

# ***Spotlight on the Board***

## **Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings**

### **March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

This was a Regular Board of Education meeting. Six Board members were present for Roll Call. Board member Kelly Keenan entered the meeting at approximately 7:55 p.m. (seated after Citizens Address the Board section).

#### **Superintendent's Reports**

##### **Modification of Food Service Offerings**

Daily Herald article dated 3/14/08 – [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily\\_Herald\\_03\\_14\\_08\\_lunches.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily_Herald_03_14_08_lunches.pdf)

#### **Citizens Address the Board**

**Margo Ban** – Pleasant Hill School parent

She wanted to let the Board know that the transportation plan that is currently on the District's Web site (two-tier modified) is a good upgrade from the current system and a good alternative to the previously proposed three-tier system. She hopes that the Board considers voting for it because it does address Pleasant Hill's safety issue with Fremd High School's end time. In her opinion, the plan does the very least shakeup in the district's start times and looks to be just a little bit of a tweak to the current system. Thinks that is good, it looks like we are giving this (two-tier) plan a shot.

**Mary Larsen** – Paddock School and Marion Jordan (gifted program) parent

Would like the Board to reconsider the reduction of buses (proposed) or guarantee that the bus routes will be no longer than 30 minutes for any of our students. Says that D15's transportation is problematic already and can only imagine what will happen with bus reductions. She doesn't think that any student should spend more than an hour per day total in transportation to school in their own community. Thinks D15 transportation is already pretty bad. She suggests spending money on buses needed to prevent long commutes and early starts for our young ones. Also suggests spending the time/energy to rework school boundaries so children like hers don't go to one school when there are 3 schools closer to their house. Or work out a more equitable plan so that kids in special programs like gifted stay in their home schools like other gifted children in the district.

**Barb Morris** – Virginia Lake School parent

Concerned about the two-tier proposal as well but for a different reason. Virginia Lake is located not less than 3/10ths of a mile from Palatine HS where there is a lot of traffic. She thinks it is a real safety issue if VL children get out of school any later than it is today (3:05 p.m.) because of traffic from the high school kids and buses. Last year, VL did a number of different studies where parents literally sat at the different corners and timed how much time was needed to get the children out of the area before Palatine HS let out. It was determined that 3:05 p.m. was the latest they could go. Pushing VL's time back another 5 minutes (3:10 p.m.) is still a safety concern for the kids. She worries about the high school kids driving abilities and that their concern for safety is not always their utmost top priority. Asked that the Board consider the safety perspective.

**Julie Bloom** – CLA parent

Concerned about her 4 year old who will be in the afternoon preschool program at CLA next year. All of the transportation proposals have CLA at the latest time and her son would be starting preschool at 1:05 p.m. and ending at 3:35 p.m. She has had children at CLA before and their transportation has always been between 45 minutes and an hour – it has never changed. Thinks that coming home at 4:45 p.m. is too late for a 4 year old. Asked if there was any way to put more buses at the later time to get children home in 30 minutes or less? Would like something different than it has been for the past five years because it is usually an hour before they get home. Doesn't know if the new plan allows for more buses for the late start time so children can get home sooner.

## Board Discussion and Reports

### First Reading – Policy 2:125 Board of Education: Board Member Expenses

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_policy\\_2\\_125\\_board\\_member\\_expenses.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_policy_2_125_board_member_expenses.pdf)

**Dr. Jean Sophie, Asst. Superintendent for Personnel** – As requested, the policy has been brought back in its entirety showing changes/deletions. Asked the Board what changes they would like to have made to the policy. Indicated that she did make one change today that wasn't noted in the policy the Board received – regarding the \$25 expense, it should read "when possible" and crossed out "exceeding \$25" due to some Board discussion about the issue.

**Board President Tim Millar** – Has concerns about overnight hotel stays if the hotel is within 30 miles. Would like a solid guideline/policy that is more in line with corporations. Said that other school districts do not allow for overnight stays within 30 to 40 miles of a Board member's home.

