

Spotlight on the Board

Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings

October 14th, 2009

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

Agenda and attachments for this meeting can be found at:

http://www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/BoardOfEducation/AgendaAttachments/2009-10/2009-10-14_AgendaAttach.pdf

2009 Annual Student Achievement Report

Mary Zarr, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum – Presented information on AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress), Student Demographics, MAP growth and Next Steps.

Complete copy of the presentation available online – see link above – Pages 19 through 57

Board member questions/comments after presentation –

Board member Sue Quinn – Asked Zarr to go back to the MAP Growth Target charts that were presented (*pages 50 and 51 of the agenda attachments*). The chart basically says that approximately 60% of students in all grades/schools are meeting their targets of growth from testing in the fall to testing in the spring – and 40% of students are not making that (growth) goal. Quinn thinks that it is that 40% that we need to focus on why these kids are not meeting their growth target. She would like to see (the chart) broken down to where are those 40% of kids in the district. Not so much by sub-category or school – but is thinking more of our lower performing, mid range performing students. Which ones are not seeing the kind of growth that we would like them to see? Maybe we can already target them on an individual, classroom basis. She would like the district to look at that data and put it in perspective.

Board President Gerald Chapman – If that does become our goal, then the superintendent and staff would come back to us and tell us what resources they need – that (is the) kind of analysis (that) becomes a part of it. Before we establish the goal, he would expect reports back that would say “this is what we need to do to get there” and this is the kind of analysis – we have done to show what resources are needed.

Transportation Update

Jim Garwood, Asst. Superintendent – At the last BOE meeting a few weeks ago at the ESC (9/22/09), Dr. Lukich shared one of the major decisions that we made in terms of looking at bus stop safety after we heard from a lot of parents through emails, phone calls and at the last BOE meeting (9/9/09). That was to address one of the largest categories of concerns that parents were expressing to us which was kids having to walk to bus stops in areas that don't have sidewalks. We obviously heard from a lot of parents that they were concerned about that now in good weather. That anxiety is only greater in the winter time with snow on the ground. We can't necessarily guarantee that people are going to shovel their sidewalks, but we know that they aren't going to shovel the grass along the side of the street.

Garwood asked the transportation director (Walt Doughty) and the assistant director (Tom Bramley) to go back and look at all of the bus stops/routes in areas without sidewalks to not necessarily make all of the stops door-to-door, because that would be a dramatic increase in stops. But to look at shortening the distance that kids have to walk especially in areas where curves or line-of-sight were an issue as well. Although the department has made a lot of progress in making those modifications, we can't say that they are 100% done with that because we are still getting the occasional concerns that are being expressed to us. But it has decreased dramatically from this time a month ago.

Another thing that we did to sort of “close the loop” is that we decided to involve (bus) drivers. Two weeks ago the drivers were invited to meet with us to talk about setting up a process where they had some concerns about safety – that we would go through a review process with their concerns over their route with them. We set up a committee to do that which included the transportation director,

assistant, himself (Garwood), the routing coordinator, dispatcher and a trainer as well. We gave drivers an opportunity that had concerns to express those concerns to us one at a time. We heard their concerns and we made adjustments where we felt where adjustments were warranted.

About 30 different drivers expressed concerns. In each case, we were able to make very sensible adjustments that made them feel like their routes were safer and more efficient. In a lot of cases, these mirrored what parents had concerns with as well. That has been helpful. Our drivers, more than anybody else out there, drive the routes. It is one thing for him (Garwood) to pull out a map while talking to a parent or go out to look at a bus stop. The drivers' feedback is invaluable to clean up some of the safety concerns.

