

# ***Spotlight on the Board***

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

### **May 14th 2008**

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

### **Action Items**

#### **Appointment of Superintendent of Schools**

District 15 Press Release – [www.ccsd15.net/WhatsNew/NewsReleases/HTML/Archive/CCSD1505\\_14\\_2008.html](http://www.ccsd15.net/WhatsNew/NewsReleases/HTML/Archive/CCSD1505_14_2008.html)  
Daily Herald, 5/15/2008 – [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily\\_Herald\\_05\\_15\\_08\\_new\\_superintendent.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily_Herald_05_15_08_new_superintendent.pdf)

### **Citizens Address the Board**

**Board President, Gerald Chapman** – Announced that the meeting would now be open for public comment. Said to please remember that public comment is not a dialogue between people who speak and the Board. If there is a specific issue for which a response is necessary, Dr. McKanna or his designee will get back with a response. Said that the Board has been made aware in an email of the concerns of several people in the audience regarding the Paddock facility concerns. He wanted to report that a Board committee has already met and discussed those issues, which are on the recommendations for capital projects at the next Board meeting. In addition, we have hired an architectural firm that is in the process of studying the facility needs of all of our schools and the Board expects to receive a comprehensive report in September. We are looking at addressing facility concerns not only at Paddock but district-wide.

Said that when he calls the name of the citizen (who filled out a request to speak), he would like them to come forward, take a seat, state their name, community they represent, limit their comments to three minutes, and if somebody has previously stated something in which you agree – please state that you agree rather than just repeating the entire comment in the interest of time. And finally, please keep your comments general and not specific to any person, student or staff member respecting their right to privacy. This is not the place to comment on personnel issues.

#### **Vicky Wilson – Paddock School parent**

Stated that she sent the email about issues with the Paddock building. It began with an inquiry about the carpeting at Paddock and then it turned into something much larger. The problems with the Paddock building are quite numerous and are causing a great deal of concern for both parents and staff. The problems are primarily in the following areas: carpet, roof, electrical and HVAC. The carpeting is 18 years old. Nearly all of the other D15 buildings have gotten all or some of their carpeting replaced in the past 12 years. Only Paddock has had no new carpeting or flooring of any kind in 18 years. Paddock is still not planned for replacement, only for repair per the five year plan from the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. In addition to the old carpeting, there is an issue of the cleaning of the carpet. Due to cutbacks in custodial staff, the carpeting only gets vacuumed on a regular basis, not cleaned. Hallway carpeting is only cleaned with a scrubber on extended breaks like spring, winter and summer. Classroom carpeting is only cleaned with a scrubber during the summer.

Regarding the roof, Paddock was built in 1954 and still has the original roof. In 1990, a new roof was overlaid. The old one is still there causing major problems. The roof has been a known problem for years but for some reason, it has never been made a real priority. In the 10 year safety survey report from 2005 for Paddock, the violations state that the roof has deteriorated and is beginning to tear at the seams. The recommendation was to tear off/replace the roof area with an estimated completion date of 10/06 and a priority code of A. However, we are still not slated for replacement until 2009/10. Hard to understand why the roof at Paddock was an urgent priority in 2005 but is not considered urgent in 2008.

**Joanne Colucci – Paddock parent**

Doesn't feel that we are doing our best for Paddock, doesn't feel proud of her school, and doesn't think the kids at Paddock feel proud of their school. The building is not being maintained, it smells. Bottom line, everyone who walks in there smelled it. Her first impression of the school was that it smelled like urine and that was several years ago. Nothing has been done about it. When she found out that the carpet is 18 years old that explained why. The roof problem is that it is leaking in classrooms while children are trying to learn. Buckets are placed around the classroom and they have to go between the buckets while they are trying to concentrate on school while the rain is dripping through the vents in the ceiling catching the rainfall. On the weekends, when no one is there to empty the buckets, they come in and the carpeting is soaking wet. They can't have story time, or snack time sitting on the floor while the teacher reads because the floor is too wet. Feels that the ventilation system is also a problem, it is always extremely hot in the building. Knows the building is from 1954 but again feels that Paddock has been overlooked as far as maintenance goes. Would like to know when Paddock is going to become a priority. Also would like to know why schools that are a priority C or low on the list are getting fixed before us and we are on the priority A list. Has a child that suffers from a disease that will become a student at Paddock shortly. She is on chemotherapy right now, has a compromised immune system and fears for her being at that school. Other parents have expressed concern for their children with asthma. They say at the beginning of the school year at Paddock, their child's asthma problems increase because of the school environment, air quality at the school. She knows that there is mildew and mold in that carpet from all of the wetness that is left. Would like to see her school moved to the top of the priority list.

