



SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2007

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Members Present: Ginny Burley, Chair; Mark Berry, Vice-Chair; Conrad Smith, Clerk; Susan Chickering, Allen Gilbert, Adrienne Magida.

Administrators Present: Keith Gerritt, Principal; Tom McKone, HS Assistant Principal; Tim Flynn, Special Services & Programs Director; Lisa LaPlante, Guidance & Counseling Director; Robbe Brook, Superintendent.

Also Present: Abbey Allen, Beth Allen, Sara Allen, Thea Ballard, Toren Ballard, May Carkeet, Tom Cate, Wes Cate, Mark Chaplin, Anne Decker, Maggie Desch, Nancy Disenhaus, Chris Ditmeyer, Callie Fothergill, Dan Gandin, Lexi Hall, Stefan Hard, Ellen Heitmann, Alice Howland, Betty Jaworski, Catherine Jaworski, Julie Kiefer, Barbara Korecki, Daphne Larkin, The Times Argus; Luna Larkin, Tracy Martin, Kate McCann, Deb Morris, Jeff Rubin, Sydney Rubin, Kit Walker, Kathy (Topping) Wiese.

- 1.0. The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Chair, Ginny Burley.
 - 1.1. Ginny Burley welcomed guests present and asked whether anybody had an issue other than scheduling discussion. None being heard, Keith Gerritt noted that the Scheduling Committee members were told 6:45 was the time for discussion of schedule proposal. The board decided to hold off on schedule proposal presentation/ discussion until that time.
 - 1.2. Agenda Revisions – Keith Gerritt circulated an agenda revision that included a revised Winter Athletics Coaches List and item 5.6. Approve Co-Curricular Advisor.
 - 1.3. Public Comments and Correspondence – None.
- 2.0. **Allen Gilbert moved to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2007 school board meeting. Seconded by Conrad Smith. Discussion: Allen Gilbert suggested some edits. The minutes were approved unanimously as amended.**
- 3.0. Reports to the Board
 - 3.1. WCSU: Adrienne Magida reported that the WCSU budget was discussed at the most recent WCSU meeting; one of the goals in the budget was to support the WCSU Strategic Plan; the first draft of the budget shows a 4.04% increase, due mostly to salary increase and health insurance. She reported that the lease agreement is for another year. There was some discussion of special education expenses. Robbe Brook added that phone technology improvement/ overhaul will be included in the budget. Adrienne Magida reported on some discussion of teacher leaders and a supervisory-union-wide facilities manager. Robbe Brook stated that feedback from individual boards is invited before the second draft of the WCSU budget.
 - 3.2. Policy: Mark Berry reported that the committee is gearing up to examine and rework the Field Trip Policy. Allen Gilbert reported that at the most recent meeting the committee drafted a list of concerns in beginning field trip policy discussion; due process requirements as related to coaches/ athletics.
 - 3.3. Personnel: No report.
 - 3.4. Co-Curricular: No report.
 - 3.5. Curriculum: Sue Chickering reported that the committee is proposing two new courses that are basically “cost neutral”: a statistics course and an English/Branching Out course. The committee continues to discuss weighted grading and advanced placement courses.
 - 3.6. Facilities Report: Conrad Smith reported that the committee met in October and discussed continued funding of the tennis courts, the progress of the roof project (99.9% complete), the aeration of the fields & turf management, follow up discussion of the bleachers, and resurfacing of the track. The facilities committee is considering whether to go ahead with a full resurfacing of the track versus a shorter-term repair/maintenance. The committee continues to draft a capital budget, primarily working on soliciting information from department heads to create a list for capital budget needs. Keith Gerritt noted that this request has gone out to “budget managers.” Jeff Rubin asked about the status of “commissioning” the building. Keith Gerritt reported that a report is forthcoming regarding the HVAC system and action re: commissioning will come as a result of this report. Allen Gilbert reported that no money was received from the USTA as hoped. The total funds raised for the tennis court proposal so far is \$68,162.
 - 3.7. Negotiations: Mark Berry reported that the process is going very well so far; both sides have shared proposals and the committee meets again tomorrow to move forward.
 - 3.8. Student Representative’s Report: No report.
 - 3.9. Administrator’s Report
- 4.0. Discussion Agenda
 - 4.1. Discuss 2008-2009 New Course Proposals: Sue Chickering presented to the board two new courses: “Statistics” and “Branching Out English.” She explained the cost impact of these courses; including that the branching out course will be subsidized in part by a grant.



