

MINUTES OF THE  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
of the Board of Education  
Riverside School District No.96  
held on Tuesday, October 20, 2009  
at Hollywood Elementary School  
Brookfield, Illinois

Committee chair Hareena Wakely called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Present: Mrs. Hareena Wakely and Mrs. Jennifer Leimberer

Absent: Mr. Jim Schraidt

Also Present: Board Members Mrs. Mary Ellen Meindl and Mrs. Mary Stimming; Dr. Jon Lamberson, Superintendent; Ames School Principal, Colleen Lieggi; Blythe Park Principal, Bob Chleboun; Central School Principal, Dr. Janice Limperis; Hollywood School Interim Principal, Mindy Keller; Hauser Jr. High School Principal, Leslie Berman; Technology Director, Vern Bettis; and approximately 20 District 96 staff, parents and interested citizens of the community.

During the public comment portion of the meeting District 96 parent Martha Carlson addressed the Committee regarding questions she has about laptop use by 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students in 2010-11. She also read a statement concerning the relocation of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program from Blythe Park School to another District 96 school in 2010-11. She urged the Committee not to relocate this program to Hollywood School due to space limitations in the building.

Mrs. Wakely thanked Mrs. Carlson for her comments and noted that the 1 to 1 Laptop Initiative would be discussed more thoroughly at the regular Board meeting later this evening. She also commented that whatever decision the Board comes to regarding relocation of the ECE program will be in the best interest of all District 96 students.

An extensive 66 item agenda was prepared for tonight's meeting. Committee Chair Hareena Wakely asked Supt. Lamberson for his recommendation regarding which items to address first. Dr. Lamberson suggested the Committee focus their discussion on a review of the 2009-10 District Goals and on identifying "rubrics" they deem appropriate to evaluate the achievement of these goals.

**1. *Initiate a comprehensive strategic planning process***

Mrs. Wakely commented that the strategic planning process is a Board goal and that the Committee would not look to Supt. Lamberson or the District Leadership Team for accomplishment of this goal.

**2. *Implement a new writing program***

The Regie Routman In Residence writing program was introduced to the Language Arts Committee last year. Director of Learning Systems, Dr. Janice Limperis commented that all District 96 teachers will receive training in the program on Institute Days and student Early Release Days throughout 2009-10. She noted that Regie Routman's methodology will provide a consistent framework for all teachers across the District and an organization system everyone can follow. She commented that the framework validates the work of veteran teachers in the District who already employ a number of Regie's

strategies. As part of the implementation process, teachers will maintain a professional notebook containing their reflections of the program.

Following discussion, Education Committee members identified the following goals they will look to as measures of a successful implementation:

- Confirm that teachers completed their reflection notebooks throughout the school year.
- At the end of the school year, compile reflections from teachers regarding how student work has changed as a result of utilizing the RRIR program.

**3. *Implement "laptop initiative" in fifth grade and prepare for 2010-11***

Supt. Lamberson began the discussion by saying the District Leadership Team wants to ensure their efforts are focused on accomplishing the Board's expectations of this initiative in 2009-10. He asked Colleen Lieggi, Administrative liaison for the program, to provide a brief overview of events so far this year. Mrs. Lieggi stated that the roll-out of the program is off to a "smooth" start. All 5<sup>th</sup> Grade students have been issued a dedicated laptop for in-school use, and teachers and students are in the process of evaluating various software tools to support the curriculum. She reiterated that the objective of the initiative is to help District 96 students become life-long independent learners. So far this year she has observed students fully engaged in their work and has not found students inappropriately "surfing the web".

Committee members discussed various aspects of the initiative including the importance of teaching the Internet Safety Curriculum to all students this year. If the laptops are sent home with students in the future, Mrs. Wakely inquired whether they could be "password protected" requiring parents to login before the computers could be used. Mrs. Lieggi commented that the District would investigate this possibility, but noted even without password protection, parents will still have the opportunity to set daily household rules regarding when, where and how long the laptops can be used at home. Following this conversation, Education Committee members identified three goals they will look to as "rubrics" to evaluate the program and, in particular, to justify the distribution of dedicated laptops to all 5<sup>th</sup> Grade students:

- Provide safety control measures for laptop use at home.
- Demonstrate lesson plan changes that occurred as a result of students using laptops - a before and after view.
- Demonstrate student projects completed on laptops illustrating the type of student learning that occurred through the use of a laptop.

**4. *Complete review of science curriculum for grades 6-8***

Blythe Park Principal Bob Chleboun provided a progress update of the activities of 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade science curriculum review committee. He noted that all District 96 teachers were surveyed last year regarding their interest in reviewing the science curriculum in 2009-10. Elementary teachers overwhelmingly expressed a desire to wait a year before starting a science curriculum review due to the new writing program being implemented this year. Jr. High teachers on the other hand expressed great interest in moving forward with a science curriculum review in 2009-10. Based on this information, a science curriculum review committee consisting of all Jr. High Science and Wellness teachers was formed at the end of 2008-09. The committee will use "Curriculum Mapper" software to identify gaps and redundancies in the current curriculum and to assist in finding new curriculum materials that fulfill District 96 mission objectives as well as state standards.

A question arose regarding what criteria are being used to choose the new curriculum. The criteria defined by the committee are as follows:

- nurturing and sustaining children’s natural curiosity about self, community, and the global environment.
- scientific instruction that is supported by: explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and meta-cognition.
- relating scientific knowledge to societal issues, developing decision making skills, and becoming responsible, environmentally aware citizens.
- utilizing the scientific method through observation, hypothesis, experimental design, data collection, analysis, and formulating conclusions.
- utilizing process skills such as classification, communication, and inference.
- integrating the technology of our rapidly advancing world.
- productive participation and development of lifelong skills to achieve health and wellness by balancing physical, mental, social, and emotional health.

Following this discussion, Education Committee members asked the science curriculum review team to undertake the following objectives in 2009-10:

- Select curriculum materials.
- Create a *Science Curriculum Guide* to provide consistency at all schools.
- Prepare to pilot the curriculum in 2010-11.

**5. Complete negotiations with the REC by June 30, 2010**

Supt. Lamberson commented he is hopeful contract negotiations with the Riverside Education Council can be completed by the end of this school year. REC President, Patty Gill, remarked that negotiating teams within the union are already forming in preparation for negotiations in early 2010.

A few years ago teacher “cadres” were formed in the District giving teachers the opportunity to become “specialists” in certain areas of interest. Evaluating the progress of these cadres is a continuing District goal in 2009-10.

**6. District 96 Cadre – Curriculum Mapping**

Dr. Limperis described the curriculum mapping process District 96 teachers are learning with Collaborative Learning Inc.’s *Curriculum Mapper* tool. Teachers enter goals and objectives into the program as well as a monthly curriculum calendar. The software aligns the stated objectives with the calendar, and can also identify for teachers which state standards have been fulfilled through the lesson plans they have entered.

Following these remarks, Education Committee members stated their goal for this Cadre will be that the software is used to map the following curriculum areas in 2009-10:

- Social Studies.
- Regie Routman In Residence Writing Program.
- Science.

**7. District 96 Cadre – Inquiry (PD on Demand)**

Supt. Lamberson initially proposed the formation of this cadre two summers ago to investigate “how students ask questions” and for teachers to publish their findings on a podcast for interested staff to view at their convenience. In his vision, podcasts could be developed by teachers to provide training for colleagues in various subject areas. Dr. Lamberson noted he would like to defer activity to summer 2010 because cadre members are currently involved in other District initiatives.

Following his comments, Education Committee members stated their goal for the PD on Demand Cadre will be for the group to develop, by June 2010, a plan for summer 2010 and the following school year.

#### **8. *District 96 Cadre – Technology***

Technology Director, Vern Bettis, commented that the Technology Cadre was formed to help identify key technology-oriented staff members who would be interested in training others. The type of training cadre members provide each year will change depending on what technology initiatives are being implemented in the District.

Following these remarks, Education Committee members stated their goal will be for the Technology Cadre to provide a summary at the end of this school year highlighting the various technology issues that arose in 2009-10 and how these matters were addressed.

