

ELWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Elwood, New York

MINUTES

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING -- BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 10, 2005

Elwood Middle School

A. CALL TO ORDER – District Clerk – 8:04 p.m.

Present Michael Kaszubski President

Joseph Fusaro Vice President

Dina Annunziata Member

Julie Badlato Member

Dan Ciccone Member

Staff Dr. William J. Swart Superintendent

Carl Fraser Assistant Superintendent/Business

Robert Annucci Assistant Superintendent/Human Resources

John Hogan Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum

David Cenerelli Director/Special Education

Carlene Granieri District Clerk

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Board President

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) (TAB A)

Mrs. Annunziata moved and Mrs. Badlato seconded that the Board approve the minutes of the Regular Business Meeting of January 13, 2005.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS – Dr. William J. Swart

Petitions are available upon request for anyone who cares to run for the Board of Education. Information and the petitions are located in Mr. Fraser's office.

Our Student Liaison, Brooke Kluepfel is absent; therefore, there will be no student report.

Dr. Swart wholeheartedly supports the recommendations of the Health & Nutrition Committee. He was impressed by their presentation last Thursday. He was flabbergasted at the scope of the problems affecting our youth regarding poor nutrition and unhealthy food choices. He believes that our School District will be at the forefront of reform in Long Island with the changes we will be making in our nutrition program. We are making positive and proactive steps. He was equally impressed, as were the Board members, with the presentation and the recommendations of the K-12 Articulation Committee. He provided the Board with job descriptions for the position of subject coordinator, coordinator objectives and what the coordinators will accomplish, and a set of instruments in how to measure their success in the years beyond 2005-06. The Board has an example of curriculum alignment for third graders in the English Language Arts area,

which Dr. Swart used in one of his previous School Districts. He thought the Board members were right in asking for more information re K-12 Articulation. It is a critical decision the Board has to make and they need clear ways to measure success. In his vision statement at the end of his exploratory work in January, Dr. Swart recommended and wants to establish a District Strategic Planning Council (DSPC). The Council should be comprised of the following broad based constituents: central office, the Board, PTA, general community, teachers, administrators, support staff and some university partners. He believes the DSPC will work over the next four months to develop a 3-year comprehensive district plan. They will begin work at the end of this month. They will hold a first meeting on 2/28 and follow up with a retreat held here, on 3/4 and 3/5.

The council will have 4 months to make recommendations in the form of a comprehensive plan. He expects their recommendations to the Board in late June.

The plan should focus on alignment of curriculum, changes in the instructional technology program, and how we use data to help individual students and their progress in educational achievement. He believes the establishment of objectives, the implementation of a plan, and the evaluation of progress will be critical to the well being of the District. The DSPC will last 4 months and will consist of 16-18 meetings. They will make their recommendations, and the committee will cease to function. Notices will be placed in the newspapers and on our website, and those interested may contact Mr. Hogan or Dr. Swart at 266- 5402.

Mr. Kaszubski added that he wanted to clear up any misconceptions from the last meeting. This Board is pro education and pro teacher and is impressed with Dr. Swart's vision. He wanted to thank all the members of the K-12 Articulation Committee for their time and hard work. If people recall last year, our former Superintendent made the recommendation to follow a District format.

When the Board questioned him they were told to just trust him. They did that last year and the model did not work, nor did it get off of the ground. This year the Board wants to make sure it does not fail and is a model the teachers were hoping for.

E. COMMENDATIONS – none

F. RESIDENTS' REMARKS – 8:11 - 8:38 p.m.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS -- (No Recommended Items)

H. FINANCIAL MATTERS (TAB B)

1. The Board acknowledged receipt for audit of the Treasurer's Report for the month ended December 31, 2004.

2. The Board acknowledged receipt for audit of the Revenue Report for the month ended January 31, 2005.

3. The Board acknowledged receipt for audit of the Extra Classroom Fund Reports (High School and Middle School) for the quarter ended December 31, 2004.

(Mrs. Badlato thanked Treasurer, Nancy Raguzin, for her time and assistance).

