

Board of Education

Northeast Kansas Education Service Center

Minutes

Date: Wed., Nov. 20, 2002

Location: USD #341 Oskaloosa Board Office

Time: 7:30 pm - Call Meeting to Order

At 7:30 p.m. President, Tom Holroyd called the meeting to order. Members present: Tom Holroyd, Keith Ostrander, Leonard Lange, John Metzger (for Roy Artman), Carol Meneley, Mike Miller and Doug Walbridge (arriving at 7:35 p.m.); Jim Wheeler, Ph.D., Executive Director; Patty Hart, Director of Special Education; Shelia Clark, Assistant Director; Susan Aspinwall, Business Manager/Clerk; Dolly Gudenkauf, Bookkeeper; David Grove, Superintendent; Tracy Livingston, Behavior Analyst; and Sharon Branson, SETA representative.

Consent Agenda

Lange moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Ostrander seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Action - Approval of Agenda

The following additions were made to the agenda: Under Special Education Items, add 5) Information/Discussion - Gifted Report. Also, add Executive Session.

Action - Approval of Minutes

Action - Approval of Bills and Claims

Receive - Communications from Visitors Present

There were no communications from visitors present.

Receive - Communications

Treasurer's Report

Susan provided copies of the treasurer's report for the month of November.

Special Education

Action - Personnel Update

Shelia reviewed the list of contracts and resignations for approval. Miller moved to approve as presented. Meneley seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Information/Discussion - Students with Autism and Assistive Technology Needs

Patty explained that the incidence of students with autism is skyrocketing in the United States and many foreign countries. Schools are struggling to meet the needs of these students as well as parental demands to provide staff with specific training for working with students with autism. She introduced Tracy Livingston, our only teacher with this training, who is an Associate in Behavior Analysis and also coordinates assistive technology. Tracy explained that she works with several students with autism in our districts as well as some other districts in the area. These students are low functioning and 80% are considered mentally retarded while others are very intelligent. All of the students are different, some are non-verbal, extremely aggressive with severe behavior, while others smile. They hit, bite, spit, and kick because they are unable to speak. A motivation system must be built up because when you get interaction, the aggressive behavior goes down and she can then get the students to work on such things as opening doors, brushing their teeth, potty training, etc. She works with them on social, academic and functional life skills. Tracy enjoys working with a team of people: OT's, PT's, speech pathologists, etc., modeling what works for the kids so the regular teachers can then take over. She noted that parents can be very challenging. There are many philosophies on teaching students with autism, but it comes down to what the child needs to be successful in life. Each child learns in a different way and every day is a challenge, but Tracy loves her

work with the children. She described the challenges she faced with one six foot, 270 pound, non-verbal, aggressive student. She told how she revised his area (space), analyzed his behavior, manipulated his environment and arranged consequences to address each behavior. She set up a functional communication system, teaching him how to self-regulate, how to eat, sit, work, and use the picture schedule. She instructed the teaching team in how not to be intimidated and to modify their own behavior to work with the student. When asked "What is success?", Tracy explained that for each child it is different, depending on their age and other factors. For an older child, success is providing basic skills specific for their environment to be successful, particularly getting communication in place. Tracy then explained that she works with children as young as three years old, in our early childhood program, but is not licensed to work with the birth to three-year olds in our PAT program. However, she stressed that the more we can do when the children are very, very young, the more successful they will be. Research has found that autism is brain-based and it is common to see more than one member of a family with autism or one with autism and one gifted, so heredity also plays a role. Holroyd thanked Tracy for her presentation and Meneley stated that Tracy's enthusiasm was nice to see as well.

Information/Discussion - District Meetings for Special Education Staff and Principals

Patty discussed that NEKESC administrators will provide ongoing staff training/information this year and in the future on maximizing student independence and achievement. We are dealing with issues that make our task more difficult, such as dwindling resources and new federal requirements for student progress and qualifications of

paraeducators. Meetings are being scheduled in each district in order to discuss why we need to examine some of the things we are currently doing, what changes need to be made, and how we can do what needs to be done to maximize the available resources that we currently have. We want to involve teachers, paras, and principals in the discussion because they are the ones who know their school and students. We will be looking at the “givens”, things we cannot change: financial picture, legislation, and certification and then improve the things we can change. Plans are to have the meetings after school and to pay the participants for their time from funds in our Continuous Improvement grant.

