

Minutes of the Board Retreat
July 17, 2010
Emerson Middle School – Conference Room
8101 N. Cumberland Avenue
Niles, Illinois

Board President John Heyde called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Board members present included: John Heyde, Genie Taddeo, Eric Uhlig, Sharon Lawson, Pat Fioretto, Russell Gentile and Ted Smart. Also present was Superintendent Philip Bender. Dr. Ted Blaesing facilitated the discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

An inquiry surfaced prior to the start of the agenda, asking how periodic committee-of-the-whole meetings are scheduled. It was stated that they are scheduled around buildings, finance and referendums. The Facilitator Dr. Ted Blaesing asked about the types of committees upon which the Board serves. President Heyde stated that we pursue opportunities to have specific groups have discussion with the Board and to confirm certain topics i.e. the Strategic Plan. We felt that there was a need to set a meeting in the future for conversation concerning not only the Strategic Plan, but other issues as well. It was noted that feedback from teachers would be important as it relates to the Strategic Plan.

DISCUSSION AND AFFIRMATION OF OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Discussion and Affirmation
of Operating Principles

Expectations for the appropriate behavior of the Board are currently in place. The Board felt that with the addition of a new superintendent and commencement of the Strategic Plan, that at this time they will not make any changes to the operating principles; however, they will be reviewed again in one year.

DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Discussion of Strategic Plan

Board members feel that many people are concerned that the change in the Strategic Plan is top-down not bottom-up. There is also concern that the District is stretching our teachers. The superintendent tried to put the Board at ease to help them understand that during the summer period, people have extra time to discuss with their peers, and they do not have all the appropriate pieces in place concerning the Strategic Plan. The base of knowledge is limited, therefore there is uncertainty. We plan to instill some of this knowledge on Institute Day, as well as follow-up meetings that will occur at the building level. They discussed briefly how this information was going to be presented. The superintendent spoke about the video being shown on Institute Day. The Board is concerned that this be presented in the sense as to how teachers will work with it and not an emphasis on the leadership. They want to make sure that the teachers have a vested interest in the plan. We agreed that during this period we need a lot of listening and learning from teachers as to how they envision the Strategic Plan and understand that it is a map, it is direction. We may run into roadblocks, but we want to continue forward.

There was mention of the strike that had occurred a number of years ago. It is still on the minds of people. Our facilitator indicated that with this Strategic Plan this certainly is an avenue for the Board and the superintendent to move the District forward and away from the ramifications that dealt with the strike of six years ago. We believe perception is a huge issue as it comes to the Strategic Plan. It is up to the superintendent to unroll and move the Strategic Plan ahead in as professional manner as can be. The possibility of a need for a professional survey from the community was asked. There is interest in this professional need for the District and so this will be pursued at some point. An update to the Board on the Strategic Plan driven from the color-coded implementation sheet will occur either monthly or quarterly.

ENTRY PLAN (SUPERINTENDENT)

Entry Plan (Superintendent)

The Board reviewed the Entry Plan and accepts it as presented with the exception of number three. Inserted was the word 'state', to include those individuals who affect our District at the state level. The Board would also like a ninety-day report from the superintendent basically depicting the first ninety days of leadership within the District. It was suggested that the superintendent become acquainted with Erika Lindley - Executive Director of ED-RED, state representatives and lobbying organizations.

SUPERINTENDENT'S GOALS

Superintendent's Goals

Dr. Bender delivered those goals and they were accepted as presented.

BOARD GOALS

Board Goals

The Board developed three goals for the 2010-2012 years. These goals are being sent to President Heyde for review and will be presented as an agenda item on the August 9 Board meeting for Board approval. The Board also felt that a special invitation needed to be extended to PREA President Erin Breen inviting her to Board meetings personally so that we understand that there is an important place for her.

At 2:10 p.m. it was moved by Board member Lawson and seconded by Board member Taddeo to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by consensus.

August 9, 2010
Date

President

Secretary