

Grass Lake Community Schools

899 South Union Street • Grass Lake, Michigan 49240
(517) 522-5540 • Fax (517) 522-8195

Grass Lake Community Schools Special Board of Education Meeting

Monday, May 24, 2010
7:00 p.m.

Grass Lake Middle School
Library/Media Center

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mark Burnett
Darrell Hart
Florine Herendeen
John Paterra
Loretta Ryan
David Wright

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tim Waskiewicz

ADMINISTRATORS

Brad Hamilton
Michelle Clark
Eric McCalla
Doug Moeckel
Andi Overmyer
Jeanene Satterthwaite
Brian Thompson

GUESTS

Julie Alexander
Ben Dandrow
Margaret Henthorne
Shannon Maynard
Jim Murray
Penny Murray
Trevor Murray
Elaine O'Neill
Joe O'Neill

Stephen O'Neill
Carlene Pindzia
Nate Pittenger
Nancy Rigg
Deanna Rouster
Kimberly Seaburg
Jennifer Sullivan
Jena Tengman

PRESIDING OFFICER:

Tim Waskiewicz, President

Certified Correct

John Paterra, Secretary

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1. Call to Order

Vice President Hart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Member Paterra, supported by Member Ryan, to approve the agenda with the addition of Item VI C, Hometown Heroes – Julie Alexander. All present voted Aye. Motion Carried.

3. Correspondence

Mr. Hamilton passed out some handouts for board members to read on their own.

4. Hearing of Citizens

Joe O'Neill said he and Jim Murray would like to ask permission to start a high school tennis team, which he and Mr. Murray would be willing to coach. He said he had been contacted by a number of students and parents who were interested. If they started as a club, there would be no cost to the district.

Although there were no tennis courts at the school, they had contacted the village about reserving the courts at the park for practices. They could also check into using the private courts at the Calderone Golf Club.

Athletic Director Eric McCalla informed the board that he had met with Mr. O'Neill. Even as a club, the team would have to abide by MHSAA rules. Mr. O'Neill said that as a beginning team, they could compete against JV teams of other schools. Mr. McCalla suggested the possibility of a co-op with another district, such as Jackson Public Schools, as they do for gymnastics. Mr. O'Neill said he would prefer if they had their own team and could set their own schedule.

Mr. O'Neill said that he and Mr. McCalla had discussed whether students could participate in tennis if they were in another sport. Mr. McCalla had told him that a student could do two sports if the coaches agreed and there were no schedule conflicts. Mr. O'Neill added that this was a sport that students could participate in when they went to college. He said that he had attended college with a tennis scholarship.

It was agreed that this request would go to the Athletic Committee for review. They would meet in the next few weeks and put the request on the agenda for action at the first meeting in June.

5. Reports of the Superintendent for Action

A. Approve L-4029

Mr. Hamilton reviewed the form with the board and reminded them that the Townships could not levy taxes until this was approved by the board.

Moved by Member Paterra, supported by Member Herendeen, to approve the L-4029. All present voted aye. Motion carried.

B. Ratifying Resolution

Mr. Hamilton explained that, by law, the Board had to approve the resolution to approve the bond pricing and bond sale.

Moved by Member Burnett, supported by Member Ryan, to approve the Ratifying Resolution. All present voted aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Hamilton informed the board that they were getting an even better deal on the bond sale because of the AA3 rating from Moody's. Some of the factors that contributed to the good rating were: the size of the district's fund equity, the fact that the District hasn't had to borrow in the last eight years, increasing enrollment, a good ratio of school of choice students, and partnerships such as with Jackson Community College.

6. Reports of the Superintendent for Information

A. Elementary Breakfast Pilot Program

Mrs. Pindzia informed the board that more students had participated in the elementary breakfast pilot program than expected. The first week they averaged 210 students, the second week the average was 214, and that morning they had served 222 students. She said she had learned a lot from the pilot program, including that it was impossible for just one person to do. She had received mostly positive feedback and she planned to present a final report to the board in June.

Among the positive comments, parents said they liked it because children didn't always want to eat breakfast first thing in the morning. The negative feedback included comments that parents should feed their children breakfast at home.

Mrs. Pindzia said they were serving 45-50 breakfasts a day before the pilot program, and she was very happy with the response. If they continued the program next school year, she said she might need to add manpower. She would also need extra help for the kindergarten students, because they had difficulty opening the cereal and milk.

