

WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Work Session Minutes
August 21, 2006

The Wyomissing Area School District Board of School Directors' work session convened at 6:08 p.m. with President Snyder thanking everyone for coming to hear the Act 1 Tax Study Commission presentation.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Barnett, Mr. Deem, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Hinsey, Mr. Larkin, Mrs. McCready, Mrs. Sakmann, Dr. Shuttlesworth, and Mr. Snyder.

Administrators Present: Dr. Riedel, Mr. McDonnell, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Laubach, Dr. Zerr, Mrs. Mason, Mrs. Motze, Mrs. Steele, Mrs. Whye, Mrs. Simyak, Mr. Hartman, Mr. Babb, Dr. Kennedy, and Dr. Larson

Others Present: Diane Schaeffer and audience included on the list included as part of these official minutes.

Dr. Larson addressed the group and shared a power point presentation on Act 1 that deals with a shift of property taxes to an earned or personal income tax.

Mr. John Woodward asked if resources would be available to the committee members at the meetings. Dr. Larson responded that they would.

Mrs. Judy Stoudt commented that the deadlines established would mean a quick turn around time with much to learn.

Dr. Larson noted that applications to serve on the committee were available and would need to be submitted by September 5, 2006, to be considered.

At 6:42 p.m., the Board went into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

The Board reconvened at 7:15 p.m. and reviewed the work session agenda.

I. Personnel –

The personnel items were reviewed. It was noted that 21 new teachers were hired and they were invited to attend the board meeting on August 28 to meet the board members.

The Board agreed to place the personnel items on the next agenda.

II. Curriculum –

The field trip requests were reviewed. Mr. Hartman was asked if there were any trips planned for an entire class to participate. He responded the only real class trip scheduled was the seventh grade trip to the Renaissance Faire.

Mr. Snyder asked if all trips were approved by administration. Mr. Hartman responded that 80 to 85% of the trips were on the list, but trips may be added if a request occurs based on curriculum needs. Requests are submitted for all out of state or overnight trips.

The Board agreed to place the curriculum items on the next agenda.

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III. Finance –

Mr. McDonnell informed the Board that the agreement to provide transportation to the Goddard School had not been done previously.

Mr. McDonnell spoke about the agenda item on the Security Benefit Basic Plan. He noted that every employee will be eligible to use the Section 125 Plan, and a presentation is planned for the staff on August 22, 2006, when teachers return.

Mr. Snyder noted the transportation schedule would be available for review next week. He asked if there had been any comments received regarding the detours.

Mr. McDonnell said the transportation department worked with the Borough on their proposed schedule so residents could be informed. The Borough estimates completion of the work by mid to late October.

Mrs. McCready asked if police would be visible when school opens. Mr. McDonnell said they would be contacted.

Dr. Larson complimented Barbara Troxel who assumed the responsibility for transportation recently upon Mr. Rausch's retirement. She noted Barb drove the routes and moved stops to accommodate the construction.

Mr. Snyder asked if the board could be provided with a list of the bus drivers prior to the meeting on August 28. Dr. Larson indicated the bus driver list would be e-mailed to the board as soon as possible.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the agreement with Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf is a new item. Mr. McDonnell responded that it was the second year for the agreement.

The board briefly discussed the number of students who were home schooled or enrolled in a Pennsylvania Charter School.

Mrs. Barnett asked if any of the students had requested participation in sports, and Dr. Kennedy stated that none had to her knowledge. It was stated that there was no large increase in the numbers this year and no driving force in the decision to choose the home school or charter school options.

The Board agreed to place the finance items on the next agenda.

IV. Facilities –

Mr. Dawson indicated the high school would be ready for the opening of school. He reported that the Reading Hospital held an event in the auditorium on Friday with 350 people in attendance, and were very happy with the facility and service provided by the staff. Mr. Dawson noted that the floor has taken a great deal of time. He also noted there is a tree planting scheduled in October.

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V. School Activities & Athletics –

There was no discussion on the School Activities & Athletics items that will be placed on the next agenda.

VI. Technology –

Mr. McDonnell said bids were solicited to renovate Room 101 for the IT Department with plans to open them today, August 21, 2006, but because of delays it was decided to open them on August 28, 2006, for discussion at the board meeting and a vote.

Mr. Laubach reported that the new phone system was in operation and modifications are being made as needed.

Mrs. Sakmann requested that an announcement be put on the district's web site about the new phone system. Mr. Laubach responded that it would be posted when all modifications are complete.

Mr. McDonnell commented that bids for the phasing in of new copiers were opened on Thursday, August 17, 2006, and additional review was needed before a vendor could be recommended to the Board.

VII. Policy –

Dr. Larson explained the need to postpone the first reading of Policy 707 Use of Facilities until she had more time to review it and work with Mr. Dawson and Mr. McDonnell to review the different categories and continue their discussion on the procedures.

The Board agreed to postpone the first reading of Policy 707 until the next meeting.

Dr. Kennedy noted that Dr. Zerr is working with Andy Faust on the special education policy.

VIII. Community Relations – No discussion.

IX. Other Items –

Mrs. Whye reported that attendance was high for the summer school programs. She shared a poster made by the Kutztown University teachers and students. She reported 9 students enjoyed the new ESL program taught by Mary Rebecca Freymoyer and Michelle Hetrich. There were 20 students in the math program, 41 students participated in the Gear Up for 7th Grade, and a number of students attended the book discussion held at Borders. She noted her goal was to generate even more interest for next summer.

Mrs. Simyak proudly announced the completion of the sensory playground. She reported that many contributions and the Kurr Foundation Grant made it possible.

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Dr. Larson said she attended Monday morning activities with new staff that morning. and Drs. Kennedy and Riedel did a great job working with the new staff.

Mr. Snyder asked Mrs. Steele if things were ready to go as far as the Wellness Policy.

Mrs. Steele announced big changes at the high school cafeteria. Iced tea and lemonade will no longer be available in the lunch line but two sizes of milk will be available (both an 8 and a 12 oz. size), and 8 and 16 oz. water. There will also be new seating and changes in lines.

Mrs. Steele indicated she believed telling the students why changes occurred would make them more palatable.

Mr. Love, former board member, asked if a dedication was being planned for the high school renovation. Dr. Larson indicated it was being discussed with plans for student involvement but suggestions would be welcomed. She noted that more details would follow.

X. Discussion Items – None.

XI. Public Comments – None.

The work session adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Arthur J. McDonnell
School Board Secretary