

Wayne-Westland Community Schools

21st Century Schools Committee

Minutes: November 17, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.

1. Welcome

Dr. Baracy welcomed all of the 21st Century Schools Committee Members and visitors to the meeting and thanked the committee for their continued commitment and their valuable input.

2. Video Presentation

A second updated video on the 21st Century Schools Committee was shown to the entire audience. This will be aired on the district's educational cable channel, the district's web site (*wwcsd.net*, by clicking on the 21st Century Schools logo) and on the City of Wayne and Westland's cable channels. Dr. Baracy commended all of the committee members who participated in the video and thanked them for their efforts.

3. Project Overview and Guiding Principles

Jeff Rahmberg, Consultant from Rahmberg, Stover & Associates, welcomed all of the visitors and committee members who were in attendance this evening. He provided a brief overview of the agenda topics to be discussed which included: overview of the guiding principles; individual team updates and reports on their progress and findings; review of the collective recommendations from all five of the committees (Instruction, Facilities, Finance & Human Resources, Enrollment and Communications); followed by open discussion to form a consensus on the final recommendations from the 21st Century Schools Committee to the Board of Education.

4. Team Updates

Finance & Human Resources: Discussion took place on the status of major capital projects that were put on hold until the final recommendations from the 21st Century Schools Committee are made to the Board of Education; the recent foundation allowance reductions from the state totaling \$292 per pupil with further cuts expected after January 1, 2010; and the district's operating deficit for 2009/2010 projected to be \$11 million.

The team reviewed the expenditures of two typical school buildings to understand the potential savings associated with closing a school building; staffing and contract implications associated with building consolidations were

discussed; and a review of the cost savings analysis related to building consolidations and the need for additional cost containment efforts was done.

The team concluded that school consolidation is expected to save the district approximately \$6 million annually; the district is still anticipating a \$4-6 million deficit next year; and additional cost savings and revenue producing measures need to be included in the recommendations to the Board. The team explored some of these recommendations including possible uses and options for potential vacant school buildings and sites.

Enrollment: The team reviewed potential school attendance boundaries for the 10 elementary school configuration; the two 5-6 and 7-8 buildings; and the high schools. Discussions took place on potential situations where the Board might want to consider grandfathering for selected grades and geographic areas. The team reached consensus on the schools to be utilized and the corresponding attendance boundaries to be recommended to the Board of Education.

Facilities: The team reviewed building floor plans of the elementary schools including the grade or special assignment of each room, student count and staffing projections; assessed the four buildings for the 5-6 and 7-8 grade configuration; discussed reallocating sinking fund dollars from closed schools to other capital project priorities previously identified; and discussed measures to be taken to maintain school buildings which may be closed.

Instruction: The team reached final consensus on the K-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12 grade configurations and developed additional recommendations to be presented to the Board of Education related to the educational programs at the K-4, 5-6, and 7-8 buildings.

Communications: The team discussed additional options to reach parents and staff to keep them informed as to the progress of the 21st Century Schools Initiative; translated the 21st Century Schools Initiative brochure into Spanish; explored topics for a possible second Q & A document; the team produced a second video for the 21st Century Schools Initiative; and are in the process of printing buttons that would identify committee members so parents/staff could approach them on questions.

5. Recommendations

Recommendations to the Board of Education by the 21st Century Schools Committee are being made in the following areas: Instructional Programs, School Buildings, Attendance Boundaries and Additional Cost Containment and Revenue Measures.

Instructional Programs: The committee recommends the K-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-12 grade configurations.

At the K-4 level the committee recommends All Day Kindergarten in all of the K-4 buildings.

At the 5-6 level, the committee recommends an elementary focused instructional program with self-contained classrooms (with flexibility for the type of teacher teaming that is currently practiced in some of the elementary grades and the elementary day will include recess); the students will receive specials and the committee recommends offering World Languages and Instrumental Music as 5th and 6th grade specials; and educational programming for students who are identified as Gifted/Talented through the current district identification process would be included.

At the 7-8 level the committee recommends that World Languages be continued as full year classes where students would be required to take at least one year of World Languages at the 7-8 level; students should have the opportunity to take two full years of World Languages at the 7-8 level to fulfill their Michigan Merit Curriculum high school credit requirement; and the committee recommends that advanced classes be offered at the 7-8 level for students who are gifted in particular academic areas.

School Buildings: The committee recommends utilizing 10 elementary school buildings: Edison, Elliott, Graham, Hicks, Hoover, Roosevelt-McGrath, Schweitzer, Taft-Galloway, Walker-Winter and Wildwood.

The committee recommends closing 7 elementary school buildings: Hamilton, Jefferson-Barns, Kettering, Lincoln, Madison, Patchin and Vandenberg which would save the district an estimated \$6.0 million on an ongoing annual basis.

The committee recommends utilizing Adams and Marshall for the 5-6 grade level school buildings and Franklin and Stevenson for the 7-8 grade level school buildings. The two (2) recommended configurations of students from elementary through high school would be as follows:

(1) Edison, Graham, Hicks, Walker-Winter (*note: Walker-Winter remains split between the John Glenn and Wayne Memorial attendance areas*); and Wildwood for K-4; to Marshall for 5-6; to Stevenson for 7-8; and to John Glenn for 9-12.

(2) Elliott, Hoover, Roosevelt-McGrath, Schweitzer and Taft-Galloway for K-4; to Adams for 5-6; to Franklin for 7-8 and to Wayne Memorial for 9-12.

Attendance Boundaries: The committee recommends the adoption of revised attendance boundaries for the 10 elementary schools, the two 5-6 and two 7-8 grade level schools as well as updated attendance boundaries for the high schools (*proposed attendance boundaries maps were shown*).

Additional Cost Containment and Revenue Measures: The committee recommends that the Board of Education and Administration pursue further cost containment/savings and revenue producing options in the areas of salary freezes; compensation cost containment; reduction of employee benefit costs; and staff reduction of non-mandatory or non-grant funded personnel.

The committee also recommends that the district research non-core instructional related expenditures to see if savings can be achieved in areas such as transportation, athletics, food services, etc. and to research revenue enhancement items such as a one mill sinking fund in the Spring of 2010, a bond issue two or three years from now, more general education grants, and sell off property of closed buildings, etc.

6. Discussion and Consensus

Mr. Rahmberg asked the committee as a whole how they felt about the recommendations and all of the good work that has been accomplished. He stated that he was impressed with the hard work and all of the time and effort that has gone into this initiative by the committee members.

It was the recommendation of the 21st Century Schools Committee that all of these recommendations be passed on to the Board as presented this evening for their full consideration and action.

The following suggestions were also made by individual committee members for consideration: have the new boundary attendance maps defined further to include major streets so parents can see what building their children will be attending if their current school is being closed; meetings should be held for all staff on the re-configuration and how each of them will fit into the new picture; the need for increased parental awareness in all of the school buildings lead by the principal; to actively pursue re-purposing our closed buildings; and to consider having a "robo-call" go out to all parents and staff as well as having a message printed on students' report card to provide information on the changes if the Board adopts the 21st Century Committee's recommendations.

7. Next Steps

On Monday, November 30, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. there will be a Public Forum at a Special Board of Education Meeting held at Stockmeyer Auditorium on the campus of Wayne Memorial High School where the recommendations will be officially presented to the Board and public comments will be heard. A flyer will be sent home with students announcing the meeting. It will also be posted on the website and cable.

The next regular Board of Education Meeting scheduled for Monday, December 7, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. will be moved to Stockmeyer Auditorium on the campus of Wayne Memorial High School. A portion of the meeting will be open for public discussion on the 21st Century Committee Schools recommendations with the possibility that the Board of Education will act upon those recommendations.

NOTE: Please refer to the district website at wwcsd.net and use the link 21st Century Schools Committee to find the following documents: 21st Century Schools Committee Video 2 and the November 17, 2009 Agenda/Presentation Containing Committee Recommendations.