

Conneaut School District

PUBLIC WORK SESSION
AGENDA
Wednesday, February 4, 2015
7:00 PM

The Conneaut School Board of Directors met Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at the Alice Schafer Annex gymnasium.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President Mrs. Jody Sperry.

The following members answered to roll call:

Mr. Boyce	Mr. Ellis	Mrs. Klink
Mrs. Krachkowski	Mrs. Luckock	Mr. Schaeff
Mrs. Sperry	Dr. Thomas	

It is noted Mr. Burnham was absent.
It is noted Mr. Ellis arrived at 7:04 PM.

Administrators Present-

- Superintendent:** Jarrin Sperry
- Business Manager:** Kara Onorato
- Director of Special Education:** Susy Walters
- Curriculum Director:** John Hines
- Director of Buildings and Grounds-** Elwood Schell
- Technology Coordinator** – Rick Kelly
- Principals:** Joel Wentling, David Maskrey, Sharon Sielski, Kevin Burns and Adam Jardina.

Visitor Recognition

Mrs. Sperry offered an opportunity for visitor recognition, noting as per Policy 903 – Public Participation in Board Meetings. All visitors who are recognized during the Visitor Recognition are allotted a maximum of five (5) minutes to address matters of their concern, unless otherwise determined by the Board President. Visitor recognition is to be limited to thirty (30) minutes unless otherwise decided by the Board. No one addressed the school board.

Discussion Items

WQLN Literacy Program-

Mr. Jardina informed the Board there will be a 4 week workshop with WQLN titled “Families Turn on to Literacy”. The work shop will be held at Conneaut Valley Elementary School and is free to the District. This workshop closely aligns with the Title 1 Plan specifically in parent trainings to help educate the student at home. The program is held during the evening and divided into three parts. The program works with parents and provides strategies to help children to be better readers. During the last hour of each evening everyone comes together in a joint activity. The program provides great benefits and educational resources and best of all is free.

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All four sessions the children receive a certificate, tickets and other bonuses. It is a first come first served basis for 25 families for kindergarten through 2nd grades.

Lion Mascot-

Ms. Sielski asked the Board permission to donate the old lion costume to an acquaintance school whose mascot is also a lion. The Board agreed to pass it on to them.

Gosney Memorial Donation Proposal-

Mrs. Sperry indicated this item will be discussed at the March work session, as per requested by Mr. Burnham.

Senior Project Day-

Mr. Maskrey and Ms. Sielski updated the Board on the Senior Project Presentation Day, held on Monday, February 2, 2015. In lieu of the 2 hour day with the biggest question from parents was what time is my child's presentation they both felt it went well. 18 seniors called off due to the bad road conditions therefore, between guidance and Ms. Sielski they have been rescheduled and made up over the past two days. One or two in cyber and one senior they will catch tomorrow as everyone ran out of time today.

Mr. Maskrey indicated that outside of the current direction of the program, and if the program continues beyond what the states direction he asked the Board for more direction. Mr. Schaefer sat in on several and it was disturbing to listen to several students say they had not started until a month ago and wished they had started sooner. He felt the mentors were/had not followed up and there should be punishment points taken away if the district continues the program. Mr. Maskrey replied that students knew about the projects and he would like to talk about continuing after the state concludes the program. But suggested forming a committee and can gladly address the pros and cons at that time. Mr. Schaefer agreed that such a committee may be appropriate and suggested it be a discussion topic at one of the additional work sessions, potentially in June with guidance and faculty for a roundtable discussion.

Mr. Boyce asked Mr. Maskrey for his opinion of the program, if he was for or against it. Mr. Maskrey replied that for career learning it is a great program to go through but felt it should start at the 8th grade level. This would help the students to know what courses they want or should take during their high school years. Also, he would like to see the mandate go away because it is only one more thing the students have to do. Two to three weeks prior to the presentation he had students go to the counselors, skipping classes in order to work on this which resulted in 30-40 students in ISS for skipping class to work on their projects, it became a discipline thing. An announcement went out and teachers were informed what was happening.

Mrs. Sperry listened to six that day but felt only three were worth her time. She felt with Career Cruising in place as a guide but so many ignored what the program said their interests should be. The resources are there for a reason, to show strengths and weaknesses but some students choose to disregard them. Projects years ago had more value to them. Therefore, until we come up with something of value to the students there will not be the incentive. She understands this is a pass/fail project but they should have points taken away for not getting portions completed. Mr. Maskrey added that in the past, if students did not present at all then they did not walk. But due to the 2 hour delay he felt as an administrator he could not do that. The 18 students who did not present have made it up, but before this year that was the punishment, they did not walk at the

graduation ceremony. If they presented and did not pass they had a week to fix and represent at a later date. They do try to hold them at task but kids do have a right to fail.

Mr. Schaef felt outside of pass/fail point system then we should encourage them to meet various deadlines and not as this year showed, wait until last month and skip classes, in school suspension, etc.

Mr. Sperry added his feelings that a lot of the issues and the state dropping the mandate after this year we will have to find value in it. In talking with Mr. Maskrey, who sat through a number of presentations with students saying "this is my plan for the future" and at the end one mentor would ask what classes have you taken. Then come to find out the student was not prepared with the courses they should have taken. So to wait until your junior or worse senior year, go through the WIN Learning or Career Cruising is too late. Granted some students do change their minds, very few know what they actually want to do.

Mrs. Sperry indicated her goal to have in June would be to have the discussion, and then ask: moving to that point challenge what do you want them to be, what is the reason and goals to keep in place to move forward and get players involved in that discussion. Mr. Maskrey asked in line with that to invite the guidance counselors and a learning support teacher, as this teacher will provide insight on what to do to prepare the students in organizing a portfolio.

Mrs. Krachkowski understands special education presents a unique situation but sometimes we don't let the students fail. We give them so much help and at some point they have to take responsibility for themselves and their learning.

Americorp-

Mr. Hines and Mr. Burns are working on apply for an Americorp Grant which would provide an individual to work on specific areas, educationally based at Conneaut Valley Middle School. The building has had an Americorp person another time in the past. This person, at that time, worked with the teachers and raised math scores. Now the opportunity is there to work on Common Core issues.

Mr. Hines heard about the grant opportunity again this year, has applied and understands we have made it to the 2nd round. It is not free, \$4,700 for the year and it is included in his budget for 2015/2016 under CVMS. Results should be made public the middle of March.

Mr. Hines indicated the last individual was through Keystone/Knox Program and this time through Vista.

Mr. Schaef felt it was a good program to be involved in with positive effects in Mercer. Mrs. Krachkowski said they have an Americorp person in her building. The individual is usually a recent graduate.

The Board discussed the validity of a recent graduate versus a 20 year veteran in what the Americorp person can teach/review. Mr. Burns felt there is a lot of information the Americorp person helps to research and the individual can provide new teaching concepts to incorporate into the classroom and helps with data to review.

Curriculum-

a. *Common Core Discussion-*

Mr. Hines and Mr. Sperry felt it would be beneficial to show what students experience in preparing for Common Core, but first, they felt it important to have some input from teachers: both positive and negative.

As an introduction, Mr. Hines felt the struggle is a political one and as not one we are dealing with but in what our teachers struggle in meeting the expectations. He personally felt a six year turnaround time is necessary to see the impact. Students and schools are tested on the PA Core, teachers evaluated on it and the public's perception of success. Mrs. Dawn Dougherty, Mrs. Jessica Martin and Mr. Adam Jesse each discussed the struggles they go through for the content as the biggest issue is the depth of knowledge the students are now asked to learn. Students are tested on material they haven't learned and/or something that used to be taught in 6th grade now is pushed to 4th or 5th grade to learn. The tests are way beyond those grade levels and even higher, writing essays in 3rd and 5th grade is so far beyond what our kids can do.

The Board expressed their interest in how to help parents at home with frustrated students. It is hard to teach an old dog new tricks, parents get the right answers but the process is different. Also, we need to put in front of legislators what they have demanded on us as they have no idea what they have done to the students these days.

The Board wondered if a parent's night just for Common Core would be beneficial but Mrs. Dougherty indicated parents do not have access to Study Island.

In summary, Mr. Hines stated the point of this presentation was information to the board for when you are asked by the parents what this transition is.

- b. *Agriculture Education-* Mr. Hines discussed a grant the district applied for this past fall, for a CNC Plasma Cutter for the Ag Shop. He is proposing purchasing the cutter from the Lincoln Company with the district putting in for the balance above the grant, \$2,500.00. In researching other cutters, three came up but they are of lower quality and reliability with one which has not been in business very long. The longevity and support he feels would be with the Lincoln Company. He has monies in the equipment curriculum account and this item is on the agenda for approval next week. Mr. Schaefer agreed with going with a reliable company in the long run. Other company's may not stand up to the use by students.
- c. *Course and Supplements-* Mr. Hines discussed courses he is asking for approval; this included Remedial Biology; High school Geography Elective; 3 AP courses (literature, composition, projections); Honors English 10th grade. Also he wishes to utilize an etextbook now for Forensic Chemistry and take the Apps IOS Development Online and pull it into the brick and mortar selection sheet; begin work on AP Programming for the 2015/2016 sy; add to the computer programming coursework for a three year plan with students taking a test/certification in networking areas (C++ or along those lines). Mr. Messerall is also talking with the CCCTC to duplicate their resources. There is a great deal of growth in the technology department with hands on for our students to be successful in employment and the collegiate level.

