

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, August 18, 2014 6:00 PM

City of Gering Council Chambers
1519 10th Street
Gering, NE 69341



Minutes

1. Signature of Notification

2. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Welcome Visitors

2.1. Notice of the meeting was published in the Gering Citizen on August 14, 2014.

3. Excuse Absent Board Members

4. Consent Agenda

4.1. Approval of Agenda/Amendment of Agenda Items

4.2. Approval of Minutes from Previous Board Meetings

4.3. Approval of Claims/Bills

4.4. Personnel Items

4.4.i. Contract Approvals

4.4.ii. Resignations

4.5. Second Reading of Board Policy 302.02 - Superintendent Contract and Contract Nonrenewal

4.6. Second Reading of Board Policy 406.02 - Certificated Employee Qualifications, Recruitment, Selection

4.7. Second Reading of Board Policy 412.02 - Classified Staff Qualifications, Recruitment and Selection

4.8. Second Reading of Board Policy 503.04 - Excessive Absenteeism

4.9. Second Reading of Board Policy 504.11 - Weapons

4.10. Second Reading of Board Policy 508.05 - Emergency Plans and Drills

4.11. Second Reading of Board Policy 508.15 - Concussion Awareness

4.12. Second Reading of Board Policy 1006.02 - Tobacco-Free Schools

5. Recommendation to Approve Consent Agenda

6. Patron Comments

7. Reports & Discussions

7.1. Elementary Summer School Summary

Northfield Elementary Principal Betty Smith provided information about summer school, including attendance figures, curriculum, and responsibilities that are shared among the three elementary principals. Smith stated that the district will receive reimbursement for the number of students who attended twelve or more days. Winn inquired about the various times of the summer when summer school has been held (i.e. immediately after school ends in May, mid-summer, and right before school starts back up at the end of summer). Smith stated that the time frame has varied over the years and that, according to the teacher survey, this most current time frame seems to work best for both staff and students.

7.2. Curriculum Committee Meeting Report

Chairperson Peters informed the Board that the Curriculum Committee reviewed the newest NePAS data, which is embargoed until August 26, 2014. Curriculum & Assessment Director Terri Martin shared a variety of ways to look at the data from a district standpoint. The data will be used as a tool to improve instruction in K-12 classrooms. Peters hopes to have the information ready to present to the full board at the September meeting.

7.3. Facilities Committee Meeting Report

Chairperson Upp said that the Facilities Committee spent time reviewing the strategic plans and how they will affect the committee's goals. The committee will be driven by specific goals determined by the strategic planning process.

7.4. Business Committee Meeting Report

Chairperson Copsey and Board Member Doll were both absent from this committee meeting. Business Manager Tim Meisner and Board Member Brunner reviewed the bill listing and discussed refinancing the Lincoln Elementary bonds.

7.4.i. Financial Report

7.4.i.1. Trial Balance Summary

7.4.i.2. Fund Balances

7.4.i.3. Schedule of Investments Held

7.4.i.4. Financial Statement

7.5. Personnel Committee Meeting Report

Chairperson Winn stated that the Personnel Committee spent time discussing the strategic planning goals. Superintendent Hastings provided a summary of the certified staff handbook. Staff will sign an acknowledgment form stating that they received that information. The Classified Staff Handbook will have proposed changes next year.

7.6. Superintendent's Report

Hastings informed all that the school year is off to good start. The district welcomed ten new certified and approximately ten new classified staff members this year. There are still one or two para positions that need to be filled, however the majority of staff are in place. Hastings spoke regarding student numbers, which seem to be comparable to last year's numbers. He anticipates between 2,100-2,200 students for the 14-15 school year. The district received their final evaluation report and state aid figures so work will begin to create a new budget. The Business Department will ask for budget approval in September.

8. Action Items

8.1. Discussion and approval of the Gering Public Schools Strategic Goals.

Superintendent Hastings explained the strategic planning process and reviewed the goals prior to asking for formal approval from the Board. High School English Teacher Tyler Thompson was present to serve as a spokesman for the team. Hastings presented information about the team and recognized all who participated, which included high school