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4.2. Discuss U-32 Schedule Proposal: Keith Gerritt began this discussion by explaining the history over the past year of schedule discussions/issues. Keith complimented the scheduling committee on their great efforts; explained the makeup of the committee; and that the committee was charged with the task of recommending one or two schedule models to the administration to bring forth to the board. He reported that at the committee meeting yesterday the following decisions were made:

- Vote of 11-2 to move forward the present trimester schedule model for consideration,
- Unanimous: move forward 66 minute semester schedule model for consideration versus 50 minute semester schedule,
- 10-3 to recommend the 66-minute semester schedule model.

Keith Gerritt reported from his written summary, the list of pros and cons that has been generated. Keith Gerritt summarize his rationale for supporting the proposed new schedule model:

- Opportunity for students to interact with their classes regularly over the course of the school year: best practice
- Opportunity for teachers to build individual relationships with students
- Students fitting more course requests into schedules than with trimester model
- Compatibility of U-32 schedule with rest of the state and nation.
- Transfer students/ transcripts more compatible

Keith Gerritt noted that the semester model will incur some textbook costs; reported the vote count from faculty members regarding scheduling model proposals. He also spoke about the 50-minute semester model and the committee's opinion on this model at U-32: that it does not allow the middle school and high school schedules to coordinate; there is not enough time for many courses, e.g., lab sciences. Keith read a statement from the chairman of the Scheduling Committee regarding the committee's recommendation. He stated that he gives his full support to the committee's recommendation.

Some discussion followed regarding schedule models.

Ginny Burley explained Act 31 that goes into effect Fall 2009 and requires 27.5 hours of class time per week and how this legislation impacts schedule models.

Mark Chaplin, Science Department Head, presented the "minority" report. He thanked the board and the committee for taking science courses into consideration, and stated concerns with the recommended schedule model of 66-minute semester. Mark shared a written presentation regarding "pros" of the trimester system. He noted one major issue/concern was what kind of load kids and teachers will be carrying with this schedule model? He stated that the "franticness" of the day was what drove the school initially to move to the trimester system. Mark stated that in the trimester system he has become a much better teacher and the chemistry courses he's taught have become deeper and richer.

Michelle McFadden spoke on behalf of the Scheduling Committee, to some of the points made by Mark Chaplin.

Tom Cate articulated the music department's problems with the trimester model and that a 66-minute semester model would be a "major hit on the middle school music program."

Some students spoke to the board in support of the trimester model.

Michelle McFadden gave a visual presentation of examples of trimester versus semester schedule models.

Two hours of discussion and debate took place! Students who were present were overwhelmingly in favor of staying with the present model of trimesters. Students who were present stated that they had not felt included and heard in the discussions leading to tonight's recommendation.

Mark Chaplin stated that the trimester is being blamed for things that data has yet to prove the trimester system is responsible for. Mark suggested creating variable bands within the trimester system.

Barbara Korecki explained the reality of preparing for such a scheduling model.

Keith Gerritt reiterated the work that has been done by the scheduling committee, especially the fact that every point that has been discussed tonight has been discussed by the committee in the process that has taken place over the past year.

Ginny Burley thanked everyone for input and comments and invited everyone to stay for the rest of the meeting if desired. She explained to those present about the procedure; that the board will conduct its regular board business before taking action on items on the agenda.

4.3. Policy First Reading

4.3.1. Search & Seizure Policy F3: Ginny Burley invited the board to read over this policy and send any comments to Mark Berry or Allen Gilbert. Allen Gilbert noted that this draft has been reviewed by legal counsel. This policy will move to second reading for the next board meeting.

