

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Avoca Schools

January 21, 2010

The Board of Education met in regular session on January 21, 2010, at 6:30 p.m. in the Marie Murphy School Community Room, 2921 Illinois Road, Wilmette, Illinois. The President called the meeting to order and asked the Board Recorder to call the roll. The following members were present:

Jeffrey Greengoss, President
Rosanne Ullman, Vice President
Sherry Wallingford
Rick Zelinsky

Absent: William Bazianos
Henry Kingwill
Michael Knippen

Also Present: Kat Cetrone, Video Recorder
Beth Dever, Business Manager
Cindy Devin, Pupil Services Director
Dr. Kevin Jauch, Principal/Avoca West Elementary School
Madeleine McCloskey, Board Recorder
Dr. Joseph Porto, Superintendent/Secretary
Dr. Deanna Reed, Asst. Supt./Principal, Marie Murphy School

Visitors: Christopher Brown, District Tech Coordinator
Ken Florey, Atty., Robbins, Schwartz, Nicholas, Lifton & Taylor, Ltd.
Helen Hoffenberg, Apple Corp. Representative
Denise Nahley, Apple Corp. Representative
Gail Soriano, Technology Facilitator, Avoca West Elementary School
Kim Zimmer, Technology Facilitator, Avoca West Elementary School

SCHOOL/STAFF RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Helen Hoffenberg, representing Apple Corporation, was on hand to formally designate Avoca West Elementary School as an "Apple Exemplary Program" and Marie Murphy School as an "Apple Distinguished School." Plaques recognizing both achievements were to be delivered at a later date. President Greengoss presented certificates of recognition to the six members of the Avoca tech team for their efforts that culminated in the two schools receiving the two Apple designations. Superintendent Dr. Porto also reported that that day's tours of Avoca's schools, organized by Apple, was extremely successful and had been attended by 20 educators from nearby school districts. A short break for refreshments was called at this point.

CHANGE TO THE AGENDA

Superintendent Dr. Porto indicated that, due to the absence of three Board members from the meeting, the closed session topic was being deferred until the February 1 Committee of the Whole meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Ms. Wallingford suggested that the principals might consider adding signs to the outside of the school buildings regarding the two Apple designations, just as Marie Murphy School has done for the Science

Olympiad state wins. Doctors Reed and Jauch indicated they would look into the matter. President Greengoss reported he had been invited to meet with the other township school board presidents for the purpose of sharing ideas about what has worked well in the different districts. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Greengoss should accept the invitation.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Wallingford moved that

THE BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- REGULAR MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2009
- DECEMBER FINANCIAL STATEMENT WITH A TOTAL FUND BALANCE OF \$8,867,977.33, AND EXPENDITURES INCLUDING DECEMBER PAYROLL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$701,948.72, DECEMBER FIXED CHARGES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$101,301.42, JANUARY EDUCATION FUND EXPENDITURES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$140,655.11, JANUARY OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE FUND EXPENDITURES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$88,073.11, JANUARY TRANSPORTATION FUND EXPENDITURES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,310.88, AND JANUARY TORT FUND EXPENDITURES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$68
- DECEMBER ENROLLMENT REPORT

Ms. Ullman seconded the motion. Upon roll call, members voted as follows: Ms. Ullman, aye; Mr. Zelinsky aye, except abstaining from the December 17, 2009, regular Board minutes; Ms. Wallingford, aye; and Mr. Greengoss, aye. The motion was carried. Mr. Kingwill will audit the books for the month of February.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review PTAB Process

Attorney Ken Florey, from the District's law firm, provided the Board with a brief summary and status report on recent pending Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) challenges. He projected there would be a large increase in future PTAB cases due to confusion about the way properties are now being assessed. Although assessments will drop, tax bills will go up. It was also reported that school districts are now being allowed to go to the circuit court to challenge a PTAB claim. Finally, Mr. Florey briefly reviewed a list of recent property tax appeals to demonstrate the amount of money that would have been lost had those appeals remained unchallenged by our District. Mr. Florey responded to a few questions from the Board about the PTAB challenge results.

First Reading of New State-Mandated Freedom of Information Act Policy

Due to the sweeping changes the Illinois legislature recently made to its existing mandates surrounding the Access to District Public Records Policy (2:250) and compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, Superintendent Dr. Porto included the single revised policy for a first reading. He stated that, because the law already took effect on January 1, there was no time to wait for the next scheduled Ad Hoc Board Policy Committee meeting to review the policy. The policy will be adopted at the next regular Board meeting.

Update from Three District Committees

A brief oral summary of work accomplished to date by the three District goal committees was given by the co-facilitators of each committee. Co-facilitators Dr. Jauch and Ms. Ullman of the Community Relations Committee reported that five ad hoc committees had been created dealing with communication vehicles, volunteerism, service projects, school finance education, and business partnerships. The main goal of this committee is to enhance the partnership between the District and the Avoca community. Co-facilitators Cindy Devin and Rick Zelinsky of the Diversity Committee reported they were considering a few ideas, including creating a diversity center and a book club focused on authors of different cultural backgrounds, starting a sister school in the city, Skyping with people from other countries, and looking at hiring practices within the District. The committee's main goal is to initiate activities that enhance and expand the benefits of diversity and promote an understanding and appreciation of a world community. It was noted that there was some overlap of ideas between the Community Relations Committee and the Diversity Committee, which the committees will work on together. Co-facilitators Dr. Reed and Ms. Wallingford of the Extracurricular Committee listed the committee's three main goals: Encourage the right match of extracurricular offerings to student interests; achieve a better balance of extracurricular activities between the two schools; and give specific recommendations to the Board to accomplish the first two goals in a budget-conscious manner. It was indicated that surveys of both students and parents will be conducted in February and the collected data analyzed in March. The survey to parents will include a question about initiating a fee structure for certain activities. All three goal committees will provide another update on their activities in a few months.

Avoca West Sculpture Donation

Superintendent Dr. Porto reported that, in conjunction with the Avoca PTC, Avoca West Elementary School was being offered an opportunity to acquire an outdoor sculpture at no cost from a nationally-renowned local artist (Shencheng Xu, who is also an Avoca West parent), with a request that it be placed at a location in front of the school. It is a temporary piece of artwork that would last approximately 20 years. Dr. Porto indicated it was necessary to seek Board approval for any change that affects the visual appearance of the outside of the schools. The Board was provided with a photo of the sculpture, the artist's biography, and an aerial view of Avoca West Elementary School showing two possible locations for the sculpture. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to accept the donation and have it installed in May at the designated location north of the front entrance. The PTC will be donating the pedestal for the sculpture.

ACTION ITEMAdoption of Budget/Finance Guideline

Business Manager Beth Dever indicated the Budget/Finance Guideline was to be approved by the Board every January. The Board was asked to vote on the matter at this time.

Mr. Zelinsky moved that

THE BOARD ADOPT THE BUDGET/FINANCE GUIDELINE, AS PRESENTED.

Ms. Ullman seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all Board members voting aye, the motion was carried.

Ms. Wallingford moved that the meeting adjourn, and Mr. Zelinsky seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

President

Secretary