

**EAST TROY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting Minutes – June 10, 2013**

The East Troy Community School District Board met in regular session on June 10, 2013. The meeting was called to order by President, Dawn Buchholtz at 7:04 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members present were Ted Zess, Murry Mitten, Martha Bresler, Mike Zei and Dawn Buchholtz. Also present were Dr. Chris Hibner, Kathy Zwirgzdas, Amy Foszpanczyk, administrators, 63 guests and one reporter.

Dawn Buchholtz read the open meeting statement indicating that the meeting is open to the public as required by state statute and that notice of the meeting had been sent to the media and/or posted.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS POSTED

A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Ted Zess for approval of the agenda and amended agenda as posted. Motion carried unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ON MAY 13, 2013 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Ted Zess to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2013 regular Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PER BOARD POLICY

A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Ted Zess to allow Mr. Tim Peerenboom to speak prior to public participation. Motion carried unanimously.

Tim Peerenboom read a prepared statement of which he wanted to clarify a few recent items discussed by media and the public regarding the telecommuting of his position of Special Education Director and District Assessment Coordinator for the East Troy School District. Mr. Peerenboom stated that his relationships with Dr. Chris Hibner and other District staff are purely professional. Mr. Peerenboom explained to the Board that despite common public misperception of faulty leadership, a survey of East Troy special education staff expressed opinions of him being “very supportive”, “always means well for ET kids” and “always going above and beyond”. Mr. Peerenboom also explained that he has two Masters Degrees and is certified to be a Special Education Director, Principal as well as a Curriculum and Instruction Director. Mr. Peerenboom explained that he understands that the position of Special Education Director can be a challenging position at times but he has and always will be a

Director for the *student* and understands that student needs are not scheduled. He stated that he portrays objective leadership and that the student always comes first, regardless of where his desk may be located. Mr. Peerenboom stated that he found it personally insulting that his dedication to students and the District was being questioned. He explained a few of the personal and professional risks he has taken and will be taking by telecommuting. He also expressed how he desires to continue in his role for the consistency of students and staff during times of educational change. However, based on the issues at hand, Mr. Peerenboom stated he recognized that the director of special education and district assessment coordinator role is only one piece of the larger puzzle. That the impact the current discussion pertaining to the realignment of the position may be having on the district as a whole should be considered. Mr. Peerenboom went on to state that he cannot and will not allow myself or my restructured position distract or detract from a district that is moving forward and improving outcomes. Mr. Peerenboom requested that the Board consider a request for a one-year leave of absence. Mr. Peerenboom reiterated his belief that the student always come first and assured the Board that he would assist during the transition period, if they approved his request. Mr. Peerenboom thanked the Board for their vision, dedication to the District, time and consideration.

A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Ted Zess to adjourn to executive session. Motion not carried.

Bobbi Paddock expressed her disapproval of the new job model. She believes that telecommuting is not in the best interest of the student, due to the unfamiliarity the Director would have with special education students and explained to the Board that special education students have on and off days or even moments, that the Director should be available to consult in person. She also expressed her concern with the student and staff transition from elementary school to middle school. She also reminded the Board that there will be quite a few new special education staff next year and that they deserve to have a Director present. She recommended that the Board retract their decision to allow the Special Education Director to telecommute.

April Steffes expressed her concern of leadership possibilities of the Special Education Director when not in District and explained to the Board that having scheduled classroom observations will produce unnatural results. She also would like the Board to consider the special education students that open enroll out of district and the turnover of special education staff. April Steffes also stated she did not agree with the recent hourly staff cuts and personnel decisions made by Mr. Peerenboom.

Dawn Buchholtz reminded the public that there will be no personal attacks on staff at an open meeting; comments must concern policy and procedures not personnel.

John Miller stated that he agrees with April Steffes comments and believes that the Special Education Director should be a full time position. He also believes that accepting the one-year leave of absence will just be a “band-aid” for the situation; the District should find a person that will be continue to work for the District for more than one year.

Meredith Libbey presented letters written by Carrie Gauger, Jenna Hau (Miller), Carrie Franzene and herself on behalf of Mr. Tim Peerenboom.

