

**BATTLE CREEK BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
June 10, 2013
6:00 p.m.
McQuiston Center**

PRESENT - BOARD OF EDUCATION

Karen Evans
William Burton
Susan Buckley
Todd Stagner
Art McClenney
Scott Cubberly
Kellie Thomas

All Board Members in attendance except Dr. Todd Stagner.

Present – Administration

Dr. Linda Hicks – Superintendent
Dr. Jeffrey Greene – Resource Development Coordinator
Deborah Gregory – Executive Director of Financial Services
Robert Harberts – Interim Director of Human Resources
Dianne Hatley – Interim Executive Director of Human Resources

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President Evans at 6:00 p.m. All board members were present. Approximately 100 citizens were in attendance including school personnel.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

Moved by Mr. Burton, supported by Ms. Thomas to approve agenda as presented.

Motion approved 6 – 0

MICHIGAN YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY RFP

Superintendent Hicks presented the MYCA RFP for discussion. Dr. Jeff Greene gave an overview of the RFP requirements and the new items that were in the proposal. One of the differences was that it was a firm fixed price proposal.

Board Discussion:

William Burton discussed the nature of our relationship with MYCA which he stated the relationship has deteriorated over the past few years. He calls into question their intention of remaining in a relationship with BCPS when considering the communication issues etc. What is in this for us if they are so interested with pursuing a relationship with other districts? Why would we continue in a relationship and what would we gain? Mr. Burton concluded that he had no interest in pursuing a relationship with MYCA.

Susan Buckley gave a thank you for providing RFP. She noted that a lot of the language is standard RFP language in a government contract. In looking at the numbers the district had lost money running the program. Her questions were: If proposal is under why does that money go to MYCA? She said she was confused about the extra money going back to the MYCA with fixed price contract. In her analogy she states that it will take me X number of dollars to do the work. If they can do work in less time and save money they profit. Why are they trying to tell us extra money received goes to MYCA?

Dr. Hicks stated that the program does a lot of good for our students. However it seems it is becoming more challenging to be able to be part of MYCA. If we don't have 110-115 students in the program we don't break even. Over the years there were about an average of 100 students.

Art McClenney stated that he would have liked to hear from MYCA to hear what the breakdown was in this relationship. He stated that we had a long-standing relationship. His question was; why don't we have students in that program?

Scott Cubberly comments were that based on what we've received we lost \$168,597 on this program. He stated that we have no guarantee that we will make money from this program. Lastly, the proposal is asking for additional things.

Response: The money we get is through FTE and passed through from the State of Michigan. Money generated from that only. If they raise the cost we don't get more money unless they get more kids. The money generated would be flat if we go forward. We would break even only if we keep expenditures at level of FTE?

Kellie Thomas asked, if the number of students hasn't changed why is there a big difference? For example, if the FTE went down 9 students first count and 19 students in second count. That is the shortfall. It will cost X to run the program and they sign contract, it is not profitable.

Susan Buckley stated that the cost of the contract is based upon what it takes to run the program. This year it cost 2.7M to run program. If we get fewer students we won't get money in contract. She stated that this doesn't make sense.

William Burton stated that we have been dealt a hand that requires us to do things above and beyond what we would normally be doing, under a timeline with no reasonable expectations, and will not end in a positive result...why are we doing this? His decision has nothing to do with the value of the MYCA program. He further stated that we are not in the business of subsidizing programs. He suggested that the Board "Cut bait, move on, and wish them well. We can be as supportive as we can of the concept of the program but we are not underwriting a program. He stated that it doesn't make sense and is opposed to continuing the relationship.

Susan Buckley stated unless we can do for getting reimbursed 100% I am not willing to subsidize a program at the risk of losing money. Not willing to sacrifice the kids in our district for this program.

Art McClenney said he appreciated board comments but would like to hear about relationship. We are supplementing the program. He appreciates colleagues' comments when it comes to MYCA, but would like to hear about the relationship.

Go forward with RFP? Going to lose money and time invested in getting document out? Time better spent is it worth it? Evaluate every principal. Have done as much as we can. There has to be some reason/purpose why RFP is out there. Don't think submitting RFP will make a difference.

When program was set up was there these types of requirements? Or is this the first time?

William Burton – do not pursue any action to RFP until we can have a full airing between MYCA and BCPS on what the real problem is and how to solve. Why are we pursuing when the outcomes seems predetermined.

Kellie Thomas – not a positive outcome for us. Students around the state rely on this program but if we can't be fiduciary of the program why mess with it.

2013-14 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Dr. Hicks made a budget presentation. There will be about 2 teachers recommended for layoff this year. If we consider elementary reduction of enrichment teachers – every year we have laid off 4 classroom teachers and above. This has caused inconsistencies for our teachers. The least senior teachers moving each year and we need to give teachers a chance to have consistency in their grade level. Layoff of enrichment teachers helps us to not layoff core teachers this year. By doing this we will have a strong opportunity to see how technology is integrated into the classrooms. Classroom teachers can use computer labs for instruction and more opportunities for specific learning experiences relating to what is in their classroom. We will create an overall technology program this summer because kids need basic technology skills. Additionally, the Board has discretion of 50 minutes per week of planning time.

PRELIMINARY ITEMS PLACED FOR BUDGET APPROVAL TONIGHT:

1. Requesting that a pre-approval of items be made at the interim board meeting so that at least those items can be adjustments to the proposed 2013-2014 budget thereby reducing the shortfall budgeted.

Or

2. Adopt a continuation budget for 2013-2014 to take effect until the budget reductions are voted on by the board over the next couple meetings. A continuation budget would be the same exact budget we have in place for 2012-2013.

Budget Reductions:

Supplies
8 middle school teaching
1 full time teaching
1 full time clerical
5 high school teaching staff
1 Bearcat Watch
MYCA
1 Bearcat Watch
Alternative Education clerical
Alternative Education principal
Athletic fees: \$35 high school; \$20 middle school
Sponsors
Athletic expenditures
Reduce Sub costs
2 clerical
Election services
Tax right offs
Transportation reorganization
Energy manager reorganization
OEC reduction or closing (next board meeting)
Maintenance reduce 2
Reduce Temporary services
In district Lawn service
Flex scheduling to reducing overtime

Board Discussion:

Art McClenney – OEC is long standing organization with this district. We have heard from a number of people that this is the Crown jewel of this district and there are fond

memories. He stated that he is not in favor of cutting OEC. Urged colleagues to take a long hard look.

Dr. Hicks –A study has been done that will be presented next week. What is happening now is difficult, but we have to keep the perspective of the whole district. It is one of the things that ended up on the list as every other area. We are currently spending \$300,000 to sustain. Without the full report we are not prepared for full discussion tonight.

William Burton – Taking into consideration MYCA and moving forward, he asked if we have any sense about the budgetary incompleteness for 2013-14 school years without MYCA? Response: Budget implications if program were not to continue \$100,000 benefit to general fund for 2013-14.

William Burton – alternative education at the high school seems like we have had recommendations made to spread things around and repurpose. Sometimes we have then heard about stipends to other staff get to run the program. Is this something about moving things around to save money and hope impact – don't want efficacy of program diminish given relative success. It has had. When I hear about moving administration around I get nervous. Can you offer me anything that will assuage my concern regarding how clearly you have thought this through? Dr. Hicks – Alternative Ed this year in the high school was different. Served 50 students. Online. Students not in seats every day. Believe design of program for next year would be staggered start so that those students would be able to have the same program next year with different oversight. Principal would not be specifically assigned to the program and one clerical would be absorbed by school. School would work together to help make sure program meets the needs of all the students as we have in the past. Loosing overhead cost for making it in its design. We feel confident we can make this work. Assistant principal would be over alternative education programs including seat time waiver. Fletcher did not believe this would be overwhelming. Financially make this consideration that will benefit 50 students.

Art McClenney – we have moved this program for 3 years. We have a program that finally is stable and great turn out. We brought in our high school principal – they have not passed AYP since we had the new principal here. The high school is still on the list. The high school administration hasn't met what I consider what we are trying to achieve. The language in this program would move under the umbrella of the high school. How do we know this program will not suffer under the umbrella of the high school? Take program that is successful. I know that principal is responsible for several other programs that feel under the alternative program umbrella. If we are going to add those responsibilities to the high school it concerns me greatly. I would like to know about safety and security issues. If we are going to eliminate those things and incorporate them into the high school I would like to see a plan. What time will kids come to school, who is going to be responsible, is this going to affect the duties of the high school administration? Our high school hasn't met its burden already. Hicks – many successes at the high school. Significant gains at the high school. Not sure it's fair but

the high school. Met the standard in the first year. Lansing doesn't know if BCC is on the list or not.

Scott Cubberly – we have to get to \$2.7M to make cuts. We need to have that frank discussion about an overall picture of the district. Still 258,000 off with the adjustment.

Dr. Hicks – transportation RFP will we pursue?

Karen Evans – think that as much as I hate contracting out we have come to the point that the benefits far outweigh the cons. Will support RFP.

William Burton – this topic is one that has been on the table for some time. Each time we look at the numbers it is a relative no brainer. In house versus vendor – don't see where we have a choice. It is time for us to move forward with the RFP because the savings are significant.

Susan Buckley – It is time to take action. Ok with going forward.

