



WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT
Open Minutes from a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Monday, August 22, 2016
Central Office Board Room
400 E. Lockwood Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119

CALL TO ORDER: A Regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:02 p.m., Monday, August 22, 2016, by its president, Steve Loher.

The following members were present:

Steve Loher	President
Amy Clendennen	Vice President (arrived at 7:14 p.m.)
David Addison	Director
Arnold Stricker	Director
Emerson Smith	Director
Michael Shipley	Not in attendance
Jean Dugan	Not in attendance

Also present were:

John Simpson	Superintendent
Kristin Denbow	Assistant Superintendent for Learning
Bruce Ellerman	Interim Chief Financial/Operating Officer
Cathy Vespereny	Chief Communications Officer (Acting Board Secretary)
John M. Thomas	Director of Student Services
Tim Brown	Director of Learning Technologies

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mr. Loher called for and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag prior to beginning the meeting.

AGENDA Mr. Addison moved, seconded by Dr. Stricker, approval of the agenda. The motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT Resident Dave Buck encouraged the school board to collaborate with the Webster Groves City Council. He said that a comment by a city council member at the last meeting was antagonistic.

**COMMUNICATIONS/
RECOGNITIONS/
INFORMATION** Board members praised the smooth opening of schools last week, the drug forum for parents at the high school, the Opening Day event for teachers, New Teacher Orientation and a bus tour of the district for new teachers. Dr. Simpson commended the committee that planned the Back-to-School Barbecue earlier this month and the work done by Dr. Denbow and others on professional development this summer. He noted that ACT scores at the high school increased three-tenths of a point, a significant gain since all juniors took the test last year.

Cathy Vespereny said that two high school students - Keillyn Johnson and Jack Snelling - attended the Missouri Scholars Academy this year and that Bristol has completed renovating its blacktop with recycled tires, thanks to a grant from the State Department of Natural Resources and money from its Parent Teacher Organization.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Loher announced the open house dates and said that all board members are welcome to attend the open houses for their liaison schools.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AT BOARD MEETINGS

Mr. Loher opened the discussion by describing several different ways that other districts handle public comments. Some for instance confine comments to agenda items during the first public comment session then allow general comments during the second. Board members discussed options. The consensus was to continue public comments during meetings without any changes. Board members expressed a desire to expand community conversations and contact beyond its meeting including public forums.

BOE ROLE IN ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS

Board members have recently taken part in interviews for administrative positions to better understand the process. Members agreed that the opportunity to listen was valuable and that it should continue. New administrators commented that including board members on interview committees worked well. Dr. Simpson said the process would continue to be monitored to ensure that it functioned satisfactorily.

REPORTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF

Dr. Simpson said that positive energy characterized the opening of school this year. He told the board that they received a standing ovation from staff members during the Opening Day event when he announced that the district would offer free full-day kindergarten this year. He praised Mr. Ellerman and Matt Palmer for the excellent condition of the buildings when school began and noted that new administrators were enthusiastic about their new roles.

First day enrollment was higher than last year's first day: 4,721 this year (including 193 children at the preschool) compared to 4,527 the previous year. Eight of the ten schools had higher enrollments; Steger Sixth Grade Center and Avery Elementary did not.

Challenges include not enough room at Adventure Club for families who want to use the program. Staffing continues to be a problem because of the pay and work hours. He said the administration will work to address these issues so the problem might be solved.

Mr. Ellerman presented information on the tuition rate calculation for non-resident students based on prior year actual district expenditures, which would be \$12,332.24 for this school year. This amount is slightly less (3.3 percent) than the 2015-16 rate of \$12,756.58.

Dr. Stricker moved, seconded by Mr. Addison that the non-resident tuition rate be set at \$12,332.24 per student for the 2016-17 school year. The motion carried 5-0.

Dr. Simpson brought additional information to the board regarding the issue of paying for a concrete pad at Walter Ambrose Family Center that will hold a curriculum-related, interactive play sculpture. At the July 18 special meeting, the board approved a recommendation to go ahead with an \$8,900 bid for constructing the pad so long as no district funds be used to pay for it. Dr. Simpson told the board that in consulting with the district's attorney, Doug Copeland, after the meeting about what constitutes district funds, he decided to ask the board to approve a motion to clarify how the contractor would be paid.

He said that the money for the entire sculpture project came from Parent Teacher Organization fundraising (about \$20,000), a \$1,000 grant and the remainder from the WAFC budget including tuition, school study fees, donations, reimbursements from the Special School District and other sources. No general tax dollars from the district were used.

A discussion followed on preschool budget deficits and what funding was used to wipe out the deficits. Some board members said that tuition money should first be used to make the program solvent. Board members also discussed whether it was appropriate to tell a PTO how to use its money and whether it was right to delay a project in its late stages. Mr. Ellerman suggested that the board may need to adopt a policy on the kinds of fundraising proposals it accepts for its schools. Board members asked Mr. Ellerman to go back five years to look at profits and losses at WAFC and how any shortfalls were covered.

Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Addison, to table the discussion. The motion carried 5-0.

Resident Kim Mumm commented that the WAFC finances need to be examined by the board. She thanked the board for not restricting public comments during its meetings and noted the value in encouraging the public to come forward to contribute to what's on the meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dave Buck referred back to his earlier comment about a city council member and said that although the councilman is a good person, he doesn't agree with him. He also encouraged the board to continue to ask for feedback through surveys.

Resident Kathy Whaley thanked the board and school administrators for the care and attention students receive.

Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Addison, approval of the consent agenda including:

CONSENT AGENDA

- 008a Minutes for following BOE Meeting
 - 008a1 August 8, 2016
- 008b Personnel Report
- 008c Transportation Routes
- 008d Payment of Bills
 - 008d (1) Operating Check Register (7/13/16-8/16/16) - \$1,100,193.50
 - 008d (2) Activity Account Check Register (7/13/16-8/16/16) - \$125,798.92
 - 008d (3) Bond Issue Check Register (7/13/16-8/16/16) - \$125,386.94

The motion carried 5-0.

Dr. Stricker moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the board recess into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel [Sec.610.021(3) RSMo]. Mr. Addison, Yes; Mr. Smith, Yes; Mr. Loher, Yes; Ms. Clendennen, Yes; Dr. Stricker, Yes. Motion carried 5-0.

MOTION TO RECESS
INTO CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Addison, to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. The motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President

Board Secretary