

SWITZERLAND COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION
Minutes of the March 15, 2010
EXECUTIVE SESSION BOARD MEETING
4:30 P.M.
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M.

The School Board of Trustees met before the regular public meeting for an Executive Session beginning at 4:30 at the Switzerland County Middle School Library to discuss I.C.5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(9).

The board members present were Mr. Phipps, Mr. Daugherty, Mr. McKay, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. Truitt. Board Member, Waltz was unable to attend. Dr. Elizabeth T. Jones, Superintendent; School Board Attorney, Ron Hocker; and Jerry Monjar were also in attendance.

The board discussed no subject matter in the Executive Session other than the subject matter specified in the public notice.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Mr. Phipps called the Public Session to order and led the group in the pledge to the flag.

ATTENDANCE:

Board members in attendance were Mr. Phipps, Mr. Daugherty, Mr. Mckay, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Truitt, and Mr. Roberts. Mr. Waltz was unable to attend.

Others in attendance were Dr. Elizabeth T. Jones, Wilma Swango, Mona Crabtree, Ronald Hocker, Michael Jones, Dan Noel, Rhonda Pennington, John Druba, Joe Covington, Barb Covington, Ginna Watson, Kathy Williams, Pat Lanman, Matt Hocker, Steve Sebree, Rita Sebree, Ronda Humphrey, Adam Cole, Amanda Cole, Ginny Reeves, Melissa Reynolds, Lowell Reynolds, Lisa Burk, Sandy Jones, Jacquita Lanman, Kathy Daugherty, Dawn Ransdell, Melody Smith, Greg Curlin, Nancy Peters, Gerry Peters, Deb Archer, Joanne Gaudin, Linda Kurdys, Rosemary Bovard, Rebecca Bunner, Shannon Rickett, W. Darrell Hansel, Sharon Hansel, Martha Bladen, Seth Yates, Mike Busch, Candice Fulk, Jim Singer, Terry Elzy, Chrissy Elzy, Sharon Stafford, Tyler Elzy, Kaylee Elzy, Chris Mattox, Lesa McGarvey, Tony Spoores, Dave Ziegler, Chastity Scudder, Elizabeth Jester, Marylee Tolbert, Cody Hankins, Karrie Rayls, and Kimberly Temple.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Mr. Truitt made a motion to approve an amended agenda with additional items under New Business regarding a Memo of Understanding between Vincennes University and the High School and a Traffic Safety Improvement Project Agreement, as well as two

additional Use of Facilities applications. Mr. McKay seconded the motion to approve the amended agenda. The vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular school board meeting of March 15, 2010 as presented in a motion by Mr. Truitt, seconded by Mrs. Moore.

FUND REPORT:

Mr. Daugherty moved to approve the February fund report as submitted. Mr. Roberts seconded. Mrs. Swango gave a brief update on the status of the school accounts. There being no further questions, the board voted unanimously to approve the report.

CLAIMS:

Vendor Claims #39148 through #39225 and Payroll Claims for 2/19/2010 were presented for approval in a motion by Mr. McKay and seconded by Mr. Daugherty. Claim #39169 to Brown's Farm Implement for \$100 was questioned by Mr. Phipps. Mrs. Swango explained that a new stove was scheduled to be delivered to Switzerland County Elementary School on a day when there was bad weather and was instead delivered to the High School. In order to move the stove from the high school to the elementary school a lift was needed. There being no further questions, the board voted unanimously to approve the claims as submitted.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS:

In the Celebrate Success part of the meeting, the school board recognized the nominees for each of the schools. Board President, Phipps, congratulated each student with a medal and certificate. The nominees are as follows:

- Jefferson-Craig Elem.: Jordan Yates, gr. 2, nominated by Mrs. Todd
- Switz. Co. Elem.: Nominee will be honored at April's regular board meeting
- Switz. Co. Middle School: Tyler Elzy, gr. 6, nominated by Mrs. Temple
- Switz. Co. High School: Larry Braun, gr. 10, nominated by Mrs. Hansel

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Mattox gave a power point presentation on his professional leave for a writing and reading workshop. The workshop was attended by Mattox at the Center for Teaching and Learning in Edgecomb, Maine on January 11 through January 15, 2010.

