

Mt. Vernon Township High School District #201
September 18, 2007
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M.

1. President Hoffman called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members answering roll call were: Greg Backes, Ron Copenhaver, Pat Garrett, Karen Goodwine, Jon Hawthorne, Robert Stewart and Dan Hoffman. Also present were Superintendent Terry Milt, Treasurer Jane Brown, Board Secretary Shirilyn Holt and several guests.

Milt asked that items 4 and 6.1 be combined so that teacher Ann Garrett could speak.

4.0

Garrett spoke regarding the National Board Certification Master Teacher Program. She mentioned there are teachers at the school who are seeking national board certification.

6.1 Recognition of Staff member (discussion/action)

Milt mentioned English teacher Ann Garrett will be recognized by the State of Illinois as a Merit Teacher on October 13 at a banquet in Decatur.

2. Recognition of Public Comments:

- Horton Petties spoke regarding the school having a dress code at the high school. He felt students wear uniforms.
- Luther Torres complimented the school on the way the situations have been handled so far, but thinks the school may be taking the situation too lightly and afraid because of the white supremacist on campus. He stated the board should go to the city council and ask for an ordinance to restrict outside access to areas around the campus.
Question: where are we going from here? Torres stated he has entered this campus at any time without anyone stopping him.
Question: what plans does the school have and what can the citizens do to help?
- Mary Ferguson stated she and her son had been threatened and she has called the school regarding this. She has a god-daughter and son at the school, who are different races and are afraid to speak to each other on campus.
- Rev. Erie Patton commended the school for their actions. Her concern is the children and knows children cannot learn if they are afraid. She is willing to help the school in any way. She stated we must admit there is a race problem in order to correct the problem. Rev. Patton mentioned a concern with a bus full of students who had been taken to the police station because a student was in possession of marijuana. Her concern was why everyone on the bus was subjected to going to the police station because of the actions of one.

- Student Tasha stated she has always loved going to school and is now afraid. The students are the ones who are walking to their classes each day.

6.19 School safety (discussion/action)

President Hoffman moved 6.19 regarding school safety. Hoffman stated a meeting had been held with the city council, county board and school board regarding school issues. He stated the board is working to make the school a safer place. Comments are listed below.

- One point was to close the campus for lunches and/or closing down streets.
- Milt stated there would be community meetings. He would like the board to give the administration permission to look at closing the campus. There are businesses which will be impacted by the closing.
- Milt would like permission to talk to the city about closing 6th and 8th streets during school time.
- There will be a study regarding school uniforms.
- Do most students feel afraid to come to school? Milt stated he does not get that feel from the students at this time and depends on who is asking the students. It was mentioned to take an anonymous poll regarding how the students feel about school safety.
- Teachers at the meeting stated students felt safe in the classroom.
- Decisions and motions should not be based on how many students are afraid, because we want all students to be comfortable in school
- Look at a way to monitor the movement of students at the campus.
- Find more ways to communicate with the entire community.
- Look at the academy approach where the classes are separated. i.e.... Freshman, Sophomore etc.
- Investigate an ordinance to deter uninvited groups from congregating near the campus.
- Upgrade cameras on campus
- The question was asked is there a crisis plan in place.
- On Tuesday the board should communicate the safety plans to the community. What can be said to the public and what can not.
- Look at the number of lunch periods so all students are not out at the same time.
- The administration, faculty, and police did a lot to defuse the incident and to keep the students safe.
- Look at ways to monitor the areas which are hard to see.
- Find ways to involve the community. There are programs across the country with grandparents and parents in the schools helping out as monitors. We want community members to feel comfortable coming to the school.
- Look at changing periods to blocks, cutting down the amount of time students are out of the classroom.

Stewart made a motion to direct the administration to proceed to rapidly study the pros and cons of a closed campus, pros and cons of uniforms, to talk to the city regarding closing 6th and 8th streets, and to look at the number of lunch periods, monitor behavior on campus (camera,

etc), scheduling more time in class, have community meetings, study having monitors from the community, look at stricter discipline, and speak with a second by Goodwine.

Roll Call: Yes - Stewart, Goodwine, Backes, Copenhaver, Garrett, Hawthorne, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

Update of these items will be in the October and November meetings.

3. Approval of the Consent Agenda:

A. Minutes – Open and Closed minutes from regular Board of Education meeting on August 21, 2007 and Open and Closed Disciplinary Meeting on September 10, 2007.

B. Bills

C. Treasurer’s Report

Backes made a motion to accept the consent agenda with a second by Copenhaver.

Roll call: Yes – Backes, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Stewart, and Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

4. Administrative Reports: Principal/Superintendent

Superintendent Milt mentioned the following items:

- FFA would like to attend the National Convention in Indianapolis, IN on Oct
Backes made a motion to approve the trip with a second by Goodwine.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Goodwine, Copenhaver, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart,
Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

- Egyptian Division semi-annual dinner on October 2 in Nashville, IL for board members.
- Milt recommended postponing the October 2 school improvement meeting with faculty until after the negotiations.
- Teacher Rebekah Reyling has volunteered to form a French club.
- The board had a waiver hearing on the administrative 10% cap. Milt stated he has legal correspondence which stated the school did not have to have the hearing because we were under the cap.
- Milt stated he had placed information regarding 403B regulations on the table for board members. Each staff members will receive a letter regarding this tax shelter annuity plan.

Dr. Garrett mentioned the 28th Annual Mt. Vernon Conference that will be held October 25 and 26 at the high school. Any board member can attend.