#### **9. *District 96 Cadre – Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)***

Blythe Park Principal Bob Chleboun commented that District 96 has moved away from using the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)* and instead administers *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)* tests to assess student learning. *MAP* provides computer-based tests that adjust up or down in difficulty depending on how a student answers the questions. This adaptive approach creates a unique test for each student based on his or her skills. The *MAP* cadre was formed by those District 96 teachers interested in learning more about *MAP* and willing to become “resident experts” to help colleagues use the new assessment tool.

In District 96, *MAP* tests are administered to students twice per year: in the fall and spring. Mr. Chleboun noted that *MAP* is an extensive tool that supplies a great deal of data about student performance. Testing data is available to teachers via the Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) website within 24 hours. Based on this data, teachers are able to tailor lesson plans and create student groups to support learning. This year the cadre will learn more about how *MAP* data can predict *ISAT* performance. He also commented the more familiar teachers become with *MAP* data, the more impact that information will have on instruction.

Mrs. Stimming inquired whether *MAP* aligns with District 96 curriculum. Dr. Limperis noted that because *MAP* aligns with state standards it aligns with District 96 curriculum.

Following discussion, Education Committee members specified the following goals for the *MAP* Cadre in 2009-10:

- Continue professional development.
- Create a culture of learning in District 96 regarding *MAP*.
- Increase teacher proficiency in order that data can drive instruction.
- Report on the correlation between past *MAP* and *ISAT* performance.

#### **10. *Phase 1 and 2 of RtI (Response to Intervention)***

RtI (Response to Intervention) is a federally mandated prevention program created to support student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. Supt. Lamberson commented that this intervention model allows the use of Special Education Services to support student needs before an IEP process is initiated.

A question arose regarding who is “responsible” for this initiative in District 96. Supt. Lamberson remarked that although RtI is a Regular Ed. initiative, the District uses a “blended” approach between Regular Ed. and Special Ed. to meet students’ needs.

Mrs. Wakely inquired whether an RtI brochure could be developed to provide parents with information about the program. Supt. Lamberson noted that the District Leadership Team is still defining what RtI Phase 1 and Phase 2 look like in District 96. Once this has been defined he stated a brochure would be developed that represents the District's practice.

Following this discussion, Education Committee members stated the following goals for the RtI initiative this year:

- Give a report at the next Education Committee Meeting highlighting real examples (without student names) of how the program is helping students.
- Once the District 96 RtI Practice is defined, create an RtI brochure (may not be accomplished during the 2009-10 school year).

#### ***11. PowerSchool with parent portal, extending to some elementary grades***

Technology Director, Vern Bettis, presented an overview of PowerSchool, the database system used by District 96 to collect and report student data to the state. Currently, all teachers in the district use PowerSchool to record student attendance. The system contains additional modules; an online teacher grade book, PowerTeacher, and a parent portal that enables parents to view their child's progress.

Hauser piloted the parent portal in 2008-09. Jr. High Principal, Leslie Berman, explained students were initially worried about parents having access to their grades. Throughout last year Hauser teachers focused on helping students understand that the online grade book and parent portal are tools they can use to take responsibility for their own learning. She was pleased to note student growth in this area this year.

Ms. Berman reiterated that 2008-09 was a "pilot year" with PowerSchool at Hauser and that the school worked closely with programmers to tailor the software in order to better meet District 96 needs. Hauser teachers update online grade books each Tuesday. The online grade books provide teachers with universal access to students' grades. With this overall view of student performance, staff can more easily identify those children who may be struggling. Teaching teams work together to provide support for these students. Ms. Berman commented that Hauser's Student Services Team meets regularly to monitor performance of those students in the "danger zone" who are earning D's and F's.

A question arose regarding when access to the parent portal will be available to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade parents. Mr. Bettis commented that Elementary teachers just began using PowerSchool for student attendance this year. As the program was piloted at Hauser last year, it is being piloted at the elementary schools this year. He is hopeful that access to the parent portal will be available to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade parents sometime during 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester this year. Mr. Bettis will provide an update on the implementation at the next Education Committee meeting.

Following this discussion, Education Committee members identified the successful implementation of PowerSchool with the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teachers as a goal for 2009-10 with the possibility of access to the parent portal toward the end of this school year.

