



WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT
Special/Workshop/Retreat Meeting of the Board of Education
Saturday, June 8, 2013

Epworth Children and Family Services
110 North Elm Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63119

CALL TO ORDER

A special/workshop/retreat meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 1:00 p.m., Saturday, June 8, 2013, by its president, Amy O'Brien. The following members were present:

Amy O'Brien	President
Emerson Smith	Vice President
David Addison	
Jean Dugan	
Steven Loher	
Joel Oliver	

Also present were:

Sarah Booth Riss	Superintendent
John Simpson	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Diane Moore	Assistant Superintendent/COO
Linda Holliday	Human Resources Consultant
Cathy Vespereny	Director of Community Relations
John M. Thomas	Director of Student Services
Katie Brookes	Secretary

AGENDA

Mrs. Dugan moved, seconded by Mr. Loher, approval of the agenda as presented. The motion carried 6-0.

SPECIAL WARM UP
SESSION

Those in attendance participated in a warm-up activity.

LONGITUDINAL
FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Dr. Moore presented the longitudinal financial outlook, noting that budget projections came out well. Certified salary savings are expected in 2013-2014 because of the large number of retirements in 2012-2013. She noted that the fund balance is projected to be good for the next two years but then drops rapidly. She discussed the possibility of reprioritizing budget items and the ramifications of budget numbers on future planning.

SPECIAL GUEST
SPEAKER ON TAX
LEVIES AND BOND
REFERENDUMS

Mr. David Winkler presented his “recipe” of actions needed in order to pass a tax levy (see attachment). Board members discussed the source of funding for a campaign, determining needs vs. wants, the timing of the decision to submit a ballot issue, what not to do, and the need for transparency. Board members thanked Mr. Winkler for his presentation.

SHARING OF
PERFORMANCE
BASED TEACHER
EVALUATION TOOL
FOR THE FUTURE

Steger/Computer School Principal Dr. Kris Denbow provided information about the new Performance Based Teacher Evaluation Process. She shared the reasons for the adoption of the new process and indicated the district is ahead of the curve in compliance with Missouri Senate Bill 291. She then explained the Marzano Evaluation Process being implemented in phases over the next few years with active participation of administrators and teachers. The process includes 60 elements broken down between the two areas of instructional practice and student achievement growth. Eventually all teachers will be evaluated every year.

Board members discussed the amount of additional time that will be required of principals in connection with the new process. Dr. Denbow noted that there is a computer program to be used for the process which will allow closer tracking of the elements in a timely manner without a lot of additional paperwork.

Approval of the Performance Based Teacher Evaluation Process will be on the consent agenda of the June 24 meeting.

Board members thanked Dr. Denbow for her presentation.

DISCUSSION OF LONG AND SHORT TERM GOALS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
2012-13

Board members shared their accomplishments for 2012-2013 including:

- Marzano, The Art and Science of Teaching
- PBIS awards
- Architecture/Green awards
- Opening of the new wing at the high school
- Good responses with student tragedies—proactive practices, procedures, and response
- New logo, improved communication, web site, Facebook
- AA+ financial rating; clean audit
- Clear board feedback leading to streamlined data area and school reports
- COPS payoff

- The board's stand taken on the Rock Hill TIF issue
- MSBA Governance Award
- Three-year teacher salary agreement
- Kindergarten scholarship adjustments
- Facilities and Revenue Committees
- Early Years Committee report
- Additional space being added at elementary schools
- Continuing work of Legislative Advocacy Committee including the addition of Kirkwood
- Stability of the district leadership team
- Continued community support
- Board credibility

UPDATE FROM
FACILITIES AND
REVENUE
COMMITTEES

Dr. Moore provided updates on the work of the Facilities and Revenue Committees. The Facilities Committee met monthly over the past school year and is expected to offer some outside-the-box recommendations. The Revenue Committee was divided into four subcommittees which met throughout the year. The whole committee met in May and heard draft reports from the subcommittees. The recommendations of the Facilities and Revenue Committees will be presented to the board in November 2013.