5. Old Business:

5.1 Discussion of tabled request for transportation contract extension

(discussion/action)

After a short discussion Copenhaver made a motion to accept the \$1.90 per gallon proposal from Beck Bus and grant a two year extension with a second by Backes.

Roll Call: Yes – Copenhaver, Backes, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried



5.2 Update of football lights and progress (discussion)

Milt stated there are two bids and mentioned the poles are the most expensive item. The school is looking at a total project cost of \$60,000. Milt mentioned a formal “thank you” to Tri-County and Ameren IP would be sent to them and put in the paper. A recommendation will be given at the October board meeting.

5.3 1st reading AUP for technology plan

Milt discussed the copy of recommendation of the acceptable user policy from the attorney. Corrections will be sent out with possible adopting at the October meeting.

6. New Business:

6.2 Budget hearing for 2007-2008 school budget (discussion)

Milt gave a short discussion regarding the budget with the board. There were no comments from the public.

6.3 Approve hiring of classroom aides (discussion/action)

Backes made a motion to hire Enid Kennedy and Jennifer Morgan as special education aides and Amber Leahy as an early child care aide with a second by Stewart.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Stewart, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

6.4 Approve retirement of Library aides (discussion/action)

Copenhaver made a motion to accept the retirement of Paula McGowan and Penny Jacobs with a second by Goodwine.

Roll Call: Yes – Copenhaver, Goodwine, Backes, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

6.5 Approve resignation of FBLA co-sponsor (discussion/action)

Goodwine made a motion to accept the resignation of Holly McKay with a second by Copenhaver.

Roll Call: Yes – Goodwine, Copenhaver, Backes, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

6.6 Approve resignation of Sophomore class officer (discussion/action)

Backes made a motion to accept the resignation of Jessica Pilson with a second by Stewart.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Stewart, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

6.7 Request to attend Model School Conference in Atlanta in November (discussion/action)

Backes made a motion to approve six teachers and an administrator attending the conference with a second by Garrett.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Garrett, Stewart, Copenhaver, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

- 6.8 Request to utilize loan from Transportation fund to Education fund(discussion/action)
Milt read the motion.
Copenhaver made a motion to approve an inter-fund loan up to \$350,000 with a second by Stewart
Roll Call: Yes –Copenhaver, Stewart, Backes, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**
- 6.9 Approval to fill class sponsor positions (discussion/action)
Backes made a motion to approve the class sponsors as follows:
- Kiley Thomas, Freshman Class
 - Christine Renth, Sophomore Class
 - Andy Wells, Senior Class
- Second by Hawthorne
Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Hawthorne, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Stewart, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**
- 6.10 Approval to fill JAVA co-sponsor (discussion/action)
Copenhaver made a motion to approve Hannah Rodgers with a second by Goodwine
Roll Call: Yes –Copenhaver, Goodwine, Backes, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**
- 6.11 1st reading of policy updates (discussion)
Milt gave a short update of policies for a 1st reading
- 6.12 Approve budget for 2007-2008 school year (action)
Stewart made a motion to approve the 2007-2008 budget with a second by Backes
Roll Call: Yes – Stewart, Backes, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman.
No - None **Motion Carried**
- 6.13 Facility update information sheet (discussion)
Milt presented a list of possible facility upgrades which were discussed at a meeting with Maintenance and Milt. Milt recommended having a special facility meeting with Brian Rightnowar and maintenance to discuss the facility upgrades.
- 6.14 Authorization to seek worker’s compensation/ property/ liability insurance bids (discussion/action)
Backes made a motion to let bids on worker’s compensation/property/liability insurance with a second by Goodwine.
Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Goodwine, Copenhaver, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**
- 6.15 Accept retirement of special education aide (discussion/action)
Backes made a motion to accept the retirement of Ernestine Bee with a second by Stewart.
Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Stewart, Copenhaver, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman
No - None **Motion Carried**

6.16 Approve 1st reading technology plan (discussion/action)

This item was first reading with possible approval at the October meeting.

6.17 Approve head teacher for music and art (discussion/action)

Goodwine made a motion to approve Frank Winchester as head teacher for music and Hannah Rodgers as head teacher for Art with a second by Copenhaver.

Roll Call: Yes – Goodwine, Copenhaver, Backes, Garrett, Hawthorne, Stewart, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

6.18 Monthly release time for school improvement (discussion/action)

Milt would like permission to use banked time for early release (11:30) on the 4th Wednesday of each month to work on school improvement. Milt mentioned he had spoken with Brian Cross regarding this.

After a short discussion, Copenhaver made a motion to approve the early release with a second by Backes.

Roll Call: Yes – Copenhaver, Backes, Stewart, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

7. Closed session: 9:16 p.m.

Closed session for purpose of contract negotiations 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) and personnel considerations – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Possible action to follow.

Backes made a motion to enter into Closed Session for the stated purposes with a second by Goodwine.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Goodwine, Stewart, Copenhaver, Garrett, Hawthorne, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

10:05 p.m.

Backes made a motion to enter Open Session with a second by Goodwine

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Goodwine, Stewart, Copenhaver, Garrett, Hawthorne, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

Backes made a motion to allow Head Cook Deb Brown a 60 day unpaid, unprecedented setting, leave with a second by Copenhaver.

Roll Call: Yes – Backes, Copenhaver, Stewart, Garrett, Goodwine, Hawthorne, Hoffman

No - None

Motion Carried

8. Adjournment

10:07 p.m.

Backes made a motion to adjourn with a second by Goodwine.

All members present agreed.

Dan Hoffman, President

Shirilyn Holt, Board Secretary