**Jane VanWolvelear – Jane Addams and Winston Campus parent**

Said that she just saw something and that is the reason why she is here. She would like to propose to the Board that they allocate a period of time, whether it be once a month, once every two months, once a quarter – to listen and have a true genuine dialogue with the parents of this community. Stated that what happens is – you give us three minutes to present our concerns, everybody says "thank you very much" and that's it. We get no feedback. She's looking for a genuine dialogue where whoever wants to come in this room can talk and ask Board members what they think about an issue and get feedback, genuine dialogue because that is how problems are resolved. That is what keeps a community intact. That is what we need in District 15 - sincere, genuine dialogue between the parents, the Board members, the teachers, anybody involved with our children's education. We need dialogue and it is not happening.

**Board member Kelly Keenan** – (responded) Said that VanWolvelear is more than welcome to email Keenan at any time and she does respond to her emails. So if you have any concerns or problems, please feel free.

**VanWolvelear** – Sincerely appreciates that, knows that and understands that. But oftentimes, she thinks she is one person and that's it. And what she says is her concerns and she may have five neighbor ladies feeling that same thing, they don't know what to do. If she can say, let's go talk about it, Keenan is willing to listen. They will do that but they may not feel like they are being heard. There is no personal contact with email. **Keenan** – Said to please feel free to email and we could set something up if there are enough people interested with a specific problem.

**VanWolvelear** – Said that she is not talking specifics.

**Chapman** – (injected) Said that this is not the forum to dialogue but appreciates that.

**Dave Wilson** – Paddock parent

Wanted to continue regarding the Paddock building issues. Said that the electrical system is approximately 50 years old. The ten year safety report said that the electrical system has been a hazard to the entire building. The HVAC system is working poorly; there have been over 60 work orders over 36 months. In addition to the indoor air quality issues, like the smell that had been mentioned, there is the wetness that was talked about and mold. He certainly does not know if there is or is not mold, but he does know that there are wood components in the leaking roof. At a glance of the FOIA information received on other schools, he doesn't see any other roof construction using wood parts/wood joists. Paddock due to its age does have wood in the roof. That scares us. He appreciates the fact that a committee has been set up, would love to be able to get the Paddock community to add

some input on that committee when it does meet. But obviously the goal tonight was to ensure that it is visible and make it as clear as possible our desire for prioritization in a fair and logical manner with the priority codes mentioned in the ten and five year plans. Said that they talked about carpet, roof, electrical issues, and also indoor air quality. We talked about the smells and the potential for mold. Wilson is wondering if a mold inspection can be done as well to alleviate the concerns of parents. Thinks that a quick mold inspection, by an independent third party, would put all of that to rest.

**Betty Pappas** – Has a child in the SIP (Autism-Structured for Independence program) Marion Jordan Started by saying that nobody knows that we are here however the principal was informed by one of the parents. Her first concern is the dismissal of the teacher (named).

**Chapman** – (stopped Pappas) Chapman said that this is a public meeting and we have to be very cautious about putting people's names before this Board. If you have specific concerns that relate to personnel issues, those should be put in writing and presented to the Board. They should not be presented in a public meeting.

**Pappas** - (continued) Said that she is concerned about the dismissal of her daughter's teacher in the SIP program. Though things are always more complicated than they seem, we cannot understand why the teacher was dismissed from District 15. From her perspective, this teacher has gone above and beyond for the students in her care. Not only has she come to our homes to implement school lessons and daily advocacy to the needs of our children. For these three years, this effective teacher has been the major factor in the progress of these children in the SIP program. Before this, her daughter was in a program in another school with no goals met. Pappas was a very discouraged parent and because of this, she called a meeting with all the teachers as well as another member of the special education program. They told Pappas to go over to another school and introduced this teacher to her and asked her to give the district another chance in teaching her daughter. Since her daughter has been in this teacher's class (named) she has made goals for the first time in her life since she has been in this district. And now the district wants to dismiss this teacher and not allow the parents to even give input on how we feel about this.

**Chapman** – Said that he is going to inject here again as Pappas used the (teacher's) name again. This is a public meeting, it is not appropriate to talk about specific personnel issues at a public meeting. Thinks the Board is willing to receive input but it should be in writing and it should be considered confidential. It should not be something talked about here in a public meeting. It is not appropriate for a public meeting. Thinks it is embarrassing not only to the teacher. Just doesn't see that Pappas is doing any benefit by presenting a teacher's personnel position at a public meeting.

**Pappas** – Stated that she is just a concerned parent.

**Chapman** – What he is saying is that those of you who have concerns, we are certainly willing to listen. We have to respect that all of our employees have the right to privacy. This is a public place here; it is not a private place. We are being televised.

