

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, October 26, 2009
7:00 p.m.

Grass Lake Middle School
Library/Media Center

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Darrel Hart
Florine Herendeen
Mark Burnett
John Paterra
Loretta Ryan
Tim Waskiewicz
David Wright

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

GUESTS:

Shannon Maynard
Margaret Henthorne
Matt Maynard
Carlene Pindzia
Deanna Rouster

Fritz Schinck
Sue Schinck
Suzy Sczykutowicz
Jennifer Taylor

PRESIDING OFFICER:

Tim Waskiewicz, President

Certified Correct

John Paterra
Secretary, Board of Education

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I. Call to Order

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

II. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Member Paterra, supported by Member Hart, to approve the agenda as presented. All present voted Aye. Motion Carried.

III. Correspondence

Superintendent Hamilton read a news release from the Michigan State Board of Education, asking local school districts to continue reimagining the schools and Gov. Granholm to find funding to reduce the cuts to schools. State Superintendent of Schools Mike Flanagan stated that the new three R's are now Revenue, Reform and Reimagine.

Mr. Hamilton then read a resolution from the State Board of Education.

IV. Hearing of Citizens

None

V. Reports of the Superintendent for Information

A. Administrative Reports

Mr. Hamilton called attention to the written reports.

B. Strategic Planning Committee Update

Mr. Hamilton reported that the Strategic Planning Committee met the previous week. The group listened to an update on each goal and discussed the Qualified School Construction Bonds.

President Waskiewicz stated that the committee was presented an extreme amount of information in a short amount of time. He could see further sub-committees being formed to discuss additional tasks.

VI. Reports of the Superintendent for Action

A. October Budget Revisions

Mr. Hamilton distributed a handout showing the current state of the budget. He suggested waiting until November to learn of possible additional funding cuts before approving the revised budget. The \$165 and \$110 cuts were already included. The board members all agreed that it would be a good idea to wait.

Mr. Hamilton added that the budget might improve some, but he was not as confident as in previous years. He hoped to keep the budget deficit under \$250,000, but wasn't sure if that would be possible if an additional cut was passed.

Mr. Hamilton felt that schools should be looking at ways to narrow the budget gap, such as consolidating services. He said that the budget situation was due to structural problems in the state, which should have been addressed years ago. The projections for next year were \$350 to \$600 per pupil cuts, unless the state looked at different ways of doing business. The kids were the ones who would suffer. The school's job was to make sure all students received the same education, regardless of funding issues.

VII. Round Table Discussion

A. Budget and Cost Containmentment

Mr. Hamilton stated that the ISD and district superintendents had been discussing shared services for several years. Some services were already shared, such as special education and career services. Mr. Hamilton added that he was chair of the Shared Services Subcommittee of the Superintendents.

The four main areas of discussion by the superintendents were: legal services, business services, technology and transportation. They were not just looking to save money. Any proposed service plan had to meet the three key components of: quality, capacity and cost efficiency. Saving money was an added bonus. After the subcommittee's study of the four areas, they would find out which districts wanted to be involved.

Mr. Hamilton explained that the district's state aid would be reduced by more than \$400 per pupil this year, the district's enrollment had declined slightly from the previous school year, and expenditures kept going up. In light of all these budget concerns, he had met with the administrators to look at a number of ideas for cost containment. He reviewed the suggestions with the board and they discussed the potential savings and potential affect.

Mr. Hamilton asked how soon the board wanted the administration to start implementing changes and making cuts. He reminded the board that only about 15% of the budget could be affected by changes; the remaining 85% of the budget was in contracted costs of staff. He also reminded the board to keep in mind that there were three ways that changes could affect the district: fiscal impact, impact on education, and impact on operations.

Mr. Waskiewicz asked about the process for identifying the savings and the impact to the district. Mr. Hamilton said that the board could decide to get through the year with no changes and discuss changes for next year. He added that even little changes added up and couldn't be overlooked. They would have to debate which items would create the least impact on the students. The board would also have to decide how much of the fund equity they wanted to spend.

There was discussion of a staff buyout and Mr. Hamilton explained that this was a short-term solution and was more effective as more people participated. Mr. Waskiewicz stated that the board needed more information in order to help with the process. They also would like a ballpark figure on savings of each item on the list, and then the ad hoc finance committee could meet and review the list.

Members Waskiewicz, Herendeen and Hart were on the ad-hoc finance committee and would try to meet before the next board meeting.

Mr. Hamilton added that most savings would not be short term, but instead would be long term. Hopefully they wouldn't have to be enacted at all.

Mr. Hamilton commented that the budget for the 2010-2011 year was already at a \$600,000 deficit. With the cuts from this year added in, that brought the deficit to about \$1 million. Then there were also contract negotiations, rising healthcare costs, etc., to consider.

Mr. Waskiewicz stated that he and Ms. Herendeen would be attending the JCSAB meeting on November 7 and all other board members were invited to attend also.

VIII. Unfinished Business

Mr. Hamilton stated that they were closely monitoring student absences. He wouldn't advocate closing school unless absences were closer to the 25% mark.

IX. Executive Session

A. Moved by Member Ryan, supported by Member to move into Executive Session. The members voted by roll call vote: Member Wright – yes, Member Ryan – yes, Member Herendeen – yes, Member Burnett – yet, Member Paterra – yes, Member Hart – yes, Member Waskiewicz – yes. Motion Carried

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

IX. Adjournment

Moved by Member Hart, supported by Member Ryan, to adjourn the meeting. All present voted Aye. Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.