

MINUTES  
State Board of Education Regular Meeting  
May 4, 2007  
Lincoln County School District #2, Afton, WY

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Board members present: Michelle Sullivan, Larry McGarvin, Pam Anderson, Bill Anthony, Mel Baldwin, Sandy Barton, Matt Garland, Jim Lowham, Jeff Marsh, Jan Torres, Jim McBride

Board members absent: Dana Mann-Tavegia

Also present: Mary Kay Hill, Department of Education (WDE); Jennifer Duncan, Board Executive Assistant, WDE; Diane Frazer, WDE; Joy Mockelmann, WDE; Jennifer Stone, Wyoming Attorney General's (AG) Office

Members of the public and press present for portions of the meeting: Kathy Scheurman, Wyoming Education Association (WEA); Glade Jones, Sublette County School District #9 board member; Donna Ivie, Lincoln County School District(LCSD) #2 board member; Reynold Johnson, LCSD #2 board member; Jon Abrams, Superintendent, LCSD #2

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Michelle Sullivan called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the January 30, 2007 regular meeting were reviewed for approval.

JIM LOWHAM MOVED THAT THE MINUTES BE APPROVED

JIM MCBRIDE SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Larry McGarvin presented the treasurer's report. He reported that there was nothing extraordinary. For the period ending March, 31 2007 there is a balance of \$206,344.62.

JEFF MARSH MOVED THAT THE TREASURER'S REPORT BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED

JIM LOWHAM SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Jim McBride presented his state superintendent's report. School security was the first issue he talked about. The School Facilities Commission voted to allow major maintenance funds to install, repair or upgrade school security systems. Best practices were published for the best options for schools. He also talked about the agreement that was entered into called "We Tip". School districts may enroll in this if they want to. This is a preventive measure that involves a 1-800 number that is anonymous. A memo will be sent out to school districts before the beginning of the next school year encouraging students to program this phone number into their cell phones. It provides a \$1000 reward if the tip is followed through on and arrests are made. The tip is rewarded through a three word code so no information is required from the person reporting the tip.

Proficiency Assessment of Wyoming Students (PAWS) will be reduced by the number of items in each area but the test will still be valid and reliable. Next year there will only be a single test in the spring. He would like to see an informative assessment given in the beginning of the year to identify weaknesses for teachers to use in their planning in the future. The WDE has hired a psychometrician to have in-house input on the assessment and its outcomes rather than depending in Harcourt to provide all of the feedback.

Credentialing of teachers has been a large issue. There were over 400 district employees that were not credentialed correctly. This has been reduced down to less than 30 teachers, mostly coaches. Some have expired credentials or have not gone through the proper process through the Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB). Jim Lowham wants to be able to check the status of the people he is hiring; PTSB's turnaround is not very quick. Dr. McBride is working with PTSB to improve this turnaround.

He was very impressed with the Teacher of the Year banquet and looks forward to continuing to support the entire program. He is looking into other initiatives that he would like to offer the Teacher of the Year in the future. He also talked about the Milken Teacher of the Year Program. He talked with both Milken brothers to make sure that program is fairly administered. He would also like to see an administrator recognized. That award is \$25,000. Arch Coal recognized 10 Wyoming teachers as Teachers of the Year in their process, each winning \$2500.

The WDE is following up on several legislative studies and initiatives. MPR Associates released their study on Career Technical Education in Wyoming. The Hathaway Success Curriculum is in place to make sure there is common course taxonomy for all districts to provide guidance on what to teach and what will

be tested on. He went on to discuss virtual schools. The concept is viable, the problem is with the money and where it goes. Identifying the correct instructors and finding out how the money will flow as the students are hard to account for. At-risk students are also being addressed; early intervention programs are being developed at WDE.

The Board all agreed that they would like to see the descriptions of the required courses for the success curriculum as part of the standards for graduation. The law requires that the WDE provide functional equivalents for each course and each course needs to be certified for inclusion on a transcript. The districts are required to indicate on the transcript which courses are Hathaway certified courses.

## **BOARD MEMBER UPDATES AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dana Mann-Tavegia and Jim Lowham attended the National Association of State Boards of Education Legislative Conference. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reauthorization will be passed with the schedule for the committees being released this summer.

