

HYDE PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
HYDE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2010

Board members present: Mark Freeman, Jim Lipinski, Dan Regan, Kalee Roberts, Raven Walters.

Others: Michelle Mathias, Debra Taylor, Joyce Cormier, Gary Vear.

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

Items highlighted for follow-up are shown like this.

**1. Call to Order**

J. Lipinski called the meeting to order at 6:32.

**2. Approve Consent Agenda (minutes from 12/6/201, Central Office report)**

**K. Roberts moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by D. Regan.** D.

Taylor noted that she had a preliminary spreadsheet showing which SU's plan to meet their budget reduction targets. She will forward it to the board. **The motion was passed.**

**3. Adopt Class Size Policy**

**K. Roberts moved to adopt the class size policy as revised at the last meeting, D. Regan seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**4. Possible Executive Session Concerning Employment Matter**

**K. Roberts moved to enter executive session to discuss an employment matter, inviting administration, the employee, and the employee's family to remain, seconded by D. Regan, and the board entered executive session at 6:40.** The board came out of executive session at 7:35. (*G. Vear arrived at 7:35.*)

J. Lipinski said the board will take no action now. They will consider the issue further. It will probably be on the next meeting agenda. Gary Vear spoke on behalf of the employee. (*G. Vear, the employee, and the employee's family left.*)

**5. Staff Presentation – J. Cormier**

J. Cormier distributed and discussed 2009-2010 library information, including expenditures, books lost, collection size, age of collection, and fiction and nonfiction circulation statistics.

She described the collaborative unit she is doing this year with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade on social abuse. They are reading *Bystander* by James Preller. The author agreed to do a Skype session with the students at no charge, because it was his first one and he was still learning. M. Mathias and J. Cormier said the session went very well. Students are all doing projects for the unit, such as board games, videos, raps, bulletin board displays, and an infomercial.

The book giveaway program is very sustainable. She is pretty confident we will be able to keep having 3 book giveaways a year. Book fairs are the foundation for the giveaway program. She has 2 adult volunteers. One works one 8-hour day a week,

and one comes Tuesday morning for 2-3 hours. The biggest purchase last year was more bins to use instead of bookshelves. Her focus on book purchasing has been non-fiction. The fiction collection was more than twice the size of non-fiction when she got here. Material loss has been minimal, below the state average. The pace of weeding is healthy. Circulation should be one book per student per week according to a commonly-used formula, but ours is higher than that. Based on informal conversations at library conferences, etc., J. Cormier feels she does more collaboration with faculty than a lot of other librarians. She collaborates with each grade.

All LNSU librarians meet once a month. They have been working for about 3 years on developing an information literacy curriculum, and are close to completing it. D. Regan said he thinks it is important to help kids think through how to evaluate information, especially electronic media. He thinks starting information literacy very early is important. J. Cormier said she just did a session with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders on website navigation. D. Regan said we need to figure out ways to disseminate the curriculum throughout the building so it is not just the library's area.

M. Mathias said because of the increase in enrollment, Robin Wright has not been as available to help in the library. She has been spending more time working as the school nurse, and the guided reading library has been a priority. J. Cormier said inventory hasn't happened because she hasn't had time. M. Freeman asked if the parent group could help with that. J. Cormier said they could. She is hearing that Follet is not going to continue to support the library software all the LNSU schools using. The librarians hope if we need to upgrade, if we do it as an SU, it will be more affordable. D. Taylor said she thinks there should be a discount if we all purchase together. J. Cormier's handouts included a pie chart showing how the collection is broken down by type of book and an overview of her curriculum, with a week-by-week breakdown by grade.

R. Walters thanked J. Cormier for running the library so well. D. Regan noted that there is good collaboration between the HPES and Lanpher libraries, and in concert, they make quite a volume of resources available. J. Cormier thanked the board for the support she has had. D. Taylor remarked on J. Cormier's devotion to HPES.

Everyone thanked J. Cormier for her work. (*J. Cormier left at 8:16.*)

**6. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning Request of Non-Resident Enrollment in Preschool**

There have been 2 requests for preschool enrollment from staff members, one from a town that does have a preschool and one from a town that doesn't. K. Roberts said one concern she has is that we are already oversubscribed if we believe 15 is the appropriate number. Because of the SIG grant we are allowed to go over that number, but the board hasn't endorsed that, and she thinks when we look at the space issue we are already challenged.

