

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2142, ST. LOUIS COUNTY SCHOOLS, HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2011.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruns
 B. Larson
 C. Larson
 Feist
 Rantala
 Swanson
 Zupetz

ALSO PRESENT: Rick
 Cox
 Johnson

The **regular** meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 2142, St. Louis County Schools, was held at ISD # 2142 District Office on **February 14, 2011**, at 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Chair Bruns **removed Enclosure 6.22, Award Bids for North Campus from the agenda**. Ms. Bruns also added to the agenda Enclosure 6.14a, Reconsideration of the vote that took place on January 31, 2011 Special Board Meeting.

Motion by Rantala and seconded by C. Larson to **approve the agenda as amended**.

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz
Against – None

Superintendent Rick reported the following: 1.) Last Friday attended a meeting of the Superintendent's of the region with the IRRB Commission Sertich at the meeting and an update on his new position. And also talking about more dialog with Superintendents; 2.) Field Township ordinance was received by the district and is being review by district counsel; 3.) We are progressing on the 2011-12 schedule and have a meeting with the principals this week to check the progress; 4.) Staff Development day on Tuesday, February 22, 2011 and no school on February 21 and 22, 2011; 5.) Superintendent thanked everyone that participated in the District Spelling Bee.

Linda Cox, Superintendent's Secretary, reported on the District Spelling Bee which was held on Thursday, February 3, 2011, at 1:00 p.m. First place winner - Ashley Vito, 6th grade from the Cook School; second place winner - Hannah Olson, 7th grade from the Cook School; third place winner - Marcella Cherne, 8th grade from Cotton School; and fourth place winner – Brandon Richards, 7th grade from Babbitt-Embarrass School. The first through third place winners will go on to the regional spelling bee to be held at the Woodland School Auditorium in Duluth, MN on Thursday, February 17, 2011 at 12:45 p.m.

Kevin Abrahamson reported the following: Mr. Abrahamson had handouts for the school board. 1.) Up-date on the Revised Curriculum Review Cycle; 2.) Common Curriculum Course Titles is being done to consolidate common course titles; 3.) Summary of Curriculum meetings that have been held to

date; 4.) Essentially ready for Spring MCA II, MCA III, MCA Modified & MTAS Testing in April; 5.) Finished the February round of GRAD Retest in Math.

Board Member B. Larson asked about the availability of modified testing for special education students.

Mr. Abrahamson answered yes; there are between 15 to 25 students.

Board Member B. Larson asked is we are in good shape with the Wednesday classes.

Mr. Abrahamson responded yes, there are enough students and we will know more after Thursday.

John Henry of JCI reported the following: Mr. Henry distributed and explained handouts for the school board. 1.) Cherry School-South Side roof is done, and heat is on, finishing up dirt work on the inside the storm sewer was approved. Plan on pouring slabs on grade next week in the South wing. Finishing up roof on the NW corner and will start heating that building next week; 2.) South Ridge-both elementary and secondary wings are roofed and heated and thawed and underground electrical, and slabs on grade tomorrow. Next week we will start in the secondary wing. In the gym the decking is going on and will start roofing the gym; 3.) Tower-Soudan School we have a final meeting this week to go through the final design and have a meeting Thursday, with Tom Cundy to discuss the abatement and lead the 1917 building; and 4.) Babbitt-Embarrass School finalized the design to put it on the blue prints.

Board Chair Bruns asked that the motion for the January 31, 2011 special board meeting minutes be corrected. Missing in the motion was to close the Orr School at the end of the 2010-2011 school year and combine the Cook and Orr Schools at the Cook School for the 2011-2012 school year.

Board Member B. Larson objected with the amendment and said that is not what his motion was. The motion was to combine the Cook and Orr Schools at the Cook School for the 2011-2012 school year.

Board Chair Bruns disagreed with Board Member B. Larson.

Discussion followed.

Board Chair Bruns said that she believed that minutes were recorded incorrectly and she wanted the correction noted.

Discussion followed.

Board Chair Bruns asked again that the minutes reflect that she disagreed with the January 31, 2011 special board meeting minutes and the motion was to close the Orr School.

Discussion followed.