**Board member Wendy Rowden** – Said that travel time, not just distance should be considered.

**Board member Kelly Keenan** – Agrees that members shouldn't excessively use hotel stays but doesn't think there should be a hard and fast rule at 30 miles. A member could have a meeting that goes until 10 p.m. and then have another early morning meeting scheduled for the next day.

**Board member Gerald Chapman** – Said that the policy already calls for the Board president's preapproval of expenses. **Board member Nancy Lee Carlson** – Has never seen any abuse.

**Millar** – Said that it has been an issue and just wanted to bring it up.

## Communications Committee Report

**Millar** – Reported on the recent meeting when Bob Strande, Asst. Superintendent for Business explained how the budgeting process works and answered questions. Questions were asked about the 1% sales tax from Cook County and its possible impact, taxes, how the levy works and if their taxes would go down if their property value decreased. There were about a dozen residents in attendance.

## Facility/Architectural/Real Estate Committee Report

**Keenan** – Two of the five park district agreements are before the Board tonight for approval. They are five year contracts instead of one year. A cost analysis was done as to how much it cost the park district vs. the district and it was almost equal, within a couple thousand dollars of each other. Regarding the Facilities Audit – the architects are setting up meetings with all of the principals within the next three to four weeks. Regarding sidewalk access to the schools – Craig Philips, Maintenance is going to look at all of the walking facilities within a half mile of each school and report back.

The committee has been asked by Phillips and George Lingel, Asst. Superintendent for Business to explore a long-term lease of the First Presbyterian Church's (Palatine) parking lot which is located next to Winston Campus. The last lease expired and it is now leased month to month. If the district loses access to that lot, there would not be enough parking for the school and green space on the other side of the school would have to be used.

**Chapman** – Would like this issue (parking lot) to be an extension of the committee's previous charge.

## Action Items

### 2008-2009 Transportation Plan Approval – Recommended 2-Tier Modified

**D15 Superintendent Dr. Robert McKanna** – At the prior Board meeting, the administration talked about a three-tier plan and worked hard on that plan. Following the February Board meeting, for a number of reasons, they found that it wasn't going to work. McKanna had a chance to meet with a Winston Campus parents/staff focus group that were concerned that the elementary students would in fact be separated from the junior high students and the issues that created for safety. There were also safety issues with Pleasant Hill and Fremd HS's dismissal time. Fremd is just down the street from Pleasant Hill and a time difference of 10 to 15 minutes would be problematic.

McKanna was also concerned that the district had a four-tier plan last year, two-tiers this year and then if there was a three-tier plan next year – the district’s new business official, superintendent and transportation director could see four plans in four years. He didn’t think that was a wise way to go and thought it better to stay where we are and see if there could be some improvements.

Brought up GPS systems and thinks the district really needs them based on concerns raised by parents on the length of bus rides. Said that a GPS system on the buses could tell the district exactly where the buses are, when they start and stop and those bus routes could be tweaked.

At the last Board meeting, a parent spoke and said that there is a school that dismisses early so children can get out to the buses on time so they can get to the next school. That is why the administration put an extra five minutes between tiers in the recommended plan. He wants to make sure that schools are not getting out early so that they can actually complete their educational day. All schools need to follow the timeframe and not deviate, which has created some challenges.

An adjustment was made for the private/parochial schools from 7:30 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. because the district does recognize the concerns of an early start time. Also wanted to get CLA a little farther away so we could make sure those children are picked up on time.

**George Lingel, Asst. Superintendent for Business** – Said that transportation was requested to look at changing Marion Jordan’s start time from the time on recommended schedule (8:50 a.m.) They looked at that, thought they could possibly use the parochial school buses to come over and pick up those kids up. Said the department could actually change Marion Jordan by 10 minutes moving it to same starting time as Virginia Lake (8:40 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.)