Dr. Jones presented reasons for her recommendation of the reconfiguration of Jefferson-Craig Elementary to include all sixth graders. Dr. Jones explained that she had been approached by the board to explore ways to improve testing scores and graduation rates. High School Principal, Dan Noel, presented pertinent high school testing statistics and graduation information. Dr. Jones said that she and her administrative staff had

discovered that if the sixth grade was moved back to an elementary setting, those students would get over 14,000 more minutes of instruction time per year which they felt could considerably affect their academic achievement. Also, Dr. Jones said that according to the Feasibility Study done several years ago, the one thing that committee members agreed on was that the sixth grade should be moved back to the elementary setting. Dr. Jones said that Switzerland County Elementary School was unable to accommodate any more students right now.

Mr. Daugherty asked how many 5th graders right now will be affected by this next year. Dr. Jones said that there were 5 sections of students that would be affected. Mr. Daugherty asked if that meant there would be five staff members that would need to be moved back to the 6th grade. Dr. Jones said that was correct. Mr. Daugherty asked if there was a plan in place to fit those students in the Jefferson-Craig building. Dr. Jones said that there was a plan in place that she was sure would need to be tweaked. She said that she knew those issues could be worked out. Mr. Daugherty said that Dr. Jones had already mentioned that there was no way to put the sixth grade back at both schools because there was not enough room to do that at Switzerland County Elementary. Dr. Jones said that was correct and that in order to make that a possibility, they would have to redistrict, which could take up to three years. Dr. Jones said that was time the school corporation did not have. Dr. Jones said that Jefferson-Craig had a declining enrollment, while Switzerland County Elementary did not. Mrs. Moore asked what the enrollment was before the sixth grade was moved to the Middle School. Mr. Jones said that he was unsure about then, but right now it would be around 530. Dr. Jones said that Jefferson-Craig's enrollment would be over two hundred. She said that statistically, the most desirable number of students for an elementary school is 325 to 350. She said that moving the students back to both elementary schools would not serve them well at all. Dr. Jones said that there was hardly enough time right now to get them all through the breakfast line at Switzerland County Elementary. Mrs. Moore said that in all honesty, she felt the board needed to table the decision until more questions could be answered. She said she felt the students would not get served the way they needed to be served. She said she had more questions about the room at Jefferson-Craig, and about the cafeteria situation, and she felt like she could not make the decision to do this right now and recommended that the decision be tabled until another meeting. Mr. McKay said that he wanted to thank the committee for the many hours that had been spent on the feasibility of the reconfiguration. Mr. Roberts made a motion to table the approval of the reconfiguration of Jefferson-Craig and the Middle School until the next meeting. Mrs. Moore seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: AYES: Roberts, Moore, Daugherty, McKay. NAYS: Truitt, Phipps.

At this time, Board Member Truitt excused himself from the meeting to fulfill other obligations.

Board President Phipps said he wanted to make a quick comment. He said that the board had challenged the administrative team to make some changes and make them work as a requirement to improve ISTEP scores. Mr. Phipps said that every year when the board discusses the test scores, the crowd is not near what it should be for that year of

discussion. He said that anytime the board tried to make educational changes, such as the reconfiguration, the room is filled. He said that he would challenge those in attendance and would hope that as many would attend those publicized meetings when the ISTEP scores are discussed.

The board voted unanimously to approve the final reading of a Return to Work policy in a motion by Mr. McKay, seconded by Mr. Daugherty. The policy was presented at the February 17, 2010 meeting for the first reading, and changes to the policy were presented for a second reading on March 01, 2010. The policy statement reads as follows:

Return to Work Management Policy Statement

The Switzerland County School Corporation believes that the best approach to controlling incidents and costs is to keep injuries and illnesses from occurring. We are committed to utilizing our resources to provide a safe work environment for everyone. Our employees are our greatest assets and we are committed to providing prompt, high-quality medical care and returning injured workers to productive employment as soon as medically possible.

We have developed a plan and process designed to help injured employees receive prompt medical attention and recovery assistance. This plan is called the Return to Work plan. It includes a team effort to return injured workers to compassionate, productive work. This team includes the injured worker, the treating health provider, the school's Workman Compensation provider, and the Switzerland County School Corporation management.

