

The Board of Education of the Fairfield City School District in the County of Butler, State of Ohio, held a Work Session on the 2nd day of April 2008 at the Fairfield High School Community Room.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 5:30 pm.

ROLL CALL – Present: Mr. Engel, Mr. Kearns, Dr. Morris, & Mr. Murray
Absent: Mrs. Bailey

Also present: Mrs. Milligan, Mr. Amodio, & Mrs. Lane
Mr. Clemmons arrived at 5:37 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

1. PI signage

Mr. Kearns

He believes it is important that the community recognize what projects have been completed with permanent improvement funds. The information should be placed on the website also.

Mr. Murray

He thinks the signs are a great idea.

Dr. Morris

He asked if we have “touched” every building for permanent improvements. The answer is that we have.

Mr. Engel

He suggested that we list what is going to happen this year at each building on the signs.

Dr. Morris

Can we put a couple of key items on each sign? Size of signage would be nice to have also.

2. Youth Commission – Mrs. Milligan

The Youth Commission has drifted away from the model that was in place in the beginning. Mr. Oler (City councilman) asked Mrs. Milligan to look into bringing the commission back. The question has been raised, “What do we teach our young people about local government?” Mr. Pizzano (City Manager) suggested an elective study for our youth in Fairfield City Schools.

Mr. Murray

Have we had the township involved in any of these discussions?

Mrs. Milligan responded that she had not contacted them as of yet, but the issue has come up.

Dr. Morris

I would like to see an academic aspect of the Youth Commission. We could connect the students to a mentor.

Wil McIlwain (student representative)

Teacher nominations are being considered to emphasize the importance of the Youth Commission.

Mr. Murray

It would be nice to have a chapter of BPA at Fairfield.

Mrs. Milligan and Mr. Waller will meet with Wil to brainstorm ideas.

3. Student Success Summit

Mrs. Milligan has met with facilitators to go over ideas to discuss student success. A Student Success Summit Meeting is planned on May 7th at the high school cafeteria. Please note: This date has been changed to May 12th.

Dr. Morris

He feels that we need to move forward on this issue. We also need to consider the governor's ideas on student achievement.

He has found a group called "STRIVE" that has compiled quite a bit of information regarding student success.

We need a wide variety of people to come to the Summit to discuss student success.

He feels that that the Board's role will be as listeners and not joiners.

He wants to check with the facilitators about pre-information.

4. Goals/Objectives for Superintendent for 2008-2009

Mr. Kearns

He suggested a "SMART" model to be used as the framework for the Superintendent's Evaluation.

Dr. Morris

Six standards would be a part of the broad based objectives. He suggests narrowing down to two to three standards per year. A narrative standard would be acceptable.

Mrs. Milligan

She commented that she loved the framework.

Dr. Morris

He stated that the new evaluation form should be used next year.

Mrs. Milligan

She stated that she would like to use the format with the administrators that she evaluates.

The Board is projecting June or July for the evaluation to take place.
Dr. Morris and Mr. Kearns will work on the evaluation instrument.

Mrs. Milligan will E-mail Dr. Morris and Mr. Kearns with her proposed goals for next year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 4	End of 9 weeks gr. 9-12 End of 3 rd grading period gr. K-8 One hour early dismissal for all students K-12
June 9	Make up day for PreK-12 students One hour early dismissal for grades 1-12 only, not including kindergarten

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Engel

BOARD CHALLENGED TO NEGOTIATE TOUGH UNION CONTRACTS ON BEHALF OF OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

I wish to share some important facts, concerns and comments with our community. I also urge my fellow board members to consider the following:

The Fairfield Board of Education will be negotiating the union contracts this summer.

Close to 90% of our operating budget is spent on salaries and benefits, controlled by the union contracts.

Our union contracts drive the need for all Operating Levies.

The citizens of the Fairfield School District will be facing 3 levies in the very near future. A Permanent Improvement levy to maintain our buildings, a Bond levy to build more classrooms and an Operating Levy to run our schools.

The current 5 year forecast predicts a general fund deficit spending situation of over \$4,000,000 for the next school year. If this deficit is not addressed, then an Operating Levy is inevitable.

The BOE was elected to represent the entire community and NOT special interests. I remind the board that our community voted down 4 of the last 5 operating levies.

After several attempts, the last operating levy finally passed, but only after the board plunged the district into fiscal crisis. Then the board blackmailed the community by eliminating our kids busing and extra-curricular programs.

According to the Education Tax Policy Institute, the recent school tax levy passage rate was the lowest for a primary election in the past 25 years.

Our community is facing a deep recession. People are losing their jobs. Gasoline prices are expected to soar above \$4.00 a gallon. Butler County foreclosures are at record levels. Home sales and prices are falling. Just the other day I read that Butler County residents were receiving \$3,000,000 per

month in food stamps. Only a foolish, uncaring school board would consider raising taxes amidst this kind of pain.

So, what does our board need to do to avoid any (or all) of the above mentioned levies?? It should be obvious that the majority of cuts must come from the contracts. This will require tough contract negotiations. As I pointed out in our October work session, we have the potential to save millions of taxpayer dollars.

It's no secret that our school employees are well paid and have great benefits. They have a retirement plan that private sector employees can only dream of.

In light of the weak economic climate, I pray that our school employees realize they are fortunate to even have a job. I further hope that they will be considerate to their neighbors, who are fighting for survival on a day to day basis, by being open to contract concessions.

Bottom line is, it would be reckless of our BOE to assume that all of the previously mentioned levies can pass while our economy is deteriorating. If we refuse to address the impending budget deficit before the next school year, then our district is headed for a fiscal crisis similar to the one in 2004. And this board will be responsible for dividing our community yet once again.

This board has talked a lot about community connectedness. Ignoring the previously mentioned facts and concerns would be proof that a complete disconnect exists between the board and our struggling citizens.

Before entering contract negotiations this year, this board should have a fiscal plan of action in place to deal with all the impending levies. I called for this plan at our 2-7-08 board meeting. To blindly lock us into multi-million dollar contracts without a fiscal plan for the future is a formula for disaster. To do so will create a financial crisis that can only be remedied by pumping millions of new tax dollars into the system.

Both Mr. Morris and Mr. Kearns were opposed to a sales tax for schools. Kearns said "Sales taxes impact low and fixed income citizens the hardest. Now is not the time to add to the tax burden of those who can least afford it." Mr. Morris made a similar comment at a past board meeting. Well, it's time for this board to prove that it really cares about our citizens who can least afford additional taxes. Accordingly, we must consider all the above mentioned facts during contract negotiations this summer before increasing the tax burden of those who can least afford it.

I am publicly challenging my fellow board members to address three important fiscal issues:

I am asking them to prove, through actions and not words, that they are truly connected with the citizens who can least afford more taxes.

I am once again calling for a fiscal plan of action to deal with our future levies before we enter into contract negotiations this summer.

I am asking them to pledge that they will negotiate tough union contracts, on behalf of the entire community, in an effort to avoid next year's projected \$4,000,000 deficit without resorting to new tax levies.

Mr. Kearns

Fairfield Schools received an Achievement Award from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, Division of Safety and Hygiene, for outstanding safety performance. We qualified for this award by decreasing our incident rate at least 25%.

David Foster represented the district at the Annual Safety Awards Banquet held on March 26th, when the award was presented. It is the result of David's diligent efforts in following up on our workers' comp claims. Our actual rate of decrease was 33%.

"In December, a young man showed up at the dance auditions for Fairfield High School's spring musical in a T-shirt that announced, I'm not lucky. I'm just good. The same slogan could be applied to the Fairfield Drama department." - Cincinnati Magazine – April 2008

FOSC Meeting

- The FOSC has existed for 36 years.
- It is one of the top 3 clubs in area
- They are interested in long term planning 3 – 5 years
- Fundraising after feasibility study
- Optimists Club is concerned about FOSC breaking away
- US Soccer Grants
- Turpin and Walnut Hills are examples
- \$15,000 in rentals from adult leagues right off the bat from FOSC
- Naming rights
- Bid requirements if built on our property

Mr. Murray

He reminded everyone that the *Phantom of the Opera* begins on April 10th.

He reminded everyone of the fundraiser dinner on April 10th and 11th to be held at the high school.

Dr. Morris

He announced the Booster Breakfast to be held on April 12th from 8-11 am at Rick's Tavern.

He announced the Senior Prom for Senior Citizens to be held on April 25th from 6:30 until 8:30 pm at the Fairfield Intermediate School. Admission is \$2.00 for the event.

08-46 EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION – Moved by Dr. Morris to recess to Executive Session at 6:35 pm to discuss the following:

- Employment and Compensation of Personnel 121.22(G) (1)
- Court Action 121.22 (G) (3) – Pending or Imminent Litigation
- Collective Bargaining 121.22 (G) (4)

FAIRFIELD CITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORK SESSION
APRIL 2, 2008

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. Murray

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mr. Engel, Mr. Kearns, Dr. Morris, & Mr. Murray

Absent: Mrs. Bailey

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 4-0

The Board resumed the Regular Session at 7:37 pm.

08-47 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Moved by Mr. Kearns to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. Murray

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mr. Engel, Mr. Kearns, Dr. Morris, & Mr. Murray

Absent: Mrs. Bailey

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 4-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm by the President, Dr. Morris.

Attest: _____

President

Treasurer