H1N1 Update

Daily Herald, 10/17/09 – Palatine District 15 first in line for swine flu vaccinations

www.spotlightontheboard.org/news_pdfs/Daily_Herald_101709_swineflu.pdf

CCSD15 Web site – H1N1 Flu Voluntary Vaccine Program

<http://www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/DistrictOffices/HealthServices/HTML/H1N1.html>

ABC 7 News 10/19/09 – Palatine schools first to offer H1N1 vaccine

<http://abclocal.go.com/wls/story?section=news/local&id=7072498>

Chicago Tribune, 10/19/09 –

Swine Flu: Palatine children will be among the first to get free H1N1 vaccine

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/chi-flu-palatine-19-oct19,0,4482905.story>

Citizens Address the Board

Frank Scaveck – Signal Hill District Rep for the NW Suburban Council of Boys Scouts of America
The Board's recent policy of only making available electronic flyers has drastically hurt the ability to recruit youth for the Cub Scout program – for boys 1st through 5th grade. Recruitment this year has suffered greatly especially true for the backbone of their program, which are 1st and 2nd graders. They have realized significant declines in the # of recruits this year. Feels that the group most impacted by this policy is the ones that need it the most – the families of lower income level have little or no availability to use a computer to get these flyers. Scouting is ideal for these families; our program is very low cost for a full year. The policy for flyer racks in the schools for students to pick up a flyer who do not have computer access is an improvement. However without the flyers going home with the students, the parents must make the extra effort to get the information. This limits the communication to the few that make the extra effort to learn about additional programs available to their son. NWSC of BSA agrees with the CCSD15 mission statement of building a connected learning community. The Cub Scout program reinforces the educational school process. We subscribe to the same values listed in your key goals of your core values of things like hard work, scholarship and family involvement. The Cub Scout adult leaders of your schools are the same ones that were standing up there (earlier in the evening) for the PTA. He asked the Board to revisit the process of electronic flyers.
Board member Tim Millar – Asked if it was possible to put this issue out as a future agenda item to discuss?

Kelly Wilcox – D15 teacher and parent of Lake Louise kindergartner

She is requesting a slight change to her son's bus stop. Her son is dropped off every morning at her daycare provider's house and he later takes the bus to afternoon kindergarten. He is the only one at his stop at Kenilworth and Bell. She is asking for the stop to be moved six houses down to Kenilworth and Patricia where the bus drivers have been picking up/dropping off for years. After several unsuccessful emails and voice mails, she stopped in and was very appreciative to be able to speak with someone in transportation. She expressed her concerns and he listened and agreed with her on all of the following points: 1) the change would greatly benefit my son, our daycare provider and my husband who is currently driving an hour from work at lunch time to walk their son to the bus stop when it is raining so that the other children at daycare do not have to wait in the rain. 2) the change would not cost the district anything. 3) the change would not inconvenience any other child or family because her child is the only one at that stop. 4) the change would not add any time to the bus route because this is not adding a stop, just changing one to one block down. His is the second stop of only three stops being made in the entire route. So time is not an issue. The person she spoke with in

transportation agreed with her on all of these points. The only reason he gave her as to why he is denying this request was that if he were to change her son's stop, word might get out and he would get 12,000 calls the next day. To her, that is not an acceptable answer. He also stated that the transportation department's plan is to keep the bus stops created constant so that they do not have to make any changes for the next ten years. Thinks that is rigid and short-sighted to not consider individual student's needs. Interestingly, the man she spoke with shared with her that he and another member of transportation and an administrator just met and the three of them agreed that perhaps they had acted hastily with the number of changes in bus stops that they had made. Hindsight is 20/20 and I would not expect they could foresee a problem. However, we should look at the situation that we are currently in and when someone like her presents an issue and a solution that is of no cost financially, emotionally or time wise – that they should pay attention. She understands that D15 is not running a limo service and in her case, it is not a safety issue as ones discussed earlier. However her husband and she can't come up with one true negative.

Larry King – Commissioner of Boy Scouts of America (BSA)

He would like to add a few points to the statements made by the previous BSA representative. King is involved with the following schools as commissioner – LL, Lincoln, WCE, CR, VL and Paddock. In the past these schools have, on average, when they do a recruitment of having 20 new families come to their presentations in the fall to get new scouts. This past year, these schools have had on average four families showing up. So the methodology of using electronic communication (E-Flyers) to the families severely limits us to get new scouts into the scouting program. We would appreciate it if you could reconsider our method of contacting them.

