

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in Regular Session on April 23, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. at the Davis Elementary School, 818 Hamilton, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Members Present: Jeff Smith, Barbara Brown, Kirsten Fisher, Jeff Knobloch, Claire Moisan, and Carol Wilhelm. Also in attendance at the table: Superintendent Todd Abrahamson, Business Manager and Board Secretary Lisa Johnson

Members Absent: Jonathan Nance

Administrators Present: Kevin Seney, Jeff Kirby, Sarah Seney

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Smith called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board Secretary Lisa Johnson called the roll. Six members were in attendance.

2. Fiduciary

Business Manager Johnson answered questions from the board members on the bills and presented the March financial results. Board member Wilhelm asked if the district is using a local insurance agent. Business Manager Johnson responded stating the district works closely with Ramsey Weeks.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Moisan, seconded by Fisher to approve the consent agenda. Board Member Brown asked to have the Minutes approved separately to make changes. Board Member Knobloch asked for an explanation on the internal transfer process for teachers. Superintendent Abrahamson explained that when a position becomes open an internal posting is sent out and remains open for 5 days, according to the GNEA Master Contract. These openings are discussed in cabinet meetings with the principals. After requests for the transfer have been sent to the Superintendent all applicants qualifications (endorsements) are reviewed and the Superintendent has 10 days to respond. Motion carried 6-0.

- A. Approve/Amend Agenda
- B. Minutes: Regular Board Meeting 4/9/14
- C. Financial Reports
- D. Claims and Accounts: Bills, Summary
- E. Personnel
- F. Open Enrollments

Adjustments to the minutes need to be made as follows regarding the Board Discussion of Facilities: Board Member Brown asked the minutes show she preferred the MS location. Board Member Knobloch asked to remove the comment that 4th Ave property is shovel ready and Board Member Moisan asked to remove her preference for the Middle School site.

Motion by Brown to approve the amended minutes and seconded by Fisher. Brown asked for her summarized statement from the end of the meeting, stating that the focus of planning and resources should be directed to the Middle School site for a consolidated elementary building.

Motion carried 5-0. Board Member Wilhelm abstained, due to not being present at the previous meeting.

4. Communication from the Public

Board Member Brown asked about getting a crosswalk placed at Fairview to relieve issues of students crossing the street. Superintendent Abrahamson stated the district is working with the Chief of Police to get a recommendation for improvements.

Officers have been monitoring the situation and the district will implement recommendations. Principal Chris Coffman stated that Bailey Park has a paraeducator to assist students as they cross the street after school. The other buildings do not have a staff member that does this. Board Member Fisher asked if there is a process at each building for student drop off and pick up that is communicated to parents.

Abrahamson stated the district is working with the police to develop processes for each of the buildings. Board Member Wilhelm stated she believes elementary consolidation will complicate this issue further. Fisher stated she does not believe these are issues of congestion, but rather procedural issues.

Board Member Brown asked if IASB survey results were available. Abrahamson stated the data is back. It is going to the SIAC committee to use in their planning and he will send it to board members to review as well.

Board Member Knobloch asked if someone corrected the radio announcement that went out. Abrahamson stated he has spoken with them about the correction. Brown stated that corrections need to be made timely to reduce community confusion about school issues.

5. Presentation: Financial Planning Program

Gary Sinclair of PMA Financial discussed the financial model the district is using (FPP) to forecast into the future. This program brings together all the financial variables to project a total picture for the district. Assumptions need to be agreed upon before the base case and other scenarios can be developed as needed.

Board Member Knobloch asked how long Gary has been doing this and what is his track record. Gary responded that he has 29 years of working with and forecasting school financials, and has been using this product for 12 years (3 in Iowa). He stated the model's calculations are accurate. It is the variable assumptions entered that drive the output of the model. These assumptions are district driven and can be changed/updated as circumstances for the district change. Wilhelm asked why the deficit in the model increases as it goes further into the model. Gary responded that the district assumptions currently have the expenditures increasing faster than revenues.