**Ying Wang** – MJ SIP program parent

Her son is 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student at MJ school in assisted SIP class. The issue she has is the lack of inclusions in the regular education classes in the school. Her son spent first grade at Jane Addams and was included in daily math, reading, music and art. He also had a chance to attend music therapy class. He was doing great there. His language became more spontaneous, his reading level was right on target, and his math was above his grade level. He made great progress because of his inclusion program. Last August, he was transferred to Marion Jordan to start second grade. In his IEP for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, the inclusion was the same but added 10 to 15 minutes more to his daily math classes. Last October, only several weeks after school started, Marion Jordan decided to terminate his math inclusion program. He was pulled from his math class and never given a chance to participate in the reading inclusion classes or any other inclusion classes as indicated in his IEP. This was all done without parent knowledge. Legally the school has no right to do that. The same thing happened to the other children in my son's class. Instead of finding a way to help these children to do better, they simply pulled them out of their inclusion class. Whoever made this decision obviously has no intention to help these children to make progress. Her son has had huge setbacks. For her son's next year school IEP, they cut out all the inclusion programs instead of setting up the proper goals and working hard to help children to achieve their goals, they set up the goals lower than before. We brought up the concerns at

the IEP meeting and made it crystal clear to everybody there of what we want for our son especially about the inclusion programs and the speech therapy. So far, nothing has happened or changed. She has not gotten any information from the school about her son's next school year's IEP updates. They have no intention to make any efforts to improve the current situation. Everybody knows that the inclusion program for autistic kids is very important.

**Enya Masangkay** – Also a parent of child in SIP program at MJ

Collectively the group has two main issues in the speech therapy program that their children go to. First issue is that there has been a change in the way speech therapy issues have been conducted this year from last year. Last year, they had one-on-one sessions with the speech therapist. But now most of the parents have realized that they are not given this one-on-one session anymore, they are being met as a group. So they feel that the needs of their children are not being focused on when they meet because the teacher is divided among all of the children in the group. Asked if something was done previously, why is it not being carried over and done now because the children really do have a bigger advantage with one-on-one sessions vs. a group session. Secondly, we have noticed that there is a lack of communication between the school's speech therapist and the speech therapist that our children go to outside of the school. Previously there were communications so that the therapies from outside and the therapies from the school would complement and reinforce each other. That way the goals are met much faster. Now with the lack of communication, it doesn't seem like it is going anywhere. We would like the children to be able to achieve the goals much faster than if they only had the school's therapy. That is why we brought them to therapies outside of the school. So we want this to go back. One of the parent's has raised this issue before in school meetings but unfortunately, we did not get any positive response.

**Ani Erickson** – Parent of child in SIP (Autism – Structured for Independence) program at MJ

Stated that she did meet with the principal at MJ last Wednesday to represent all of the parents who moved from Jane Addams to MJ and to present all of the concerns we are presenting to the Board right now. Since then, none of our concerns have been addressed so we felt that it was extremely important to all meet as parents and we found that we all have these same problems. The concerns she is going to address are Music Therapy and inclusion. When our children attended Jane Addams, they were in regular music classes and also had an option to attend music therapy. When we moved to Marion Jordan, the parents were told that they must choose between either inclusion or music therapy. We were told that this was a decision made by the principal and that the program was not run the same way as the principal from JA did it. Erickson said that this would not be a problem if they were teaching the same academia but they are not. Music therapy focuses on the students getting academic skills through music while regular music strictly teaches the students the basics of music. The two classes are completely different yet parents were not allowed to have their children in both of these classes. This is just one example, where every child from the program that was transferred to MJ from Jane Addams that were in the same teacher's classroom, has had reduced inclusion. Said that our children must have these opportunities so they can grow up to be productive citizens in our society. As a teacher in another district who just finished up her type 75 administration certificate, she understands the needs of special needs children and they must be placed in the least restrictive environment. We should not be sitting here fighting for our kids to get inclusion. You as a Board, principals and teachers should be welcoming inclusion - not having us sit here, as parents with children who have absolutely no voice. You have the pleasure of having your students come to you and tell you what they did at school. Our children do not have this voice and yet the administrators and the principals are the ones who should be doing this, and it is not being done.

**Mr. Xue** – Parent of child in MJ SIP program

Stated that the SIP program at Marion Jordan failed not because of the hard-working teacher, but it is because of the neglect of the school leadership. We feel that the school doesn't really care about these special kids. They don't really know how hard these families work to get a proper education and program for these kids. They don't care how much effort we have made to help our children to have a normal life. They don't know how these families have struggled emotionally and financially. They don't know how frustrated we are when they (school leadership) make irresponsible decisions. Our children

spend six hours a day in school. The school plays a major role in their life. If the school intends to fail them, then they definitely will have no future. Our children were transferred from JA to MJ last August. Before this transition, all of the parents expressed serious concerns and we wrote a letter to the program director. She replied to us saying that they made this move because they want to integrate them with valuable resources to provide better services to our children. Obviously, they failed. They transferred our children from a qualified school to an unqualified school. The school district should resolve this issue immediately. You have the ability, the resources to do this to fulfill your promise of No Child Left Behind.