Chapman – I don't know if you heard the comment but there was a request to put this issue on our agenda at our next meeting. **King** – Yes, I would appreciate that.

Proposed 2009 Tax Levy

Memo/supporting documentation available as agenda attachments (pages 74 – 77)

http://www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/BoardOfEducation/AgendaAttachments/2009-10/2009-10-14_AgendaAttach.pdf

Merilee McCracken, Interim Business Manager – There is no need for the Board to take action on any of this tonight. She did want to review the Levy calendar, take a look at the 2008 levy that this Board adopted last year and what it produced for the school district and then her thoughts on the 2009 proposed Tax Levy. All Boards are required, by law, to file a levy with Cook County by the last Tuesday in December, which would be December 29th this year. Therefore, at the December 16th BOE meeting, the BOE will be asked to adopt a levy and all the paperwork that goes along with it. Another requirement is that the BOE must establish an estimated levy or proposed levy no fewer than 20 days prior to the adoption of the levy. If that estimated levy exceeds the prior year's extension by 105% than we would also be required to hold a public hearing and file proper notice. Therefore at the November 11th BOE meeting, we will by Board Action establish that estimated levy along with any other paperwork that we need leading up to the proper adoption of the levy in December. She said that she will need direction/thoughts from the BOE this evening that if the estimated levy doesn't exceed that 105%, does this BOE choose to still hold a public hearing?

Chapman – The hearing itself is very short and thinks that we have had a practice of allowing people to speak to the BOE. He doesn't think there is a downside of having people that want to come and talk to the BOE.

McCracken – (referring to slide presentation, information in the BOE packet) – Wanted to show that the actual 2008 Tax Levy was slightly over \$114 million dollars. The extension which is the amount that this district received was \$103 million dollars. We haven't received all of it yet, just a part of it. That represents a 4.61% increase over the prior year (2007) extension. That was linked to a CPI (consumer price index) factor of 4.1%. What she learned from that was that this district received about 0.5% on the new growth, which was \$21 million last year. That takes into account the 2008 information.

Her thoughts on the 2009 Tax Levy – There is really no need to levy more than 5% this year. We are dealing with a CPI of 0.1%. Her feeling is that if we get 1% that would be a good year for us based on the economic factors that she knows right now. She will verify this, but believes that there is no TIF (tax increment financing district) that is coming off the books in this next year that we could access. She knows that there had been some discussions that perhaps Palatine might share in some of the revenue, but to her knowledge, there is no TIF coming off the books – which would change our levy. The other thing that she knows is that Palatine Township is being reassessed as we speak and she thinks that the assessed value will decrease. However that has no affect on the amount of money that we are entitled to, if (values) do decrease – it will increase our rates. That is how we will get access to the money. When she brings this information back to the BOE in proposed levy form in November, there might be some slight changes to it.

Chapman – Let’s say there is a significant decrease; are we anywhere near our capped rates in any funds? So that is why you are saying that it won’t have any impact? **McCracken** – Right.

Millar – Stated that he appreciates McCracken’s reasonable levy.

Board’s Prioritizing of District Goals

Chapman – Asked if there were any comments or questions on the list of District goals that the Board prioritized and that will be acted on later in the agenda.

Quinn – She has a couple of main points to mention. We have one section that says “Plan for meeting AYP” but she doesn’t like that heading. Thinks it should be put out as two different goals – one is clearly making AYP; everyone on the Board knows that is a priority. But also the issue that we talked about before is “meeting the growth targets”. Quinn thinks that needs to be a separate issue because it needs to be approached separately and given equal weight. Somehow it got listed under AYP.

Chapman – So what you are saying is if we adopt that (goal) you are looking at it broader – not only talking about AYP, doesn’t want it to get lost in the process. **Quinn** – Thinks it will get lost if we don’t make it (MAP) a separate heading. **Board member Mark Bloom** – He originally put it as two separate things (AYP and MAP). The achievement and the growth are really two separate areas.

Chapman – Thinks it needs to be broaden to plan for AYP and growth targets. Will that be okay?