When incidents do occur, it is in everyone's best interest that injuries are properly managed. We will make every effort to provide a modified transitional work position until the employee is able to resume normal duties. All of our modified work is temporary and intended to facilitate a return to regular work duties when medically feasible. These positions may be offered at any location or any department or shift that the Switzerland County School Corporation can accommodate.

Two Endowment Requests previously presented to the board for first readings were presented for approval to send to the Endowment Committee.

Mr. Daugherty moved to approve an energy savings tree windbreak for Switzerland County Elementary School for \$10,595, which includes the planting and mulching of two rows of 65 trees. Mr. McKay seconded the motion. Mr. McKay said that the species of trees selected were slow growing, but would last a long time. Mr. Phipps said that he thought this was a good idea, but he felt like the 4-H Club or FFA Chapter should have been involved in the planning of the project. The vote to approve the Endowment Request was as follows: AYES: Daugherty, McKay, Moore, Roberts. NAYS: Phipps.

The Middle School requested financial assistance from the Endowment Committee with the sixth grade trip to Camp Livingston for a total of \$8,235, which included \$56 for each

person and tee shirts at \$5 each. Mr. Roberts made a motion to approve the request, Mr. Daugherty seconding. AYES: Roberts, Daugherty, Moore, McKay. NAYS: Phipps.

NEW BUSINESS:

A recommendation from Mr. Noel to approve three early high school graduation requests was unanimously approved by the board in a motion by Mr. Daugherty, seconded by Mr. McKay. Mr. Daugherty asked if this number was comparable to what we have had in the past. Mr. Noel said that there were four last year. Those students approved for early graduation are Trudy Fields, Vanessa Hawkins, and William Cody McNeely.

Mr. McKay moved to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with Vincennes University and Switzerland County High School. Mr. Daugherty seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. A robotics class was added at the High School and the addendum would allow students to receive dual credit for the class.

Mr. Daugherty made a motion to approve a Traffic Safety Improvement Project Agreement with Architect, Donald K. Ball. Mr. McKay seconded. Dr. Jones said that the corporation would be better served by using a local Architect. Mr. McKay said that the board had already seen the Traffic Safety Improvement plans and asked if those were the plans that would be used. Mr. Hocker said that the bid documents used by Mr. Ball would be based mainly on the plans they have already seen. Dr. Jones said that changes would need to be made, but it would not be dramatically different than what the board had already looked at. Dr. Jones said that she did not know what the bids would look like, but the board would have the final approval on the bids submitted. Mr. Roberts wanted to know what financial obligation or percentage the board would be committing to by approving this agreement. Mr. Hocker explained that the architect is paid a percentage of construction costs, whatever that might be and in this case, the percentage was 8.2%. The vote was as follows: AYES: Daugherty, Moore, Phipps, McKay. NAYS: Roberts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Tammy Hayes said that she had some questions that she needed answered before making up her mind about the reconfiguration. She wanted to know about the floor plan so that she could see where six more classes would fit into Jefferson-Craig Elementary when she knew that students were going outside to a trailer for Science class, now. Mrs. Hayes said there were also Kindergarten students who did not get to go to the Library. She also asked if teachers were prepared to teach the sixth grade curriculum. Mrs. Hayes also questioned the numbers at Jefferson-Craig and the numbers at Switzerland County Elementary. She said that she wanted to ensure that her child got an education in a classroom with less than thirty students. She said that she had attended the parent meeting at Jefferson-Craig Elementary and asked the same basic questions that did not get answered.

Rhonda Humphrey said that she had a fifth grader at Switzerland County Elementary. She said she felt that moving the students from fifth grade to the Middle School was probably the reason the ISTEP scores were going down. She said that she did not want her child to be moved to a new school for only one year and then again be moved into another building the following year. She said she just did not see the educational benefits in that.

Carrie Rayls wanted to know if any of the board members had thought about checking the current fire code requirements for that many students at Jefferson-Craig. Ms. Rayls also mentioned that she knew of a parent who was looking forward to bringing her 6th grade twin boys to the Middle School. The parent told her no one had mentioned anything about the possibility of the reconfiguration and felt someone should have told her that this was being considered.