**Sharon Bradley** – Parent of a child in the SIP program at Marion Jordan

Said that another concern of the group is the lack of appropriate decision-making of the principal at Marion Jordan. The principal at JA went out of his way to make sure the parents were satisfied with the program and teachers. To date, there has only been one meeting scheduled with the principal from MJ. After proposing questions that we have all mentioned, she has dodged each question and they have gone unanswered. She did however mention that the situation with our children's teacher was out of her control. She further insinuated that the situation was being handled from higher up and she had little to do with this. Bradley asked the Board what kind of politics is being played in the school district where her son attends. It has also been mentioned that due to scheduling issues, including the lack of mainstreaming our children, was from the decision of the special education coordinator. Bradley finds this particularly hard to believe considering the personality the coordinator conveyed in her son's IEP meeting. Said that this is not a leader that gives up authority and decision-making easily. Further, none of the parents in the SIP program were notified in order to ensure that our concerns were being addressed on behalf of our children.

**Matt Erickson** – Parent of a child in the SIP program at MJ

Stated that he moved to D15 because of the Autism program. He did plenty of research and found that this program was giving the kids a chance to succeed. Said that he speaks for all of the parents in the class when he says that they are completely dissatisfied with the many things that have been handled involving our children. Said that even though the district's mission statement reads: "Producing world class learners by building a connected learning community", this is not happening. The principal has not considered the impact each of her poor decisions has had and will have on our children. Again, we are asking for our questions to be addressed. We know a lot happened tonight and we look forward to communication. He would like to recap the questions addressed and hopes that someone will hear them.

1. We are looking to reinstate the teacher.
2. Why were our children not mainstreamed in the beginning of the year?
3. When can we expect our students to receive one-on-one speech therapy?
4. What can be done to mainstream our children more so they can get the same opportunities as other children?
5. We are puzzled as to why the principal has not tried to resolve any of these issues.

Erickson said that the parents strongly believe that the principal does not have the best interests for the SIP students in the class. Said that further she played politics, passed the buck and has zero understanding of special needs children. Asked if it is possible to move our children back to Jane Addams where their needs were being met? If not, what is going to be done to ensure our children's fundamental needs are being met at MJ? Erickson said that the group looks forward to a response and most appreciates it. And if nothing does transpire, we look forward to taking legal action.

**Chapman** – As I indicated this is not a time to dialogue with people. We are aware of the concerns. Chapman does have a couple of comments. Said that we appreciate the fact that there are a number of people present with concerns. Chapman thinks that the respect that is shown up to a Board in terms of honoring our time works both ways. The last gentlemen summarized what the issues were and got that issue in front of the Board in a little, what he thinks, is a little more efficient kind of way. The other thing – Chapman for one is offended if you want to come to a Board meeting and threaten legal action. It certainly is a right that you have but it certainly doesn't set a tone as though we are trying to

work together to resolve issues. Thinks that what we do as a Board and what we do in terms of working with the administration is to resolve issues within the district not to threaten each other with legal action. With that said, let's move forward with the rest of our agenda.

**Board Member Nancy Lee Carlson** – Said that before she begins to speak regarding the D15 Education Foundation (on the agenda), she would like to make a comment on the SIP program. Carlson is personally aware of the SIP program because she had a non-verbal autistic child, who is now in Palatine HS, at Marion Jordan and Jane Addams schools. She wanted to say something that is rarely public knowledge – she at one time when she moved to the district many years ago, she had problems (with special education services), tried to resolve the problems and went into a “due process hearing” and frankly, she won.

After that portion in time, she felt it was her duty, as a parent and a taxpayer of this district, to speak for the children. The Board at that time was starting Conyers Learning Academy (CLA) and the head of special education then worked very hard. Those were dark days when the children were referred to as “closet children” Said that this district has done a tremendous amount for special education children and it continues to work for that. Carlson is a little concerned that many months have gone by that the parents there have felt that they are unable to be heard. One of the hallmarks she has heard of over the past eight years she has been on the school board is the willingness of our special education department to hear their voices. Possibly there was a miscommunication that didn't go up through the special education department. She knows that the district will work very hard to resolve it. It may not be the result that everybody is happy with, she can't guarantee that, but we have to work together. Carlson said she will echo Dr. Chapman's words – that by threatening this or that – that doesn't resolve the issue. Carlson can tell you that – she does a lot of pro bono (free) special education work (as an attorney). It doesn't resolve it. What resolves it is if we all work together for the betterment of the children.

*Reference:* Due Process Hearing

[www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/due\\_process.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/due_process.htm) Illinois State Board of Education

[www.ldail.org/hearing.cfm](http://www.ldail.org/hearing.cfm) Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois

## **Board Discussion and Reports**

### **First Reading - Board of Education Policies**

Policies brought to First Reading included:

**4:110** Operational Services – Transportation

**5:190** Professional Personnel – Teacher Qualifications

**6:30** Instruction – Organization of Instruction

**6:90** Instruction – Kindergarten (to be combined with above)

**7:100** Students – Health Examinations, Immunizations and Exclusion of Students

**Board member Sue Quinn** – Said that at the last Board meeting, the Board authorized a joint committee to look at **Policy 4:55** Operational Services – Bidding Procedures. The committee hashed through it and came up with a revised version. There was a room full of cabinet members, except for Dr. Sophie, and the superintendent and it went to the Policy Committee later that afternoon. And it didn't make it out of Policy Committee.

**Asst. Superintendent, Dr. Jean Sophie** – Said that it did make it out of Policy Committee, they are still waiting for some more language. That is all she is waiting for. It will be on the agenda for the June Board meeting. **Quinn** – Asked if the language was from legal?

**Sophie** – Said that it is from the attorneys and the business department on two different areas.

**Quinn** – The business department was at the meeting where we hashed out the details.

**Sophie** – Still waiting on two different areas, legal. There was some language that both Bob Strande and George Lingel were to look at. The policy will be presented at the June Board meeting along with all of the other policies that were listed (on the agenda but not presented).

## **Committee Reports**

### **Finance Committee**

**Board member Tim Millar** – Quinn and he met with the committee to go over Workmen's Compensation. It was a very productive meeting and believes that the Board will be addressing that later in the meeting so he won't go into any details. Thought it was very positive, thinks the district will have some very generous savings. Is looking forward to rolling that out.

### **Communications Committee**

**Quinn** – Last month she mentioned that this month the Board could talk about plans for renewing the committee since it was a one-year deal. It is her understanding that the Board is actually going to talk about committees in August after having our new superintendent come on board. But she would like to propose the idea of using the Communications Committee as a vehicle for communicating with the public as one of our citizens who addressed the Board mentioned. But more specifically towards the strategic planning process that she hopes we are going to start undertaking. It is part of our new superintendent's contract and it will get underway at some point. An integral part of that, she thinks, needs to be a dialogue with the community. We could use the Communications Committee as a vehicle for that and the Board could talk more about how that might work.

### **Facility/Architectural/Real Estate Committee**

**Keenan** – In June, we are going to get an update from the architects. They have met with all of the principals and have gotten feedback about their buildings. We should have their report and they are looking for direction. So when the Board gets their report, said to think about what you would like to see in the final report to be able to give the architects some direction. The committee is still looking to improve sidewalk access to the schools. Will have some numbers, hopefully for the next Board meeting, on more sidewalks needed to have more kids walk to school. They are also looking at the lease between the church and Winston Campus and meeting with them to sealcoat the parking lot this year.

**Quinn** – Commented that she attended the Architectural Committee meeting. Regarding the Facilities Audit, especially since the architects are looking for direction, asked if the audit would be brought out of the committee to the full Board. Quinn would like to see whatever is coming to the June meeting in the Board packet so there is time to think about whatever it is that they are going to present.

**Keenan** – Said that it will be, it will be presented to the full Board in June. The architects will be at the meeting and all Board members will have the architect's full report the Friday before the BOE meeting. It absolutely is coming to the full Board – that is the intention.

**Quinn** – The second part of what Quinn is trying to say is that she doesn't want to have any screening going on in the Facilities Committee as to what will be in the report. She wants everything to come to the full Board. That is the point she is trying to make. Doesn't want it to go through committee first to get screened, then come to the Board.

**Carlson** – Is going to echo what Quinn just said but echo it a little bit differently. She personally would not like to have the committee structure. We have this big strategic plan and doesn't see running it through a Communications committee. That sets up an Executive Committee. Really thinks that we should act as a Board of the Whole. As much as we have a new superintendent, she thinks that it is imperative, given that we have a very large strategic plan, that the input must be filtered through all of us. Carlson has concerns about all of the committees. She agrees that she doesn't want anything filtered and would really suggest that this year that we do not have committees. But that we act as a Committee of the Whole because a committee has no power to enact anything. Because we are coming up with Board goals and the strategic plan, she would suggest that we not have a committee. There is no requirement by the State legislature to have one and would rather that we meet as a whole so that all of us have all of the information.

**Quinn** – Wanted to say that she absolutely agrees with Carlson and did not mean to imply in any way that the Communications Committee would not be anything other than a Committee of the Whole, or

used as whatever vehicle works. Did not mean to imply that the strategic planning would go through the Communications Committee in any way. Agrees, when we are talking about these larger strategic issues – when we are talking about the Facilities Audit that affects everything that we do, the budget planning, strategic planning, everything – it really needs to be a Committee of the Whole. We need to go in that direction.

**Board member Wendy Rowden** – Completely agrees with Carlson and Quinn. Thinks that we have some opportunities here with a new superintendent coming on board. We have some big things that we need to tackle – our strategic plan, our long-range goals. We have agreed to spend a lot of money on a facilities study audit. It is important that we all have the same information. Rowden said that the Board had discussions this year and a lot of concerns about committee work - with different people having different opinions depending on who is sitting on a committee. So she thinks that going forward with these big decisions that everybody needs to be involved. When going through a committee and possibly having recommendations modified is only going to lead to a lack of transparency and a lack of trust. We need to move forward with our goal of being transparent with the community, talking with each other and making sure we are building the trust that we have often heard in the past few years has been missing.

**Chapman** – He appreciates the comments because as you might recall when our committees were appointed, I was the one that argued against having committees because I said that what we are doing is basically disenfranchising part of the Board. Thinks we have learned that by going through the process. There have been issues that have been handled in committee that all didn't have the information. Maybe last year was a learning process and is anxious to find out what our new superintendent has to say about it too. Chapman agrees with Rowden.

## Action Items

**Chapman** – Advised the Board that when they move to the Action Items, we first look for a Motion on the Table and then they should speak to the entire issue rather than each other.

## Transportation

### 1. Performance Benchmarks [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/trans\\_benchmarks\\_response.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/trans_benchmarks_response.pdf)

**Quinn** – Appreciates the administration's detailed response to her proposal from last month. Has a few comments but overall thinks it looks good. Thinks we are all on the same page about needing to have some transparency and accountability for our transportation service not only to the Board but to our community. Her major concern with the comments was the five to 15 minute on-time window which she sent to the administration. We have many schools and routes that are actually in that window now and that 97% benchmark she used before was from the consultants that the district used last year. Thought they called it an industry standard and thinks that is a reasonable measure. The Board can consider what it thinks is a reasonable on-time rate.

**Board member James Ekeberg** – He would move to table this item until we have our new transportation person and our new business person deal with this whole issue.

**Chapman** - Agrees with that. Thinks there are two issues - one is a process issue where benchmarks were created and then we asked the administration to react. Thinks the process ought to work is that if we have an issue we want the administration to address - we should ask the administration, as our chief advisors, to bring what they think would be appropriate benchmarks rather than have them reacting to the ones that we presented on an individual basis or a collective basis. Chapman does agree that the new director and business person would be appropriate to have some input.

**Keenan** – These are not the benchmarks she would have picked. Would also like to wait for the new director to see what he has to say first.

**Rowden** – Asked the Board if they all agreed if there should be benchmarks?

**Chapman** – Not opposed to that. **Rowden** – thinks that it is important to make it clear that we all agree that there should be benchmarks so that we make sure it gets done. Obviously Quinn has given some input based on her studies. That certainly can be considered and if other people have ideas, they certainly should bring them forward to the transportation director and the department as they put them

together. She would like to have a timeline as to when we can expect something like that rather than wait until next year to say we need benchmarks. So is there a way that anyone can suggest that something that can be done prior to the school year or perhaps in the first 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the year? Does anyone have any input as to when we might expect a reasonable time for our new director to come in, not only to acclimate himself to the dept. but be able to sit down and set some benchmarks. Everything we do in this district is supposed to operate on benchmarks so there certainly should be something in place and we shouldn't have to wait too long for that.

**McKanna** - New Director is starting June 15<sup>th</sup>. May need a couple of months. GPS system is going to make a big difference.

**Millar** - Agrees and thinks it is great to put together the benchmarks. Thinks there are some areas where we can really hone in on with the benchmarks particularly with on-time (performance). But the big concern is that we don't have all of the same route lengths so it is going to be very difficult to come up with averages. Thinks it is going to take three to 6 months at least to work out those routes to where you can get the most efficiency. The last thing we want to do as a Board is promise an average 30 minutes. **Keenan** - we are just asking to come up with benchmarks, not results. If you watch it for a couple of weeks, you can come up with goals or benchmarks.

**McKanna** - The Board had asked for a detailed study when it voted for next year's transportation plan. Suggested having benchmarks incorporated and have one presentation in November.

**Quinn** - Stated that these are items she proposed (benchmarks) were proposed to be goals. It is a little bit backwards, in her mind, to go and measure what we are already doing and say that is our benchmark. Thinks we should set our goals to what we think are acceptable benchmarks and we as a Board of Education should set those as goals. And then if we are not meeting the goals, then the administration can come to us and say how they can do things differently to meet the goals or if there is a cost and work with it in that direction.

Says we are actually meeting a lot of these benchmarks already such as the 30 minute on average route time. These goals are not meant to be stretch goals, they are meant to ensure reasonable transportation efficiency and to be reasonable to achieve. Quinn is a little concerned that we are going to put it off and put it off. If there are Board members who have other benchmarks that they think should be a part of this, they should bring those in now so the administration can respond to it.

**Keenan** - she would like the new administration in place.

**Quinn** - agrees with that and likes that he is starting soon.

**Chapman** - Said that there is a motion to table the adoption of the benchmarks.

**Yes** - Millar, Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Keenan **No** - Quinn, Rowden Motion approved.

## 2. Bus Drivers' Children Riding on Buses

**McKanna** - Attorneys advised that this is a practice that is somewhat common. It is used in some districts as a recruiting tool to have drivers to work to have their infant children on the buses. We have roughly 20 drivers that do that. In that respect, we would be short 20 drivers if you change it tonight. The last issue was to make sure that our liability company was aware of this and George Lingel (business manager) has taken care of that. They know that we do this; they of course would like to see us not do it. We have covered those bases and based upon feedback and reality, we at least have to get through the end of this year. He recommends that we stay where we are with that process.

