

Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting
August 28, 2006

Dr. Perkins welcomed attendees and introductions were made at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Perkins briefed attendees on the role of the group as an advisory committee. The Citizen's Advisory Committee provides the opportunity to make suggestions to the school district regarding programs and procedures. This is an advisory committee to the superintendent and we ask that respect be given to all speakers.

Attendees: Scott Hillman, Jeff Connor, Karen Greenwald, Mark Maynard, David Mathews, Nancy Mathews, Veneta Wadlow, Mr. Wadlow, Shawn Neville.

District Administrators: Betty Nighohossian, Debbie Wilkerson, John Schooley, Deb Kibort, Nancy Sanders, Bob McBride, Brad Eavenson, Ken Perkins.

Agenda Items Discussed:

- A. Testing Dates – Ruth Carr provided information about district testing programs. There will be no Fall Terra Nova testing. ISAT will be administered to students in Grades 3 – 8 in March and the PSAE will be given in April to Grade 11 students. The IMAGE test is available for students with limited English proficiency. All English Language Learners who enroll in our district will be the ACCESS once annually. The IAA portfolio program is available for those with developmental disabilities. This includes approximately 1% of the district's students.
- B. Tentative results for the Grades 3 – 8 ISAT given in March 2006 are pending. PSAE will be available at a later date. Scott Hillman asked about complaints based on the delay of testing materials. Dr. Perkins addressed the question and indicated that all districts had concerns about the lateness of the material delivery and the delay in test results. This is being addressed by the ISBE with the testing contractor.
- C. Dress Code – At GCHS one problem has been with torn, cut clothing. Piercings continue to be a problem. There have been approximately 312 dress code infractions at the secondary level (Grades 6 – 12). At the elementary level, there have been 35 children with dress code infractions. There have been no repeat offenders with shoes as the biggest problem. General discussion regarding the possible consideration of the shoe issue.

Nancy Mathews talked about the difficulty in finding nice shoes that are not open toe or that have a back. She feels the shoe issue should be reconsidered at the secondary level while maintaining the requirement at the elementary level. Dr. Perkins mentioned the problem with having two different policies. Mr. Hillman mentioned that at the secondary level he would be in favor of allowing backless shoes. Jeff Connor talked about the dress for staff and their non-compliance. Dr. Perkins mentioned that there are labor issues in making this enforcement. Karen Greenwald talked about the different rules for teachers and students. Dr. Perkins indicated that information on the dress code and the conversation of the advisory council members would be shared with the Board of Education.

- D. Sixth Day Enrollment – We are currently down 24 students at the elementary level and 12 students at the secondary level. The primary problem remains distribution of students. Five teachers have been added back.
- E. General discussion about a page 8 ad in newspaper with demographics. Dr. Perkins stated he was appreciative of this advertisement. General discussion had held about the advertisement and why individuals might move from or to our community.
 1. Test scores compared to other schools and districts would be a factor.
 2. Customer Services – The way you are treated at the school when you walk in the door.
 3. Look at other students attending. For example, if many were non-English speaking then your English speaking child may be a minority.
 4. Some people would mainly look at high school performance since there are other options for elementary programs such as private schools.
 5. Cleanliness of schools, basically the first impression.
 6. Concern about the drop in scores from elementary to secondary.
- F. Nancy Mathews indicated that great strides have been made in the past years. Dr. Perkins stated that sometimes individual tracking shows information that may not be available as a group. There is more than just numbers involved. Mark Maynard stated that we needed to sell the strong points of the school to parents and students. By providing information, we could increase “bragging rights”. Another suggestion from Mr. Maynard was to provide the statistics to realtors, use media, and web pages. Several in the group commented about information sharing at the elementary level versus secondary schools. They feel more information is sent home via flyers at the elementary level. They felt there was only limited information coming out at the secondary level, that most of it was left up to the students. Karen Greenwald suggested that the district accomplishments become more of a focus on the web site.
- G. It was suggested that information about middle school orientation dates and supply lists be sent home with Fifth graders in the report card. This will be shared with the middle schools – good idea that will help parents and student plan ahead.
- H. Strategic Plan has been completed until 2010, currently waiting on new data to review the plan.
- I. Building Renovations – A great deal of work was accomplished during the summer such as a new roof on GCHS, maintenance at Worthen, the Wilson Gym, the parking lot at GCHS, HVAC systems in Coolidge hallways, ect. The summer storms hindered some final plan and severe damage was sustained at Niedringhaus School to chimney and roof. \$42 million has been spent on renovations over the past 10 years.

Jeff Connor talked about our facilities and how good they are even after visiting other schools. Some high profile projects are still pending per Brad Eavenson. Karen Greenwald talked about the annex and the condition of that facility. It would take \$25,000 for renovations. Discussion also took place about track facilities at Grigsby by Mark Maynard. There are currently no facilities for the Grigsby students. He stated that a student sustained an injury while running the mile. District staff state there are plans for improvement. Discussion was held regarding a cinder track with Brad Eavenson to look at some cost projections.

David Mathews asked about the feasibility of bringing Grigsby students to the GCHS track for practice. Transportation costs are limited to get to GCHS. All meets will be held at the GCHS track.

- J. Health/Cafeteria Proposal – Child Nutrition Act – The wellness committee established as part of the CAC. Board has developed policy to meet the criteria and to take the first step forward in meeting the new federal and state guidelines. General discussion regarding revenue loss from the soda machines at the middle school. Brad Eavenson stated that no fast food and soda will be permitted in the cafeterias. This provides encouragement to students and parents to make healthy choices. Many area schools have developed similar programs.

General discussion continued with concern that thermos contents are not policies. While schools must comply with Federal guidelines, David Mathews concerned about the rights of parents. Attendees were informed that parents have the right to take their children out of school at lunch.

Since the changes 10 days ago, the lunch counts at GCHS and middle schools are up and IOW's are down. It appears that kids are eating something and not spending their money on snacks. Very few complaints have been received from parents. David Mathews states he has no problem with the soda machines being removed. He stated his son is to take a soda regardless. He states this was presented to the students at the beginning of the school year and that Grigsby students felt intimidated.

Brad Eavenson stated that enforcement of the new guidelines will begin the Tuesday after Labor Day. This would provide ample notice to parents and students. Discussion was also held about the information that was shared at other schools. The group was informed that the information is being shared with administrators, letters being sent home with students and information provided to the media.

Time provided for any sub-committee discussion. Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.