

Key Communicator Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2019

Key Communicators Present: Trish Buben, Laura Carr, Diana DiMaria, Cristine Dougherty, Carma Lamm, Jennifer Retsch, Terri Ronald, Jennifer Rossi, and Alison Sanders.

Administrators Present: Dr. Loughead, Dr. Cunningham, Ms. Berg, Dr. Kern, Mr. Kline, and Mrs. Hennessey (School Board).

Hampton Happenings

Food Service Bid Update - Mr. Kline provided an overview of the food service bid process. In 2005, the District moved from an in-house cafeteria model to an outside contractor. At the time, most other schools were subcontracting their food services. Mr. Kline noted that school districts are required by PDE to solicit proposals every five years. Contracts must be awarded for one year, with the option to extend the original contract for four additional years or to go out to bid again. For this bidding process, the District had three bidders: Metz Culinary Management, Nutrition Inc., and Southwest Foodservice Excellence. Mr. Kline said of the three bidders, Metz provided the best financial bid. Dr. Loughead said since there have been some complaints this year about the food quality and customer service associated with Metz, the Administration has carefully reviewed all three bids to determine if Metz is the best option. He said the District has to weigh a number of issues, including the risks of going with an unfamiliar food service agency. Two of the three bidders fall into this category. At this time, the District must select a provider in June and plans to award only a single year contract at this time, with the option to extend for an additional four years. They are leaning toward recommending Metz, but Dr. Loughead noted that the district manager for Metz has been put on notice that the quality of the food provided in the schools is more important than the financial results. He said Metz's general manager was very receptive to meeting the changes that have been suggested. Key Communicators asked if there could be a discussion about adding more staff - at least two employees who could rotate as needed - and the elimination of plastic utensils. Dr. Kern said the food service committee discussed staffing issues with the general manager and some of the other ideas that have been requested by parents, and she noted that he was very receptive to what was discussed. She also noted that in April, Metz significantly changed the food menu options, which she considered a good sign that they are willing to work with the District. The Key Communicators asked if the District selects Metz as the provider in June, if they can provide them with a written set of standards expected by families and evaluate after six months if those standards are being met. Dr. Loughead and Mr. Kline agreed that this would be the case.

Key Communicators said the three most important items for them are:

1. Signage
2. Staffing
3. Quality of Food and Food Choices

The suggestion also was made to survey the students to see how they feel about the school lunch options and quality.

High School Project Update - Dr. Loughead said that Mr. John Taormina of P.J. Dick Inc., presented to the School Board on May 13 with an overview of his findings on the HS Feasibility Study created by VEBH Architects for the proposed High School Academic Redesign project. Mr. Taormina has 35 years of experience, 25 of those years with P.J. Dick in construction management and construction projects. He has extensive experience in school construction work. His report indicates the feasibility study from VEBH was extremely well done and the District should be very pleased with it. For his portion of the review, he visited Hampton School District on three separate occasions and did a through hands-on review of the High School with his team. In his report, Mr. Taormina recommended the following:

- A variance in the proposed project based on his findings of about \$3.5 million, but noted that \$2.5 million of that is based conceptual contingency and not actual scope. From his perspective, the construction costs of the fire alarm component and the site development aspect of the project were slightly underestimated in the feasibility study.
- VEBH included a design contingency of 8%, and Mr. Taormina said his company is recommending 10% as a safer number since this is a conceptual feasibility study of a project and not yet in the full design phase.
- The district should carry a 5% escalation contingency because the District will likely be working with future price increases with this project by the time it is launched. This escalation contingency of 5% was not included in the feasibility study proposal.

Slides referenced during Mr. Taormina's presentation to the School Board are available [here](#).

Dr. Loughead reminded Key Communicators that the District continues to prepare for PlanCon reimbursement, but does not have any indication at this time if the program will reopen to accept new applications in July as anticipated.

Internet Filter Enhancements - Dr. Loughead said there has been some information sent out via Infinite Campus about adjustments made to the District's Internet filtering system. He said he recognizes that no filtering system is going to block everything 100%, but the District continues to work to ensure our filters are working as expected. He noted that a family has expressed some concerns about the filters not working to their expectations on the student iPads. He said after careful review and evaluation, the District has decided that its filters are working as intended and do not believe a major breach has occurred. He explained the District cannot outright block news organizations, which would be a freedom of speech issue, but some changes have been made to adjust which grade levels can access which materials. For instance, access for second and third graders have been adjusted to allow only child-friendly news resources. The District is also closely looking at YouTube and at what grade level it is appropriate to allow student access. For now, the District is restricting access to YouTube for second and third graders. There were also concerns expressed about the Epic app the District is using. Dr. Loughead noted the app is recommended by Common Sense Media as child-appropriate but noted that some adjustments can be made to the app to prevent students from accessing books above their recommended reading level. He said while complaints have only come from one family, the District is taking them seriously and will continue to evaluate its filters and systems to ensure they are working properly and appropriately. He also encouraged parents to monitor their children's devices and report any concerns to their building principals. The elementary Key Communicators asked if there is any way to set more parental/teacher controls over the Epic app, or one that is similar in services that

