

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – February 10, 2014

The Board of Trustees of Joliet School District No. 7 held a Regular meeting on February 10, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Joliet School Library Room. Board members present were Justin Oswald, Dawn Blain, Clinton Kramer, and Sharon Songstad. Corie Mydland, Melvin Stene, and Brad Stephenson were absent. Also present were Jeff Bermes, Superintendent, Jeanne Carroll, District Clerk/Business Manager, and Marilyn Vukonich, High School Principal.

Justin Oswald, Vice-Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Sharon Songstad made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Clinton Kramer seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

Justin Oswald explained and asked for public comment. There was none.

Reports

Item #1 Teacher Negotiations Committee

Mr. Bermes said he has told the teacher committee that he feels both parties are better off waiting to see what the new health insurance rates will be.

Item #2 Expedition Yellowstone

The fifth grade was present to give a report on their trip to Yellowstone. Each student present introduced themselves. Mrs. Sironen was also present. They went on their trip in November. Mrs. Sironen told the Board that when Mr. Cabot was here, he had a ranger coming in to talk and that was the first year she agreed to do the trip. They have been going to Yellowstone for many years now. Each student talked about what they would never forget about the trip. Mrs. Sironen had a slide show. She told the Board this is a curriculum based hands-on program. The trip is four days and 3 nights of ecology and geological studies. The Board thanked them for coming.

Correspondence

Item #1 Thank You's

There were thank you's to the Board.

Unfinished Business

Item #1 District Cell Phones

Mr. Bermes said he looked into this as the Board had requested. He said most districts either provide cell phones to their administrators via their contract or some pay a monthly stipend. Stipends range from \$30 to \$75 per month. These districts provide a phone to their administrators and maintenance personnel who are on call. Clinton Kramer asked for a recommendation. Mr. Bermes said it makes more sense to him to do the stipend at \$30-\$40 per month for the administration and Dale and Russ. He recommended \$40/month for Russ, Jeff and Marilyn. Sharon Songstad made a motion to pay a monthly stipend for phones to the above listed at \$40/month. Clinton Kramer seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

Item #2 Handbook Policies Second and Final Reading

There have been no changes, so Mr. Bermes recommends putting these policies in place. These policies are regarding clarification on Title I, Special Education and RTI programs within the districts and keeping middle school excessive absences consequences consistent with the high school. Dawn Blain made a motion to accept the handbook policies proposed. Sharon Songstad seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

New Business

Item #1 New Board Policies-MTSBA

Mr. Bermes explained adding these MTSBA changes in policy are mandatory. One is the family engagement policies, which we are already doing; the policy is just more in-depth. The other is the Significant Writing Program which has option 1 or 2. Mr. Bermes said we are already using option 1 and he recommends staying with that option. The first reading is complete.

Item #2 School Data Software

Mr. Bermes said we currently use Schoolmaster for our attendance records, grades, classes and transcripts. He said when reporting to OPI, uploads have to be done or it has to be done manually because our system isn't compatible. His recommendation would be to go to Infinite Campus for a grading system. He said with Infinite Campus, we don't house the program anymore. Teachers and parents can use it at home. It also has a lunch program. Also, it has a messenger for calling parents, staff etc. There is an additional cost for these. He said Mrs. Carroll found a messenger service cheaper. The Infinite Campus basic program would be \$5,000 with the state discount, as the state uses this program as well. The cost goes from \$6600 down to \$5500. The annual renewal cost is \$4000. The start-up cost is the main difference. He feels this program would be much more efficient in terms of reducing time and manpower as the software is managed by the State and the reporting templates are already in the Infinite Campus Software. He said our Child Count is already in there as well. Mr. Bermes feels it would pay for itself right away. He said if it's approved, it needs to be ordered right away to get information into the new program before summer vacation and training for those who will be using it. Clinton Kramer made a motion to change to Infinite Campus Software basic student data system only. Sharon Songstad seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

Item #3 Special Education Pre-School Services Contract Renewal

The Special Education Cooperative provides preschool services. Mr. Bermes recommends continuing to support the Coop preschool. He said while we currently do not have any preschool students, the Board needs to understand costs would be considerably higher for the district as we would not be able to use the federal preschool funds. Supporting the Coop also gives IDEA money back to help with special needs students. Dawn Blain made a motion to renew the contract for Special Education Pre-School Services with the Coop. Sharon Songstad seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

Item #4 Retirement Incentive

Mr. Bermes said we don't know how a teachers retirement incentive would affect us until we get the new health insurance rates. He also feels it's hard to offer an incentive at this time with an unsettled contract with our teachers.

He said no one has come forward and expressed an interest yet. The Board is in favor of it, they just need more information first. The Board is considering it.

Item #5 Election Calendar Update

Mrs. Carroll put the election calendar in the Board packet for Board information. She said Corie Mydland and Dawn Blain are up for re-election this May. Both positions are three year terms. Petitions for nomination need to be into Mrs. Carroll by March 27.

