



West Northfield School District 31

Board Briefs

A Summary from the Board of Education Meeting— June 11, 2009

Board Briefs is a regular report that is posted on the District web site to keep parents and staff up-to-date on developments at Board of Education meetings.

2009-2011

Board of Education

David A. Handler, President
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Vice President
Mary Crowe-Richards,
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Michael Berkowitz
Shel Leshner
Bonnie Schoenberg
Robert Spector

Dr. Alexandra Nicholson
Superintendent

Board of Education meetings are held on the second and/or fourth Thursdays of the month at 7 p.m. in the Learning Center at Field School. The public is invited to attend.

Communication: Dr. Nicholson and Board President David Handler acknowledged recent letters to the Board. District 31 parents Patrick and Lynn O'Dea expressed appreciation to Winkelman Principal Maria Kalant. Parents Kathy and Howard Brandeisky expressed appreciation to the District 31 staff for their students' positive educational experience through graduation. Winkelman's Young Scholars group, The Yucky Ducks, expressed appreciation to the District 31 Board for funding their participation in the Destination Imagination Global Finals in Tennessee.

Student Recognition: Dr. Alexandra Nicholson recognized three Field Middle School students for their winning entries in the Deerfield Optimist Club's annual writing contest. This year's essay topic was "Pick a place in the world and describe what your life might be like living in that location." Trent Martin, eighth grader, was the contest's top winner from the 112 entries from middle schools in the North Suburban region. Trent was also the winner from eighth grade language arts classes. Other winners included Savannah Felten, sixth grader, and Alex Turner, seventh grader.

Audience Recognition: District 31 parent Julie Tye expressed her appreciation for the increased communication and response to the concerns expressed at the April 30th Board meeting. Mrs. Tye also addressed the Board on the topic of the District's foreign language program. She noted that Field is offering only Spanish to incoming sixth graders. She suggested consideration for offering another language and suggested taking a survey. She recommended consideration for Mandarin Chinese, a language that is now being taught at Glenbrook High Schools.

Employment for 2009-10 School Year: The Board approved the employment of Cheryl Silagi as a general musical teacher assigned to Field and Winkelman Schools, Paula Delehanty as a general art teacher assigned to Field and Winkelman Schools; Michael Sackley as a Field social studies teacher; and Jill O'Reilly as a Winkelman art teacher.

Tentative Budget Approval: The Board approved a tentative budget for the 2010 fiscal year. Dr. Nicholson noted that needed adjustments will be made to the final budget before it is brought to the Board for approval in the coming months during the transition period of the employment of a new Director of Business Services. Following the resignation of the former Director Lisa Lawler-Ludwig, interviews are currently being conducted for a new District 31 Director of Business Services.

Internet Safety Curriculum: The Board approved the new Internet Safety Curriculum for District 31. Field Principal Erin Murphy reported that the new curriculum was developed to comply with a new Illinois statute and was researched and compiled by the Technology Facilitators Arlene Ament at Field and Mona Macpherson at Winkelman. Age-appropriate topics at the various grade levels beginning with grade 1 will include safe use of the internet and social networking websites, risks of transmitting personal data on the internet, cyber-bullying, copyright laws and other state recommended instructional topics. Most of the instruction will be incorporated into computer classes at Winkelman and through Field's Advisory, Conflict Resolution, or Library and Literature classes.

Technology Vision: Dr. Nicholson introduced members of the District's Technology Committee including herself, Field Principal Erin Murphy, District Technology Facilitator Dave Del Boccio, Technology Teachers Arlene Ament and Mona Macpherson, and Director of Communication Nancy Wasielewski. The vision includes the goal of equipping all District 31 classrooms with wall mounted projectors and document cameras, as well as to increase the District's bandwidth to support wider educational use of a number of web-based programs and the internet for enhanced learning and research, as well as use of the Edline web-based parent communication system. The committee also presented a tentative budget.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Nicholson summarized the enhanced communication measures that District 31 has initiated including new suggestion boxes in each building, a new "suggestion" email address, surveys, monthly union/administration meetings, plans for Board member attendance at each school event, and the introduction of the Edline home and school communication web-based program in the coming school year.

Teacher Appraisal Program: Dr. Nicholson reported that Teacher Appraisal Committee members were identifying and beginning to make needed changes to the Teacher Appraisal Program based on the Danielson training session.

Closed Session: A closed session was held to discuss legal and personnel issues.

Next Meeting: The next Board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, July 23, in the Field Learning Center.