Quinn – As long as we are clear on the understanding that it is not 1 and 2 – it is not either/or. Both have equal weight. AYP has such a large shadow. **Chapman** – He understands.

Quinn – (Looking at the list) thinks that some of the (proposed) goals are things that we already are doing. **Chapman** – Thinks the fact that these were suggestions and rated that clearly there is support on all of these (goals). Agrees with Quinn that eight (goals) is too many – we need to have a focus. But that does not mean that these others fall by the wayside.

Board member Peggy Babcock – I guess on the “Salary Merit Plan” – she thought that was

Chapman – (interrupted) that was under section (couldn’t hear). Yes, that was why he thought it was rated so low because the district is already focused and that will be done.

Quinn – As far as the “Updating Technology” – has a question. Is it beyond what we have already have planned in our District Technology Plan? We obviously are already increasing the bandwidth. Did Board members have an idea beyond that that you wanted to do something with?

Board member Richard Bokor – He brought that up. The issue there is that we did hire a new Technology Coordinator. How is the coordinator to work with staff to try to implement her knowledge about improving student usage of technology? **Chapman** – We do have a long-range technology plan but doesn’t think the plan should run out before we revisit it. He sensed that the direction was to make it part of the plan. **Babcock** – She wants to maximize the technology that we currently have not necessarily adding to that technology although we do have a plan for that. **Chapman** – We have the appropriateness of the equipment and the other component is – is it being used to the extent that we want to use it as an instructional tool? He thinks that is the focus that we talked about.

Quinn- Likes Chapman's point about the long-range plan that we have for technology is really a short-range plan right now. We do need to revisit it.

Chapman – Exactly and wants to make a comment that this is his interpretation. My expectation is that the superintendent has to come back and tell us – these are the steps necessary to reach these goals and these are the resources we need. As a Board – if the superintendent comes in and says we can't reach these goals without this resource – A, B and C – then we have to make a decision as a Board as to whether or not we are going to allow that to happen or not. Whatever the goal is, we can't adopt a goal and not expect some resource allocation. He doesn't know what that is and doesn't think we can suggest it. We have to be honest and fair. If they come back and say if this is what the Board wants us to move forward on, then here is how we can get it done and these are the resources we need - whether it is people resources or whatever.

Quinn – "Strengthening the Curriculum" – is in terms of Math and Science education. Thinks it needs to be a focus in our district, she has mentioned this before and there are many reasons why. The Board shares some of those goals. She is hoping that if we put that as an emphasis, the administration can come back and tell us what they can make concrete and what resources it would take.

Chapman – No matter what the goals are, they have to come back with a plan to tell us - whether the cost is in human resources or some other kind of resources.

Action Item - Adoption of District Goals

Bokor – Made a motion to adopt the goals that were rated from 2.0 to 4.71 (not clear as to what he was referring to) with an additional on Quinn's logic to be more specific with the MAP (growth targets) inclusion with AYP. **Chapman** – Also the "Long Range Facilities Planning", the "Administrative Team" & "Update Technology". **Bokor** – Those were the 4 goals that the majority of Board members supported.

Quinn – She would like to make an amendment to the motion. Regarding "Strengthening the Administrative Team" goal, she thinks the Board should be focused on that at all times and would like to remove that and add "Strengthening the Curriculum".

Chapman – So the amendment would be to delete from consideration of the goals, the 3rd rated one which was "Build a Strong Administrative Team" to "Strengthening the Curriculum".

Roll Call on the Amendment –

Millar YES, **Quinn** YES, **Babcock** NO, **Bloom** AYE, **Bokor** NO, **Chapman** NAY, **Ekeberg** NO

Chapman – The amendment fails.

Roll Call on Original Motion which was the four highest rated goals –

Quinn NO, **Babcock** AYE, **Bloom** AYE, **Bokor** AYE, **Chapman** AYE, **Ekeberg** AYE, **Millar** NO

Chapman – Motion carries.

NOTE: A FOIA has been submitted for the list of District Goals that were voted upon and also the entire list of goals that were considered and ranked. Once received, they will be available on the Spotlight on the Board Web site as well as added in this section.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m.

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.

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

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