Ginny Burley asked the board's intentions or wishes about continuing discussion of the schedule proposal tonight, in light of it being 9:30 p.m. already. Allen Gilbert stated that he wished to table any action regarding scheduling this evening. Keith



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Gerritt proposed that if a decision could not be reached tonight, the board schedule a special meeting to take action in the near future.

After a brief break, the board came back at 9:45 to the discussion regarding scheduling. Board members agreed that they would like to take more time to explore this issue before making a decision.

Adrienne Magida stated that she thought we have a “scheduling problem” not a “schedule” problem; she thinks if teachers taught more bands we would not be faced with such a big problem. Very concerned about music; on the other hand, would like to see the music department be more flexible. Students need to make choices. Concern over the teachers that didn’t vote; “Homework fear;” and over 66-minute time in class.

Sue Chickering thanked the scheduling committee. She stated that some of the issues brought forward tonight were new to her; she feels strongly about student numbers/“caseload.” Concerns with “fragmentation;” increasing staff workload within the trimester system; and climate and stress load factor.

Conrad Smith said it was helpful to him to go to many meetings, forums, etc. to have a better understanding. Change is always frightening but change does have some good qualities. Some of the constraints in the present schedule can be eliminated with change. Overall he feels pretty comfortable with going along with the committee’s recommendation.

Allen Gilbert stated that in the end what makes a transition successful is getting as many people as possible to buy into the change. He would like more time to consider this. He would like more advance notice of the recommendation to give it careful consideration over time.

Ginny Burley suggested that a really clear articulation of the problems with the trimester system, be stated for consideration. Some answers: lunch, inherent conflict with art and music. She suggested that more models be run for comparison and consideration. Ginny asked Lisa LaPlante if it was possible to run more models. Keith Gerritt wondered whether running more models would be useful, especially considering how time-consuming that task is. Sue Chickering asked whether it was possible to consider other options within the trimester model, for example only offering music or science courses for two trimesters.

Allen Gilbert moved to table the U-32 Schedule issue until the next special meeting. Seconded by Mark Berry, this motion carried unanimously. The special meeting to be on Wed. November 14 with Thurs. 15 as backup with the meeting warned to include the schedule proposal and a tuition waiver as action items.

4.4. Student Tuition Waiver: Ginny Burley explained to the board a student situation and asked the pleasure of the board, for Keith Gerritt to relay to the parent; the board will take action at its next meeting. The board asked that the Policy Committee work on a policy related to this issue. Corinne Stridsberg suggested that the supervisory union pursue a universal policy regarding this issue. The board is comfortable inviting the student to begin Trimester 2, with the understanding that if the move to Calais falls through, the tuition will be charged as of the moving deadline date in January 2008.

5.0. Action Agenda

5.1. Approve 2008-09 New Course Proposals: Conrad Smith moved to approve the course proposals as presented. Seconded by Susan Chickering, this motion carried unanimously.

5.2. Approve U-32 Schedule Recommendation: Tabled.

5.3. Approve Winter Athletics Coaches: Approved unanimously.

5.4. Resignations: None.

5.5. Appointments: Adrienne Magida moved to appoint the following. Seconded by Mark Berry, this motion carried unanimously.

5.5.1. Chantal Boulanger Custodian

5.5.2. William McMahon Custodian

5.6. Approve Co-Curricular Advisor: Approved unanimously.

6.0. Mark Berry moved to approve the following board orders:

October 24, 2007	\$14,096.52	General
November 7, 2007	\$432,836.69	General
November 7, 2007	\$300.00	Athletic Officials
November 7, 2007	\$30,208.95	Food Services

Seconded by Allen Gilbert, this motion carried unanimously.

7.0. Ideas for Future Agenda:

- Facilities Walk-through regarding possibility of Central Office relocation within U-32.
- Full Board Meeting December 10th.

8.0. Board Comments



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9.0. Executive Session: Mark Berry moved to go into Executive Session at 9:45 for the purpose of discussing personnel. Seconded by Allen Gilbert, this motion carried unanimously.

The board came out of executive session at 10:15 p.m.

10.0. Adjournment: There being no further business, the board adjourned by consensus at 10:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Stoudt
Board Recording Secretary