

# **Spotlight on the Board**

## **Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings**

### **January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

*Spotlight on the Board* is a synopsis of notes and recordings taken at the District 15 School Board meetings by Frank C. Whiteley PTA's school board liaison, Jennifer Mondy. They are meant to help parents and staff who are unable to attend the Board meetings on a regular basis to keep informed about the issues and plans affecting the district. These Notes are not endorsed by District 15 or the Board of Education. Below are the highlights from the January 9<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting.

#### **Options: 2008-2009 Transportation Plan**

The administration is recommending a three tier busing system next year with starting times of 7:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. in order to shorten bus routes, reduce the number of students on each route and allow for flexibility. Software simulated bus routes will be created for the proposed plan in order to compare when students are getting on the buses now vs. the three-tier system, prior to final Board approval. Some Board members are concerned about the bell time for the first tier and whether the routes will be short enough to account for the earlier start time. Other members believe that the current system isn't efficient, costs to retain additional buses/drivers are too high and three tiers would provide better service and safety. The Board is expected to vote on the plan at the February 13<sup>th</sup> Board meeting so that routes can begin to be rescheduled.

#### **Proposed Policy – Operational Services: Fiscal and Business Management**

A recommendation by the Finance Committee to set a reserve guideline was challenged by several Board members. They argued that the committee was not given the authority to review/create policy and financial parameters need to be established by the full Board. The policy was tabled and will be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Finance Committee Report**

Several Board members questioned the original charge of the committee and its recent meeting minutes that indicated it discussed items not directed by the entire Board. Committee members outlined how it had been operating with administrators bringing issues forward for feedback and discussion while working on next year's budget presentation.

#### **Bus Bids including Purchase or Lease for Remainder of 2007/08 School Year**

The Board was split over the decision to purchase or lease fourteen buses to replace the expiring Laidlaw contract and to allow for spares. Arguments in favor of a purchase or lease/purchase included upgrading the current fleet and selling older buses with increased maintenance costs. Those preferring a one-year lease cited the recent purchase of twenty buses this past year and if a three tier system is approved, additional buses will not be needed. Motion to approve the lease of 14 buses on a one-year basis.

Approved 4:3 (Yes: Millar, Quinn, Rowden, Keenan; No: Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg)

Full detailed *Spotlight on the Board* notes for this meeting can be found at [www.fcwpta.org/board\\_notes.htm](http://www.fcwpta.org/board_notes.htm)

The next scheduled Regular Board of Education meeting will be held Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. at Sundling Junior High on Smith Street in Palatine.