

MILLARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Board of Education will meet on Monday, October 9, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at the Don Stroh Administration Center, 5606 South 147th Street.

The Public Meeting Act is posted on the Wall and Available for Public Inspection

Public Comments on agenda items - This is the proper time for public questions and comments on agenda items only. Please make sure a request form is given to the Board Vice-President before the meeting begins.

A G E N D A

1. Graduation Requirements, Alternate Diplomas Paths, Strategic Planning related to Curriculum, AP Action Plans

Public Comments - This is the proper time for public questions and comments on any topic. Please make sure a request form is given to the Board Vice President before the meeting begins.

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
October 9, 2006

The members of the Board of Education met for a Committee Meeting on Monday, October 9, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the Don Stroh Administration Center, 5606 South 147th Street. The agenda for the meeting consisted of Graduation Requirements, Alternate Diplomas Paths, Strategic Planning related to Curriculum, and AP Action Plans.

PRESENT: Brad Burwell, Mike Pate, Julie Johnson, Linda Poole, Mike Kennedy, and Jean Stothert.

Others in attendance were Keith Lutz, Martha Bruckner, and other school administrators.

The board committee meeting was a conversation about curriculum. Topics that were discussed included the following:

Alternate Diploma Paths:

Martha Bruckner described alternate diploma paths that have been introduced for the Class of 2008 and beyond. Students and advisors are using the paths for the first year this school year. Mike Pate questioned whether advisors really understand the different graduate diploma tracts and communicate it to kids. Linda Poole indicated that her students had been advised appropriately.

Dr. Bruckner acknowledged that we need to continue to help students and advisors understand the requirements of the different paths, and help them decide to make the extra effort to meet the additional requirements. Paths that are labeled “liberal arts” include completion of what ACT discusses core curriculum. Brad Burwell suggested that the commended and distinguished diploma paths for specialty diplomas should include 5 additional credits in math and science.

Graduation Requirements:

The board reviewed the Omaha Chamber of Commerce Comparison data about graduation requirements from the eleven Learning Community school districts. There was discussion about the possibility of increasing math and science requirements for a regular diploma. Mike Kennedy shared his concern for the nontraditional student who doesn't want to attend a 4 year college. The Board reviewed parts of the post graduate report about the 2005 Class (scheduled for the October 16 Board meeting).

ACT - related issues:

The Board received the ACT and SAT report at a September Board meeting. Discussion occurred about the increasing scores of Millard Public Schools' students. At the same time, it was noted that the number of students taking the ACT assessment has decreased. Board members mentioned that a higher percentage of graduates may be selecting to attend community college in the future.

AP - related issues:

The Strategic Plan established a need for an “AP culture.” Martha Bruckner reviewed data about Millard students enrolling in AP classes and taking AP examinations. The trend is increasing in both categories. The AP Exam plan set a goal of having 35% of enrolled students take the test in

05-06. The goal was surpassed since 41% of students tested. A letter will be sent to recognize and thank the many teachers who met the testing goal. The goal for testing will be increased each year for the next 4 years.

Progress has been made related to AP partially due to scholarship support for testing by the District and the Foundation. Students who receive a “2” or higher on the test are refunded money. Students who cannot pay the initial cost of testing may apply to the Foundation for a scholarship. Mike Kennedy asked how AP test scholarships or funding support are advertised to parents. Brad Burwell complimented the AP program and how it is moving in the right direction. A complete report on AP progress is scheduled for the October 16, 2006, meeting.

Professional Learning Communities:

Dr. Bruckner explained the theory behind the District’s move to Professional Learning Communities and reviewed what are called “tight/loose parameters.” Dr. John Crawford has done analysis of data that Kim Saum-Mills collected related to PLCs. The data shows that teachers have made some serious growth in using professional learning communities, but that there is much more to do to improve. Board members noticed that there were differences in responses from elementary and secondary teachers, with elementary teachers being more positive in their responses. Dr. Bruckner mentioned that having “singleton” teachers have meaningful conversations is more troublesome due to the nature of their positions. Plans are in place to help those teachers have meaningful times to interact.

Personal Learning Plans:

Jon Lopez and Dr. Mark Feldhausen demonstrated two versions of Personal Learning Plans using the teacher Infinite Campus version and the web-based version that is available for student use. The fact that students can access their PLPs from home gives better possibilities for usefulness. It is hoped that teachers and students will grow more proficient in their use of the tools in the future. Martha mentioned that NDE’s Rule 10 requires some sort of career plan for grades 7-12 beginning next year.

Strategic Plans:

Dr. Bruckner gave a brief review of the previous committee work on the “Senior Project” and shared a different example from New Trier (Illinois) High School. Though the specific strategic action plan has not yet been activated, it was agreed that some sort of senior project could have meaningful outcomes for some students. Brad Burwell indicated that he would like to see movement in this direction soon.


The Board reviewed two Superintendent’s goals, and spent time discussing them:

(2C) Develop a plan to address the rapid increase of drug and alcohol use/abuse in our schools.

The specific plan is scheduled for discussion at the October 13 Strategic Planning session, but board members shared discussion about use of drugs and alcohol by high school students. Linda Poole mentioned that Strategy 7 plans must include more than counseling and prevention. Other board members agreed.

(3) The Superintendent will reexamine the curriculum and ensure it is aligned with the Strategic Plan and our goal to become a World Class School district.

Dr. Lutz mentioned that the proposed PDK Curriculum Audit is going to cost approximately \$60,000. There were discussions about the fact that a curriculum audit by representatives outside the district might be helpful and timely, and might help push us toward the concept of "world class." The Board will make a decision in the near future as to whether or not the District will have the audit in this year, as part of the superintendent's goal #3.


CHAIRMAN