

Spotlight on the Board

Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings

August 12th, 2009

This was a Regular Board of Education meeting. All Board members were present.

Student Achievement Results Update 2008-09

ISAT Math/Reading Comparison 2007-08 and 2008-09

BOE Agenda Attachment: www.spotlightontheboard.org/spotlight_pdfs/d15_081209_SA_Update.pdf

Mary Zarr, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum – (Reviewed the material sent to the BOE and included as an agenda attachment online – see above link.)

Question/Comments from the BOE

Board member Sue Quinn – Thought the report addressed a Board goal. One half of the goal is AYP and it shows how dramatically it can be improved when teacher and student efforts are focused. The other half is the RIT scores from the MAP testing. In the “mean”, our students are growing and learning but when we break it down, there are students who are making AYP but not growing. Thinks that a focus needs to be on those students, may need more one-on-one. She didn’t see any information on that in the report given to the BOE.

Zarr – That will be given to the BOE as part of their October Annual Student Achievement Report. Last year was the district’s baseline data (for MAP testing – RIT scores), it was their first full year of implementation when we add the student growth targets from fall to spring. They will be reporting on grade levels, schools as a whole – where are they in meeting their growth targets and the percentage. As Quinn stated, that is the second part of their goal to increase the # of students who hit their growth target. They are working through that data and collecting it as well. It will be in the October report.

Supplemental Education Services (SES)

Public School Choice and Timeline (2009-10 School Year)

Attachment: www.spotlightontheboard.org/spotlight_pdfs/d15_081209_SES_SchoolChoice.pdf

Zarr – (Reviewed material sent to the BOE and included as an agenda attachment online – see above link. It includes basic information on SES and Public School Choice and their implementation as well as copies of the letters sent to parents at Jane Addams and Virginia Lake Schools.)

Questions/Comments from the BOE

Quinn – Thinks the services offered are great, similar to the homework centers that we already have great success with in the district. There is great potential for this, good idea but worried about the money. Are we able to use our ARRA funds (federal stimulus) for this or are we shifting money from something else? Where is that money coming from?

Zarr – The 20% mandatory set aside comes straight from our Title I funds under our regular Title I grant. Also our Title I funds under our ARRA stimulus plan. 20% of those must be set aside for the SES services (Supplemental Education Services).

Board President Gerald Chapman – He thinks the question relates to “are there additional funds necessary beyond the 20%?” **Quinn** – No, but that is a good question. What she was getting at is “are we losing something?” Are we not able now to fund our homework centers because we have to pull money to SES? Or are we able to essentially pull it all from ARRA so that we don’t need to add additional funds to take care of what is already working.

Zarr – Yes to all. We will not be dipping into district funds to support anything. With all of the grant money that came through and the usual being that we would evaluate and pass on services. We have not cut any services.

Quinn – Concerned about something in Zarr’s notes. “Designed to increase the achievement of low-income students not necessarily low-performing students.” Our low-performing students are the ones that need the help. So, do we have any low-performing students who are not also low-income, those that are falling through the cracks?

Zarr – Only yes to the first part. Yes, there would be. Going through our homework centers and our extended day centers, we can reach out and help children that wouldn’t fit in category or the other. That is one of the things that made the SES option and alternative so much more attractive to us because we were not taking something away from a child. We were able to offer more to more children.

Quinn – This says that we are not doing Public School Choice but SES instead, which is good. However, assuming that we don’t make AYP next year (VL and JA), is the default that we have to go to Public School Choice for the second year? **Zarr** – We would be required to do both (Public School Choice and SES). If NCLB is not reauthorized and nothing changes – and schools go into their third year of not making AYP, under our current federal guidelines, we would offer both next year.

Quinn – She is assuming success this year, but just wanted to know how it would work.

Board member Tim Millar – Asked, In a worst case scenario if we do not make AYP, how much federal money would we be at risk losing by not accepting Title I monies?

Zarr – With our ARRA Title I funds, it would be pushing \$3M dollars.

District’s Summer Construction Update

Merilee McCracken, Interim Asst. Superintendent from Business – Coming out of a two-year retirement. She has been in D15 for one month and will work 3 days a week until a full-time business manager is hired for the district. Says she has hit the ground running, was pleased to know that the BOE has adopted their 2009/10 budget, is also looking forward to the challenge of working with the negotiation team to come up with a brand new contract for the bus drivers in the district. And there has been a lot of construction going on in the district this summer. At every weekly Cabinet meeting, there has been an update on the construction projects from Craig Philips and the architects to make sure that the buildings are ready for our students.

Craig Philips, Director of Maintenance and Grounds - (referred to information in the Board’s packets and also on the district’s Web site under Agenda Attachments for the 8/12/2009 meeting)

Questions/Comments from the BOE

Board Member Mark Bloom – Says that he drives by Jane Addams School every day because he lives one block away. Bloom said that the carpet and floor tile project is not complete. The asphalt/paving is not complete as of today. Of the first three for JA listed, there are two that are not in line with what he can see at least by going by the school. **Phillips** – The paving will be completed this week. That is the front drive and the back drive. All of the carpet is done. Other items will be completed this week.

Quinn – When can we expect this entire list to be completed?

Phillips – We are projecting the entire list to be completed by the end of September. All of what we have identified in terms of Life/Safety work, with the exception of the capital investments. And the architects will talk about that later. The roofing programs will be completed. The curtain walls will be completed by October over at Hunting Ridge and Winston Campus. The architects will talk about Lake Louise construction when they do their presentation. But all of those items that we identified last March/April as being completed this year will be completed by the end of September.

Architects' Update on Construction

Steve Nelson, Architect – (reviewed information in the Board's packets and also available on the district's Web site under Agenda Attachments for this meeting.)

Comments from Nelson –

Pleasant Hill Roof – All of the roofing work has been completed for several days already. They are just doing the metal trim out. Everything on the flat surfaces/low slope areas are all completed. Tar has been offsite for a number of days. There is another issue with this building that will be talked about later. The contractors did encounter one small problem when they were on the roof. They damaged a gas pipe which had to be repaired at their expense. We were out of gas for a couple of days. That occurred back in the middle to end of July.

Paddock Roof – Paddock is an older building with a different roofing style. The roof is complete. They are now dealing with the metal trim out. Both Paddock and PH will be done before school opens. The contractors also ran into a couple of snags there. The older parts of the building have a wood board batten structural system. Our details called for a felt/resin paper to go down on that before they laid the first layer of tar to build up the roof. One of the roofers took a short cut in a certain area and some tar came through and got into four classrooms and hallway. The contractors are paying for carpet replacement and the repair of some technological components that were melted. A couple of countertops got some tar on them but they got that cleaned to the district's satisfaction. Everything will be done prior to the start of school.

Hunting Ridge Curtain Wall Replacement – As promised, will be completed prior to the start of school.

Winston Campus Curtain Wall Replacement – Working with the principals, they focused on the courtyard area. Demolition is done; they are now assembling the frames. The courtyard walls will be done prior to the start of school. Then they will work on the five bays on the western face of the school. That project should be completed in October. Believes that is the timeline that he discussed with the BOE initially.

Lake Louise Curtain Wall Replacement – This building is the largest of the three curtain wall replacements to be done in the district. It also happens to be the building that had the easiest availability of moving students (around) because of the mobiles that they have at LL. The other buildings are a bit more constrained, they can't move kids. In their weekly meetings with administration, they talked about that. Even if Lake Louise was started first, they still would not have been able to finish all of the walls before the start of school. As soon as HR is done, that crew will go to Lake Louise. The other crew would stay at Winston Campus finishing by early October. Because they can really only do one bay at a time (at Lake Louise), that clearly stretches the LL project well into the colder temperatures. Both the architects and the LL principal had concerns about that. The architects are now proposing that the contractors come in at the end of October/early November while the temperatures are still reasonable and get most of the bays that they can do. Then they will discontinue that operation until spring 2010. They will get to a point where it will be difficult to maintain temperature in the classrooms and too cold to caulk/seal the joints. Thinks it will end up being a better way to deal with the kids (moving around) and the educational process.

Questions/Comments from the BOE -

Quinn – Since the curtain wall replacements are not a safety issue, it is something we want to do. It has been an on-going issue with some leakage here and there but it is not a leaking roof. Why would we not consider putting this off until next summer so we don't have to shuffle the kids around? It seems very disruptive to instruction.

Nelson – We approached that with the contractor. He would obviously prefer not to do that because he has slated/budgeted his workforce to pay for this project. The other thing to consider there is that every June 1st is a labor increase. He (contractor) would have the opportunity to look for additional compensation. We have asked him what that dollar amount would be and we anticipate it not to be a

low number. We did ask for it to see what it might be. As of right now, he is not in the mode of wanting to store all of that stuff (supplies) until next year. That is a Board decision (to delay start of project), understands that. The contractor was not excited to hear about a possible delay.

Quinn – Is sure he wasn't excited but it was not part of our understanding that construction would go on into the school year. There are allowances on each side of this.

Bloom – Absolutely, we are not anymore excited to hear that this project (LL) hasn't even started yet. No where in the game plan in any of the BOE's conversations was that this wasn't going to be even started until the end of the summer? This is by no means a small little change. This is a huge difference in the project. If it would have started on time and only half had been done, then half would have been done. And then we would be talking about a significantly disruption to the students. The fact that this particular school is in a better position to disrupt their students is no excuse for us to disrupt the students. He has no idea why this work wasn't started at the beginning of the summer when we were told it would be. Originally this game plan was that all of this work would be done, except for a certain amount of work at Lake Louise. Now Lake Louise isn't going to even be started until the beginning of the school year. Bloom doesn't believe that this was a district decision to put off this work so he doesn't think the district should have to pay additional to move the work to a reasonable time for our students.

Nelson – Respectfully disagrees part of that is when we bid the projects, we did state that there was a long lead time for a curtain wall. There was no way starting in June, it would have had to been in January. So there was no chance that they were going to start any time prior to August and had we not gone through and accelerated the curtain walls, he doesn't think that any of the buildings would have been totally done. In our discussions, rather than disrupt three buildings and displacing students, Hunting Ridge was the smallest amount (of work) and we were able to focus on that and get it done so kids would not be affected at all. Winston Campus was the same thing. He does recall talking about Winston having to go into the fall. We were hoping that they would be able to get at least the first two or 3 bays at Lake Louise done. Curtain walls are 12 to 16 week lead times. They would have had to have been bid much earlier to have the material here on June 1st. Bids were approved in April and there was a 3 ½ week bid time. We tried to expedite as much as we possibly can.

Quinn – We can go back and reconstruct the timeline. She agrees with Bloom that there wasn't this long of a timeline.

Board member Richard Bokor - He thought that they said the end of October/November.

Quinn – It might just be a month or two for the contractor but it is huge for kids. She thinks that as a Board they should look into the contract. If it is going to cost money, maybe that can be negotiated; look into a better solution because she is not happy with this solution.

Chapman – Well, there is a time issue. If we decide that we are going to fool around with the contract with the contractor and not make a decision on that. The contractor is not even going to start the project until he knows that. **Nelson** – He has been instructed to start as soon as Hunting Ridge is done and get started mid-October/early November as early as possible. He is on that timeframe. He is also currently under the understanding that he will have to cease operations and start up in spring again.

Chapman – We do have plans worked out with the LL Principal to move two classrooms at any one time. To him, we can proceed with that first phase of the work and if the coordination works, so that we know when we come back and implement the next phase in the spring, we would know it works. If it didn't work (in the fall) and it was a coordination issue, Chapman would say, yes push the second phase off until the summer. Until we know . . . what he got out of the last presentation was that we were able to do this because only two classrooms at a time would be affected. He knows it is not the most convenient. But on the other hand, it does get the project done.

Quinn – If it was a critical project. Having just recently witnessed this firsthand (disruption of classrooms due to Pleasant Hill's roof leaks), kids are great and they adapt. Teachers worked at making it work. But if there was an option not to do that, let's take that. If we are going to split it in

two, then split it into two so that there are only small disruptions in the fall which is the critical time when students come back and push most of it out until the spring.

Daniel Lukich, Superintendent – Along those lines, what percentage of the bays or rooms would be finished in the fall? **Nelson** – There are 18 bays. This fall, they will probably complete six to 7 bays, about one third of the project. Every building is slightly different. Until you take the first one or two bays out, they will not know the patterns, etc. Like at HR, it took a little bit of work until they figured out how to do it and then it moves faster. He would not want the contractors to go into the winter months because they would run into some issues with the materials. He would not want them to come back six months later to fix something because it wasn't installed in the correct temperature.

Millar – Concerned about the safety of the kids as well. Aren't they asbestos panels?

Nelson – All of the asbestos was taken out.

Millar – Will the construction impact play areas and other areas as well?

Nelson – It affects the walk area. That is the staging area that the contractors need to operate. It does have some impact, but doesn't take out the whole area.

Board member Peggy Babcock – What about noise issues? **Nelson** – The majority of the noise is the demolition. Then you are dealing with a nail gun and a screw gun. There are no jackhammers. But there is some noise. No doubt about that.

Bokor – Is there any potential safety hazards for kids?

Nelson – Not the way we will set it up. They will come in on their off hours and put in the temporary wall and then they are working on the outside for everything else. They are not in the building.

Bokor – What about parking for staff and parents?

Nelson – They will be parking in the fenced in area. That is true for the other buildings as well.

Millar – You are saying that they work off hours.

Nelson – It would be after school hours so they can put up that temporary wall. Then during the actual installation, that is regular working hours. Just when they are actually in the building which will be during after school hours.

Chapman – Noise issues will be the same when they are working on the western wall at Winston Campus. **Nelson** – We have asked the contractor for the price. We will keep the administration informed as to what that is. **Chapman** – If it is necessary to have a special meeting, we will (to discuss the contract). For Chapman at least, he would prefer to at least get Lake Louise started. You really don't know what will happen until you begin the process. The fact of the matter is when you are in the school business; unfortunately you can't get all of the construction done in the summer. It just doesn't happen. This is not an unusual circumstance. It is inconvenient but not unusual.

Transportation Update

Jim Garwood, Asst. Superintendent for Administrative Services – Now operations responsible for Transportation this year since there is an Interim Business Manager (Merilee McCracken). He is working closely, meeting as a team with McCracken and Doughty – meeting on a weekly basis. We will be going into negotiations pretty soon (with transportation employees) and trying to get the year off to a positive start.

Walt Doughty, Director of Transportation – The district has received all 22 of their new buses, they arrived the second week of July. That gave them ample opportunity to have two-way radio systems and GPS installed. An electronic inspection system that came with the GPS systems was also installed. The staff training for that system is scheduled for Friday (8/14). They will learn how to integrate that with the online internet services and train the bus drivers.

The mapping upgrade system from Cook County has been integrated with the VersTrans System which has enabled them to go through and fine-tune our transportation system to make sure all of our students have been relocated; they continue to work on that. The technology is helping them install

the onscreen GPS/VersaTrans program that was purchased. That will be ready to go when school is opened.

There was a Back-to-School meeting on Monday (8/10) for bus drivers. 154 drivers came to the meeting and there are 145 routes planned. Six drivers are still in training and should be finished prior to the start of school. Transportation is doing really well. They continue to fine-tune the routes every day since they just had the Open Registration (8/5). They work on it every day to keep the numbers down, and maximizing their potential with their equipment (buses).

They are working on introducing eLink which will have public access (online window) for community members. Realtors or parents can type in an address and it will give them the home school for that address, where the bus stops may potentially be located and times. There will be a disclaimer in there that the school given is the home school only. If a child is in a gifted, bilingual, special education program – then it could be a different school/time/bus stop.

Board member Richard Bokor – Asked if there would be a lot of changes in the pick up stops or will they be pretty much the same as last year? **Doughty** – We have gone through and fine-tuned the stops. The goal is to not have anyone walking more than 2/10ths of a mile. In most cases, of the 10,000 students that we transport – 9400 of those students are walking less than 2/10ths of a mile and of those 9,400 students – 7,000 are actually walking less than 600 ft. to the bus stop.

Garwood – They are also working on improving efficiencies. There will be some stop changes. That is a process that occurs every year.

Student Enrollment Update

Garwood – At Open Registration on August 5th, there were 259 new students registered for the District. Last year (2008/09 year), it was 361 new students for the Open Registration date. It varies from year to year. The 6th Day Enrollment last year (2008/09) – which is the 6th full day of school; there were 12,342 students (in the district). As he counts right now to date, we have 11,612 students (total in D15). We do have new students registering every day and updates will be sent to the BOE.

At this point, Garwood does anticipate that the district will be under what their enrollment was last year. Our enrollment is declining anywhere in the last five years, from 75 to 250 students a year. A final 6th Day Enrollment Report for the 2009/10 school year will be presented at the September BOE meeting.

Garwood stated that in the Personnel packet the BOE received, he has already recommended adding one ½ section of Kindergarten at Lake Louise School. Their Kindergarten is at the critical point to avoid 29/30 students in one class. As of today, he received an update from Lincoln School (this is not in their Personnel Report, just came today) they also hit that critical point and require an additional section of Kindergarten (half-day).

He confirmed that there will be a full-day bilingual Kindergarten class at both Kimball Hill and Pleasant Hill this year. In addition, there will be three full-day Transitional Kindergarten classes – two at Virginia Lake and one at Hunting Ridge.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m. An Executive Session was not held.

CCSD15 Summary of Board Actions and Official Minutes

A "Summary of Board Actions" will be posted on the District 15 Web site as quickly as possible after each **Regular** Board of Education meeting, usually within two days. Official minutes of Board of Education meetings cannot be posted until after they are approved by a vote of the board at the next regular monthly meeting. Board of Education meetings are open to the public, and all board actions, with the exception of closed sessions, are considered to be public records.

www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/BoardOfEducation/HTML/BOEMeetingDates.html

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