Phil Taugher stated that he agrees with previous statements.

Joanne Bottom stated she agrees with previous statements and encourages the Board to take the public input into consideration. She asked the Board to be critical of how decisions are made due to tax payer funding. She believes that for staff/faculty to be strong and productive they need the proper tools and resources, including a Director who is present in District. She asked the Board to question the investment of having the Special Education Director telecommute and that any monies spent be critically analyzed, prior to a decision being made.

Sabine Bottum explained to the Board that special education is very unpredictable and she believes the District cannot afford to have an offsite Director.

Tami Fesenmarer explained that she is a graduate of East Troy and that she has held positions as a school psychologist and Special Education Director. She stated that she believes the position of Director would be difficult to do remotely due to things coming up quickly and unannounced. She also explained to the Board that building principals can be supportive but they may not be knowledgeable in the area of special education.

Dawn Buchholtz thanked everyone for speaking and requested that future participants limit their comments to things that had not yet been mentioned.

Darold Kukowski stated he agreed with the comments made by Tami Fesenmarer.

Terry Dignan expressed that he believes that the Board may have violated open meeting law by discussing and allowing an employee to telecommute. He stated he looks forward to the night’s discussion in open session.

Joan Goedland proudly stated to the Board that her special education daughter just graduated from East Troy. She also explained a few program offerings in the area and believes that the Special Education Director should be local in order to enhance and maintain community involvement.

Tricia Harris explained to the Board that she had worked in the special education department and currently is a Nurses Assistant for the District. She believes that telecommuting is a great concept but not necessarily best for public schools. She also believes that the special education department has a low morale and that the department needs a better support system for the staff and students.

Daniel Donegan stated that every 2013 senior graduated and that the District is accomplishing great things and he doesn't believe that the District should be having the negative publicity due to this issue. He explained that special education students can have flare ups at any time and that the Director should be readily available. His recommendation to the Board was to accept the year of absence, for he believes that the media will be aware of every small incident that may occur, if they continue with the telecommuting. He also questioned whether the telecommuting needed to be a policy prior to action being taken. He also does not agree with what the District is endorsing and recommends that the Board re-think some of their decisions.

Colleen Farmer gave the Board paperwork pertaining to special education State standards provided by DPI and explained how those standards would not be adequately performed by a Director who is not present in District and that the students deserve better.

Carol Prasse explained that she recently resigned from being an East Troy School Psychologist and does not agree that the District is trying to pass off the idea as "innovative" or "out of the box". She believes that if there had been proper communication about telecommuting, there would not be as much public participation. She recommends that the Board reconsider the request of one year leave of absence, for she believes it will be difficult to fill an interim Special Education Director.

Jay Harris stated that he agrees with Daniel Donegan's statements.

Christy Doffek stated that she does not live in District but chooses to drive her children to East Troy to attend school and believes that what the District is trying to do is "garbage".

Emily Calcaterra explained that she has lived and worked in the District for several years and presented to the Board a written statement concerning the effects of the situation on Tim Peerenboom. She stated that whether or not a person (staff/parents/public) disagrees with the idea of telecommuting, they should not express pessimism and hatred towards individuals, especially since the children/students are very impressionable. She also stated that she believes that the special education department has room for improvement but the direction forward needs to be one of optimism.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. District Administrator Report:

- i. Dr. Chris Hibner congratulated the 2012-2013 graduates. He expressed his appreciation towards the student speeches given at graduation.
- ii. Dr. Chris Hibner recognized and thanked all East Troy School District employees for their hard work and dedication; the District would not be able to accomplish the things that it does without the great people that are involved.

