

HYDE PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
HYDE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2010

Board members present: Brian Marshall, Kalee Roberts, Jim Lipinski, Dan Regan, Henri Moser.

Others: Michelle Mathias, Debra Taylor, Sue Cano, Raven Walters.

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

Items highlighted for follow-up are shown like this.

**1. Call to Order**

B. Marshall called the meeting to order at 6:34.

**2. Approve Consent Agenda (Minutes – February 1, 2010; Principal’s Report; Central Office Report; Directors’ Orders)**

**J. Lipinski moved to approve the consent agenda, including directors’ orders in the amount of \$49,958.47.**

H. Moser said he had questions about the principal’s report. He asked, what is the special ed staff? M. Mathias said there are 3 full time special ed staff, a speech and language person, 16 paras, a behavioral interventionist from Behavioral Services and a behavioral interventionist from Laraway’s Backpack Program. Both behavioral interventionists are full time. H. Moser asked if there is a student support center, or some room where students go when they are pulled out of class for being disruptive. M. Mathias said HPES has 2 different spaces – one for high-intensity disruptions, and another space like a small office where a student might spend some time doing some work or processing. Laurie Martin usually handles the processing, but it could also be done by others such as Margie Nyland-Funke (the guidance counselor), Nancy Pope, or M. Mathias. H. Moser said it is becoming a huge part of the talk in the town that 2-3 kids are dominating classroom time. He wonders if there needs to be restructuring of how the place is staffed or a money boost to hire more people. M. Mathias said HPES did increase special ed staff as a result of the study that was done just before she came. Another thing in that study was having a behavioral specialist, and they are looking at doing that now – someone who would be available to support all general ed teachers working with behaviorally challenged kids. H. Moser said at Barnet, probably 25 of 40 staff are involved in Life Space Crisis Intervention. They are also developing an in-school alternative ed program for 4-6 Tier 3 kids. It will be staffed by a special ed teacher, a behavioralist, and a para. Students will rotate out to attend some classes, then come back into the alternative room.

M. Mathias said she, D. Taylor, and S. Cano have talked about this. Johnson has more space than HPES. M. Mathias is concerned about children who are not behaviorally challenged, and about the progress possible for those who are in the tiny spaces we have. We don’t have any more classroom-like space. They want to make sure these kids are transitioning into a more classroom-like environment. This is a

big focus here. M. Mathias is concerned about the long term impact on the environment. This has been a very difficult year. They have looked for outside resources, but this year, because of cost cutting, they are not as readily available. We may be able to have some arrangement with Johnson to use some of their space.

D. Regan asked, do traditionally trained elementary teachers ever come to us certified in special ed? M. Mathias said yes; some of our teachers are certified in special ed. D. Regan asked, would trying to employ more such teachers be a cost-effective way of addressing problems in-house? D. Taylor said she, S. Cano, and M. Mathias have worked a lot this year on this issue. D. Regan noted that a former principal's report shared information on testing achievements of kids with a lot of problems. Was that a different subset of students? M. Mathias said yes. A student can be intellectually ok, but behaviorally challenged, for any number of reasons.

J. Lipinski said the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is being rewritten. Can we get an idea at some point what the implications to us of DSM-V will be? For instance, Asperger's will be gone. Will we see more kids id'd, or fewer, or kids who should be id'd but are not? We probably shouldn't wait until the new manual comes out in 2013 to think about it. D. Taylor said S. Cano has been following the autism spectrum issue closely. She has observed an increase in identification of students on the autism spectrum and how they are progressing, and noted that LNSU schools have built the capacity to support them well. One in 76 LNSU students are identified on the autism spectrum. J. Lipinski said he imagines there will be conferences coming up to discuss the DSM revision. He is interested in being tapped in as much as possible.

D. Regan asked for a correction to the minutes of February 1. He said the sentence under Item 3 reading: *D. Regan suggested adding an item to those marked for follow-up in the January 25 minutes: exploring further steps in convening a community committee to advise the board on deferred maintenance* should be changed to refer to "deferred maintenance and sustainability." He thanked J. Lipinski for posting materials on the board website, and asked if there is any possibility of posting materials before the weekend. J. Lipinski said one thing that makes it difficult is if the agenda is not ready, because everything is linked to the agenda. He said he generally shoots for Friday night.

