

Minutes of the REGULAR Meeting of the Board of Education
Community Unit School District No. 4, Champaign County, Illinois
Mellon Administrative Center, 703 S. New Street, Champaign, Illinois
January 14, 2008 Within the Boundaries of Said District

Regular Meeting

Board President David Tomlinson called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 5:32 p.m.

Board Members Present

Nathaniel Banks, Kristine Chalifoux, Susan Grey, Scott MacAdam, Greg Novak, David Tomlinson

Board Members Absent

Arlene Blank

Staff Members Present

Superintendent Arthur Culver, Deputy Superintendent Dorland Norris, Assistant Superintendent Beth Shepperd, Assistant Superintendent Michael McFarland, Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas, Administrator Joe Davis

Approval of Agenda

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Kristine Chalifoux, to approve the amended agenda. The motion carried on voice vote. The Resolution to Prepare the Tentative Budget and the 2006/07 Audit by Virschow Krause & Company were moved as Action items.

Executive Session

Scott MacAdam moved, with a second by Greg Novak, to adjourn into *Closed Session* in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2c) to consider Negotiations 120/2(c)(2), Student Discipline 120/2(c)(9), and Pending Litigation 120/2(c)(11) related to Johnson, et. al. v. Board of Education of Champaign Community Unit School District #4, Case No. 00-1349 (U.S.D.C. Central District of Illinois. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 6. Nays 0.

The Board convened into *Closed Session* at 5:33 p.m.

Board Member Arlene Blank joined the meeting.

The Board convened into *Open Session* at 7:00 p.m.

Open Session

Board President David Tomlinson called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Nathaniel Banks, Arlene Blank, Kristine Chalifoux, Susan Grey, Scott MacAdam, Greg Novak, David Tomlinson

Staff Members Present

Superintendent Arthur Culver, Deputy Superintendent Dorland Norris, Assistant Superintendent Beth Shepperd, Assistant Superintendent Michael McFarland, Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas, Administrator Joe Davis

Approval of Agenda

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Scott MacAdam, to approve the agenda. The motion carried on voice vote. The Resolution to Prepare the Tentative Budget and the 2006/07 Audit by Virchow Krause & Company were moved as Action items.

Guests

Representatives from CFT, and local media and other interested persons

PTA Council

Brian Minsker thanked Deputy Superintendent Dorland Norris and Executive Director Dedrick Martin for updating the Council on the current status of the Consent Decree.

Board

A discussion was held regarding concerns expressed related to a Christmas tree at one of the elementary schools and the purchase of furniture for the Technology Department.

Action Agenda2006/07 Audit by Virchow Krause & Company (Exhibit "A")

Arlene Blank moved, with a second by Greg Novak, to accept the audit report on the 2006/07 financial statements as presented by Virchow Krause & Company. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

John Rossi, Virchow Krause & Company, provided a brief overview regarding the District's financial performance for the year ending June 30, 2007. For the third straight year, the District has received a "clean" or unqualified opinion that the Financial Statements were prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. This is the best opinion that an audit client can receive. The "clean" opinion will result in lower interest rates on bonded debt, if it should be sold in the future. Rating agencies like Standard & Poor's and Moody's take the "unqualified" opinion into consideration when issuing a rating on a governmental unit. A positive audit equals a positive rating and, thus, lower interest rates.

Reports/DiscussionAcademic Spotlight – Stratton Elementary

Principal Orlando Thomas shared Stratton's academic achievements. The 2007-2008 school year began with an enrollment of 390 students, reflecting an increase of 30 students from the 2006-2007 school year. School demographics are represented as: 46.6% African American, 27.1% White, 13% Hispanic, 12.8% Asian, and 0.2% Native American. Stratton qualifies as a Title-I School because 68.9% of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Academic Achievements:

Stratton achieved Adequate Yearly Progress during the 2006-2007 for the 5th consecutive year since being removed from the state's "watch list". Stratton was also recognized as a Spotlight

School. Spotlight Awards honor high poverty, high performing schools, where at least 50% of students are classified as low income and at least 60% met or exceeded standards on the ISAT tests. Stratton students scored exceptionally well on the ISAT tests during the 2006-2007 school year with the following overall percentage rates of students meeting or exceeding standards.