- iii. Building principals reviewed and updated the Board on vacancies and new hires for their respective buildings.
- iv. Dr. Chris Hibner stated that he wants to lead the District forward and feels that it is unfortunate that the reconfiguration of the Special Education Director position has divided some people. He reiterated his appreciation for the feedback that he has received related to questions, concerns, and dialogue toward understanding of the entire concept. Dr. Hibner stated he understands that recommendations and decisions often times bring controversy, but wanted to apologize for the perceived lack of communication and creating an anxiety amongst some individuals which was never his intention. In addition, he reiterated that any discussion concerning specific personnel is done under closed session. That Wis. Stat. 19.85 (1) (c) authorizes a School Board to discuss (and take action) in closed session (even though we at East Troy do any action back in open session) for the purpose of considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance of any public employee. Furthermore, Dr. Hibner believes that the focus in media should be on telecommuting or if on an individual, be it himself, for it was his decision and recommendation, not Mr. Peerenboom's. Dr. Hibner recapped budget challenges and impacts and explained the three budget goals that the Board and administration have: control spending, control debt and invest properly. He explained recent budgetary/hourly changes within the special education department and described the history of the department and differences between staff classifications. He explained how the model has shifted from having district psychologist(s) that were attempting at doing the responsibilities of the director of special education to the need to have a Director of Special Education and district psychologist(s) over the years; especially as the transition of services occurred from Lakeland. Furthermore, Dr. Hibner went on to comment that throughout the last six years, the East Troy Community School District has been unable to sustain psychologist services and Special Education Director position which are now both needed and probably always has been needed. He reiterated that School Psychologists have different responsibilities than a Special Education Director and that was one reason the recommendation was made. Dr. Hibner stated that a goal for the 2013-14 school year was to have a 2.0 FTE school psychologist as compared to the current 1.5 FTE psychologist, but explained that this would not be possible if the District kept the Special Education Director at 1.0 FTE and that is why he had proposed the telecommuting option. Believing in the importance of having leadership continuity; especially with the new Special Education law to be implemented by November of 2013, knowing we must keep the Special Education Director to maintain oversight and coordinating of our Special Education Department, but also recognizing

the need to increase school psychology services for the betterment of students and staff, I viewed this as an opportunity. An opportunity to increase services of our psychological services from 1.5 to 2.0, to keep our current Special Education Director (all responsibilities of a 1.0 FTE status would be completed even amidst a .7 salary contract, and not increasing the district budget within this area since Mr. Peerenboom's contract was restructured to ensure the increase in psychological services for the district. Thus, resulting in an increase from the current 2.5 (1.5 psychologist and 1.0 Director) to 2.7 (2.0 psychologist and .7 Director) contractually, and possibly could be viewed as an increase to 3.0 since believing all responsibilities will be completed even though the salary contract is at .7 FTE. In addition, Dr. Hibner reminded the audience that Mr. Peerenboom is also the District Assessment Coordinator which was assigned to him two years ago. This is vitally important with the current transition of State-Wide assessments and the implementation of Smarter Balanced Assessments. Dr. Hibner acknowledged that having an East Troy staff member telecommute, is taking a chance that may not work out as planned and that is why there is a 30 day discontinuation clause allowing the Board of Education or Mr. Peerenboom to discontinue the contract and he would not have may any such recommendation if those items were not included. Dr. Hibner explained to the Board that the success of change is dependent upon the right solution, right message at the right time and that after hearing feedback, suggested to the Board that this may not be the right time if some staff, parents, and or community will not allow a fair opportunity. Dr. Hibner reiterated his compassion for East Troy, the importance of moving forward, the importance of recognizing that we must be creative to provide services within the budgetary complexities and challenges.

Dawn Buchholtz described Dr. Hibner as a visionary leader who continues to move our district forward and continues to address the many challenges facing our district and educational system. Also, she stated that Dr. Hibner always has the students in mind. She also thanked the individuals who stayed to listen to Dr. Hibner's statements.

Martha Bresler apologized to Mr. Tim Peerenboom for putting him in this situation and stated that she believes that if given the opportunity, telecommuting could be successful.

- v. Mary Green presented a comparison of 2011 and 2013 Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was administered to 6th-11th grade students. Board members requested the data be desegregated to also view from a cohort perspective.

- B. Business Manager Report: Kathy Zwirgdsas explained the State mandated paid lunch equity requirement and its impacts on the East Troy Community School District.
- C. Director of Instruction Report: Amy Foszpanczyk provided an update pertaining to 4K programming (morning or afternoon section selection/consideration) for next school year and possible impacts on budget and 4K and Early Childhood programming.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

No items submitted.