Information/Discussion - DIBELS Information for Elementary Principals

Shelia reported that elementary principals met on October 10 to learn how they can use information from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) tests to help students who don't have adequate skills for learning to read. This intervention is done early in order to have the children reading by 3rd. grade. Tests are given to kindergarten and first grade students and the teachers then get reports for individual students. She explained that the tests help identify kids who have reached their benchmark as well as those who need intensive instruction. She explained how the teacher could read the scores, do the appropriate lesson plans and work on instructional strategies.

Information/Discussion - Gifted Report

Patty explained that the gifted program is trying to have a special project at each level. The high school students, working together at the service center recently, practiced to participate in the model United Nations in Topeka this coming March. The students worked on writing

resolutions and presenting them using parliamentary procedure. One purpose in doing this is to have the students be challenged by each other and do creative and critical thinking, seeing things from someone else's perspective.

Middle school students participated in a workshop where they role-modeled members of a big city council. They divided into groups and did proposals for city councils on how to spend the \$200,000 they had received.

Elementary school students went to a Kansas City museum where they picked out an exhibit and used a rubric to evaluate it. They will then do a display for the students in their class at their own school.

Regional Service Center

Action - Inter local Agreement

Jim provided copies of the new Interlocal Agreement that has been drafted incorporating recommended changes from the October and November Supers' meetings. One member stated that his board had concerns regarding the members serving two years on the service center board. Local boards have different assignments for each member and need flexibility. It was explained to the member that four years ago we were faced with five new board members and it was difficult as there is so much to learn with regard to the diversity of the service center. Discussion had been held in the past on the need for continuity. In reality, the agreement is actually unenforceable as it is, but it still reflects the need for continuity wherever possible by local boards, and that we would like for them to serve two year terms so that each year we would have a least three experienced members. Ostrander moved to approve the Interlocal Agreement as presented. Miller seconded and motion carried 6-1 with Lange opposed.

Action - Internet Consortium Budget

Jim explained that McLouth will be staying with their current connectivity speed, therefore the Internet Consortium Budget will remain as initially presented. In anticipation of the need to add bandwidth to the consortium, the Service Center has requested additional bandwidth on the recent E-Rate application. This would provide adequate band width on issues related to KANED. Jim then presented a budget for Fund #5 in the amount of \$80,150. Walbridge moved to approve as presented. Lange seconded and motion carried 7-0.

Action - Charter School Budget

Jim reported that an implementation grant

proposal for the 03-04 school year was due to KSDE on November 13th. Jim reviewed the proposed grant and budget for the John Dewey Learning Academy in the amount of \$452,000 with the grant portion being \$210,000. He stressed the need to retain carryover so that the program would be able to operate in the future when the grant funding ended. An actual budget will be presented for approval after approval by the state. Ostrander moved to approve the request as presented. Lange seconded and motion carried 7-0.

Action - KPIRC Budget - Fund #40

Jim reported that KFAST (Kansas Families and Schools Together), a not-for-profit arm of the Service Center, has received a 3-year, state-wide, 1.2 million dollar Federal grant. The basic purpose of the grant is to help parents be more informed and get more involved with the Title I planning. It is a State-wide program on parent involvement modeled after a Colorado Program. Teachers will be provided preparation programs on how to work with parents and get more parent participation. He explained that with the new "No Child Left Behind" program, parents can actually access supplemental funding for services from "approved provider" agencies such as the Sylvan Learning Center. The grant stresses "best practices" for parents. Because a portion of the Federal monies will be spent on Parents as Teachers, KSDE has indicated that we will be able to use it as match to "leverage" additional state PAT funds (approximately \$9,999) that have not yet been committed. Jim presented a budget for Fund #40 in the amount of \$365,242. Lange moved to approve the budget as presented. Meneley seconded and motion carried 7-0

Action - Teacher Sick Leave Request

This item was tabled until after executive session.

Information/Discussion - Request from City of Lecompton

The City of Lecompton has requested that NEKESC remove the satellite dish from the front of the building site. After discussion, the item was tabled until a later date.

Executive Session

At 9:00 p.m. Miller moved to go into executive session for 15 minutes until 9:15 p.m. Walbridge seconded and motion carried 7-0.

At 9:15 p.m. open session resumed and Walbridge moved to deny the teacher's request to borrow sick days from other teachers. Meneley seconded and motion carried 7-0.

Adjournment

At 9:20 p.m., Meneley moved to adjourn the meeting. Metzger seconded and motion carried 7-0.