

Board Briefs

April 2010

An informal report from Eudora Board of Education regular meetings

The following are highlights of discussion and action from the board meeting on April 8, 2010.

CONSENT ITEMS. Items listed on the agenda were approved without discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT. The Eudora Amateur Baseball and Softball Association addressed the board about improvements to the ball fields at Eudora Elementary School that will be made and donated by the Association. Don Grosdidier explained an agreement with the city of Eudora that will outline maintenance and scheduling responsibilities.

Next, the board heard a presentation from a parent regarding proposed budget cuts and concerns about the district.

CONSTRUCTION & FACILITIES UPDATE. Don Swartz reported on progress in the auditorium, science classrooms and technical education center. It is expected that dirt work will begin on the stadium construction as early as next week, weather permitting. He also noted that additional savings have been secured in the bond budget since the last meeting.

Don Grosdidier explained to the board financing for the stadium, including the difference between funds used for construction and funds used for salaries and educational programs. To complete all construction projects will run the bond budget over by approximately \$590,000; the board voted to finance this overage with a lease purchase agreement with TAC. The payments on the lease purchase will be paid out of capital outlay, which may require the capital outlay mill rate to be increased.

OPERATIONS REPORT. Hal Reusch updated the board on transportation, maintenance and grounds. He noted that snow removal costs were higher than usual this year and recognized the efforts of the maintenance crew and drivers through the long winter, keeping the fleet both operational and safe. He also complimented the maintenance team that has saved the district contractor expenses, as well as the two-person grounds crew that is responsible for all district grounds and fields.

TECHNOLOGY REPORT. Ron Long updated the board on the extensive progress that has taken place over the past five years, to modernize the district's technology infrastructure and develop procedures for efficiency. The help desk ticketing system has had a total of 2,062 tickets in the past year, with average response time of 19 hours. Areas for improvement include a growing need for support in instructional technology. Don Grosdidier said that the district was about to add many of the staff and resources that are needed for technology when the financial crisis began, which is a loss that is harder to account for, but that affects the district nonetheless.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT. Don Grosdidier discussed two bills that have, or could have, an immediate impact on Eudora Schools. The first, HB 2739, would change finance formulas in a

way that would increase pressure on local districts to raise funds, while cutting aid at the state level. The other, SB 362, changes the deadline for boards to non-renew employee contracts. The governor is expected to sign SB 362 into law later this month, delaying the notice deadline from May 1 to the third Friday in May. Don recommended that the board stick to the May 1 deadline, even in light of this new ability to delay action.

He shared enrollment projections for next year, showing a possible FTE increase of approximately 16.5 for next year. He finished by giving an overview of the cooperative efforts with the city of Eudora to develop commercial guidelines for Laws and Nottingham properties.

BUDGET SCENARIOS. Don Grosdidier covered a number of proposals, organized in three tiers. Each of the tiers is based on the depth of possible cuts to base state aid per pupil, with losses on the district level ranging from \$410,000 to nearly \$1,000,000. All of these scenarios included the same program and staffing changes that were discussed at the February and March board meetings. He also identified cuts that could be made in the case of an emergency, should BSAPP fall below \$3,726. These center on cutting employees who are not protected by continuing contract laws.

Don briefly discussed some of the cost savings suggestions that had come from the public. He also brought up the idea of having a public forum and recommended that the board consider planning for a format to collect public feedback next fall. He then explained preliminary numbers that showed the potential for revenue if various fees (activity or enrollment) were adopted.

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN. Don Grosdidier shared data from the Kindergarten Roundup parent meeting, indicating that the vast majority of parents were interested in an all-day program, even if it were fee-based. He explained the staffing models that would be needed to accommodate the needs and choice of the largest number of Eudora families and then went through the details of different fee levels, ranging from \$10 to \$13 per day. The board also briefly heard from a parent of an incoming kindergarten student who was concerned about the financial burden of fees.

After lengthy discussion, the board voted to continue with the all-day kindergarten program for all students. Board members rejected proposals for a fee-based optional all-day kindergarten program that would have cost families approximately \$200 per month and instead opted for a one-time \$100 enrollment fee for all kindergarten students. The board also agreed to consider other fees later this month that could impact students outside of kindergarten.

CALENDAR CHANGES. The board approved next year's calendar, endorsed by the district's calendar committee, that will eliminate 10 school days and save the district approximately \$100,000. Minutes will be added to the school day, varying at each building, to meet state requirements for instructional time.

Want to know more about board business?

- **Attend a board meeting!** Meetings are open to the public and usually take place at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at Eudora Middle School. Check the calendar on www.eudoraschools.org to see the date of the next meeting.
- **Go online!** A full, searchable record of minutes and agendas is available online through BoardDocs. The Eudora section of BoardDocs can be accessed from the district Web site under School Board > Meetings.