Motion by Rantala and seconded by Zupetz to **approve consent agenda**: January 24, 2011 Regular School Board Meeting Minutes; January 31, 2011 Special School Board Meeting; Policy: 5.21 Donations: 1.) \$250.00 from Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN for the Tower-Soudan School; 2.) \$600.00 from Tower-Soudan Athletic Association for \$30.00 for each student to go towards student athletic fees; 3.) \$700.00 from Target Grant through Scholarship America for the AlBrook School; Program: 5.31- Enstrom Studio, Inc. school portrait contract for South Ridge School for 2011-2012; 2012-2013; and 2013-2014 school years.

Yes – B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Zupetz
Against – Bruns, Swanson

First reading of Conflict of Interest-charter School Board Members, Policy 210.1.

Marshall Helmberger spoke and said that this policy does not apply to a regular school district and only applies to a charter school.

Board Chair Bruns removed from the agenda.

First reading of Out of State Travel by School Board Members, Policy 214.

First Reading of Public and Private Personnel Data, Policy 406.

First Reading of Tobacco Free Environment, Policy 419.

Board Chair Bruns indicated that she would like a vote to reconsider the vote of January 31, 2011, Special School Board Meeting to combine the Cook and Orr Schools at the Cook School for the 2011-2012 school year.

Member Rantala said that it is recommended that the person that voted yes on this topic should bring forth the motion.

Board Chair Bruns said that this information was incorrect at the advice of Knutson law firm.

Superintendent Rick confirmed the information.

Motion by Swanson and seconded by C. Larson **to rescind the motion of January 31, 2011.**

Board Chair Bruns read an opinion of Cope and Peterson regarding the motion of January 31, 2011. And explained that the proper procedure was not followed for closing the Orr School.

Discussion followed.

Board Member Rantala asked for point of information and what would the repercussions be?

Board Chair Bruns indicated that there could possibly be a lawsuit.

Board Member B. Larson said that the Knutson, Flynn law firm said that it was legal.

Discussion followed.

Board Member Rantala asked for a point of information. What if we have to move into the new North School in the January of 2012? What impact would that likely have?

Board Member Bruns said that it was highly unlikely and would be more like April of 2012 and have occupancy in December of 2012.

Discussion followed.

Board Member B. Larson stated that we have a plan and this was a continuation of that plan made in good faith. Really the way I made the motion was to continue with our plan.

Board Chair Bruns said no where in the plan did it say that we were going to move the Nett Lake and Orr kids down to the Cook School.

Board Member Feist indicated that the board had to make a decision and the educational plan comes first.

Board Member Rantala asked for a point of information and asked for the motion to be read.

Item added for Reconsideration of the vote that took place on January 31, 2011 Special Board Meeting.

Board Chair called for the vote **on the motion to rescind the motion of January 31, 2011, which was motioned by Swanson and seconded by C. Larson.**

Yes – Bruns, Swanson, C. Larson

Against – B. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Zupetz

Comments from visitors:

Julian Brzoznowski explained that he has served on many boards and has seen this board doing things that they should not be doing and not keeping their promises.

Karlene Chosa stated that she is in favor of rescinding the motion of combining the Cook and Orr Schools.

Donald Chosa said that he has a son at the Orr School that has stated that if he has to go to the Cook School he will quit and will not attend the Cook School.

Dennis Peterson said that a hearing must be held at the Orr School regarding the closing. Mr. Peterson will present the financial fact at that hearing.

Ann Sather has a son going to the Orr School. Ms. Sather said that she was told that the school would not be combined and her son does not want to attend the Cook School. She stated that she is concerned about his education.

Dawn Benner said the vote was to close the Orr School and the board needs to hold a hearing and asked that the board hold a hearing at Nett Lake.

Judy Koch indicated that she is a parent of students past and present and is interested in the education at the Orr School. Ms. Koch read an opposing letter that she wrote and published in the Cook News Herald/Timberjay/Mesabi Daily News.

Pete Glowaski spoke of his disappointment in the board and how they handled the situation.

Peter Drift has 2 students going to the Orr School and asked the board to keep their word. Mr. Drift stated that his daughter will be PSEO and that he is not sending his kids to the Cook School.

David Glowaski stated that there has been a lot of errors and cited the vote during the last election. Mr. Glowaski asked for more accountability on the finances.