IX. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- A. Staffing Resignation(s): A motion was made by Martha Bresler and seconded by Mike Zei to approve, with gratitude, the retirement of Chester Sokolowski. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Murry Mitten and seconded by Ted Zess to approve, with gratitude, the retirement of Dona Allen. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Murry Mitten and seconded by Ted Zess to approve, with gratitude, the resignation of Sara Kaiser. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Ted Zess and seconded by Murry Mitten to approve, with gratitude, the resignation of Mary Schultz. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Staffing Recommendation(s): A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Martha Bresler to approve a 1.0 FTE elementary teaching position for Ashlyn Anderson. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Ted Zess to approve a 1.0 FTE elementary teaching position for Brian Beierle. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Murry Mitten to approve a middle school special education position for Matt Vanevenhoven. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Murry Mitten to approve a middle school special education position for Sandra Martinez. Motion carried unanimously.
- C. What's Next Pertaining to the Process as it Relates to Any Future Referendum for the East Troy Community School District: Administration and the Board briefly discussed the process as it relates to any future referendum. Dr. Hibner stated the importance of focusing on a question that will be guaranteed to be successful with 60% of voter approval. He suggested to begin focusing on a timeline of phases that maintains a strong focus on the 41 million dollars identified by the Ad-Hoc Facilities Subcommittee and allowing the process of communicating the need to allow the community to demonstrate what will be approved at the 60% approval rating. He stressed his recommendation was not to focus on any solutions, but to focus on process toward determining

the solution of 60% voter approval. The Board of Education asked to have this item on the June 24 meeting to further discuss and provide direction and feedback to Dr. Hibner.

- D. Agreement Between CESA 6 and the East Troy Community School District: A motion was made by Martha Bresler and seconded by Mike Zei to accept the Cooperative Educational Service Agency 6 (CESA 6) for providing services and training for the required educator effectiveness to be implemented by 2014 – 2-015 school year. Motion carried unanimously.
- E. Health Care Reform and Changes to Meet New Mandate: A motion was made by Ted Zess and seconded by Murry Mitten to approve support staff changes in hours to align with health care reform, with 5.75 hours per day as a baseline for those support staff not currently receiving health benefits. Motion carried unanimously.
- F. Update Pertaining to Employee Request for Part-Time Status for Next School Year: Tim Peerenboom presented a request by Meredith Libby to reduce her position from 1.0 FTE to .50 FTE and potential options that the District is exploring concerning this request via a job share with another district. Administration will bring forth any recommendation if able to fulfill a 66:03 contract with another school district.
- G. Koerner Bus Contract: A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Martha Bresler to approve the Transportation Contract for the Transportation of Students with Disabilities by Koerner Bus Service, Inc. Motion carried unanimously.
- H. 2013-2014 Collective Bargaining Agreement/Contract with ETEA and ETESPA: A motion was made by Martha Bresler and seconded by Mike Zei to accept the 2013-2014 Collective Bargaining Agreement/Contract with ETEA and ETESPA as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- I. Employee Request for One Year Leave of Absence: Item moved to executive session.

X. POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT:

The Board reviewed and discussed policy updates for the 2013-2014 school year as it relates to the 500's series of policy, Personnel.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Chris Hibner congratulated the 2013 high school graduates and wished them luck with their future endeavors.

XII. BOARD OF EDUCATION – FUTURE ITEMS:

Martha Bresler would like the Board to discuss dress code at a future meeting.

XIII. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Ted Zess and seconded by Murry Mitten to adjourn to executive session to discuss an employee request for one year leave of absence. Murry Mitten, aye; Ted Zess, aye; Martha Bresler, aye; Mike Zei, aye; Dawn Buchholtz, aye. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

XIV. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Martha Bresler and seconded by Ted Zess to reconvene to open session Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 11:20 p.m.

A motion was made by Ted Zess and seconded by Mike Zei to accept the request for a one year leave of absence as it relates to an employee at the elementary level. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mike Zei and seconded by Murry Mitten to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 11:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Zei