students, parents, community members, city staff, WNCC staff, Twin Cities Development staff, three board members and district administration representatives. Hastings provided an overview about why the district held strategic planning session, which included confronting our current reality, moving beyond that reality and improving performances and outcomes. An overview of the process included the state of the district, purposes of the Gering Public School district, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, an environmental analysis (political, financial, technological, societal and work), desired futures, and the prioritization of goals. He then reviewed district goals and intent behind them. The goals are specific but have room for the next step in the process, which is to further refine these goals. These goals included: 1) By June of 2016, the district will have in place a prospectus to align grade levels that include workable and efficient grade level configurations, a facilities master plan that accommodates the grade level configurations, and a timeline for implementation. Rationale behind this goal was discussed and Thompson provided examples; 2) By June of 2017, the district will accommodate the technology needs of all PK-12 students. Rationale behind this goal was discussed and Thompson provided examples; 3) By June of 2018, the district will have in place flexible learning options for all students. Rationale behind this goal was discussed. Participating students indicated that they desire a wider variety of options for students, including continuing the district's college prep programs, implementing a trade program, preparation for 2-year colleges, career readiness courses, certification classes, etc. to allow for those who enter the workforce immediately after High School. Thompson provided examples. The district has great models in place already with it's voc-tech classes, however it would like to develop more offerings in the areas of business; 4) By June of 2016, the district will build a consistent and inspiring brand that will be utilized throughout the entire district. Thompson discussed the rationale behind this goal, stating that the district would like to establish an identity in the community so citizens know who and what Gering is and what we have to offer. Peters expressed his appreciation to Dr. Dlugosh for doing an excellent job in leading the process. Hastings explained that the next step is to ask the Board for their formal approval of the goals, then the district will develop the formation of action planning teams, which will consist of individuals from the strategic planning teams, staff members, and community members. He hopes to have the plan written by Thanksgiving. He expects to bring the action plans to the full Board in December for their approval prior to plan implementation. Once the district is close to achieving a goal, then another goal will be brought to the forefront so the process continues. Hastings plans to make strategic thinking part of the Gering thought process. There were five goals that did not make the top priorities, but those will be addressed in the future. Winn expressed her liking of the goals that were developed, especially #4, which she believes is an umbrella goal that encompasses all of the other goals. Copsey thought the process was very energizing and he agrees that branding of the district should be a top priority as it ties all of the goals together. He stated that the comments from participating students were phenomenal, well spoken and well thought out. He also thanked Dr. Dlugosh for his leadership. Copsey said that it was great having administrators, students, community members and board members being productive as a group. There was good dialog and good insight as to what is going on in the various buildings. It was a positive experience and he encouraged everyone to support these goals. Doll said he thought it was a great process and thanked all who were involved. He believes that all established goals are achievable without huge price tags attached. Upp expressed his appreciation to Thompson for this hard work and comments to the Board.

8.2. General Obligation Bond Refinance--Lincoln Elementary School Bonds

Hastings explained that the Gering Public School district issued Build America Bonds in 2010 to finance the Lincoln Elementary construction project. At that time the rate was approximately 6 3/4% and they were taxable bonds. The district now has an opportunity to refinance these bonds at a more favorable rate of approximately two to three percent, which would save around 10% over the life of the bond in savings. Nate Eckloff distributed

information pertaining to the refinancing and explained that the current bonds receive subsidies from the Federal Government every six months. The district considered refinancing last year, however the rates were not low enough. The district may continue to receive subsidies until 2015 if it refinances to tax exempt bonds. Savings are expected to be between \$650,000 and a million dollars. Eckloff added that the District's annual savings will be approximately \$48,000 per year until 2035. The schedule and closing dates were discussed. Copsey explained that the Business Committee already reviewed this process last year and are ready to implement the refinancing at this time. Doll explained that, as elected officials, the Board needs to be a great steward of finances and expressed his desire to save the taxpayers money.

8.3. Approval of funding request from the TeamMates of Scotts Bluff County.

Winn asked if it this contribution is built into the annual budget? Hastings confirmed that it is and that Mr. Deines would again service as the local TeamMates representative. Hastings explained that this program provides a tremendous services to the schools, the community and the state. This program provides positive role models for at risk students.

9. Tentative Committee & Meeting Dates

Hastings stated that he would send out an email about setting a Facilities Committee Meeting date. Winn asked if the Curriculum Committee Meetings could be moved to a different day of the week. She will email committee members to come up with a new day.

10. Board Comments

Peters said the summer went by fast but he feels the energy that comes with the start of a new school year. Winn commended the Gering Courier and Gering Citizen for their recent district coverage. She has enjoyed the photos and articles about new staff members. Copsey said he is enjoying fall activities and is excited to get started. Upp thanked the Business Committee, Superintendent Hastings and Meisner for their work on the refinancing project. Doll stated that the summer is gone and that he will be moving his student to college soon.

11. Adjournment