**Rowden** - Would like to make a motion that we stop this practice as of next year.

We have two different attorney opinions and agrees with McKanna's summation except for one thing. Asked if we have all of these drivers signed up with the release of indemnification as recommended by the attorneys? That if their children are harmed or if some how involved with harming others?

**McKanna** - From business managers' looks, he would say we have not received those signed forms.

**Rowden** - That concerns her a great deal and thinks that we should do that. The reason that she doesn't think this is something we should continue is that the risk is too great. If we stop this practice and run into a problem with recruiting drivers, we can always revisit it. Her own personal experience was with a driver who brought her young children on board and her children were able to sit wherever

they wanted even though they were not supposed to. There were problems on the bus. Doesn't think it is a good idea, thinks it is a practice that puts not only the children that we are transporting at risk but also the children that we are carrying. Even though people do it, and if the main reason has been recruitment, until we know that it will dramatically effect recruitment than thinks it is better to be safe than sorry.

**Carlson** – Not so sure, liability wise, even if the bus driver signed a statement that it would clear us from any litigation. In her opinion, this has been a long-standing practice and other districts do this. She too has the same concerns and has personally witnessed problems on the bus when the bus driver had children with them. She doesn't see this as a horrendous issue. It is an issue for recruitment. Thinks that if 20 bus drivers had to find childcare, we would lose a substantial amount of them and thinks it would negatively impact the drivers who would come to work for us in the future because there are other places they can go to drive. We are all fighting for the same pool of bus drivers. Thinks it is a positive benefit and one of the extra special benefits of this wonderful district. Thinks we should leave the policy in place, doesn't think it is detrimental.

**Rowden** - Motion is to stop this practice starting with the next school year so it would not impact us this year. Just wants to reiterate that she doesn't know if them signing a waiver would indeed make a difference, but it was the recommendation of our attorneys. That is why she brought that up. As far as recruitment, again if we do run into a situation where it is clear that we are not able to find people, right now we have 20 out of 150. Not that huge of a percentage. Definitely doesn't think that there should be a baby on board.

**Chapman** – Well going back, he thinks that losing 20 bus drivers when we can't get to where we want to be currently would put us in jeopardy.

**McKanna** – Mentioned that the district put out another flyer about hiring bus drivers. Transportation confirmed that they got about 10 responses.

### **Vote on the motion to discontinue the policy of bus drivers' children riding on buses for 2008/2009 school year**

**Yes** – Quinn, Rowden, Keenan    **No** - Millar, Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg    Motion failed.

### **3. Mid-Day Parking of School Buses in Driveways**

**McKanna** – Two issues were shared from transportation about this subject. When somebody drops children off at Kimball Hill and the driver happens to live in Rolling Meadows, instead of going back to transportation after the runs in the morning, dropping the bus and getting their car and going back. There would be less mileage because the bus would be parked in Rolling Meadows, less gas, technically less pay because they wouldn't be on the clock as much, whatever time it took to drive back to the bus garage. There would be a number of people that fall into that. When we get the GPS systems, it will help us in so many different ways. There are about 12 to 14 people who keep the buses with them consistently.

**Quinn** – Asked what the timeline was for getting the GPS systems?

**George Lingel** – We have to go ahead and get the map before we can go ahead and start ordering them. What that means is that we don't have an enough detailed map in our system to be able to follow the GPS system. That is a considerable cost, about \$10K to \$11K.

**McKanna** – But we are doing that, we need to get our system up-to-date. Are trying to get about 8 to 10 GPS systems to start, put them on different buses and be very upfront with the drivers. So when a parent says that their child has been on the bus for 55 minutes, it can be matched up. Reality is that it will be August/September before we get started.

**Rowden** – Wants to go back to the mid-day parking discussion. Asked if the administration got an attorney's opinion on this one? **McKanna** – He did not, did not see it as a legal issue.

**Rowden** – What about our insurance coverage?

**Lingel** – We have coverage but again they recommend that we don't do this.

**Rowden** – Again she is going to reiterate the safety issue. For example, she thinks it is a huge distraction to have a bus parked in a subdivision road, standing out there asking to be hit. But more importantly, she has seen the children being carried on the bus, children of the bus driver, parked in a driveway while their child is running around the bus – a 3 or 4 year old while they are visiting. She has a serious issue with that. Has an issue with the safety of that child, but also the liability of the school district. Doesn't think buses belong in neighborhood driveways let alone with children running around them. Wants to put a motion on the floor to stop this practice as of next fall.

**Millar** – Wants to say regarding the bus drivers children riding on the buses, he voted to allow that but prefers they not do it. This is the same situation, he prefers the buses go back but again we have the fuel expense, etc.

**Carlson** – Said maybe it is a personnel issue that transportation can work out with a particular bus driver and safety issues. But again, with fuel costs going up and it is a common practice, Carlson says that given the reality of the situation for the district, it is a practice we should continue.

**Rowden** – Her final comments are that she doesn't want to be common; she wants to be safety oriented. Thinks a school bus sitting in a parking lot, sitting in a driveway or sitting in the middle of a subdivision road is a liability. Doesn't think we should do it.

### **Motion on the floor is to discontinue the process of allowing drivers to park their buses in driveways in residential streets to be effective with the 2008/2009 school year.**

**Yes:** Quinn, Rowden, Keenan **No:** Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Millar **Motion failed.**

### **Capital Projects to be considered for the 2008/2009 Budget**

Chapman indicated that this item will be brought back for the June Board meeting.

**Quinn** – Had a question. Said that there was a joint committee meeting (Finance and Facilities) and this was addressed at that time. Asked if it was going to be brought back and discussed as a Committee of the Whole at that time? Nothing is being done with it in committee now, is it?

**Chapman** – No. The reason it was not brought forward now is that they couldn't get the information ready for the Board packet. There is nothing on that list that would be delayed by waiting. It will be brought in the form that we agreed upon. **Keenan** – Said that that joint committee is done.

**Quinn** – So you are planning on bringing back what that (joint) committee discussed?

**Keenan** – There is an architectural committee coming up. **Rowden** – Asked what the architectural committee meeting was about? **Keenan** – Doesn't have the exact agenda but it is about the sidewalks and the lease for the church. **Rowden** – no capital improvements?

**Keenan** – No, that was part of the Finance/Architectural committee that had a specific charge. We met twice; we finished it so now that committee is done.

**Quinn** – So nothing about the Facility Audit? **Keenan** – yes, actually does think that the architects are coming to the facility meeting. **Quinn** – has an objection to that.

**Rowden** – Would also like to echo what Carlson said earlier. Thinks that those kinds of things (Facility Audit) need to be brought to a Committee of the Whole.

**Keenan** – All Board members are welcome to come. The last meeting Ekeberg and Quinn came. Everyone is welcome, it is a public meeting and the public has come before. The meeting is Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

### **Bids – School Buses: Wheelchair [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/bus\\_bid\\_05\\_14\\_08.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/bus_bid_05_14_08.pdf)**

Motion to accept Bids for two (2) wheelchair capable school buses for a grand total of \$166,623

**Quinn** – Asked why the district is trading in buses?

**Lingel** – Because in this particular case, we made the decision and the recommendation is that we have one wheelchair bus that we are trading in and it came back to trade in whatever other vehicle they felt in need of more repair. We do not need these two buses (trade-ins). We are not reducing the fleet at all. **Quinn** – Her concern is that we have needed more buses all year and it concerns her that we are giving them away. We can trade them in at any time, is that correct? **Lingel** – yes.

**Quinn** – would like to propose that we hold on to our buses until the fall with a new transportation director and if we have no need for those buses, we can trade them in. Wants to amend the motion to accept the bid but to hold the trade-ins until future consideration.

**Chapman**- Has a question. If we hold the trade-in until whatever date – September or October – will we still get the value that we are being offered now on the trade-in?

**Lingel** – doesn't know that. **Chapman** - so this trade-in value is based on the fact that we are going to be purchasing now?. So if we don't trade in, we are going to lose. They are going to pay \$11K now?

**Lingel** – exactly. **Chapman** – Doesn't support the amendment. Asked Lingel if he was confident that we do not need these two buses? **Lingel** – Yes and Don Skinner (transportation) is too. They had that conversation.

**Millar** – Has a question, we also have the 14 buses with a lease coming up in January. Could any of these buses be used? He is sure the trade-in would not change dramatically over a few months.

**Board member James Ekeberg** – Said that - Well, you can tell that the trade-in is going to change quite a bit. The other guy is going to trade them in for \$4K and this guy is going to give you \$11K. So you have a \$7K difference now, it could be more or it could be less later.

**Lingel** – The one-year lease on the 14 buses does expire in January. There is money in next year's budget right now to extend that lease.

**Millar** – but we don't know how many buses we are going to need until we have the new routes.

**Lingel** – we have projected routes

**Quinn** – Thinks that the district will have the opportunity to make a good trade-in later since we do have this lease situation. And it seems that the district does buy some buses every year.

**Vote on the amendment to accept bid but not trade-in buses.**

Yes – Quinn, Rowden, Millar No - Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Keenan Motion failed.

**Vote on original recommendation for two wheelchair buses including the trade-in values (\$11,000) as outlined by Midwest Transit for \$166,623**

Yes: Rowden, Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Keenan, Quinn No: Millar Motion approved.

## **Freedom of Information Act Requests (FOIA)**

Several requests received from Victoria Wilson, resident of Palatine

And Shirley Forpe, President of Northwest Suburban Teachers Union, Local 1211 (District 211)

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/FOIA\\_05\\_14\\_08.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/FOIA_05_14_08.pdf)

## **Executive Session**

The Board went into Executive session at approximately 9:45 p.m. They were expected to return to Open Session afterwards to vote on the Personnel Report as well as the Executive Session minutes from the April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Board of Education meeting.

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