The length of MJ bus routes were also brought to their attention. After an evaluation, the department did find there were a couple of very long routes (45 to 55 minutes). The routing coordinator is going to look at that. If the routes are found, the department needs to address them and not let those issues sit out there. If a bus is available and there is a 45/55 minute route, we are going to shorten that route because nobody in the department wants the kids on the bus that long.

Some evaluations of routes were done and Lingel knows that Don Skinner did look at the three-tier system again. As McKanna indicated, there were some problems with the three-tier system and the department also ran into problems with the afternoon routes. Since the parochial school routes cover the entire district, the routes are long and it takes a long time to bring those buses back to start a new route. It takes time to cover the parochial school routes and pick up those students. That was the department’s biggest concern as far as working with the three-tier system.

The concern with the modified two-tier system is the size of the fleet and the need to maintain 162 buses. The fleet could possibly be reduced by 6 buses, but Lingel doesn’t know if that is even possible. Doesn’t want to make any reductions until a final evaluation of the routes is done. Along with the size of the fleet, other concerns are the number of bus drivers available and maintenance of the fleet.

**Don Skinner, Transportation Director** – Added to Lingel’s comments that MJ’s routes average a little over 30 minutes. He did find one route that was an isolated, special route that was longer. If they had an extra bus, they could split that route tomorrow. When transportation did the revised two-tier, this year’s numbers and loads were used. The times and loads (for next year) should be somewhat what the district has this year. They are hypothetical at this point in time. We do need buses that are available to go out as sub buses. As Lingel mentioned, Skinner would not want to see the district sell any buses until it knows exactly what the numbers are.

**Carlson** – Asked about CLA buses that are 55 to 60 minutes long and if anything could be done about getting those times changed?

**Skinner** – CLA pulls from the entire district which means long bus routes. Obviously the more buses the district has, those routes could be reduced. As McKanna mentioned, Skinner did present a three-tier plan to the Board in January and that had the parochial & junior high schools starting at 7:30 a.m. That plan takes fewer buses, which means there would be more excess buses and they could reduce the long CLA routes. That plan was predicated on reducing loads.

But then the administration had input from the public and there were focus groups and transportation made some adjustments to that plan.

At February's Board meeting, transportation had a (three-tier) plan where the junior highs were starting at 7:40 a.m. which did not give them enough buses to get back for the afternoon tiers.

So that is why we are here right now.

**Carlson** – Do we need more special education buses because it is a different type of bus? We do get reimbursed for them.

**Skinner** – We do need wheelchair buses and there are funds allocated for that in the plan. Skinner thinks the district should hang on to those six buses (proposed to release) and work hard to reduce our routes.

**Keenan** – It is her understanding that there is no room to put any additional buses and it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the buses we have because we have such a large fleet. So while she agrees with Carlson and would love to shorten the bus routes – and even being reimbursed by the state, you are still paying for it. It is not like free buses. And there is nowhere to put them and they (transportation) can't maintain them anymore.

**Carlson** – There should be a discussion on where transportation should be moved to. We have a real problem, as you know there are buses at Marion Jordan, everywhere in this district.

**Lingel** – The district does need a larger area for the buses. We do have to have a facility available to start them in the wintertime and have the electricity available to plug them in. We are using CLA and using some at MJ and the lot here in town is full. Size of the fleet is a concern; probably will need a couple of more mechanics if we are going to maintain 160+ buses.

**Carlson** – Her only concern is that we really have to look at transportation even though this is very important but it is only a small piece of the pie. We have to address the entire larger piece at some point in time. We are no longer able to push it aside. She would like to see a comprehensive transportation plan for next year when we have a full-time transportation director.

**Chapman** – Asked for clarification about the recommendation. Said that the Board has heard from parents at several Board meetings and it seems as though, in general, there is more support for this two-tiered plan vs. the initial three-tier plan? **Lingel** – yes, that is what we have heard.

**Chapman** – Said that regarding one of the significant issues heard over at Marion Jordan, Lingel is telling the Board that it can be addressed?

**Lingel** – Yes, we can address 10 minutes of that issue so we can actually put MJ on the same time schedule that we have for Virginia Lake which would be the 8:40 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.

**Chapman** – Earlier this evening we heard about Virginia Lake's dismissal time. As Chapman understands it, it was a balance between that dismissal time and with Palatine HS because of its proximity. But if he understands this right, those buses are there because we also heard from the parochial parents about not starting so early. You have to use those buses – so you can't make everyone happy. So assumes Lingel is trying to get the best balance of safety. **Lingel** – yes, we do have VL at 3:10 p.m. and Palatine HS is at 3:30 p.m.

**Quinn** – Asked about the Palatine Police study that was done and its conclusion as to how much separation is needed between VL and Palatine HS?

**McKanna** – The Palatine village manager did tell him today that he felt the 20 minute separation would probably work. We could reconvene again with Palatine HS and get together with the parent leadership (as before). We could do that again, if we need to move 5 minutes but the initial blush is that 20 minutes would probably work.

The other thing that has come out of this is that we need to get a focus group of Marion Jordan parents, staff, the Palatine village manager and police. With MJ, McKanna doesn't think the fire lane goes around the building. Maybe we could create an exit out to Palatine Road that is only used at dismissal time and maybe pave some additional areas. Maybe have shuttles from the church that is nearby. There has been a lot of creative ideas and brainstorming that is good. Regardless of which plan the Board adopts, getting in and out of Marion Jordan is a challenge.

**Millar** – The Board has to also decide how to balance the cost of everything. Right now, the district is running about \$1.5M over even after reimbursements. Reimbursements actually average closer to 50% when you include all of the other costs. That is 14 teachers or 25 program assistants (comparing costs). Much of the decisions the Board makes with the budget is - what is our priority on spending?

The whole issue with the different tiers is really about the turns on our buses and that is your efficiency. If you can't turn those buses, then you are not maximizing your investment. What happened this year is that we have all the buses with CLA getting to CLA, there were problems with the parochial schools because there weren't buses for those routes. And they were just being used for one route which was a killer in costs and efficiencies. Hopefully, we can get some of that back this year. We are going to be looking at budgets. Keep in mind that there are tradeoffs as well.

**Keenan** – Wants to say that it is shame that we are spending all of this money on transportation and it is almost the same thing we had with the four-tier system with just a couple of little changes. We went from 9:10 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. – that is 20 minutes. For 20 minutes, we have spent millions of dollars. Even if we are reimbursed, that is great for our budget but we are just pushing it off to the State. We are still paying for it. We went from the most efficient transportation system to one of the least efficient transportation systems. We provide worst service with kids on the bus for much longer. Even though some start later, the kids get on the bus earlier than they did. They are starting 15 minutes later but getting on the bus 20 minutes earlier. We are providing the worst service for more money and cutting teachers and we gain 20 minutes from the four-tier system. This has been a very disappointing two years for busing.

**Millar** – asked for a roll call on the motion. **McKanna** – wanted to remind the Board that the motion before them is the one presented that would keep MJ at 8:50 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

**Chapman** - Made a motion to amend the MJ time to 8:40 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. He would also like to include in that the Board ask to get a comprehensive study to consider in November, for final approval in December, that looks at the totality of the two-tier vs. the original four-tier program with the idea that we need to increase efficiencies. We need to balance our efficiency with getting our students to and from school safely. **Ekeberg** – seconded the motion.

**Millar** – Not opposed to doing that but would really like to see how that matches up with the buses that are coming off. We got into a lot of trouble this year with the 10 minute change with St. Theresa and Immanuel Lutheran's time. We then ended up with basically 30 minutes between tiers. Millar just wants to make sure that we are not causing a different problem.

**Quinn** – Heard Lingel say that it (change to MJ's time) can be done, but she is not sure that it addresses the problem. Would like to see it contingent on whatever the outcome is of the Palatine Police and community study. It may or may not solve the problem. Quinn is fine with authorizing that if that indeed is the conclusion that is to fix the problem at MJ.

**Millar** – asked Lingel/Skinner how the 10 minutes solves the problem?

**Keenan** – (Interjected) – Answered that there are two issues at MJ. The first issue is the long rides and it (time change) doesn't address that at all. The second issue is safety and that is two issues. One is the later you dismiss the kids, the more parents pick up the children at school because they have other obligations. And also long bus rides cause parents to pick their kids up after school. The later the dismissal time and the longer the bus rides, causes more parents to come to the school to pick up their children creating a very unsafe environment there at MJ. The second issue is walking home. There are no street lights and sidewalks. So in the winter months when we set the clocks back, you are literally dropping every kid off at their driveway because they can't walk in the street.

**Millar** – But it is only a 5 minute change from this year?

**Keenan** – Well, we were hoping to get 8:30 a.m. – that's what we asked for but transportation was unable to do it.

**Quinn** – Thinks the time should be contingent on the study.

**Board member James Ekeberg** – Said it won't solve the safety issues. There was a plan already in place for MJ parents to drive into MJ. Apparently that plan is no longer being followed. Police have gone out there checking on compliance. So even if we direct the village police department – apparently the recommended traffic pattern is currently not being followed there. The recommended traffic plan seems to present fewer problems in terms of safety.

**Keenan** – That is true and that is false. She totally respects what the village manger said but she has been in the line (car line at MJ). Even when you are following the recommended pattern, you cannot get emergency vehicles in there. If anyone darts out - there are so many cars in such a small area. Parents do get impatient, they don't always follow the rules but that is not the main impetus behind the safety problems. There are way too many cars in way too small a space. The cars are literally on some of the lawns. Parents don't comply 100% but that is not why it is not unsafe. It adds to the "unsafeness" but that is not the cause of the "unsafeness".

**McKanna** – Has two comments. A plan for MJ won't happen in the next week or two and a decision is needed tonight so that parents can plan for daycare. All of the school times need to be set tonight. McKanna doesn't think the 10 minutes is going to make a lot of difference in what is going on (at MJ). The district needs to help that building with traffic flow and work with village officials. He is optimistic MJ can be improved regardless of what transportation plan is adopted.

**Chapman** – Doesn't disagree with Quinn's concepts just thinks the Board needs to approve this (amendment) tonight and if there is an adjustment to be made based on what we hear, then we do that.

**Quinn** – There is an equity issue. There are 9 other schools that get out at the same time with the same types of busing lengths and issues. If you are going to move it for one school . . .

**Keenan** – (Interjected) - They don't have the same issues. MJ has by far the longest routes - except for the junior highs and parochial schools.

**Quinn** – With Virginia Lake, where we do make some adjustments, there is a serious issue with teenage drivers coming down the street. It is a serious issue that has to do with their configuration of the school (in relation to Palatine HS). Each school has their own traffic problems that they need to resolve. Quinn is concerned about making the concession on time that is not necessarily going to solve the problem. If it is a genuine safety issue, yes – of course. But just to accommodate getting out sooner vs later.

**Keenan** – That is not the issue. A couple of years ago the Barrington Police department got involved and that is why MJ did not have the 9:10 a.m. start time. There are no street lights and there are no sidewalks. And the later they go to school in the winter months; they can't walk on the streets. This isn't "we want to get home 10 minutes earlier". This is there is no street lights, there are no sidewalks. Trust me, they (MJ) would probably like 8:15 a.m. and they would have liked 8:30 a.m., they are taking 10 minutes because that is all that the transportation department could give. These are very important safety issues as important as drivers around Palatine HS. Hunting Ridge has the same problem on (Fremd's) late start days. They (HR and Fremd) are only 5 minutes apart on late start dates. There is a madhouse there. That school has a problem too. And if there are legitimate safety concerns, she doesn't think it is fair to say that it is just because they prefer a different start time. MJ does have the longest elementary bus times. And we have virtually no sidewalks. As it is, we have the most buses with the longest bus routes, no sidewalks and no street lights.

**Carlson** – Added that there are thousands of drivers coming down Palatine Road. She mentioned that there will be a change in Police departments. The village of Inverness will be getting its own department next year. There are a lot of issues that are uniquely different with that school. The school is on a stretch of Palatine Road that is used very often. It is a safety issue. There are issues and most children in Inverness at not picked up at their house. They have been bunching them and it gets to be a safety issue. There isn't a place for children to walk other than in the road.

**Motion to approve the 2008-2009 Transportation Plan schedule as amended with Marion Jordan Elementary starting at 8:40 a.m. (ending at 3:10 p.m.) Approved 6:1**

Yes: Chapman, Ekeberg, Millar, Quinn, Rowden, Carlson; No: Keenan

**Keenan** – (comment before voting) – While she likes all of the amendments, she is opposed to the Two-tier plan so votes no.

## **10-Year Vehicle Replacement Plan**

**Lingel** – The department looked at our current fleet, there are a number of vehicles 13+ years old. For the last three years – with the exception of this year – we did not buy many buses. We now have 24 new buses in our current fleet (purchases this year) which has helped a lot in terms of keeping our maintenance costs down. After the determination has been made as to how the two-tier modified system is going to work for next year, and then determine what we need for the following year – Lingel thinks the district then has to get to a point of getting back on a replacement bus schedule that probably replaces 12 to 14 buses a year. It is very easy to spend \$5K to \$6K a year on a 14 to 15 year old bus because of engine upkeep/repair and body upkeep/repair. Transportation currently has one mechanic that is excellent at doing this and does a great job on reconditioning fenders, the undercoating on the bodies as far as getting our buses through inspection.

Said that this VRP (Vehicle Replacement Plan) is a guideline for the future. He doesn't think the district can commit to buying 12 to 15 buses next year or trading buses until it is determined how our current routing plan is actually going to work. The thing to keep in mind is as far as the State plan is concerned with how buses are depreciated out for a five-year period. After the fifth year, those buses have been depreciated and the total depreciation has been taken so we do not get any other reimbursement on the actual equipment.

That is one of the factors when we look at the budget. It usually comes out to be 60% for regular education buses and 80% for special education buses. You really have to take the equipment items out of there before you actually look at it. The more equipment – the more your depreciation is going to be.

Looking at the 24 new buses this year and depreciation – even the leased buses in there will be a full 20% depreciation. That is going to help us, which is why you are looking at revenue for next year to increase.

Thinks that this is a good plan (VRP) that the district needs to get into – thinks it will help in the long range planning. But because we bought 24 buses this year, Lingel would say that we can adopt the plan but we have to evaluate where we are going to be at in the future years.

**Keenan** – Asked Lingel if he ever did the study to figure out what the costs of keeping/maintaining a bus would be vs. buying new buses?

**Lingel** – The cost of keeping a bus – If there are 100K to 130K miles on it, there is going to be a reconditioning cost of about \$5K to \$6K in any particular year. Now granted, when you look again at the reimbursement factor – those costs are claimable. Whatever we spend on engine repair, body work, replacement costs for fenders/bumpers, whatever we need – those are claimable costs on our next year's money.

**Quinn** – It says that the maximum life is 200K miles. There is a pretty comfortable margin there before getting to your maximum usable life per bus. Since we bought so many buses this year, She doesn't think the district should purchase buses in 2008/09. By 2009/10, thinks yes – the district should get back on a schedule. It is very important to have a regular schedule of replacing buses. Thinks that if the district is replacing 14 buses a year, it will quickly get down to a lower average age (per bus). It appears (from the VRP) that the district is trending toward a 10 year bus life. Quinn thinks that the district could stand to have a little longer life on our buses. She agrees with Lingel, especially with changing circumstances, no more buses purchased next year.

**Lingel** – Agrees, all transportation is going to need are a couple of new wheelchair buses that were talked about. That is an actual need the district has because of special education kids. It is already in the budget. **Quinn** – These 12 buses for next year (on the VRP) are not in the budget? **Lingel** - yes

**Millar** – Dug out information he had when the Board had this discussion a few years ago. It was from the National Association of State Directors of Transportation Services. Their recommendation basically is that for type C and D school buses – those buses can go 12 to 14 years. Smaller buses (type A) can go 8 to 10 years. Maximum up to 15 years, 250K mile cycle. Millar thinks maybe we should stay within the guidelines of the transportation association – that would be okay with him.

**Lingel** – We have to revise the 2008/2009 numbers currently in the VRP, would need to do that.

**Motion to table the vote on a 10-Year Vehicle Replacement Plan until the November meeting**  
Unanimously approved.

## **2008-2009 Student Fees: Book, Material, Technology and Lunch Fees Pay Rider Transportation Fee**

*Reference:* Proposed Book, Material, Technology & Lunch Fees for 2008/09 and comparison data  
[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_student\\_fees\\_2008\\_09.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_student_fees_2008_09.pdf)

Proposed Pay Bus Rider Fees for 2008/09 and comparison data  
[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_pay\\_bus\\_rider\\_fees\\_2008\\_09.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_pay_bus_rider_fees_2008_09.pdf)

Some Board members questioned why the district doesn't charge the pay bus riders for its transportation costs and/or charge for the actual cost of student lunches? (Costs outlined in the data provided to the Board and on the district's Web site – see above references). It was also questioned whether the lunch program included other costs for the program such as electrical use, etc.

**Lingel** – The only thing that is not in the lunch program are the IMRF and Social Security costs and that is not charged for the employees in there. Other than that, the cost of the lunch program is what we spend in all areas including fuel for the delivery trucks. Everything is charged back to that program. Lingel said that what really subsidizes our lunch program, so that it operates in a positive each year, is the number of free and reduced lunches (the district provides to eligible students). If you did the calculation, the total that we get back for a free lunch is \$2.58. Based on the percentage of free and reduced lunches, it really does subsidize that program. That is basically what makes the program operate very cost effectively. The district does get back from the Federal government a portion even on the paid lunches, and there is a State reimbursement for all lunches.

**Millar** – Has a concern about the Pay Rider increase (\$60) – is not in favor of raising it that much. Said that one of the things in understanding the cost of the pay rider – they are not the average. The pay riders are not going to be the ones with our highest transportation costs. Millar went through some of the ridership numbers to see what the district was paying per rider.

Some were \$2,000 per student depending on how the buses were utilized. The longer routes, the special routes are not your pay riders. Have to look at it on an individual school basis. He guarantees that the pay riders, being that short a distance (from their school), are not the ones costing the district the highest average. It is the longer routes – the parochial and junior high schools – that cost a lot and skew the average (higher).

**Keenan** – They (pay riders) are over 10 full bus loads of kids. So if we didn't have them, you would be able to use your buses in a more efficient way. You would be able to shorten some of the routes, have more turnarounds. They are closer to the school but technically within walking distance.

**Mary Werling, Business Department** – Provided additional information to the Board on the pay rider requirements. Said that pay riders are those that live more than ½ mile from school but less than 1 ½ miles. There are currently 477 paid riders. Twenty-five to 30 are PIP students (preschool intervention program) and are enrolled at CLA. In addition to their monthly tuition, they also pay for transportation. The current proposed rate for 2008/09 is \$360. If the district brought that fee up to the average cost of \$494 – that would be a \$134 increase.

**Rowden** – Asked about Books and Materials fee increase. Concerned about continuing to raise those fees. **Mary Zarr, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum** – Explained how books are amortized over a five year period. Many districts break out books and technology fees.