Sandy Barton updated the board on the Job Corps site in Riverton. The center was awarded to the state of Wyoming; it will be phased over the next 4 years. It is a job training site.

Michelle Sullivan and Jennifer Duncan briefed the Board on their upcoming retreat in September. It will be held at the HF Bar ranch on September 10-12, 2007. This location is outside of Buffalo, WY. Michelle looks forward to having a highly inclusive discussion with many varied education entities.

Jeff Marsh briefed the Board on the activities of the School Facilities Commission. Jeff feels that the new Executive Director, Ken Daraie, will be a good fit for the commission. There are a lot of new projects going on around the state.

## **TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

Dianne Frazer, WDE, addressed the board regarding issues within districts regarding teacher certification. There are a number of individuals working in schools that are not properly licensed. This is part of the accreditation process and must be rectified soon. She reviewed the history of notification of the districts over the last two years regarding this issue. She also reviewed the requirements for being a teacher in the state of Wyoming i.e., teachers must be certified but not highly qualified. Jim Lowham expressed frustration with the process of notifying the districts of certification. The districts rely solely on the teacher providing the proof of certification since there is no real time information available through the PTSB.

Dianne continued on to present each district, of which there are seven that have not corrected their issues, and the numbers of non-certified professionals within their district. Altogether there are 63 non-certified professionals. These districts will be reviewed by the Board for accreditation if the discrepancies remain.

## **PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT OF WYOMING STUDENTS (PAWS) DISCUSSION**

Jim McBride reviewed the summary of the suggested changes to PAWS that were recommended by the task force. He hopes to have a modified contract done by July 1, 2007, and he informed the Board he would keep them updated. There will be a single test next year. He would like to see an informative test that is multiple choice that could be used at anytime during the fall so that the teachers can see where each individual student is and adjust their teaching to them.

All testing nationwide is done within the same windows because of the mandates of NCLB; this also contributes to the slow down in the return of results from the 4 companies that handle statewide assessments, this includes Harcourt. There was a nine minute power breakdown in one district that caused the back up, testing should have been suspended for a couple of hours until everything could be brought back up, however, testing continued and much of the data was held up due to that.

Larry McGarvin is concerned that PAWS has no consequence for the students yet the schools have consequences. He feels there needs to be a tie in with some kind of incentive for the students to do well. Jim McBride agreed and would like to see the school districts record the results on the report card; he thinks that accountability might help. Bill Anthony suggested taking it a step further and listing their results on their high school transcript that will follow them to college and to employment. Jim Lowham feels that may be of no consequence because most employers don't ask for the transcript, but he agrees to the accountability. He would like to see the students take the PAWS near the end of the course, rather than at the end of the year. However, the federal government won't allow testing more than once a year at this time.

Michelle Sullivan would like to determine what the appropriate role of the SBE is. The legislature has set policy in advance of the SBE being able to set their own policy by statutorily mandating certain items to be tested on. Mary Kay Hill reviewed the SBE statutory duties with them; however, the legislature's statutory mandates overrule these at this time.

## **UPCOMING ISSUES TIMELINE**

Mary Kay Hill reviewed the upcoming timelines for issues that the Board will need to address and tie them into their upcoming meetings. Accreditation typically occurs with a teleconference in August; the state board retreat occurs

in September; a meeting in conjunction with Education Week in Casper is held in November and a meeting is held in Cheyenne in conjunction with the legislature.

There are some key items that the board handles in the summer; alternative school schedules are decided in June; accreditation will be handled in August. Standards are going to be a major focus for the board over the next year in addition to the issues surrounding that. The Board is also concerned about the functioning of the PTSB and the certification of teaching staff in the districts. Charter school renewals and waiver reviews are upcoming within the three charter schools that exist in the state; this will most likely be a September or November meeting.

There is the possibility of having a face to face meeting in August if there are accreditation issues. This date will be set with a teleconference being the first protocol and an in person meeting being secondary if necessary. Michelle would like to assure that they meet with the Joint Education Committee (JEC) during the legislature. Mary Kay indicated this is a big challenge with the schedule they are required to keep during the session.

#### **MEETING WITH TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

Mark Nethercott, winner of the 2007 Wyoming Teacher of the Year award, visited with the Board. He also provided some NCLB reauthorization suggestions that were put together by some of the Teachers of the Year from around the country.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 12:50 P.M.