



Roundtable Discussion Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 14, 2009

Place: Administration Building Boardroom

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

This Roundtable Discussion Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order and everyone was welcomed at 7:02 p.m. by President Stuart Jones. All other board members ... Kandace Boysen, Jeanne Cooper-Kuiper, Dan Potts, David Kitchen, Kay Olthoff and Judy Wilcox were also present.

II. Special Recognition:

- A. Board President Jones and Superintendent Terry L. Babbitt extended grateful appreciation and special thanks to retiring school board member Dave Kitchen. President Jones acknowledged Trustee Kitchen's balanced professional leadership, strong work ethic, and many district contributions during his four years of distinguished board service. Trustee Kitchen then shared some gracious personal remarks about his time on the Board and expressed confidence in a bright future for Mona Shores Public Schools.

III. Public Comments:

None.

IV. Separate Action Item(s):

- A. Superintendent Babbitt presented a recommendation from Director of Technology Lane White calling for approval of a \$45,785 bid proposal from the Trivalent Group to upgrade the District's Storage Area Network (SAN). Supt. Babbitt supported the motion to be paid out of district bond funds. After discussion, Trustee Judy Wilcox moved to approve the recommendation. Vice President Kandace Boysen supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously (7-0) by all members present.

V. Roundtable Topics of Discussion:

- A. Budget Clarification: President Jones offered a clarification regarding the Board's action this past May when establishing an Ending Fund Equity target for this year's 2009/10 GF Budget. Jones reminded the Board their target is \$4 million, not \$3.5 million as stated the previous week. Superintendent Babbitt noted the need to consider making possible mid-year budget cuts and recommended the Board wait until after the January 11, 2010 Revenue Consensus Conference before deciding on this matter.
- B. Board Policy Review: Vice President Kandace Boysen recommended the Board and Administrative Team establish a structured plan to review current board policies. In response, Superintendent Babbitt shared information about MASB and NEOLA purchased services to help organize and guide this process. Supt. Babbitt supported contracting with MASB to carry out a complete policy manual review. Board members decided for cost reasons to only review current high priority board policies before carrying out a complete policy manual review. President Jones reminded board members this initiative requires a large commitment of their time. He then asked members to review the current policies and to be ready in January to recommend specific ones for review.
- C. Data and Tracking of Expelled Students:
 - Trustee Wilcox and all others expressed a desire to receive periodic updates on reinstated expelled students. Supt. Babbitt shared that the Administrative Team tracks these students and compiles data on their status. He agreed to place this topic on periodic future Board Meeting agendas.
- D. Marketing of School District:
 - President Jones and others discussed the need for marketing the school district to current and potential new parents. Discussion focused on current 5th grade parents and those families living south and east of the school district. Supt. Babbitt agreed to work with building administrators and Community Services Director Renee Doan about these matters.

E. Healthier Student Lifestyle Initiative:

-Trustee Potts offered thoughts about promoting healthier student lifestyles. This discussion covered topics ranging from healthier foods to greater and more diverse exercise activities for students. President Jones supported such efforts but reminded everyone that district costs often prevent doing everything districts would like to do. Supt. Babbitt agreed to share this Healthier Student Lifestyle Initiative with members of the Administrative Team to promote and generate more focus on this message.

F. Budget and/or Finance Related Topics:

*Long-Term Facility Needs-

- Trustee Boysen offered the perspective that a new cost-saving building level structure might be needed in the future if classroom space needs decline. Trustee Olthoff noted this lessened-space scenario has led some school districts to utilize a lower and upper elementary grade-level configuration. Supt. Babbitt noted this classroom space scenario isn't the case right now but this scenario is possible in the future. Babbitt noted the district's strategic placement of new SOC students helps keep class sizes balanced and at appropriate levels in all four of the district's elementary schools. He further assured members the Administrative Team carefully monitors this particular matter.

*Staffing Plans-

- Board members discussed reviewing all positions carefully before recommending new hires. President Jones reminded members they are always the final decision maker when it comes to hiring decisions. Supt. Babbitt assured members the Administrative team carries out such careful reviews before bringing personnel recommendations forward. Trustee Cooper-Kuiper noted the district's need to adjust to the "new-normal" over time. Trustee Wilcox further suggested, "comparing Mona Shores' staffing structure to other like-sized school districts and cautioned to steer clear of micromanagement in this area."

*Service Consolidation With Partnering Districts-

- Board members recommended the district support appropriate consolidation efforts. Supt. Babbitt agreed this should be the case and reminded members these kind of shared leadership services are already occurring in certain areas.

*Board Expectations Regarding the 2010/11 Budget Process-

- President Jones asked Supt. Babbitt when it would be appropriate for the Board to establish an Ending Fund Equity target for next year's 2010/11 Budget. Supt. Babbitt recommended early March, immediately after Governor Granholm submits her 2010/11 Budget in February.
- Supt. Babbitt also recommended holding an Executive Session no later than in early March to establish negotiated contract expectations for 2010/11.
- President Jones facilitated a discussion regarding communication plans with district stakeholders. He noted the need for school supporters to contact state legislators about school funding needs. Trustee Wilcox reminded everyone cuts are going to be "drastic and we need to engage in serious communication with supporters." Trustee Kitchen noted this is "tough to do ... as we saw in the bond campaign." He further noted it's "hard to get anyone's attention until they are directly impacted by cuts." Every other board members offered similar comments. Jones closed this discussion by recommending specific "talking points" be developed for school supporters to assist in their advocacy efforts. Supt. Babbitt supported this idea and agreed to pull these talking points together.

VI. Adjournment:

Trustee Kitchen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.; Jeanne Cooper-Kuiper supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously (7-0) by all members present.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Cooper-Kuiper
Secretary, Mona Shores Board of Education
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