Item #6 Superintendent's Contract Compensation Package

At the last meeting, the Board re-hired Mr. Bermes for a one year contract. He said compensation was not discussed at that time. He would like to table it for now.

Item #7 Odysseyware Renewal

Odysseyware is offering a three year deal for our school district. Mr. Bermes said the three year deal does offer some savings to the district. He is not sure we want to be tied to a three year deal with all the new technology and options in education. Mr. Bermes feels a year to year contract is best. Dawn Blain made a motion to renew the Odysseyware contract for one year. Clinton Kramer seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried. Mr. Bermes said the Odysseyware has helped with credit recovery. He said it is the easiest one to use. He described a lesson for the Board and explained that he can set thresholds and tailor it to meet the student's needs. He said it is used also for the gifted students. It is very user-friendly and inter-active.

Item #8 Hirings/Resignations

Mr. Bermes said he has a number of middle school assistant coach applications for track. He said they will be interviewed this month and he will have a recommendation for the Board in March. People have applied for some other positions that are open. He asked if the Board is willing to help with the cost if a teacher is interested in taking credits to be a Driver's Ed teacher for us. This has been done in the past. The Board feels the costs need to be explored more, etc. before they make a decision.

Superintendent's/Principal's/AD's/Business Manager's Reports

Mr. Bermes offered his greatest thanks to Mrs. Means for obtaining an AGATE grant for \$12,000 for the school. They already have a world class speaker in differentiation lined up. He said hats off to her.

He also has a request from Mrs. Means to add the Lego League to the Gifted and Talented program with Linda Hayden to manage it and Coach Atkins and Coach McAndrews for the robotics/lego league. He said this offers an interest and an outlet for student's talents. Mr. Bermes thinks it would be great to put this into the activities. Linda Hayden thanked the Board. She said they have been doing Legos and have \$1600. She said hopefully they will qualify in September and be able to go to the meet in Bozeman. She said this activity is like FFA. She said Joliet is the only school in Carbon County with this program. She said this way, kids have a different alternative. Coach Atkins said he does this out of the Laurel Schools. He said the kids learn a ton. They do presentations, slide shows, each one based on a theme. They build and program robots. Teamwork is an important part of it. Currently there are 24 kids in the group. Three robotic kits have been purchased through the money they have raised. He said there are high school scholarships for \$12,000 to \$14,000 available to kids. They are students from fourth to eighth grade. The league starts in August. The competition is in January or February for regionals. This will be put on the agenda for the next board meeting. Sean McAndrews said he is doing something similar with the MARS Rover Challenge that he just received \$350 for. They will need an 8'x8' sandbox in which to practice. He said the first rounds are here and they will be filmed. He said there are all kinds of challenges and opportunity. Mrs. Vukonich said if the kids are gone, then it would be a school-related absence and school transportation would be available. Mrs. Sironen said she sees this as a step up from the Destination Imagination which the school used to do, and it will lead kids into trades they can't even imagine. Mr. Atkins said support from the school is what they really want from the Board.

Mr. Bermes said the Spring Count enrollment numbers by grade. In the elementary total enrollment is 181 students which is up from 175. The middle school is down to 57, so up 5 students in the elementary including middle school. The high school enrollment is down to 123 and will be down to 121 now, with possibly losing one more.

Mr. Bermes asked what the Board thinks about Class C or B. He said it would take two years with high school student enrollment under 119, for it to happen naturally to drop back into Class C. However, he said, the district can petition and it would be an emergency placement starting in April. The 7th and 8th grade will be at 52 students. He said projections for the high school will be at the 120 mark. Mr. Oswald said the most important thing is safety for the kids in football. Mr. Bermes said we would also lose the basketball program. Or, he said, for the middle school, keep them in the current class. MHSA won't allow changing classes if we can fill a team. Mark Beckman won't even consider it. Mr. Bermes is asking for guidance. Mr. Kramer said we really only want Class C for football.

Mr. Bermes said District Tournaments start next week. The boys and girls teams will both be going. From the last regular meeting, student one is doing wonderful, student two has dropped out, and student three is still here.

Tammy Taylor, gym custodian is out for 8 weeks because of surgery. Mr. Bermes has hired a substitute and has also hired a student to help. The school song banner is on order. There have been bus break-down issues they've been dealing with.

Mrs. Vukonich handed out her principal's report with a listing of calendar events, which she briefly reviewed. She talked about the Aim Higher Program put on by MHSA. Awards will be given out at the Honor Roll Assembly on Thursday. Kindles and water bottles have been purchased as rewards from J-Club. She said the students have been doing MAPS testing and Smarter Balance. At State Speech and Drama, April Seymour got sixth place.

Items for the Next Agenda – March 10, 2014 at 7 PM—Regular Meeting

- Item #1 Lego League
- Item #2 New Board Policies
- Item #3 Early Retirement Incentives
- Item #4 Elections

The next Regular Board meeting will be held on March 10, 2014 at 7 p.m. in the Library.

Dawn Blain made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Sharon Songstad seconded the motion. It was unanimously carried.

Approved _____

Clerk _____

Chairman _____