	Reading	Math
3 rd Grade	60%	73%
4 th Grade	85%	96%
5 th Grade	67%	78%

Instructional Leadership:

A critical analysis of ISAT sub group scores and DRA scores revealed that only 40% of African-American students met or exceeded ISAT standards and 30% of all students are working below DRA benchmark standards. The instructional goals are to increase time students spend with literacy on a daily basis to promote phonemic awareness, letter identification, comprehension strategies, and fluency. To assist with this initiative the principal, literacy specialist, literacy committee, and Chancellor's Academy team created a school wide literacy program/initiative. The team created a program which contains four major components: parental involvement, school-wide initiatives, professional development, and community involvement.

Parental Involvement:

Parents were invited to participate in family literacy night and received free books to promote the home school connection. In addition, twenty-five parents were selected to participate in a parent tutoring program called "At Home Tutor." The program provides parents with training regarding how to facilitate reading at home and focuses on developing phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sight word development, vocabulary development and reading fluency. Research supports early intervention as the most effective way to support struggling readers. The program focuses on grades kindergarten through third grade and provides parents with four one-hour workshops to introduce and model effective reading strategies.

School Wide Initiatives:

Stratton has implemented several school programs to promote literacy to all students.

- **Chancellors Academy Team:** Implemented a school wide word and pattern of the week to increase vocabulary development. This team also analyzed the areas of need for Stratton students and developed an action plan to address fundamental reading strategies.
- **Book Recommendations:** Each morning during announcements either a staff member or student offers a book recommendation, which provides students with a brief synopsis of an interesting book the staff or student has read.
- **Family Literacy Night:** Provided personal invitations to all parents in an effort to improve the home/school literacy connection. Parents were able to see reading strategies in action and this provided parents with a framework of how to incorporate reading at home. Each parent received a free book to promote literacy.
- **Book Buddies:** Intermediate classrooms are paired with primary classes and students read to each other.
- **Battle of the Books:** The enrichment team selected ten texts for each grade level to read. Classes competed against one another and this competitive style was incorporated to address reading strategies based on the selected texts. The classrooms with the highest

preliminary scores competed during an all school assembly. The winning teams received a plaque and two books to add to their class library.

- **Reading Kickoff Assembly:** Students, staff, parents and community members participated in a reading assembly that was designed to get students excited about reading. Many influential community members were invited and students loved having them in their classrooms. “Stratton Loves Reading” T-shirts were purchased for all students and staff members and the principal challenged students to read 10,000 books before the end of the school year to earn a carnival. To date, students have 5,422 books!

Professional Development:

The literacy specialists provided extensive training for all staff members on DRA testing to ensure students are being properly assessed. In addition, they provide teachers with specific literacy strategies during bi-weekly teacher collaboration meetings. The specialists also observe lessons and provide feedback to new teachers who are having difficulty properly implementing the curriculum. They model guided and shared reading lessons to provide teachers a framework to help tailor their instruction.

Stratton also participated in the Reading/Writing project that focused on properly implementing writer’s workshop. Teachers were given an opportunity to meet with the professional development providers before the session to discuss specifics regarding unit implementation and concerns about the workshop model. Each grade level designated one classroom as a lab site. During each session one teacher teaches the lesson and grade level colleagues and the professional development providers observe the lesson. Following the lesson, teachers debrief to share celebrations and offer input regarding strategies to improve the writer’s workshop. The project is comprised of twelve sessions with each session containing a different instructional focus.

Community Involvement:

Stratton reconnected with First Presbyterian Church as their primary business partner. They have volunteered their time and provided monetary support. Stratton has also partnered with University of Illinois to implement three programs. The first program, America Reads/America Counts, provides tutors on a weekly basis to assist at-risk students in a one-on-one setting. Tutors meet with classroom teachers to discuss specific areas of concern and provide materials to support students. The second program, Champions Are Readers (CAR) is a reading program sponsored by Pi Beta Fraternity. Each week, over forty students reported to Stratton and read to students for forty-five minutes. The program focuses on building reading stamina and promoting family literacy. The final program, Illini Mentoring Program from the University of Illinois, is a dual program that provides one-on-one mentoring and assistance with reading and homework. Mentors meet with students each Tuesday and Wednesday for two hours.

During the “Stratton Loves Reading” kickoff assembly, community members were selected to serve as guest readers for classrooms. The following community leaders participated in the assembly: Jennifer Roscoe/Channel 3 News, Dr. Michael McFarland/Assistant Superintendent, Naomi Jakobsson/State Representative, Denise Zook/Ron Zook’s wife, Dave Tomlinson/School Board President, Tracy Parsons/President of the Urban League, Nathaniel Banks/School Board Member, Holly Nearing/Champaign Police Officer, and Greg Novak/School Board Member.

The effectiveness of the program will be assessed by comparing 2006-2007 ISAT literacy scores and DRA test scores to 2007-2008. The literacy team will also continue to update the number of books students read on a monthly basis with the end goal of 10,000 books before May 23, 2008.

Consent Decree Update – Grow Your Own Scholarship Program for ESP Employees

Director Doretha Simmons provided the following information regarding the Grow Your Own Scholarship program for ESP employees. In fall 2003, the Champaign Schools Board of Education approved the “Grow Your Own” program to encourage current Educational Support Personnel to obtain teaching certification to address shortage areas. Upon completion of certification, Grow Your Own participants fill one of the District’s identified shortage areas and remain employed with the District for a minimum of three years in exchange for payment of tuition and books. The identified shortage areas are bilingual education, special education, higher level math or science, and African American teachers. A selection committee comprised of administration, CFT and CESP representatives drafted the Eligibility Requirements, Application Process and Participation Guidelines for the program. A selection process was designed that included an application similar to the one completed by teacher candidate and, a selection committee comprised of representatives from the CFT, CESP and the District administration. The District agreed to supply funding for tuition and books up to \$20,000.00 annually for the program. The District also agreed to work with Parkland College and area universities to utilize counseling services and financial aid for participants.

Initially, eighteen employees applied to the program. The ethnicity of the applicants was nine Caucasian, six African American, two Asian, and one Latino. The ethnicity of the candidates selected was; four White Females; four Black Females; one Asian Female and one Latino Male.

Currently there are two White Females; five Black Females; and one Black Male participating in the program.

A maximum of \$20,000.00 annually is allocated. This amount was never spent until the SY2006-2007. Prior to SY2007, cost ranged from \$11,500.00-\$13,297.00. The increase in cost is due to participation in the accelerated Professional Adult Comprehensive Education (PACE) program sponsored through Milliken University.

An annual evaluation of the GYO program is done by Doretha Simmons, Director of Human Resources. Results of the evaluation indicate that 5 of the 10 initial members are still actively participating in the program. All remaining applicants were in good academic standing. Tammie Windom, an African American Female was the first graduate of the GYO program in December 2005. Tammie began working as a long term substitute for the District in January 2006. She began full-time employment in August 2006 as a Cross-Categorical teacher at Carrie Busey Elementary. Alex Ramirez, a Latino Male original participant is now teaching Industrial Arts at Central High School. The GYO application process was opened again in March 2006 to fill the 3 slots made available through resignations and graduation. Three candidates were chosen through the screening process from a pool of six applicants. The ethnicity of the three new applicants are, two African-American females and one African American male.

The three new GYO participants each have more than 60 credit hours toward teacher certification. In September 2006, a partnership between Millikin University and Champaign

Unit 4 Human Resources department was established to create a cohort at Parkland University for GYO participants. Through PACE, five participants of the program were put on an accelerated track to certification. Katia Gray, an AA Female candidate that entered the program in June 2006 is on schedule to graduate in May 2008 with certification in Elementary Education. Sam Flowers, an AA Male candidate that also entered the program in June 2006 is on schedule to graduate in December 2008 with certification in Elementary Education. Two AA Females, Vanessa Elam and Lisa Foley, are on schedule to graduate in June 2009 with certification in Elementary Education, and Gwenetta Posey, one of the original AA Female GYO participants, is on schedule to graduate in June 2009 with certification in Special Education. Amanda Wood, a White Female candidate, is in good standing and is on a three-year track in obtaining certification in special education.

Two of the original female GYO participants, one Asian Female, and one White Female withdrew from the program in September 2006 and December 2007 due to family reasons. District funds expended were repaid by one participant and are in the process of repayment for the second participant. The remaining participants, One White Female, and one Black Female participant did not make any academic progress during the 2006-2007 school year due to family issues. Those participants will be reevaluated for continued participation in the program in January 2008.

There are two slots available in the GYO program. These slots will be offered to CESP employees in the spring of 2008, and new participants will be selected through the screening process. The District will explore designating one slot for a teacher who wishes to work at Columbia Alternative Center.

2008/09 Proposed Calendars – Traditional & Balanced

Director George Stanhope presented the proposed 08/09 traditional and balanced school calendars. A committee comprised of parents, teachers, support staff, principals and District administrators met during the first semester of the current school year to develop the proposed 2008-09 school calendars for both the Regular and Balanced calendar schools. The committee discussed calendar development parameters established by the Illinois State Board of Education and District-specific considerations in the process of preparing the proposed calendars, including feedback from a survey of staff and parents regarding moving 1st semester exams and the end of the 1st semester before Winter Break. Such considerations included:

- Honoring the Board's request to hold semester exams before Winter Break;
- Following the recommendation from the High School Futures Committee that the end of 1st semester should coincide with 1st semester exams before Winter Break;
- Sensitivity to the placement of the Fall and Spring Holidays respective to families traveling over designated holiday breaks and other variables;
- Alignment with the University of Illinois spring break;
- Adherence to any teacher contract language relative to the design of the school calendars;
- Alignment of the Regular and Balanced calendars to allow all District staff to be trained together on designated Institute days or District school improvement days;
- Alignment of the end of the 2nd (end of 1st semester) 3rd, and 4th quarters (end of school year) between the Regular and Balanced calendars;
- Honoring the Board's request to take President's Day, the third Monday of February, as a school holiday instead of February 12, President Lincoln's birthday.

There are no foreseen ADA implications in the development of these calendar proposals that could impact District funding by the State of Illinois

Planning Discussion/Long-Range Facilities & Infrastructure Plan

Kristine Chalifoux stated that the Vision Committee (VC) of the Long-Range Planning Group (Great Schools, Together) continues to meet and move forward. The group continues to work on issues and concerns. The first joint meeting of the Vision Committee and the Working Groups will take place on February 6th.

Greg Novak stated that the VC met on January 10th and formed the working teams and developed a preliminary list of members. Each person will be contacted to see who is willing to serve on the Working Groups.

Action Agenda

Board of Education Governance Processes Agreement Addendum

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Arlene Blank, to adopt the addendum to the Board of Education Governance Processes Agreement. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Champaign Unit #4 Board of Education adopted the Board of Education Governance Processes Agreement on December 10, 2007. Additional revisions were recommended to page 1-6 and page 1-10 for adoption on January 14, 2008.

To be the most effective advocates for children, the Board should function as a team and promote the best interests of the school district. Adherence to the Board's Governance Processes Agreement will help the Champaign Community School District Unit #4 establish and maintain an educational system that meets the needs of all of our children.

Contract for Elizabeth Perrachione (Exhibit "B")

Greg Novak moved, with a second by Scott MacAdam, to approve the contract with Elizabeth Perrachione for work related to the Vision Committee process. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board of Education decided to utilize Elizabeth Perrachione in connection with the Vision Committee process. CFO Gene Logas shared a copy of the contract. As all contracts are approved by the Board of Education, the Administration brought forth the contract for full consideration. The total contract is \$20,000, all of which appears to be due this fiscal year. It is possible that the amount might be reduced by community donations and/or grant money.

Performance Contracting

Greg Novak moved, with a second by Scott MacAdam, to approve seeking an RFP for Performance Contracting and choosing one school as a starting point. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

Board Member Chalifoux requested that the Board of Education consider an RFP for Performance Contracting. Performance Contracting is an arrangement with a vendor to design, install and finance energy improvement projects where the savings achieved by the vendor are guaranteed to pay for themselves over the term of the agreement. This program may allow the

District to improve its lighting, boilers and chillers as an example. Carol Timms, Director of Energy Net, which is a not for profit organization, explained how the District might benefit from this process.

Resolution – Preparation of Tentative Budget (Exhibit “C”)

Arlene Blank moved, with a second by Sue Grey, to adopt the “Resolution Designating Person Responsible for Preparation of the Tentative Budget,” which designates the Chief Financial Officer as the person responsible for preparing the budget. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

Board President David Tomlinson read the resolution into the minutes.

The Board of Education must, by resolution, designate some person or persons to prepare a tentative budget for fiscal year 2008-09. The appropriate resolution was prepared. It is the administration’s intent to bring the first estimate of new revenues and expenses to the Board in March and bring the tentative budget to the Board in July.

Consent Agenda

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Nathaniel Banks, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board of Education approved the following Consent Agenda items:

Feasibility Study

The Board of Education approved a Feasibility Study by BLDD Architects for an Alternative High School at 710 N. Neil Street.

The Administration looked for a new building to house the proposed Alternative High School. The building with the greatest attraction was the old Public Health Building at 710 N Neil St. The District worked with the realtor to remove the property from any sales listings for the next 60 days. During that period of time, the District is expected to perform due diligence on the property. The Administration contacted BLDD Architects to perform a Feasibility Study on the property. A letter from Mark Ritz at BLDD Architects was shared. In addition to their study, John Ayers will provide a review of the condition of the roof and a Hazardous Material (Asbestos or Lead Paint) Study.

A Board Member requested moving FIC into the 710 N. Neil site, along with the Alternative High School. The study will also address this possibility. BLDD Architects is not to exceed \$10,000. (Other expenses for other consultants will be conveyed to the Board of Education).

Board Minutes – November 12, 2007

The Board of Education approved the Board meeting minutes as presented.

Bills & Treasurer’s Report (Exhibit “D”)

The Board of Education approved the Bills and Treasurer’s Report as presented.

Human Resource Changes (Exhibit “E”)

The Board of Education approved the Human Resource Changes as presented.

Executive Session

Arlene Blank moved, with a second by Kristine Chalifoux, to adjourn into *Closed Session* in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2c) to consider Negotiations 120/2(c)(2), Student Discipline 120/2(c)(9), and Pending Litigation 120/2(c)(11) related to Johnson, et. al. v. Board of Education of Champaign Community Unit School District #4, Case No. 00-1349 (U.S.D.C. Central District of Illinois). The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board convened into *Closed Session* at 8:55 p.m.

The Board convened into *Open Session* at 10:20 p.m.

Open Session**Student Discipline**

Scott MacAdam moved, with a second by Greg Novak, to expel student #702031 from Columbia Alternative Center for the remainder of the 07/08 school year and reassigned to Homebound Services at the administration's discretion for violating Code #24 (Threats to/Intimidation of Staff) of the Champaign Unit #4 Student Code of Conduct. The student may return to the home school following the expulsion period, provided the student has completed the requirements of the alternative school. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 6. Nays 0. Abstained 1. Board Member Blank abstained.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Arlene Blank moved, with a second by Sue Grey, to adjourn the meeting at 10:21 p.m. The motion carried on voice vote.

Board approved: March 10, 2008