BOARD GOALS
REVIEWED

Board members discussed their priorities for 2013-2014. The 2012-2013 Board of Education Priorities document will be updated based on the discussion and shared at the next meeting.

TOPICS FOR 2013-14

Board members then discussed 2013-2014 board meeting topics and added the reports from the Facilities and Revenue Committees to the list of topics.

BOARD CALENDAR
2013-14

Board members then discussed their possible participation in the Webster Groves 4th of July parade. They also discussed plans for attending the MSBA Annual Conference on October 3-6, 2013.

POLICY
SUBCOMMITTEE
REPORT

Ms. O'Brien noted the Policy Subcommittee Report which had been provided to board members for review during the May meeting. Approval of the Guidelines for Supporting/Opposing Regional Education Issues and policy revisions is on the consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA Mr. Loher moved, seconded by Mrs. Dugan, approval of the consent agenda:

- 008a Approve Policy Subcommittee Recommendations
- 008b Approve Personnel Report
- 008c Approve Donation to WGHS

The motion carried 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business to be brought before the board, Mr. Loher moved, seconded by Mr. Addison that the meeting be adjourned at 4:03 p.m. The motion carried 6-0.

President

Secretary

Comments and Suggestions for Board of Education Involvement in Tax Campaigns

THINGS TO CONSIDER AND DO PRIOR TO CAMPAIGN

--It must always be about the Children!

--BOE needs to be unanimous in its vote and support. 7-0 or don't go.

--"Needs" should override "wants". Voters generally will support items or funds that are truly needed but often are cautious about items or funds that seemed to be nice and desirable but not necessary for a quality educational program.

--Facts only. Not the time for emotions, threats or hyperbole.

--State clearly how the additional funds will be used. Specificity over generalities.

--Report how previous funds have been used and spent in a timely manner.

--Know the language and distinctions of levies and bonds. Can be confusing when heard every five years.

--Lots of BOE support and exposure when collecting data on public opinion prior to committing to ballot issue. Public needs to see and hear 7-0.

--Teachers need to be on board or it will become a distraction. You also need their support and labor for canvassing and phone calls.

--Minimize distractions such as highly public/media issues, contract issues, contentious board elections, groups of angry parents/residents.

--As much as possible, have something for everyone in the tax levy or bond issue to gather wider support. Not always possible.

--Attractive issues: class size, student achievement, technology.

--Distractive issues: swimming pools, athletic facilities, increase balances, some salary issues.

--April election: voter turnout more predictable, shared costs, contract time, spring break, board elections.

--November election: too many other issues that can be distractions, turnout unpredictable, shared costs, more exposure.

--Special election: costly, appears to be stealth, volunteers not always available, lower voter turnout.

--Webster has a winning culture regarding ballot issues. Lose one and it is difficult to win again.

THINGS TO DO AND CONSIDER AFTER HANDING OFF BALLOT ISSUE TO
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

--Once voted to place issue(s) on ballot, hand off communication and dissemination to Campaign Committee and be its biggest supporter.

--Appoint a liaison with the campaign committee that gives the BOE's sound bites. One BOE member should speak publicly. All BOE members speak in support privately and in small groups but always reflecting the Board's message.

--One or two sentence message or description of the issue(s) that each person repeats as a mantra. Do not ad lib.

--Convince "yes" voters to support and show up. Do not try to convert negative or "no" voters. A negative person may or may not show up to vote "no". An angry person will not only vote "no" but organize friends to also vote "no". Negative =1 "no" vote. Angry= multiple "no" votes. Do not want organized opposition.

--Everyone in district receives all printed facts and information first time around. Past and regular voters as well as parents should be the target audience for face to face and phone calls.

--BOE members can help with canvassing, envelope stuffing, etc. But should not make the campaign a personal political issue.

--BOE members need to be present, if at all possible, at the opening rally each Saturday of canvassing. Public needs to see the BOE's unity.

--Respect the community's knowledge of finances and educational issues. They know this stuff.

--Assume nothing and take nothing for granted. It is never over till the votes are counted. Work as if you are behind; you might be and just don't know it.

--It must always be about the Children!

bm/dw 6-8-2013