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. District Strategic Planning Council

Mr. Kaszubski asked Mr. Hogan re a memo dated 2/11 how he arrived at the 30-35 Council members.

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Mr. Hogan stated that he conferred with Dr. Swart and sought his experience at his two previous school districts. He recommended the committee be open and wide enough and represent a cross section of people. In addition to Board members, the DSPC will include those who have and do not have children in our schools. It would also enable them to break

out into more manageable sub-committees of 10-11 people to focus on an issue. They could then come back and give a general report. Both he and Dr. Swart hope that at least two-thirds of the 30-35 members would come back, and you would still have a group that is

representative of the community.

b. Proposed policy IAB: District Health and Nutrition Advisory Committee (**TAB C**)

A bill was recently voted into law and it will be a permanent committee. It becomes effective on 7/1/05.

Mr. Kaszubski stated Elwood is ahead of everyone else in not waiting for a mandate to make permanent changes. He thanked Mr. Ciccone, and Mr. Hogan, and the Advisory Committee for their participation, presentation and their efforts.

Dr. Swart asked if the Board had any concerns with the scope of the committee's work—

do they feel that it is broad enough, and are there other issues the committee needs to

address.

Mr. Fusaro agreed it was a great start, the committee did a good job, great thought went into their presentation, and progress was being made.

Mrs. Annunziata thanked the full committee for their comprehensive effort to improve the focus of the District on nutrition concerns, and for their presentation at the Work Session. The new Education Law as written is focused on nutrition, and our draft policy is called Health and Nutrition Advisory Committee.

She questioned if the Board and the Advisory Committee envision going beyond the area of nutrition, or will it address anything that falls under the umbrella of a healthy lifestyle, and broaden our focus to include other health issues, such as substance abuse and teen sex.

At present, the policy does not do that. She asked if Elwood could be the trendsetters on health before our Legislators tell us to do so.

She was curious why the specific reference of notifying the residents re participating on the committee prior to the July Reorganization Meeting. She feels the response in generating new participants may be different in June than in late August.

She also questioned the role of the committee's recommendations on the academic program, particularly, physical education, health, living environment, biology, home and careers, interscholastic athletics and co-curricular physical activities, and classroom activities.

She is concerned the Board may be too strategic in this specific statement in directing educational curriculum outside the education policy statement. She asked Mr. Hogan for feedback.

Mr. Hogan said the committee actually addressed the topics of drug use, tobacco use and teen sex, on a number of occasions. He said Director of Physical Education & Athletics, Mr. Lou Tuorto, informed the committee the above topics are appropriately addressed in Physical Education and Health throughout the school district, and are not ignored. Mr. Tuorto told them much more comes under the scope of his department than simply food, health and nutrition. These issues are included in the Great Body Shop, at appropriate levels, and in the health classes at both the Middle and High Schools.

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Mrs. Annunziata asked if the committee is receptive to expanding its role and including in the policy a statement re healthy lifestyle issues.

Mr. Hogan replied he thinks the committee will be open to these types of topics. However, he cannot speak for the entire committee, since many of them have not seen the entire policy statement. He and his co-chair will have conversations with the committee, faculty, Dr. Gross, Dr. Metallios and the committee nutritionist, about these topics.

Mr. Hogan was also concerned with the policy statement in the academic areas of Living Environment, Health Curriculum, and Physical Education Curriculum. Those areas would more properly fall under his domain and the Curriculum Committee and District Leadership Council. However, the committee discussed where there is overlap in the academic areas:

the sophomore Health Class, compared to what they are teaching in Living Environment and Honors classes, the Regents section, and the Food & Nutrition course in Home and Careers. The committee understood it can make suggestions but it still has to go to a different venue before it became a curriculum item.

Mrs. Annunziata asked that the language of the policy be revised so that it is unambiguous and will provide clear guidance to any future member that the role of the committee is advisory.

Mrs. Annunziata also suggested the wording of the "lunch program be considered an extension of the overall academic program" be revised. Her preference would be to look upon the program as an opportunity to model good eating habits and establishing good eating practices. Her concern was with staffing and how the academic programs are

serviced.