- d. *Title I Report Parent Survey*- Mr. Hines provided a parent survey for the board to see, this survey is required with the program. It asks what they recommend and worded in a way for us to gain information. All four title plans have been completed in January with the major goal for parent involvement and teacher training to bridge the gap for both general population and the socially economically disadvantaged. Unfortunately, the upcoming parent title night has been cancelled due to no responses. He did not expect this and it may have been in the wording. It would be a good idea to provide iPads for the parents, to learn the apps and provide them access through smart phones or Mr. Messerall's instructions. On February 12th the Conneaut Lake Middle School is having a Red Hot Readers Celebration of 1 million words; Conneaut Valley Middle School held theirs in December, of which the parents really enjoy.
- e. *Keystone Remediation*- Mr. Hines is submitting a request to pay next week for this summers' Keystone Remediation offerings.

Junior High Boys' Volleyball Numbers-

The Athletic Ad Hoc Committee has had conversations regarding the numbers at the middle schools with an anticipated participation of 8 at Valley and 18-20 at Lake. Historically the numbers have been very low and each school has struggled at practices and tournaments having enough players. There have been discussion to consolidate the boys' program to Conneaut Lake which is the recommendation by the Committee. They also recommend taking the four total (2 at each middle school) coaches and reducing it to three assistant coaches at Lake. This will enable two teams going to tournaments.

Mrs. Krachkowski voiced her thoughts that combining the sport eliminates student development for JV and varsity but on the flipside encourages them to be more competitive and more serious about selection. Mr. Sperry replied that this same competitive enthusiasm that may develop could be similar to what happened when the District consolidated the middle school football team.

Mrs. Luckock added that the committee considered volleyball as a sport that does not have a feeder program that starts it so maybe our middle school program has to emphasize the basic skills. If not getting a good foundation in the middle school they will struggle at the JV level, thus she supports a third paid coach as well as joining the programs together.

Buildings and Grounds-

Bids for the practice fields down by the football fields are due this Friday; after reviewing them he will bring it for approval next week.

He is working on the Architect and sending it out to bid for security cameras and access controls. He anticipates bringing it to the March meeting.

Cross Country-Mr. Schell plans on meeting with the coach, get his perspective on the CASH course and have it ready for next schools season.

Summit Building- He and Ms. Onorato are working on the RFP for Realtors, sending it out this month and back to the board, potentially in March.

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Smart Edge- they have purchased all the lighting upgrades and are putting together a plan for a small crew next month. Most of the activity will be this summer and some working in the evening on small jobs

Board Comments-

Mr. Schaefer asked if the RFP for Summit could add the Lake cross country property as well. Mr. Schell can include it as well as getting a value.

Intramural/Inter-murals-

Mr. Acklin will meet with the Policy Committee next week. In the meantime, Mr. Sperry called PENNCREST about their 5th and 6th grade programs. He was told it is a community program and not associated with the school at all. They fill out a facility use form. In our own program, Mr. Sperry felt, due to the long history, had been run helter skelter but our goal is for it to be open to all students. If a student is picked out/selected to play then it is not our program nor our goal.

PSBA and NSBA Updates-

Mr. Ellis reminded the Board of upcoming webcast and the legal roundup in April. Mrs. Sperry reminded everyone of the Tom Templeton presentation Thursday, February 19, 2015 on budgeting at the IU.

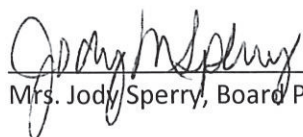
Mr. Sperry and Mrs. Sperry attended the Basic Ed Funding in Greenville and provided a brief overview of the meeting.

Agenda Review-


The board reviewed the agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION immediately following the meeting to review and discuss agency business which, if conducted in public, might lead to disclosure of information protected by law, issues might include personnel/contract concerns.



Mrs. Jody Sperry, Board President



Ms. Kara Onorato, Board Secretary