**Werling** – Received a survey that was done of other school district's fees (included in the data provided to the Board and online). There are about six to seven districts charging a separate technology fee as little as \$5 to \$50. Ours is a comprehensive fee.

**Carlson** – Wanted to make sure that families knew about the free and reduced lunch program and that they would also be eligible for a waiver of the book/technology fees and activity bus. Asked what percentage of students were eligible for the program and if it was increasing each year?

**Werling** – Approximately 22% qualify for the free/reduced lunch program. Every year it does go up, it was 4% higher this year than last year.

**Quinn** – Is fine with the fee increases with the exception of the increase in milk (10 cents). Doesn't think we should be charging any more for milk, thinks we should be encouraging kids to drink milk. Would be okay with subsidizing milk for a couple of years.

**Werling** – the district's last fee increase for milk was 3 years ago and as we all know, the cost of milk has been increasing over time. Thinks the next time they would look at an increase would be at a similar interval – 3 years. This is the increase recommended by the school lunch department.

**Keenan** – Would like to make an amendment to the motion to bring the pay rider transportation fees up to cost and the lunch fees up to cost. (Amendment wasn't seconded.)

**Bobbie Desprat** – Provided some insight to the Board as to whether some families who do qualify for the free and reduced lunch program actually take advantage of it. Said that if the cost of the lunches is too high, those students will just not eat – rather than apply for the program.

### **Motion to approve the 2008-2009 Student Fees: Book, Material, Technology and Lunch Fees And Pay Rider Fees - Approved: 5:2**

(Yes – Quinn, Rowden, Chapman, Carlson, Ekeberg; No – Millar, Keenan)

### **2008-2009 Student Fees – Book/Materials**

Junior High \$130 (\$10 increase); Grades 1-6 \$120 (\$20 increase); Kindergarten \$60 (same)

**Student Lunch** Elementary lunch \$2.00 (10 cent increase); JH \$2.10 (10 cent increase)

**Student Breakfast** - \$1.25 (10 cent increase) **Milk** – 45 cents (10 cent increase)

**Activity Bus** - \$60 family/year (\$10 increase)

**Interscholastic Activities** - \$85 Sport/year (\$25 increase) (\$175 max/student/year - \$50 increase)

### **Pay Rider Transportation Fee**

|                    | <b>On or before 8/1/08</b> | <b>After 8/1/08</b> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Child            | \$370 (\$60 increase)      | \$420               |
| 2 children         | \$470 (\$60 increase)      | \$520               |
| 3 or more Children | \$520 (\$60 increase)      | \$570               |

### **Bids – Technology e-Mail Archiving System Purchase**

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_email\\_archiving\\_system.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_email_archiving_system.pdf)

Board discussion/questions prior to the vote revolved around concerns over the company chosen not being in business for very long and not a public company; contingency plans if the company went out of business; the new rule in place requiring email archiving and whether this could be done in-house.

**Motion to award bid to Gaggle.net** - Approved 5:2 (Millar and Keenan voting no.)

## **Correspondence**

### **Freedom of Information Act Requests (FOIA)**

Requests were received from Collin Hitt of the Illinois Policy Institute and Shirley Forpe, President of the Northwest Suburban Teachers Union, Local 1211 (representing D211).

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_FOIA\\_mar\\_12\\_08.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_FOIA_mar_12_08.pdf)

## **Executive Session**

The Board went into Executive Session at approximately 9:40 p.m. to discuss items listed on the agenda and the personnel report which was expected to be voted on when they returned to Open Session.

For information on agenda items not covered in these Notes, please read the district's Summary of Board Actions for the March 12<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting found on the district's Web site at:

[www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/BoardofEducation/HTML/BOEMeetingDates.html](http://www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/BoardofEducation/HTML/BOEMeetingDates.html)

Summary written by: Jennifer Mondy  
[fcwnews@comcast.net](mailto:fcwnews@comcast.net)

Posted: Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008