott announced the Board would take a short break. Upon return to regular session at approximately 8:35 p.m., Mrs. Bott immediately recessed the meeting into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the superintendents' evaluation, specifically goals for the 2009-2010 school year and stated the public is excluded due to the sensitive nature of this topic. She said she anticipated the Executive Session would be approximately 20 minutes long, and that the Board would not take formal action upon return to public session.

The meeting reconvened to public session at approximately 9:12 p.m. There were no decisions and there being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Board President

Board Secretary