

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Avoca Schools

February 1, 2010

The Board of Education held a Committee of the Whole meeting on February 1, 2010, at 5:30 p.m. in the Marie Murphy School Library, 2921 Illinois Road, Wilmette, Illinois. President Greengoss called the meeting to order and asked the Board Recorder to call the roll. The following members were present:

William Bazianos
Jeffrey Greengoss, President
Henry Kingwill
Michael Knippen
Rosanne Ullman, Vice President
Sherry Wallingford

Absent: Rick Zelinsky

Also Present: Kat Cetrone, Video Operator
Cynthia Devin, Director, Pupil Services
Dr. Kevin Jauch, Principal, Avoca West
Madeleine McCloskey, Board Recorder
Dr. Joseph Porto, Superintendent/Board Secretary
Dr. Deanna Reed, Asst. Supt./Principal, Marie Murphy

Visitors: None

ADDITIONAL ITEM ADDED TO THE AGENDA

Superintendent Dr. Porto indicated there was another discussion item to be added to the agenda in regard to the New Trier High School referendum.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Parent/Teacher Conference Times

Superintendent Dr. Porto reported the Avoca Education Association (AEA) was proposing a slight change to the twice-yearly, parent/teacher conference time frame that would be more amenable to the teachers and better match the current time preferences of the parents. Their preference was to hold conferences one hour earlier, from 3:00-7:00 p.m., on at least one of the two consecutive nights. The rationale was that the 4:00-8:00 p.m. schedule creates an extremely long day when combined with teaching a half day each morning on Wednesday and Thursday followed by attending a contract day on Friday. Over the past several years, the teachers have noticed the 7:00-8:00 p.m. conference time slots often go completely unused. Following some discussion on the pros and cons of the proposal, it was the consensus of the Board that parent/teacher conference times will be changed to 3:00-7:00 p.m. on both days starting next year. It was suggested that the new time frame be monitored to make certain the change works for both the teachers and parents.

Superintendent Search Firm Interviews

Superintendent Dr. Porto asked Board members for their preference on scheduling interviews with three superintendent search firms in March. This is the first step in the process of recruiting and hiring a new superintendent to replace Dr. Porto in 2011. Several interview scheduling options

were suggested. Dr. Porto indicated the firms were almost identical in protocol and cost, and it was only a matter of deciding on which one was the best fit for District 37. Following some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to have Dr. Porto arrange 45-minute interviews with each firm on the same night as the March 1 Committee of the Whole meeting. The meeting date was already scheduled, which meant all seven Board members most likely would be on hand to participate in the interviews. Dr. Porto indicated he would check on each firm's availability on that date and report back to the Board.

New Trier Referendum

Superintendent Dr. Porto showed the Board a full-page ad endorsing the New Trier High School referendum, which included the names of the six New Trier sender districts near the bottom. The ad was placed in the January 28 edition of the Pioneer Press newspapers by a group called Our New Trier, which supports the referendum. The fact that the district names appeared in the ad was brought to the attention of the superintendents from each sender district by an individual who was opposed to the referendum. Including the names made it appear the districts officially endorsed the referendum, which Avoca did not do and the law prohibits. When contacted, the chairperson of the Our New Trier committee said that had not been their intent. A letter, signed by all of the superintendents, was sent to the chairperson that day, requesting that her committee take immediate steps to rectify the misperception. The letter also served to put the superintendents' response on record, making it clear that none of the districts condoned or were responsible in any way for the ad. There was discussion among the Board members as to whether or not further action by our district was required, since the election was to take place the very next day. Since none of the superintendents had received any calls to date concerning the matter, the Board decided to wait and see if the chairperson of the Our New Trier committee complied with the request made in the superintendents' letter.

Mr. Knippen moved that

THE BOARD MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF
DISCUSSING PERSONNEL MATTERS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.

Mr. Kingwill seconded the motion. Upon roll call, members voted as follows: Ms. Ullman, aye; Mr. Bazianos, aye; Ms. Wallingford, aye; Mr. Kingwill, aye; Mr. Knippen, aye; and Mr. Greengoss, aye. The motion was carried. Following a short break, the Board moved into closed session at 6:30 p.m. and returned into open session at 7:44 p.m.

Mr. Kingwill moved that the meeting adjourn, and Ms. Ullman seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried. The Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

President

Secretary