Mr. Hogan explained the committee wanted the lessons learned in health class, such as exercise, low fat diets, or fried foods, be modeled in our schools.

Dr. Swart recommended a first reading of the policy for 3/10. He feels the committee needs to focus on nutrition and the food service program. However, there are these other issues of alcohol, drug/substance abuse, and healthy choices relative to sexual behavior. He is concerned about the language re academics. Mr. Hogan is responsible for the division of Instruction. While he appreciates the role of the Advisory Committee, he wants to make it clear that whatever recommendations the committee makes, it is in an advisory capacity.

Therefore, the right to reject some of it, none of it or all of it, remains up to the Board.

Mr. Ciccone said we have a policy that expands beyond the new Education Law and goes to the spirit of the sponsors of the law. We have incorporated the goals and objectives laid out in front of the committee. He also wants to make it clear that this is an advisory committee. While the committee may discuss curriculum issues, they must give a consistent message of health and nutrition and all it covers. The law was written to give the schools a foundation, as there are other laws indicating what types of food are to be sold. A Federal law will become effective in July '06 and will expand beyond this new Education Law.

He recommended that the Board not get bogged down in specifics and make it all encompassing and suggested to focus on the spirit of the policy, as opposed to mirroring exactly what is written in the State Legislation.

Mrs. Badlato asked if the policy could be clarified and circulated, and in addition, could the scope be expanded to include sexual activity, mental health, substance abuse, obesity, eating disorders. She thanked Mr. Hogan, Mr. Ciccone and the committee for doing a wonderful job.

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Dr. Swart asked Mr. Hogan if it was feasible to ask the committee members for feedback, and an update, or, if they can decide on a policy, prior to the 3/3 Work Session.

Mr. Kaszubski requested the Board receive any committee suggestions, updates or decisions prior to the 3/3 Work Session.

Dr. Swart suggested discussing the policy at the 3/3 Work Session and if the majority of the Board is supportive of the draft policy almost as is, or as is, he would frame it as a resolution for the 3/10 Board Meeting.

2. ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Swart asked Mr. Hogan to give a commentary on Mr. Steimel's performance.

Mr. Hogan announced that Mr. Steimel is leaving Elwood to become the Principal for the Eastport/South Manor School District. Mr. Steimel has only been at Elwood for 3 years and received tenure last month. He was a quick study, was a great help from the moment he arrived, and he handled any task effortlessly. He managed the English, Social Studies, and Music Departments and the Principal's Advisory Committee. He wishes him well.

Mr. Kaszubski added he is Elwood's loss and Eastport/South Manor's gain.

a. Mr. Fusaro moved and Mrs. Badlato seconded that the Board approve **(TAB D)** personnel items:

Resignations: Eleanor Abbott Science Teacher

Joseph Steimel Assistant Principal

Appointments: Elaine McCauley Internal Auditor

Paul Noonan Head Custodian

Other:

-- Emergency appointments and reappointments

-- Change in grade 2 Academic Intervention Services Teacher

-- Appointment of musical sets design/painting advisor for the high school

-- Accept contract termination of LJR Transportation & Mapping effective May 20, 2005

-- Schedule of Interscholastic Coaching Staff for the 2004/05 spring season

-- Addendum to Schedule of Substitute Teachers/Nurse

b. **and** that the Board approve the Committee on Special Education's recommendations for students' classifications/placements and/or discontinuance of services for meetings held on January 4, 13 and 26

c. **and** that the Board approve the Committee on Preschool Special Education's recommendations for students' classifications/placements and/or discontinuance of services for meetings held on January 6 and 27

c. **and** that the Board approve the addition of Jennifer Staehlin as a parent member of the Committees on Special Education and Preschool Special Education for the 2004/2005 school year.

e. **and** that the Board approve a health service contract for a student attending private/parochial school:

Jericho UFSD 1 student \$735.42

The motion carried unanimously.

f. Mr. Fusaro moved and Mrs. Badlato seconded that the Board approve the partial **(TAB E)** property tax exemption for eligible volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers in accordance with the amendment of section 466-C of the Real Property Tax Law.