D. Taylor said M. Frederick had asked for a clarification to the minutes of February 1. Under Item 4 (Approve Copier Bid), she would like clarification that the memo distributed included opinions of staff regarding a copier recommendation, as well as her recommendation, and that information concerning the quality of the machines was the opinion of staff. The board agreed to that clarification.

**H. Moser seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda with the above changes to minutes, and it was passed.**

**3. Financial Reports**

M. Mathias said she is basically going to be on a spending freeze, though she does want to finalize purchase of a SMART Board, which she thinks will be mostly grant funded. B. Marshall noted that we currently have a shortage of revenues relative to expenses, and he understands that is projected to continue. M. Mathias said yes, because of an increase in special ed costs.

**4. Discuss Town Meeting Presentation**

M. Mathias showed the presentation M. Frederick had developed, and suggested changes were discussed. D. Regan suggested that on March 1, someone stand up and actually do the presentation for practice. (*S. Cano arrived at 7:19. D. Taylor left at 7:23.*) M. Mathias will send out a revised version of the presentation for the board to review.

**5. Report on NECAP Scores**

M. Mathias distributed grade level summaries of NECAP results. She said the data is now downloadable from Measured Progress, so it can be pulled into a spreadsheet or SPSS and manipulated. Also, it is going to be available on a longitudinal basis. The longitudinal data is available on a student by student level, but it may be changed to make it possible to download the whole school's data at once. Faculty can get passwords and look at item analysis for each student. This year's results showed improvement in reading, not math, but teachers have been working more on math this year. Of students in Grades 3-6, 60% were proficient in reading and 54% in math. (Of those on free and reduced lunch, 58% were proficient in reading and 47% in math). Of students in Grades 3-7, 56% were proficient in reading and 50% in math. (Of those on free and reduced lunch, 61% were proficient in reading and 52% in math). Seventh graders did not do as well as the rest of the school. M. Mathias said we have serious work to do in math. We're lower than the middle school average, and that's not acceptable.

M. Mathias showed the percent proficient in math by grade from 2008 and 2009.

H1N1 definitely had an impact on test taking. Many kids were absent during the test taking period, and had to make up the test over a shorter period. S. Cano noted that the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade trend is upward. Those are the grades where the majority of the co-teaching was last year. M. Mathias showed the percent proficient in reading by grade from 2008 and 2009. She said 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades piloted a common instruction time for reading that allowed kids to be put in small groups for direct instruction. Third grade showed an increase in reading scores.

M. Mathias talked about RtI and the need for additional assessments for math besides what they have in AIMSweb. S. Cano said she recently attended a webinar about improving math competency in RtI schools. She suggested M. Mathias could look at it, because it's archived.

H. Moser said he doesn't see any buy-in to Mahesh Sharma's ideas at HPES. He said math is also not differentiated in any way. It's focused on computation, with no problem solving. M. Mathias said she has seen problem solving. She saw both second grade classrooms working on problem solving last week. She said in first

grade, there is a big difference between how kids are learning this year compared to last year. They are not using their fingers now. They know math facts. Teachers in two grades have not gone through the Mahesh Sharma training. It will be offered again this summer, and she will strongly encourage teachers who haven't had it to go. She has seen a real change in teaching kids the language used to express math concepts.

K. Roberts noted that although M. Mathias had referred to Mathland as a curriculum, it was a program, not a curriculum. She thinks a lot of math teachers didn't have a curriculum. She asked, how are we differentiating professional development for staff? They will have to identify student deficits, if AIMSweb can't. M. Mathias said Tami Hugulet is part of a teacher leader program through LAPDA. There is at least one teacher leader in each LNSU school. They will work with their colleagues on examining lessons. Some faculty have been insistent about asking what we are going to do for a math program. M. Mathias is not planning to go to a program until teachers have more understanding about concepts, their students, etc. She also wants to see what direction the LNSU math curriculum committee wants to go in. We should all go in the same direction. K. Roberts said we don't have a curriculum, so we shouldn't choose a program yet. She said teachers can't identify where there are gaps. There hasn't been a lot of in depth thinking. M. Mathias said they are working really hard on a direction for a math curriculum, using current research. S. Cano said Dave White would say that the additional math assessment we need is a formative assessment based on student work. The purpose of AIMSweb is to test speed of basic foundational skills in reading and math.