Scott Cubberly – BCPS needs to come up with \$400,000 cuts. Pursue RFP

Kellie Thomas – Agreed with colleagues and stated that the numbers are amazing in regards to transportation cost.

Art McClenney – Will our transportation service have an opportunity to participate in the process? Yes.

Susan Buckley – teachers taking technology skills into classrooms. Damned if we do damned if we don't. Making the best of the situation that can be made. If we move these teachers around. Will there be a matchup of reducing 8 staff and placing middle school teachers into those vacancies so they are qualified. Will those filling the vacancies of those leaving have the skills to do the work? Hicks – that teacher will need to learn some new things. Even core teachers need to learn all the enrichment teachers have been in a classroom previously so they have that experience. We are doing our best to have teachers have opportunities to make suggestions. Principals are going to be making this conversation this week.

William Burton – we have always kept the cuts away from the classroom and now at the limit with this one. Would rather see 2 schools close and take care of the technology regarding instruction than to lose that. For us to do this we have to take away that... in my mind would rather close 2 schools and maintain the level of instructional services that we have become accustomed to providing.

Art McClenney – it is clear to me it seems there is more work to do when it comes to this proposal. Instead of piecing this together we need to have it all together on one page to make a decision. Not ready to make a decision. Option 2 (adopting a continuation budget) until we have more information. Will be losing students from this

district. We need to have a complete packet. These cuts will have ramifications for our district and we will be back here again. Not willing to approve tonight.

Susan Buckley – would not carry any cuts over if we approve continuum. All cuts will affect kids in one way or another. Cannot have that discussion. Don't want to have staff go back and rework all this. Obligated to work with parents and school closing would have get parents in. Could always close schools at a later date. Will reinstitute cuts later. Disservice to go back and rework. Board told them to bite the bullet and come up with cuts so we're not sitting here every year. Throw in a few school closures. Difficult. They are paid to do this. Have to trust that they can get it done.

Scott Cubberly – still not at 2.7M for this year. Need to have all the information out of all the information on the table. This is the bulk of the cuts. Do what we can to make all cuts at once. May have all information next week and need it all prior to making decisions.

Art McClenney – need all of the information. Some of us are invested in this district and these cuts affect our kids and tried to remain supportive of this district. These cuts hurt our families and our children. I want all of the information.

William Burton – we will never have all of the information. We have never had all of the information. One reason is because State of Michigan conducts business like public education. Gregory talks about variances and changes. Have never had a complete picture to finalize the budget. Have a window in November to make adjustments. We have asked that the budget we approve took care of carry over. We still have cuts to make regardless of additional information regarding OEC. Satisfied the state by submitting a budget and can make it work. High incentive for us to make additional hard decisions including building sect. Willing to accept recommendations – not sufficient but closest we have been in a lot of years. Other options to bring budget in line with expectations.

Kellie Thomas – have to submit the proposed budget – can we reverse those decisions. Gregory – adopt in June and in November adjust. This is our first attempt at the New Year budget. Making an attempt to make cuts and that are reversible. Can change 3 times during course of year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE 2013-14 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Susan Buckley moved that we postpone decision until next week – June 17, 2013.

Moved by Ms. Buckley, supported by Mr. Cubberly to approve the postponement of approving the 2013-14 budget reductions.

Motion approved 5 – 1 (Mr. Burton Opposed)

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE BOARD TERMS OF OFFICE

Robert Harberts, Interim Director of Human Resources, presented a resolution for approval amending board terms of office from 4 to 6 years. The board bylaws and/or policies will be amended to reflect the changes.

Moved by Mr. Burton, supported by Mr. Hoelscher, to approve the resolution amending board terms of office to six years.

Motion approved 6 – 0

CONSIDERATION TO CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO SECTION 8 (a) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT TO CONSIDER THE NON-RENEWAL OF AN EMPLOYEE AT THE REQUEST OF THE EMPLOYEE

Moved by Ms. Buckley, supported by Mr. Cubberly, to convene in closed session pursuant to section 8(a) of the open meetings act.

Motion approved 6 - 0

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TEACHER CONTRACT NON-RENEWAL

It was moved that the Board accept the recommendations for non-renewal as was discussed during Closed Session and sign the resolution stating the same.

Moved by Mr. Burton, supported by Ms. Buckley to approve the teacher contract non-renewals as presented.

Motion approved 6 – 0

BOARD OFFICER TERMS

Karen Evans' term closes at the end of June. Knowing the terms will only be for one and a half years Human Resources needs to change policy to be in sync with the election terms.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Superintendent Hicks commented on:

- 210 bearcats celebrated for Academic Achievement as well as other activities.
- 303 participated in extracurricular activities.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

President Evans spoke of the wonderful celebrations – Adult Ed had a father and son graduate together.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.