D. Taylor noted that the board has already considered John Nelson's opinion on the board's draft non-resident enrollment policy. He had said that policy could be

interpreted as saying we will take on any special ed costs, but there are provisions in law that the child's community will be responsible. However, it would be sensible to have an agreement about that expectation. If we did accept a child from a community that had preschool and that child became identified as having special needs, the community might request that the child be returned to their district. She said it wasn't clear to her how the board intended to take on cost issues. J. Lipinski said the board had discussed that if our enrollment became too high, the non-resident's child would have to leave.

D. Regan asked if other LNSU schools face these requests. If yes, how do they deal with them? If no, is there a particular history of precedent at HPES that shapes expectations? If so, those precedents and expectations are facts we have to take into account. There are serious retention issues here that have to do with instructional quality. D. Taylor said for the last 2-3 years, she has observed that a few individuals have made such requests, but other towns have not accepted them. None of our other town elementary schools tuition students from within or outside the SU, mainly because of space (except for Belvidere students who are tuitioned to Waterville.) Taking on a non-resident as another pupil even for a single year takes away from a school's mission, which is to serve community residents.

D. Regan asked how many precedents there have been at HPES. M. Mathias said several. K. Robert said only in the last 2 years; the board turned them all away before that. M. Freeman said for staff members who come from towns that have a preschool, he is less inclined to agree to it. J. Lipinski said allowing it only for people who don't have a preschool in their town avoids the slippery slope of requests for kindergarten and later, because all districts have those. M. Freeman said he thinks we need language about the town of origin being responsible for any special ed costs.

K. Roberts said people choose where to live, and she does not feel we owe it to employees to provide preschool if they chose to live somewhere else. D. Taylor said there are multiple ways to solve problems of transportation, such as having a neighbor or friend help. She can help employees with problem solving. K. Roberts said we are not helping other people in Hyde Park solve the problem of transportation between daycare and preschool, so it doesn't make sense to her to help employees by allowing their children to attend our preschool. D. Regan said he would have no problem with that if it had been consistent, but he is seeing that instances in the recent past have created a set of expectations that is our legacy to deal with. D. Taylor said she thinks it would be helpful for the board to reach consensus on outlining a policy for administration to follow. M. Freeman said John Nelson contradicted what Sue Cano told us. M. Mathias and K. Robert noted that John Nelson brought up other points besides the issue of special ed costs, such as the fact that this could be a bargaining point in contract negotiations. J. Lipinski said keeping it out of bargaining lets us put more constraints on it. M. Mathias said precedent only goes so far. Things have been changing with the school in terms of enrollment. Precedent is a weight, but we can make a change. K. Roberts asked how many are in preschool now. M. Mathias said

the two classes have 14 and 11 students. The board agreed that they are not in favor of increasing preschool class size over 15.

It was agreed that the policy committee would schedule time to work further on a policy on non-resident enrollment of employees' children.

**K. Roberts moved to deny the request for preschool enrollment from the staff member from a town with an existing preschool. M. Freeman seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**K. Roberts moved to defer the request from the staff member from a town with no preschool. The motion was not seconded.**

**M. Freeman moved to accept the request by the staff member whose town does not have a preschool, under the condition that class size does not exceed 15 students. The motion was not seconded.**

There was discussion about preschool class size. M. Mathias said she thinks we were legally limited to 15 students before we got permission to exceed the guidelines due to being in school improvement. She doesn't think anything was said about how much we could exceed the guidelines by. She said she wouldn't go above 16, given the available space.

**J. Lipinski moved to direct administration to communicate to the staff member whose town does not have preschool that the request is still under consideration, and that policy work in that area is still ongoing. R. Walters seconded, and the motion was passed.**

**7. *Adopt School Action Plan***

M. Mathias said she feels the action plan should be our road map, and we should be working on it and changing it on a regular basis. The state's requirement that we provide an action plan shouldn't preclude us being able to change it. The 5-year action plan we send to the state is a snapshot of where we are now, but she would like to bring it back to the board every 4 months or so.