Mr. Hamilton asked Mrs. Pindzia to share the comments with the staff and get their response to the comments. Mrs. Pindzia responded that, when the trial period was over, she planned to send a survey to the teachers and possibly to parents as well. Mr. Hamilton suggested that Mrs. Clark review the surveys before they were sent.

Mrs. Pindzia informed the board that all meals were designed to follow the National Breakfast program. She sampled ideas from other schools when she put together the menus. She had not had a chance to evaluate the food values.

B. Administrative Reports

1. Principals

Mrs. Clark reminded the board that the talent show was scheduled for the following night at 6 p.m. in the High School Auditorium. She responded to a question about kindergarten enrollment and said that there was usually a rush of students enrolling in mid-August. She added that the science fair was a big success and they hoped to expand it next year.

Mrs. Ryan added congratulations to the softball team and said that the portfolio night was uplifting.

2. Curriculum Director

Mrs. Overmyer called attention to her handout and Mr. Burnett asked to review it during the round table discussion.

3. Superintendent

Mr. Hamilton reported that a marketing campaign was being developed. There has been a brochure in previous years for use at the expo and for recruitment. They have started doing some radio ads and were working on some ads for JTV. Mr. Hamilton would be interviewed on June 3rd by JTV, but he didn't know when it would be aired. He planned to start a marketing committee and would be looking for positive staff people to serve on the committee. He wants the committee to develop a plan, but he added that the number one marketing tool for the district was what was happening in the classrooms. He also wanted to develop a plan to reward staff for helping to get out the word about the district with something for their classroom.

C. Hometown Heroes – Julie Alexander and Jeff Punches

Mrs. Alexander explained that they started their project when Mrs. Satterthwaite set up advisory groups and paired teachers with groups of 20 students. The groups had to bond and had to do a community service project. Mrs. Alexander and Mr. Punches worked together with a group and decided to help local Grass Lake graduates who were actively serving in the military.

The group collected donations and sent care package to the soldiers, and gave gifts to the soldier's families at Christmas. Thanks to press releases put out by Mr. Moeckel, the group received many donations, including from the City of Jackson.

Mrs. Alexander thanked Mrs. Satterthwaite and Mr. Moeckel, as well as the Grass Lake Educational Foundation for paying for mailing the care packages.

Mrs. Alexander and Mr. Punches then showed a portion of a video that the group had prepared about their project. Included in the video was footage from a visit to the middle school the previous week by soldiers Tommy Niehaus and Tyler Adams.

7. Round Table Discussion

Mrs. Overmyer reviewed her handout about EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT tests and answered questions. Mr. Thompson stated that this was the 4th year that all 11th-grade students in the district took the ACT. Previously, it was only college-bound students. The change was directed by the board and the Indicators of Success.

Mr. Hamilton commented that the district's expectations had to be high for all students, not just college-bound students. Also, the state was proposing that teacher evaluations be based on student success. Mr. Thompson added that students were asking for more advanced courses to be offered.

Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Clark had recently attended a presentation at the ISD of teachers who went through SELECT training. Alaina Ellison went through the first year of training and was getting good results from use of her training.

Mr. Hamilton explained that the Jackson County special education initiatives were still in the formative stages. If the initiatives were approved, Grass Lake would share a special ed. supervisor with East Jackson, which would be a cost savings.

Mr. Hamilton reported that there was unexpected good news out of Friday's revenue conference. The revenue was reported as being above where it was expected to be. He cautioned the board to not be too optimistic because there was pressure from some groups to put any excess money toward community colleges. Mr. Hamilton encouraged people to call and/or write legislators and tell them this was not acceptable.

Mr. Hamilton informed the board that Blue Cross was fighting the county school initiative for pooling healthcare to reduce costs. They had a different interpretation of the law.

8. Unfinished Business

Nothing

9. Executive Session

Moved by Member Ryan, supported by Member Paterra, to move into Executive Session. Member Wright – yes, Member Ryan – yes, Member Herendeen – yes, Member Burnett – yes, Member Paterra – yes, Member Hart – yes.

Moved by Member Ryan, supported by Member Hart, to move out of Executive Session. All present voted Aye. Motion Carried.

10. Adjournment

Moved by Member Hart, supported by Member Paterra, to adjourn the meeting. All present voted Aye. Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.