#### ***17. Internet Safety Curriculum***

Per *Illinois School Code*, Public School Districts are required to provide an "age-appropriate Internet Safety curriculum to be taught at least once each school year to students in Grade 3 or above," beginning in 2009-10. Supt. Lamberson provided the Committee with a

copy of the District 96 *Internet Safety Lesson Objectives* designed to address the following curriculum topics recommended in the *School Code*:

1. Safe and responsible use of social networking websites, chat rooms, electronic mail, bulletin boards, instant messaging and other means of communication on the Internet.
2. Recognizing, avoiding, and reporting online solicitations of students, their classmates, and their friends by sexual predators.
3. Risks of transmitting personal information on the Internet.
4. Recognizing and avoiding unsolicited or deceptive communications received online.
5. Recognizing and reporting online harassment and cyber-bullying.
6. Reporting illegal activities and communications on the Internet.
7. Copyright laws on written materials, photographs, music, and video.

Supt. Lamberson asked the Committee which of the 7 topics should be significantly stressed with students at the various grade levels.

Following discussion, the Committee requested the following topics be thoroughly addressed with students in Grades 3 through 8 as noted below:

- Grades 3-4:
  3. Risks of transmitting personal information on the Internet.
  4. Recognizing and avoiding unsolicited or deceptive communications received online.
- Grades 5-6:
  1. Safe and responsible use of social networking websites, chat rooms, electronic mail, bulletin boards, instant messaging and other means of communication on the Internet.
  2. Recognizing, avoiding, and reporting online solicitations of students, their classmates, and their friends by sexual predators.
  3. Risks of transmitting personal information on the Internet.
  4. Recognizing and avoiding unsolicited or deceptive communications received online.
  5. Recognizing and reporting online harassment and cyber-bullying.
- Grades 7-8:
  1. Safe and responsible use of social networking websites, chat rooms, electronic mail, bulletin boards, instant messaging and other means of communication on the Internet.
  2. Recognizing, avoiding, and reporting online solicitations of students, their classmates, and their friends by sexual predators.
  5. Recognizing and reporting online harassment and cyber-bullying.

Mrs. Leimberer inquired whether District 96 has a filter system to prevent students from being exposed to inappropriate material on the Internet. Mr. Bettis commented that each school, and each computer, has an Internet filter that blocks inappropriate adult sites and any websites that require a password to login. The District has a filter update service that maintains and updates the filtered site list as needed.

Supt. Lamberson noted that at the next Education Committee Meeting the District Leadership Team will provide samples of Internet Safety Curriculum materials.

**19. *Early Childhood Education Program - current enrollment, program scope and future facility needs***

A new location must be found for the ECE Program that is currently housed at Blythe Park School. This change is needed because, starting in 2010-11, anticipated Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade enrollment at Blythe Park will require the use of all available classrooms.

Supt. Lamberson reviewed a *Preliminary Draft K-5 Classroom Projection Matrix* that lists the number of class sections needed to accommodate projected enrollment through 2013 compared to the number of rooms available in each building to hold those classes. Based on projections, all schools but Hollywood School will be required to hold morning and afternoon KA to accommodate enrollment next year.

Dr. Lamberson expressed hope that a suitable location will be found to accommodate the ECE program for the next few years. He would like to avoid bouncing the program from building to building, year after year.

Dialogue occurred regarding whether an alternate location within the local community could be secured to house the ECE program. In recent years, three ECE classes were needed to accommodate enrollment. Twenty students, the maximum allowed, have attended two sections of ECE in District 96. Any additional students enrolling in the ECE program have attended school out-of-district. It was suggested that if an alternate location large enough to house 3 sections of ECE could be found, the District should be able to accommodate total enrollment locally.

Following this discussion, Mrs. Wakely noted the Committee would recommend to the Board that the Building Committee work with the District architect to find a permanent space for the ECE program; and that more information should be gathered regarding the Life Safety requirements for alternate facilities that are used for public school programs.

Following these remarks, a motion was made by Mrs. Wakely, supported by Mrs. Leimberer, that the Education Committee meeting be adjourned.

The time was 7:30 p.m.

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Susan Moorhead, Board Secretary

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Hareena Wakely, Chair