does allow tighter restrictions/monitoring. Dr. Loughead said Epic appears to be one of the better digital book apps out there, but the District is reviewing other options. At the middle and high school levels, the Key Communicators said the concern focuses more on out-of-date information and resources from teachers to assist parents with management of devices at home. The question was also asked if the District was able to do a "FaceTime" scenario for students who are absent from school so they could attend virtually. Dr. Loughead said some options are being explored. Another round of parent/family surveys will be going out next year, along with some open meetings to collect feedback from families.

Central Roof Update - Dr. Loughead said this project also is moving forward and will cost the District around \$1 million. The District is exploring all options, with bid openings happening this afternoon (5/20).

Academics

School Start Time Committee Update - Dr. Loughead provided an overview of the presentation he provided at the last School Board meeting on the progress the committee has made. He reviewed the work the committee has done thus far, and addressed the challenges associated with moving forward with the process. He reviewed the models the District explored in relation to start times and transportation. The District is considering Scenario Three, which incorporates a time switch for the high school and middle school start times, while keeping the current three-tier structure currently in place. In this model, dubbed the "Secondary Switch," Middle School students would continue to start at 7:55 a.m., High School students would start at 8:30 a.m. and elementary school students would begin school at 9:10 a.m. By adopting this model, all students would benefit from the later start times. There are a number of challenges and concerns the committee needs to examine next, including a competing start time with A.W. Beattie. Other challenges include extra-curricular activities, athletic competitions and practices, and childcare changes for families. Next steps for the committee include reaching out to the public and surveying the community to determine the impact later start times might have on families, and to explore solutions to some of the challenges Hampton faces to adjusting start times. An update to the Board in October or November 2019 is planned. No changes in start times are planned for the 2019-2020 school year. The PowerPoint presentation that accompanied this report is available [here](#).

Arts

Gene Kelly Nominations - Nominations were announced May 7. Hampton was nominated in the following categories for Budget Level II:

- Best Actor – Joseph Fish
- Best Costume Design
- Best Lighting
- Best All-Student Student Orchestra

The awards ceremony is on May 25, 2019.

Athletics

Spring Sports Playoffs Update - A number of our athletic teams are in the playoffs. Schedules are posted on the [Athletics website](#).

Fridley Field Turf and Track - The bid has been awarded and the work will be starting June 10 with a completion date by early to mid August. The track and field will be closed down immediately following the High School graduation program. Some portions of the old turf has been claimed by other organizations. Those who are interested in any areas of turf left should contact Mr. Rick Farino.

Questions and Comments

- A question was asked about Senator Lindsay Williams' visit to the District. Dr. Loughead said the visit was positive, and that it was encouraging to hear that cyber school legislation is being proposed. The proposed legislation would require cyber students to be enrolled in their own district's cyber program, if available, or be responsible fiscally for attending an out-of-district cyber program. He also noted the District met with State Rep. Lori Mizgorski and said that meeting also went well.
- It was suggested that more information needs to be provided to families about what students are being trained to do during ALICE training due to some concern that was expressed online in a social forum. The Key Communicator who made the request said a parent who was commenting in an online forum about the ALICE training students receive was misinformed about the actual training received by students in the District.
- The Key Communicators relayed that a group of parents are expressing concern about a rumor that the High School pool will be shut down next year and students will be bussed to Fox Chapel. Dr. Loughead said the rumor is not true. The District has a back-up plan should our pool ever be unusable, as do many of the schools in our area that have pools, but that is a back-up plan only.
- Elementary PTOs received notification that there has been a change in the elementary schools being able to use the middle and high school facilities. Dr. Loughead said it's not a change in policy, but rather guidance on when it is appropriate to host an elementary event at the middle or high school and when they should be hosted in an elementary school building.
- Mrs. Hennessey expressed appreciation of the Key Communicator group and said the value the parents who serve as Key Communicators have brought to the District has been outstanding.

Upcoming District Events

- 5/27 Memorial Day Holiday (Schools Closed)
- 5/28 Board Special Meeting (if necessary) – 7:00 p.m., Dr. Harold Sarver Memorial Library
- 6/3 Board Work Session Meeting – 7:00 p.m., Dr. Harold Sarver Memorial Library
- 6/6 High School Graduation, 6:00 p.m., Fridley Field
- 6/10 Retirement Luncheon
- 6/10 Board Voting Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Dr. Harold Sarver Memorial Library
- 6/11 Last Day for Faculty and Staff
- 6/24 Board Special Meeting (if necessary) – 7:00 p.m., Dr. Harold Sarver Memorial Library