Gary continued to explain how the "Unspent Authorized Budget Report" is the most critical, because state code does not allow to over-spend authority. The deficit is

being driven by smaller increases in state supplemental aid and decreasing enrollment. Wilhelm mentioned the increase in supplies expense is growing 0% so the whole increase is related salaries and benefits. Gary responded stating 80-85% of the expenses are salaries and benefits, so this is a majority of the expenses. The district can create multiple scenarios. Wilhelm asked where the unspent authorized balance should go. Gary responded saying that what the district should focus on is the practice of controlling spending to match revenues.

Board Member Wilhelm asked what current class sizes look like. Abrahamson stated the graduating class is in the 130s and the incoming kindergarten is expected to be in the 110s.

6. Communication and Reports

A. Board

Board Members are attending a Superintendent evaluation conference held by IASB on April 29th.

Knobloch and Brown attended a planning committee meeting on 11th Avenue where it was determined the city will entertain an offer from the school. Brown asked the district to contact the city clerk to get the City's costs invested in the property.

B. Superintendent

Abrahamson is scheduling a work session for the Board with FEH to show costs with the programming requirements identified by the building principals. This includes a non-site specific plan for an elementary and a K6-8 Middle School on 11th.

The district has received requests from various districts regarding sharing various staff members. The district will analyze these requests to determine if they are feasible.

State Supplemental Aid for FY16 still has not been set and it does not look like it will be addressed until after the elections in the fall.

The school has had three separate bomb threats, all of which were handled very well by the staff. Abrahamson addressed the students at the Middle School on the subject. The district is meeting with law enforcement to debrief on the situation and to get suggestions on how to better handle similar situations in the future.

C. Principal(s)

Davis staff presented on actions they are taking to reduce SINA status, such as 90 minute reading blocks, clustering students, collaboration projects, and a new reading program (Fontas and Ponelle).

Principal Jeff Kirby showed improvements in testing scores and proficiency improvements. He also stated that a district wide focus on literacy in professional development has driven improved results across the district. They have developed a comprehensive data form to demonstrate student results as well as analyze student progress. Knobloch asked to work on getting a consistent assessment in reading between the buildings.

Kirby discussed technology and how a team was put together in December to work on a long-range plan for technology in the district. He also presented the Clarity data. Brown stated the data shows students are using technology but wants to see more on the quality of use and how it is impacting student learning. Kirby responded saying the technology team is working with the AIW team to see how technology integration can better impact teaching methods. They are using the results from Clarity to help plan professional development in the future.

7. Old Business

A. 3rd and Final Reading - 200 Policy Series

Motion by Moisan, seconded by Brown to approve the 200 Policy Series. Motioned carried 6-0.

8. New Business

A. Destination Imagination – Out of State Travel, Knoxville, TN

Motion by Moisan, seconded by Brown to approve out of state travel. Motion carried 6-0.

9. Board Discussion

A. Facilities

Brown asked that data be sent to Board Members prior to the May 21st meeting. Abrahamson agreed to send out the information and to get the information requested from the City Clerk.

B. Principal Reports

Brown stated the Principal Reports do not need to be a production. Smith would like to hear about what is and is not going well. Fisher wants to know what support is needed. Moisan wants to see innovation for our district. Knobloch wants to reduce to 20-25 minutes and would like to see more on innovation and how leadership is working to drive innovation and change.

C. Sharing Opportunities

Discussed previously

D. Agenda

None

10. Board Talking Points

None

11. Adjournment

Motion by Brown, seconded by Moisan to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Board Calendar:

Work Session (IASB Conference at West Marshall)	4:30 p.m., April 29, 2014
Work Session (Community Center 3rd Floor)	6:00 p.m., April 30, 2014
Regular Board Meeting (Community Center 2nd Floor)	6:00 p.m., May 14, 2014