Board Chair Bruns was given Minnesota Statute for school closure to her by Dawn Benner. Ms. Bruns read the statute, "The board may close a schoolhouse only after a public hearing on the question of the necessity and practicability of the proposed closing. Published notice of the hearing shall be given for two weeks in the official newspaper of the district. The time and place of the meeting, the description and location of the schoolhouse, and a statement of the reasons for the closing must be specified in the notice. Parties requesting to give testimony for and against the proposal shall be heard by the board before it makes a final decision to close or not to close the schoolhouse." Ms. Bruns indicated that this should have been done first. In addition, she said that Kindergarten parents already received letters that orientation would take place at the Cook School. Also Ms. Bruns received a letter from the Orr Community Education coordinator and she has been told that there will be no community education in Orr School it will now be in Cook because there will be no school in Orr. Ms. Bruns asked the board to honor their promise to keep the Orr School open for the 2011-2012 school year.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Bruns indicated that she is not opposed to closing the Orr School but not for the 2011-2012 school year.

Discussion followed.

Board Member Swanson stated that the board has a chance to maintain the integrity of the board.

Discussion followed.

Motion by C. Larson and seconded by Bruns for **permission to proceed with the closure for the Orr School for the 2012-2013 school year.**

Board Member B. Larson asked for discussion on the motion. Mr. B. Larson stated that he talked to a former board member and there were no promises made to keep the Orr School open. We made a promise to keep our schools open this year with the idea that the new schools would be built by next year. Mr. Larson indicated that we have a plan for improved academics for students and improved finances for the whole district and we have to think about that and the whole district would be affected by this \$400,000.

Board Member Swanson said we have a change to help further animosity and for a smoother transition.

Discussion followed.

Superintendent Rick asked "Why are we doing this?" In the education plan there will be more offerings. By combining we have more flexibility in scheduling, staffing and coming together. It is my job and Kim's job to prepare the board for the possibility of a loss of revenue. As we move along this road board integrity is important, it is important to me too, but so is creditability. We present accurate information to the best of our knowledge.

Board Member C. Larson said that he believes the facts and figures of Business Manager Johnson, but this is about community and we were going to move all the students into the new school.

Discussion followed.

Board Member Rantala said that he has already gone through this experience with his own children when they has to go to Babbitt, but they were offered a much greater education in Babbitt then they would have been able to receive in Embarrass. I look at the advantages available for the children and I don't want to delay it. I cannot support any further delay.

Discussion followed.

Board Chair called for the vote with the motion by C. Larson and seconded by Bruns **for permission to proceed with the closure for the Orr School for the 2012-2013 school year.**

Yes – Bruns, Swanson, C. Larson

Against – B. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Zupetz

Motion by B. Larson and seconded by Rantala to **grant permission to administration to proceed with the process of closing the Orr School and direct the Superintendent to follow the statutory procedure necessary to bring about closure.**

Yes – B. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Zupetz

Against – Bruns, Swanson, C. Larson

Motion by C. Larson and seconded by B. Larson to **grant permission to receive quotes to purchase one (1) suburban and two (2) Dodge minivans.**

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz

Against – None

Motion by B. Larson and seconded by C. Larson to **accept Shelly Weme's resignation as cook aide effective February 4, 2011.**

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz

Against – None

Motion by B. Larson and seconded by C. Larson to **hire Jim Nemec as a bus driver, bargaining unit, not to exceed full time equivalency for this position, 5 days per week, effective February 14, 2011,** with terms and conditions of employment in accord with master agreement between ISD # 2142 and Operating Engineers #70.

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz

Against – None

Motion by B. Larson and seconded by C. Larson to **hire Shannon Benson as a bus driver, bargaining unit, not to exceed full time equivalency for this position, 5 days per week, effective February 14, 2011,** with terms and conditions of employment in accord with master agreement between ISD # 2142 and Operating Engineers #70.

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz
Against – None

Comments from the board:

Board Member Rantala stated that the board needs to schedule a meeting with the City of Babbitt council. A meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2011 in the Babbitt School auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

Board Chair Bruns scheduled a closed board study session for negotiation strategy for Monday, February 28, 2011, at 3:30 p.m. at the District Office.

Motion by C. Larson and seconded by Rantala to **hold a closed board study session for negotiation strategy for Monday, February 28, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. at the District Office.**

Yes – Bruns, B. Larson, C. Larson, Feist, Rantala, Swanson, Zupetz
Against – None

Board Chair Bruns turned the meeting over to Vice Chair B. Larson for the remainder of the meeting.

Board Member B. Larson invited the board to attend “Reading Across America” at the AlBrook School.

Board Member Feist thanked Linda Cox for her work on the Spelling Bee.

Board Member Zupetz said that she thinks that by moving ahead with this the kids will be better off, no matter how hard it is.

The regular board meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Chairperson

Clerk