Marylee Tolbert said that she was speaking in support of Candice Fulk. She said that Ms. Fulk had been a positive influence on her child and was grateful for that and felt that her contract should be renewed for next year. Mrs. Tolbert also said that if the board were truly thinking of the students' best educational interests, all students, even Kindergarteners, should have the opportunity to visit the Library.

Mr. Phipps said that the parents' questions and comments would be duly noted and considered by the board and to contact him if their questions were not answered. Mr. Phipps closed the public comments and the meeting resumed.

PERSONNEL:

The retirement requests from four members of the teaching staff were unanimously approved in a motion by Mrs. Moore and seconded by Mr. Daugherty. They are as follows: Janice Meadors, Ann Roller, Kathy Williams and Virginia Reeves.

Mrs. Moore made a motion to approve the non-renewal of the teaching contract of Candice Fulk. Mr. McKay seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: AYES: Phipps, McKay, Moore, Roberts. NAYS: Daugherty.

The recommendation of the non-renewal of the teaching contract of Melissa Andrew was not voted on due to lack of a motion.

USE OF FACILITIES:

Four Use of Facilities were approved by a unanimous vote in a motion by Mr. Daugherty and seconded by Mrs. Moore. They are as follows:

- HS Café./Kitchen & Appliances: Joyce Atwood/Gayla Bullock for Republican Lincoln Day Dinner, April 24, 2010 from 6-9 p.m.
- Jefferson-Craig: Meg McPeek for Girl Scout Troop on April 1 & May 6, 2010, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

- Old Admin. Bldg. Parking Lot: Bill Steele, Lifetime Resources for van parking 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- SCES Café.: Amy McAllister for SCES PTA Chili Dog Supper Fundraiser, April 13, 2010, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS: (SUPERINTENDENT)

Superintendent Jones announced that a special board meeting would be held on March 29, 2010. Dr. Jones also announced that the next Endowment meeting would be held on March 30, 2010. Dr. Jones said that the next regular board meeting would be on Monday, April 19, 2010.

High School Principal, Dan Noel, gave a trimester report and his thoughts on scheduling for next year. Mr. Noel said that some changes to the scheduling would need to be implemented next year due to the students' attention spans in longer classes and the need for time for teachers to move back and forth from the high school to the middle school. He said to better facilitate the scheduling, they were looking at introducing "skinnies". He has put together a proposal for teachers to look at and actually have a selection on what they may like to teach. He said that with the introduction of "skinnies", the teacher would have the option of teaching the literature portion of a Language Arts class in the morning and finish with the grammar or writing part of the class in the afternoon. He said he hoped to get started registering students for classes in the next couple of weeks so that by the middle of May there would be something to look at. Mr. Noel said that when you have something to look at, you can try to prevent over scheduling and create more electives.

Technology Coordinator, John Sieglitz, gave a presentation on navigating the school corporation's website. Mr. Sieglitz showed the board some of the things that have been added to the website, such as the library's card catalog. Mr. Sieglitz said that if someone has a question for a teacher, they can log on and ask their question and the teacher can email them back with the answer. Mr. Daugherty said that at a school board convention last year, they were shown paperless board meetings. Mr. Sieglitz said that was certainly possible.

Switzerland County Elementary School Principal, Mike Jones, said that he would like to invite everyone to come and see the third grade students' wax museum of historical characters to be held Tuesday at 1:30 at the school. He said the students were excited about it and wanted to invite board members and anyone else to come out and see it.

BOARD REPORT AND COMMENTS:

Mrs. Moore said that she appreciated the effort of the committee members who worked so hard on the reconfiguration. She said she was not going to totally discount the reconfiguration. She said she had no opinion yet because she had more questions that needed to be answered. Mrs. Moore said when she got those answers, then she would make her decision and that decision would be for the good of the child.

Mr. Daugherty said he knew that those persons in charge had the best interest of the students in mind. He said that he had confidence in them and trusted their opinions as to what should be done.

Mr. McKay said it was good to see such an interest being shown in this decision with such a big crowd.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Roberts moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. McKay seconded and the vote was unanimous. The meeting was so adjourned. (8:25 p.m.)

James Phipps, President

Wayne Daugherty, Vice President

William Roberts, Secretary

Virgil Mckay, Member

Tonya Moore, Member

Andy Truitt, Member

Vernon Waltz, Member
(Unable to attend meeting)