D. Regan said M. Mathias had mentioned that we are not where we want to be with NECAP scores, and the board would agree. But the board has come to the conclusion that more important than NECAP scores is a growth model for individual students and cohorts. So if 4<sup>th</sup> graders in October aren't scoring well on the NECAP, the real question is, will they have those things under their belts by spring? We need to keep that growth model in mind and have the check-ins and assessments we need to see if skills have been mastered. And we need to return to report cards to reflect the growth in skill mastery this board has been talking about. M. Mathias said yes, they will be addressing the report card. It would be better if it were more standards based. AIMSweb does show growth. She did notice that when she sees AIMSweb rankings compared to how students did on the NECAP, even if they are in the green area in AIMSweb, if they are on the lower half they probably are not safe by this state's standards, because AIMSweb is nationally normed, and if Vermont standards are higher than many states', the national average may not be good enough. (R. Walters left at 8:26.)

**6. Discuss, Adopt Policies**

J. Lipinski noted that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills policy wasn't warned. K. Roberts said we can warn it for March 1<sup>st</sup> and adopt it then; there is no need to discuss it more than once.

**K. Roberts moved to adopt the policy titled Board Member Conflict of Interest to replace any existing policy covering board member conflict of interest, J. Lipinski seconded, and the motion was passed.**

D. Regan said it was discussed last time that if the official LNSU policy was the one we intended to adopt, then for efficiency and brevity we could indicate our embrace of it and provide a link. He checked with the superintendent who agreed the two were the same. The LNSU manual hadn't been updated, but now it is. K. Roberts asked if this policy is required. J. Lipinski said it is required for supervisory unions.

**J. Lipinski moved to adopt the policy titled Professional Development, which incorporates by reference the corresponding LNSU policy, and to replace any other policy with the same title, and the motion was seconded.** K. Roberts said she is somewhat opposed to adopting any policy that is not required. She is reluctant for the board to have a policy about something we can't control. D. Regan said he wants this board to have a policy on professional development. **The motion was passed, with K. Roberts opposed.**

**B. Marshall moved to adopt the policy titled Substitute Teachers to replace any existing policy covering substitute teachers, seconded by J. Lipinski.** K. Roberts said she had the same objection to this policy. H. Moser said he thinks substitutes should have bachelor's degrees. J. Lipinski said he thinks this one is mandatory. K. Roberts said she doesn't think so, and thinks this policy is totally procedural and should be left to the school. (S. Cano left at 8:35.) M. Mathias said they often will use someone from within the building, like a para, as a substitute. It is much better for the kids because it provides more continuity. **The motion was passed, with K. Roberts opposed.**

J. Lipinski asked, do we want to make any changes to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills policy? K. Roberts said she approves of it because even though it is not a required policy, it should be. D. Regan said he thought it was fine.

7. ***Discuss Possible Press Release about Budget***

The board agreed to delegate writing a press release to M. Mathias. There was discussion about points to include.

8. ***Other***

K. Roberts had some updates. She said in Washington, the news is mixed. A lot more education money is proposed in the budget, but all of the programs are going to be consolidated and there are going to be competitive grants. Things like E-rate will no longer be formula-based. It will be a kick in the teeth for rural districts. She thinks Arne Duncan is probably as disingenuous as our commissioner. He talked about understanding how difficult it is for rural states, and about making sure we won't be left out, but then issued a press release saying something opposite. He talked at great length about changing to a growth model in the ESEA reauthorization, but they are also going to change all of the standards. The new phrase is "college and career ready," but he doesn't know what that means. By 2020 this will replace NCLB, but nobody knows what it will look like. A committee of governors is

working on uniform standards. They have sworn it won't dumb down anyone's standards, but it will have to.

At the state level, A. Vilaseca was at a meeting last Wednesday. He says he will do what he wants no matter what anyone says. He talked about having state colleges scrap the SAT and ACT in favor of NECAP, as a way of making NECAP relevant to kids. The state grant may be smaller by 5%. K. Roberts thinks we need to think about how the school will look in 2 years with 20% less money; we need to get realistic about that.

**9. Executive Session - Negotiations**

**It was moved and seconded to enter executive session for negotiations at 8:58, and the motion was passed.** The board consented out of executive session at 9:12.

There was a brief discussion regarding board reorganization and the desire to appoint B. Marshall as representative to the negotiating committee.

**10. Adjourn**

**B. Marshall moved to adjourn, seconded by Henri Moser, the motion passed, and the board adjourned at 9:17.**

UNAPPROVED

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*

**Items highlighted for follow-up:**

J. Lipinski said the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is being rewritten. Can we get an idea at some point what the implications to us of DSM-V will be?

UNAPPROVED