The motion carried unanimously.

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Mr. Fusaro moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board approve the disposal **(TAB F)**

of obsolete boxes of files meeting New York State Records Destruction requirements.

The motion carried unanimously. (Mr. Fraser will go through files to extract any historical and financial files, accordingly).

h. Mr. Fusaro moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board approve the **(TAB G)** disposal of obsolete Brother fax machine at James H. Boyd Intermediate School.

The motion carried unanimously.

i. Mrs. Annunziata moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board approve the **(TAB H)** February edition of *Highlights*.

The motion carried unanimously.

j. Mr. Fusaro moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board approve the formation of a District Transportation Committee to study cost effectiveness of the Division of Transportation, routing patterns and policy regarding transportation service.

The motion carried unanimously.

k. Mr. Fusaro moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board of Education **(TAB I)** adopt for implementation the recommendations of the District Health and Nutrition Committee as written January 13, 2005 and presented on February 3, 2005.

The motion carried unanimously.

J. ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA

Mrs. Annunziata said the District works hard and plays hard. It was a busy academic month. She thanked the staff for preparing the students for the ELA, mid terms, and Regents. She thanked the talented school principals, teachers, staff and parents who participated in the hopefully annual "Battle of the Bands" fundraiser run by the Elwood Music Sponsors. It was a wonderful celebration of music, talent and joy for the entire community. She also thanked the Harley/Boyd Fun Fair volunteers for their time and talent. All of the people responsible for the High School performance of "Bye, Bye Birdie" were thanked for what they do with limited resources in this small District.

Mr. Fusaro thanked all of the presenters at the 2/3 Work Session and hopes to have more interaction with the PTA'S and SEPTA and perhaps do something on a rotating basis. There may be areas where they may need help and it would be beneficial for all of us to be on the same page. He noticed that when Dr. Swart was at Newburgh,

the PTA was very involved in the extensive communication with the community. He asked Dr. Swart to lead them on that road to increase community spirit.

Dr. Swart said it is an objective he listed in his vision statement, and he believes it is essential. He can point to the back of the calendar and sees a legion of people who are participants in the PTA. They are a robust group and do a lot for the School District. We need to continue to cultivate a positive relationship with them.

Mr. Fusaro said after Competition Night, he spoke to Mr. Mulieri about using Site-Based to put the word out on other events, as a way to increase community spirit. He suggested looking to Student Council for suggestions.

Mr. Kaszubski thanked the PTA for sponsoring "Italian Night" for our Elwood senior citizens and other community members. The PTA used the proceeds raised from Battle of the Bands to fund the dinner. In addition, he thanked Carol Dano and her community service students for their time and help. After the dinner, the senior citizens were invited to see a preview of "Bye, Bye, Birdie."

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Mr. Ciccone commented that after a recent seminar and discussions on 4th Grade assessment testing, he was struck that no one has come up with different ways to measure the effectiveness of our schools. He would like this to be a Discussion Item. He asked Mr. Hogan if there is a way to put together some kind of poll or survey from our recent alumni, once they leave Elwood for the Armed Services, the Ivy Leagues, Universities, Community Colleges, and the workplace. He wants to know how prepared they felt. Their feedback could be used as a way to measure our effectiveness, rather than testing and re-testing.

K. COMMUNICATIONS (TAB J)

- a. Letter from Gerard K. Hannon 1/7/05
- b. Letter to Miller Lilly & Pearce, LLP 1/14/05
- c. Letter to Noreen Miller 1/14/05
- d. Letter to Gala Handler 1/14/05

L. RESIDENTS' REMARKS – 9:50 - 9: 58 p.m.

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Fusaro moved and Mr. Ciccone seconded that the Board go in to Executive Session at 10:00 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter.

The motion carried unanimously.

At 11:16 p.m. Mr. Ciccone moved and Mr. Fusaro seconded to end Executive Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Annunziata moved and Mr. Fusaro seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:17 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlene Granieri

District Clerk