

Board of Education

Northeast Kansas Education Service Center

Minutes

Date: Wed., Jan. 15, 2003

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 included Keith Ostrander, Leonard Lange, Carol Meneley, Tom Holroyd, Roy Artman and Mike Miller; Jim Wheeler, Ph.D., Executive Director; Patty Hart, Director of Special Education; Judy Denton, Assistant Director; Susan Aspinwall, Business Manager, Clerk; Linda Kilgore, Administrative Secretary; and Zoe Thompson, Carl Perkins Coordinator.

Consent Agenda

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

Action - Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended as follows: under special education items, add 5.1) Action - Increase in Budget Authority for General Fund #01.

Action - Approval of Minutes

Action - Approval of Bills and Claims

Receive - Communications from Visitors Present

There were no communications from visitors present.

Receive – Communications

Susan provided copies of the Treasurer's report for the month of January.

Special Education

Judy presented two contracts for approval. Ostrander moved to approve as presented. Miller seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Meeting moved to RSC Item #2.

Information/Discussion - Dec. 1 Special Education Child Counts

Patty explained that every year on December 1 a special education student count must be done and submitted to the state. She then provided each board member with information on their special education student FTE and head counts by USD and disability, as well as a summary page of all USDs with a past "history" count. The printouts

reflected the prevalences of disabilities for each district compared to other districts in NEKESC as well as compared to the state prevalences. She noted that Infant/Toddler counts were reflected in the local district counts, but that district assessments are not based on these counts as Infant/Toddler services are provided with totally separate funding.

Information/Discussion - IDEA Reauthorization Update

Jim reported that a recent study by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, shows special educators spend more time on required forms and administrative paperwork than grading papers, communicating with parents, sharing expertise with colleagues, supervising paraprofessionals, and attending IEP meetings combined. He provided a copy of the "SPeNSE Fact Sheet" summarizing this information. The 2003 reauthorization of IDEA may see the beginning of the replacement of the IEP by a unified system of testing. The 1997 IDEA added standardized and alternate assessment for all special education students as well as additions to the "at least once-a-year" IEP. The 1997 IDEA moved away from the IEP as the accountable document and moved toward testing. Already a bill has been introduced in the U.S. House that would require an IEP only once every three years (or at transition points between elementary, middle and high school.) This is the natural progression for both the full inclusion movement and for those attempting to reduce the cost and influence of special education. Student outcome will be high on the agenda. Jim provided another handout condensed from an article by statisticians (not educators) which said that special education makes a positive difference, especially in math and reading, and overall in schools, not just for special education students.

Information/Discussion - Update on Utilization of Paras

Patty provided a handout from a special education journal citing that too much para support can have far reaching effects on the classroom teacher's ability to assume ownership for the student, the frequency and types of peer interactions the student has, and the student's ability to become an independent learner. Feedback from former students and parents that Patty has received, indicates that students are not exiting special education as independent as they'd like. She then provided a summary of recent "conversations" held

at schools in the past couple of months. These discussions focused on issues related to a changing role for paraprofessionals and the implications of NCLB legislation as it affects the use of paraprofessionals. Patty noted a number of building principals participated. At the meetings, they stressed that changes being made in the way we do things are being made as a result of federal laws and the current financial situation. Consistent topics at all the meetings included: the “para test” and the test the Chapter I paras will have to take; who will pay for the cost of the test; the need for more and better training for paras; the need that has evolved for more regular education involvement with special education students; and the need to figure out how we can manage to have time for just planning - in order to be very specific about the services provided to students. This will be a multi-year project. Patty, Judy and Shelia will be meeting with local principals to decide the priorities for their districts, as well as to find out what principals need from us. NEKESC has been planning various kinds of para training with Highland Community Junior College to allow paras to pass the test, get an associates degree or for specific training. Staff developments will also be held for regular and special education teachers with regard to assisting students in the regular classroom. Continuous Improvement funding may be used for the inservices where necessary. Administrators are open to ideas and suggestions from the districts. Patty stressed that we don't want to cut paras, but get more efficient in how we use them.

Action - Increase in Budget Authority for General Fund #01

Jim explained the need to increase budget authority in our general fund due to the contracted services we are now paying for a couple of special needs students. He recommended using \$35,000 of Medicaid carryover to fund these services. Ostrander moved to approve the increase as presented. Miller seconded and motion carried 6-0. This will increase the budget authority from \$4,368,767 to \$4,403,767 for Fund #01 - General Fund.

Regional Service Center

Information/Discussion - Communities in Schools

Jim and Zoe explained our not-for-profit KFAST organization (Kansas Families and Schools Together) is considering an affiliation with the national Communities in

Schools (CIS) organization. This is a national organization that networks health services, social services and other agencies with schools under one “umbrella”. The model is different everywhere according to the needs of the district. KFAST’ recommendation is to have a local board, which would be a separate committee under the KFAST association, comprised of approximately 25 to 30 members which would be 60% private individuals and 40% public. As a national program, this would benefit communities in applying for grants. Next month the Kansas Communities In Schools organization (based out of Newton) will send representatives to present information on how NEKESC’s USDs and communities might benefit from a CIS affiliation in this region. Members thanked Zoe for her presentations and she left the meeting which returned to Special Ed item #2.

Information/Discussion - Update on Carl Perkins

Zoe Thompson, Carl Perkins consultant, provided an overview of the goals of the Carl Perkins project for this school year. She presented members with a short spreadsheet of the inservice expenses for each district and the funding allocations from Carl Perkins. She noted that all participating districts have access to e-choices. Zoe reported there will be technology workshops every month January through April, the summer institute will be done in conjunction with the Regional Staff Development network, and the Perkins program will be offering whole day, mini externships. Meeting moved to RSC Item #1.

Information/Discussion - Purchase of Van

Jim discussed the need to purchase a new van due to the fact that the two we now have are high mileage and not dependable for long trips. They are currently used for two routes, AV and Media Center, as well as the many field trips for JDLA and their regular trips to their outdoor classroom at Lake Perry. Three dealers provided bids on six different vehicles, all based on the state bid specifications. The low bid was provided by Ed Bozarth of Topeka for a CG13406 Express 1500 at \$17470. Ostrander moved to accept that bid as presented. Lange seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Executive Session

At 8:10 p.m. Ostrander moved to go into executive session for 20 minutes until 8:30 p.m. to discuss negotiations and property. Meneley seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Adjournment

At 8:30 p.m. open session resumed. Lange moved to adjourn the meeting. Meneley seconded and motion carried 6-0.