

Board Briefs

February 2010

An informal report from Eudora Board of Education regular meetings

The following are highlights of discussion and action from the board meeting on Feb. 11, 2010.

CONSENT ITEMS. Items listed on the agenda were approved without discussion. Use of public facilities was pulled and moved to new business, later in the agenda.

CONSTRUCTION & FACILITIES UPDATE. Roger Edgar with George K. Baum informed the board that the bonds discussed at the January meeting sold with a favorable interest rate of 4.42%. The board approved the sale.

Next, Don Swartz showed the board conceptual drawings of the district stadium and explained the bidding process that will take place in the next month. The board will need to make a decision about whether to proceed with the stadium project at the March meeting. The base bid includes the field turf, eight-lane track, outside fence and scoreboard. City administrator John Harrenstein commented on the city's support for building a new stadium on the high school campus. Don also mentioned that projects on the high school campus are progressing with interior work.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS. CAP director Janell Barnow gave an overview of the elementary reading program, as well as an explanation of the Title I programs in the district. Eudora Elementary principal Jan Irby and assistant principal Shelley Dougherty reported on activity that's taken place since moving into the building last fall and what is expected in the coming months.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT. Don Grosdidier updated the board on correspondence with Rep. Anthony Brown, who represents Eudora in the Kansas House. Don said he had recently sent Rep. Brown a concern about any legislation that threatens funding equity across school districts in the state, including efforts to allow school districts to raise the local option budget. Rep. Brown responded with a letter that said he is opposed to state-wide tax increases and supports legislation to allow local school boards to raise taxes. Don pointed out that the problem for Eudora with this proposal is that it is inequitable to property-poor districts, such as Eudora. This district does not have the same ability to raise revenue as property-wealthy districts. He then covered a few other pieces of education legislation being considered in the Senate and House and encouraged board members to contact Rep. Brown and Sen. Tom Holland to express their thoughts or concerns about these issues.

Don then invited Christina Mann, Safe Schools/Healthy Students director, to help present a proposal for a new district department, Student Development and Partnerships. Led by Christina, the new departmental approach will align staff, resources and community partners, district-wide. The department team will use a unified, collaborative approach to create a supportive environment where students can learn and grow. This change also will help integrate the SS/HS initiative into district systems, providing a greater capacity for long-term sustainability.

BUDGET CUTS AND POTENTIAL SAVINGS. Don Grosdidier began by describing district revenue. He pointed out that new facilities weighting funds have helped soften previous cuts, but that these funds are only temporary from new construction and will decrease in our budget significantly for the 2011-2012 school year. The worst-case scenario — if no new revenue sources are created by the state legislature — the district will lose more than \$800,000 in state aid.

Next, Don gave the board an overview of possible options to reduce expenditures, should the cuts in district revenue materialize as projected. Details about these options will be made available in a fact sheet as soon as possible next week. The following options are not listed in order of priority:

- Close West Early Childhood Family Center for the short term
- Eliminate all-day kindergarten; revert to half-day program
- Eliminate Parents as Teachers program
- Close Nottingham to all public use
- Eliminate one administrator position at EHS/EDTEC
- Reduce EDTEC instructor positions
- Eliminate one EDTEC program
- Eliminate three EMS reading positions and one half-time math skills position
- Eliminate secondary library aide position
- Reduce the number of school days
- Restructure teacher inservice/early release program
- Examine possible student fees
- Outsource evening custodial cleaning and possibly activity transportation services

Don concluded by asking the board members to consider these options and to be ready to begin making decisions in April.

BOARD CANDIDATES. The board voted to form a committee to review applicants for the vacant board position. This committee will make a recommendation at the March board meeting.

SCHOOL CALENDAR. The board voted to table the approval of the 2010-11 district calendar, pending any changes that might be needed for cost savings.

DRIVER EDUCATION. Don updated the board on the driver education program after the board instituted program fees last year. He said that the fees do not cover all costs of the program at this time. The board voted to proceed with operating a driver education program for summer 2010.

USE OF DISTRICT FACILITIES. Board members raised questions about fee structures for district facility use. Don suggested that the fee schedule be reexamined and possibly updated. The board also approved all facility use requests, with the exception of the Baker baseball tournament. This decision was tabled until the board had more information about the tournament's needs.

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.