

(revised-5/29/14)

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in Regular Session on May 14, 2014, at 6:10 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Community Building 927 4th Ave., Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

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

Members Absent: Claire Moisan

Administrators Present: None

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Smith called the regular meeting to order at 6:10 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. The health insurance increase for 2014-2015 is 1% and dental increased 6%. This is included in the package increase approved for GNEA at the 4/28/14 meeting.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Brown, seconded by Fisher to approve the consent agenda.

Brown expressed concern about the number of resignations. Abrahamson stated he has talked with most and he is conducting exit interviews to see if there are other causes. Pay may be a factor as we are lower compared to other districts our size.

Motion carried 6-0.

- A. Approve/Amend Agenda
- B. Minutes: Regular Board Meeting 4/23/14, Work Sessions 4/29/14 and 4/30/14
- C. Claims and Accounts: Bills, Summary
- D. Personnel
- E. Open Enrollments In
- F. Open Enrollments Out

4. Communication from the Public

None

5. Communication and Reports

A. Board

Committee Reports

Wilhelm discussed the most recent policy meeting. The 300 series will be brought to the board along with a few other random policies for approval at the 5/28/14 meeting. Every policy must be reviewed once every 5 years.

Fisher stated the academic committee is meeting on 5/15/14 at 4:00. They will be discussing clustering to increase academics. Clustering is putting similar students academically together in a group to help better address the needs of the students. Nance stated this is already being used at Davis with good results.

Nance discussed the facility meeting. At that meeting Dave Kubalsky presented the academic technology needs. Higher usage of bandwidth by students and more computerized testing needs has increased our needs. All these improvements would be transferrable to a new building if needed.

Jim Dunne was also at the facility meeting and discussed the need to refinish the gym floors. Roofing issues and other building needs were also discussed.

Nance stressed the importance of communicating to the public that some of these projects have been put off until a decision of a building project has been made. If a new building does not happen significant improvements will need to be made to all the buildings and a bond will still likely be needed. Fisher asked if the district has had a schedule in the past. Abrahamson stated the district has not, but he and the maintenance department are working on an infrastructure plan for the future, which will be adjusted as decisions on a building project are made.

Knobloch stated that this situation is similar to what the district has put in place for school bus rotation with the current bus lease program.

Abrahamson stated the district is addressing the issue of the bomb threats with a Threat Assessment process. He is working closely with Chief Reilly and reaching out to other districts to find best practices.

Knobloch asked whether the district has a policy. We currently do not have board policy, but processes specific to different scenarios are being developed with Administrators and Law Enforcement. These will be distributed to staff and there will be further training for employees in the fall.

Knobloch requested that parents be asked at registration how they want to be communicated to, whether by email or phone. In addition, he stated, the district needs to address a common communication plan and educate all administrators to properly use the systems available to get important information out to the public as quickly and accurately as possible. Having a specific spokesperson identified would be beneficial.

6. **Old Business**

A. **Superintendent Goals [Goal 1](#) Facilities [Goal 2](#) Academic Rigor [Goal 3](#) Budget**

Smith discussed the process of developing the goals for the 2014-2015 school year, which are detailed in the agenda on the school website. Weekly, monthly and quarterly communications on the progress will take place. Knobloch stated the deficiencies at the site visit included not having a documented superintendent review.

Fisher likes the structure and the forward looking aspects of the process. Abrahamson stated he has shared the goals with the administrative team and noted the importance of developing their goals to also align with the board's focus.

Motion by Fisher, seconded by Brown to approve the Superintendent Goals for 2014-2015.

Motioned carried 6-0.

7. **New Business**

A. **National Debate: Out-of-State Travel, Overland Park, KS, June 15-20, 2014**

Motion by Wilhelm, seconded by Nance to approve the Out-of-State Travel.

Wilhelm stated that she believes debate helps students to see all perspectives when addressing a situation.

Motioned carried 6-0.

B. **Thespian Festival: Out-of-State Travel, Lincoln, NE, June 23-29, 2014**

Motion by Brown, seconded by Wilhelm to approve the Out-of-State Travel.

Wilhelm stated these trips are paid for through activity funds the students have raised.

Motioned carried 6-0.

C. **2014-2015 Breakfast and Lunch prices [Prices](#)**

Carrie Nachazel discussed the proposed price increases for the 2014-2015 school year. The prices must be increased to meet regulations. This will also help to offset the deficit we are running in the Nutrition fund for the previous and current years. The school is offering a summer lunch program again this summer at the High School.

Motion by Brown, seconded by Fisher to approve the 2014-1015 Nutrition price increases.

Motioned carried 6-0.

D. Technology 3-year Plan: Year 1 Middle School Switch Replacement [Year 1 MS](#) [Year 2 HS/Davis](#) [Year 3 BP/FV](#)

Motion by Nance, seconded by Knobloch to approve the Middle School Switch Replacement.

Brown asked if it is typical to see a total but no line items. In the future we can ask for a line item break out.

Motioned carried 6-0.

E. Gym Floors - Refinishing [Quotes](#)

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Nance to approve the Gym Floors Refinishing with FLR Sanders. The bid was \$42K. We typically spend \$10K in labor and chemicals annually. Also \$18K is being funded from the Athletic accounts. Fisher stated public perception may not look favorable. Abrahamson stated this is a necessity. It will help to make it brighter and also help to prevent injuries.

Motioned carried 6-0.

F. Bike Trail Easement [Easement](#) [Drawing](#)

Smith stated the City of Grinnell is asking for an easement and access to the property to create a bike path on the east side of the 4th Ave property. The City will maintain the path at their expense.

Motion by Nance, seconded by Brown to approve the Bike Trail easement with the City of Grinnell.

Motioned carried 6-0.

G. Lease Agreement with City of Grinnell for Ahrens soccer facility

Motion by Brown, seconded by Fisher to approve the lease agreement for the soccer facility with the City of Grinnell.

Motioned carried 6-0.

H. Class of 2014 Graduates [Graduates](#)

Motion by Fisher, seconded by Wilhelm to approve the Class of 2014 Graduates.

Motioned carried 6-0.

8. Board Discussion

A. Facilities

FEH proposed a tour of Bondurant-Farrar’s new elementary. For the meeting on 5/21/14 FEH is putting together various timelines and building program costs. They are sending documents ahead of time. Abrahamson will send those out as they are received.

Smith stated the meeting will help to narrow the focus of the board to collect the information needed to put together a plan to present to the public. Wilhelm started a discussion recapping the discussions the board has had to date on the divisions of grades between buildings. Smith pointed out that until we have a board decision for a plan moving forward our communication with the public needs to be that the board is not decided yet. Once a decision is made the board will need to have a common message of facts to provide to the public. Brown pointed out that any decision will include a PK-12 plan that is financially possible.

Wilhelm stated her concern about school consolidation, which is not favorable according to the public who have talked to her. She is concerned we are working towards a bond issue that will not be approved. Knobloch stated it is possible a bond would fail, but we cannot pre-determine the reasoning.

9. Board Talking Points

Brown asked that we communicate the FEH presentation next Wednesday, 5/21/14 at the City Council Chambers. Abrahamson said there will be plans for a K-5 and 6-8 at the High School, timelines to a bond issue in April 2015, the matrix discussed and costs. At the end of the meeting the board will develop common talking points of the key items discussed. Brown asked to include plans for a tornado safe room. Wilhelm asked about the safety of a large number of students in one building. Fisher stated there is no perfect plan and there will be compromises from all sides.

The other key items discussed were safety and superintendent goals.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Nance to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Board Calendar:

Academic Advisory Meeting	4:00 p.m., May 15th, 2014
Work Session on Building Project	6:00 p.m., May 21st, 2014
Regular Board Meeting	6:00 p.m., May 28th, 2014