J. Lipinski brought up his prior recommendation to make responsibilities clearer. M. Mathias said as the leader of the building, she is responsible for achievement of most parts of the action plan. (Some are board or LNSU responsibilities.) J. Lipinski noted that Goal 1, Objective 2a just lists "Faculty" under Responsibility. K. Roberts said she is still waiting to see the curriculum map. If there is no definitive responsibility for collecting and reporting the data, then we don't really have an accountability structure. It empowers people when they are charged with responsibility, and it may expand their thinking on accountability and understanding. J. Lipinski said if an item is listed as a responsibility for someone, it should be on that person's performance review.

D. Regan said if he were on the faculty, one thing that would help him make the action plan a road map would be to have a set of projects and activities for each year, addressing a piece of the strategy. M. Mathias said it's not that she doesn't agree, but now it's up to the various faculty committees to decide how best to accomplish each item. Today each committee listed a focus for the balance of the year based on the needs they see. They have prioritized strategies based on the strongest needs. That gives them ownership. D. Regan said the strategy to coordinate the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade literacy program with the middle school appears to stretch over 5 years. We can't expect the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade instructors to fully realize that in the first year, then replicate their work each year. Rather, they would bite off a chunk each year, then move on. Identifying that chunk would make the first year project manageable to carry out. K. Roberts said the evidence would change dramatically from Year 1 to Year 5. M. Mathias said this is going to be an iterative process.

**R. Walters moved to approve the HPES action plan for 2010-2014 thoughtfully produced by M. Mathias, and M. Freeman seconded.** K. Roberts said evidence is really what the board needs. She is continually frustrated by the reluctance to really look at evidence. She wants to see the curriculum map at the next meeting – the one she heard was being developed a year and a half ago. She wants to see that as a baseline. Right now, she doesn't know what is happening in the classrooms. What is the evidence differentiation is occurring? If we are going to measure it, it is something we can report on. M. Mathias said she views the action plan as something to make sure the school is going in the direction that derives improvement for all the kids; that was her sole motivation for the plan. On the action plan, we have to say how we will measure each item, but some of these are hard to measure. How do we determine if 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade are in alignment with the middle school? K. Roberts said if it's in the action plan, we have to know if we are doing it. D. Taylor said some of these are process oriented and some are outcome or product oriented. Does the board view this as an outcome document which requires periodic reports, or do they want to adopt another type of plan? She thinks this one is outcome oriented. Does the board want to devote time to looking at a curriculum map M. Mathias might have asked staff to do, or does the board want to focus on different areas of the action plan at different meetings? J. Lipinski said once this is adopted, we can hone in on different pieces and discuss changes the board wants. He sees this as a huge step forward from old action plans. Part of the attitude shift he would like to see is not being afraid of measurement. There was some discussion about the evidence column, and the possibility of adding evidence columns for future years, or changing the evidence in future years. **The motion was passed.**

**8. Budget Discussion**

D. Taylor said CLA went up, so the tax rate should go down. K. Roberts and D. Taylor said the GMTCC budget will be approved tomorrow night and the LNSU budget has been approved.

**9. Plan for Visioning Meeting**

The visioning meeting will be Jan. 10. R. Walters will get something about it to the News & Citizen and Transcript. K. Roberts suggested we should personally invite those who came to previous meetings, via email. D. Taylor said C. McFarlane could

do that. R. Walters said she might have the email addresses and might be able to do it. The meeting will run from 5:30 to 8:00. M. Mathias will arrange childcare and food.

There was discussion about whether the LNSU carousel meeting is scheduled for Jan. 17 or Jan. 24. D. Taylor will check.

**10. Board Development Work – Core Purpose**

Some board members said they have written their core purpose. J. Lipinski suggested that everyone email theirs to the group, and people can choose not to read others until they've done their own if they want. The rest of the board agreed.

**11. Adjourn**

**It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 9:35, and the motion was passed.**

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*

UNAPPROVED

**Items highlighted for follow-up:**

It was agreed that the policy committee would schedule time to work further on a policy on non-resident enrollment of employees' children.

The visioning meeting will be Jan. 10. R. Walters will get something about it to the News & Citizen and Transcript. K. Roberts suggested we should personally invite those who came to previous meetings, via email. D. Taylor said C. McFarlane could do that. R. Walters said she might have the email addresses and might be able to do it. The meeting will run from 5:30 to 8:00. M. Mathias will arrange childcare and food.

Some board members said they have written their core purpose. J. Lipinski suggested that everyone email theirs to the group, and people can choose not to read others until they've done their own if they want. The rest of the board agreed.

UNAPPROVED