

**MINUTES OF THE CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Special Meeting of January 12, 2010

The Board of Education of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, Cuyahoga County, held its special meeting in the public meeting room of the Board Building at 2155 Miramar Boulevard, University Heights, Ohio, on January 12, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Nancy Pepler, President, called the Regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present at Roll Call: Ms. Nancy Pepler, President
Mr. Kal Zucker, Vice President
Mr. Eric Coble, Board Member
Ms. Karen Jones, Board Member

Also Present: Mr. Douglas Heuer, Superintendent
Mr. Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. John Britton, District Legal Counsel
Members of the Central Office Staff
Patrons of the School District
Representatives of the News Media

Board Member Ron Register arrived at 7:05 p.m.

WORK SESSION – TOPICS: Discussion of 5133 Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Extension of the Elementary Day

Superintendent Doug Heuer set the framework for discussion on extension of the instructional time at the elementary level beginning with two quotes:

“To continue to do the same things and expect different results is the hallmark of lunacy.” Albert Einstein

“We have met the enemy, and he is us.” Pogo the Possum (cartoon character)

Since September 2009, Mr. Heuer has visited all of the District’s elementary buildings. Conversations with teaching staff and observations of classroom instruction concluded students and teachers do not have the instructional time necessary to implement the adopted academic curriculum, particularly in the area of mathematics. This results in compromised educational

outcomes for our students. A recent poll of elementary staff members conducted by the teachers' union called for additional instructional time. Of seventeen area school districts, Cleveland Heights-University Heights has the least amount of instructional time.

The only option available to the Board for increasing student instructional time that does not require renegotiating portions of the teachers' contract is to increase the length of the student day within the parameters established by the teachers' defined workday. A plan has been prepared for consideration that would extend the length of the elementary student day by 25 minutes.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Heuer said the Board should discuss and arrive at a consensus concerning either moving forward with an extension of the elementary day this school year or next school year, or directing administration and teachers to collaborate and negotiate an alternative plan to provide students with the necessary additional instructional time.

Superintendent Heuer asked the following persons to present details of this plan:

- Angee Shaker, Coordinator of Communications – providing a summary of the parents' opinions on the proposal
62% of parents surveyed favored beginning January 25, 2010 with the extension of the elementary day; 38% favored beginning at the start of the 2010-2011 school year
- Stephen Shergalis, Director of Business Services – explaining the details of the proposal as it relates to transportation
The additional time would allow Transportation to eliminate bus routes that currently serve two or more elementary schools at the same time. Each bus route can be dedicated to an individual elementary school. This will serve to keep buses on schedule and minimize late arrivals and departures. In addition, daycare routes can be combined with regular elementary routes, reducing the number of total routes
- Patricia Horton, Assistant Director of Human Resources – explaining the details of the proposal as it relates to staffing
Staffing changes resulting from the extension of the elementary instructional time involve bus drivers, after school paraprofessionals, CHAMPS staff, classroom paraprofessionals, special education aides, nurse aides, and cleaners. If the proposed changes occur on January 25, 2010, the cost reduction would be approximately \$25,600. To begin in the fall of 2010, the reduction would be approximately \$69,800. Both of these scenarios include reducing the after school program by one-half hour.
- Dr. Joseph Micheller, Interim Assistant Superintendent – and
- Sally Levine, Director of Elementary Education – explaining the necessity and urgency for increasing instructional time
Dr. Micheller stated that the additional 25 minutes being discussed is not a panacea; it is an allowable amount of time to reconfigure some things. It is most important to create as much uninterrupted time for students to be with teachers. A current survey of how time is used in our elementary classrooms and buildings would show differences, Sally Levine indicated. This is due primarily to the

structure of the day and to programming. Ms. Levine outlined a typical elementary day as it currently exists, and she illustrated what ideal instructional times within a day might look like.

- Thomas Schmida, President of Local 795 – speaking on behalf of the teachers’ union Mr. Schmida requested the Board consider a different alternative than adding 25 minutes at the end of the school day to arrive at additional instructional time. He stated the union is willing to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution to add instructional time. Sixty-five percent of teachers responding to the union survey agreed that additional time is necessary. Seventy-one percent of teachers stated maintaining and preserving planning time is very important to them in order to deliver the best possible instruction and to best serve students.

Board Vice President Kal Zucker expressed dissatisfaction with the union for not bringing any viable solutions to the table, as well as the sense of urgency among parents as suggested by the results of the parent survey.

Board member Ron Register repeatedly articulated his concern and the sense of urgency on the subject and made continual efforts to guide the discussion toward reaching a clear and definite consensus.

Board President Nancy Pepler asked Mr. Schmida if at the next meeting, January 19, 2010, he could be prepared to present an alternative proposal. Mr. Schmida responded that while he is certainly willing to work toward this effort, it would be extremely difficult to bring forth a proposal in that short time frame.

The Board is in support of allowing continued conversations and collaboration between Superintendent Heuer and Mr. Schmida to implement a plan to increase elementary instructional time that will begin in the fall of 2010. Superintendent Heuer indicated his confidence in finding the best solution to this problem as quickly as possible.

Board Policy 5000 Series and Section 5133 Student Rights and Responsibilities

To date, Superintendent Heuer reported that the Board has held two readings of the proposed student policies, the 5000 series, of the NEOLA Policy Development Group. Proposed changes to these policies have been reviewed and approved by District legal counsel, Attorney John Britton.

Dr. Joseph Micheller, Interim Assistant Superintendent, and Mr. Thomas Schmida, Local 795 President, presented the results of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee meeting held on January 6, 2010. The Committee worked collaboratively in an effort to avoid arbitration regarding these student policies.

The final draft of these policies and an Interim Student/Parent Handbook will be read and acted on at the January 19, 2010 Board work session.

Eight-Period High School Day

Superintendent Heuer mentioned that in addition to finalizing the adoption of the 5000 policy series at the January 19th work session, the Board will discuss the status of the eight-period day at Cleveland Heights High School. Dr. Joseph Micheller provided the Board with an update on the progress of this matter to give Board members an opportunity to ask questions or request information needed prior to the work session.

The proposed high school schedule is within the parameters of the teacher day according to the negotiated agreement and would have eight equal 50-minute periods. The proposed schedule will give teachers in core subjects more time with their students.

Board member Ron Register requested feedback on the impact the proposed schedule would have on working students.

Board President Nancy Peppler asked how many students use the special help period at the end of the day in the current schedule. Board member Karen Jones asked for more clarification on the special help period, specifically if that time was available for a student to take an additional class.

At the January 19th work session, Dr. Micheller will provide prototypes of grade level student and teacher schedules.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday, January 19, 2010 – Special Board Meeting – Board Policy 5000 Series
Tuesday, February 2, 2010 – Regular Board Meeting

MOTION TO ADJOURN

It was recommended that the meeting be adjourned.

No. 10-01-014

It was moved by Mr. Zucker, seconded by Mr. Register, that the meeting be adjourned.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Ayes: Ms. Jones, Ms. Peppler, Mr. Register,
Mr. Zucker, Mr. Coble

Nays: None

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

Nancy Pepler, President

Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer