

Tri-County Area School District

Plainfield, Wisconsin

Minutes from Special School Board Meeting
Held January 3, 2017

Mark Bacon-President called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Board Room.

School board members present were: Mark Bacon, Cindy Baumgartner, Jeff Hopkins, Jim Knutson, Jim Cesar, Wayne Cummings, and Sue Lederer. Peggy Buckholt, and Jerry Knutson were absent. A quorum was declared. Also present were Gary Knuth, Annette Carroll, Anthony Marinack, Shawn Jepson, Nicholas Marti and Wendy Hetzel.

The "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited.

Cindy Baumgartner made a motion; Jeff Hopkins seconded and carried on a voice vote to adopt the agenda.

Mark Bacon handed out the survey results for the School Board policy 370.00AR Interscholastic Athletics Co-Curricular Activities. Sixteen (16) Parent responses were given and twenty-seven (27) staff responses were given. Mark handed over the meeting to Nicholas Marti 7-12 principal and Nick presented the board with the survey questions and answers. The board took a moment to look over the results. Anthony Marinack-District Administrator, presented the board with some policies from surrounding area schools. The policies stated their grading percentage (60%, 65%, 67%,70%), how they become eligible (quarterly, 15 days, grade point average), probation, ineligibility and eligibility. The board asked Nick what the status of the students was at this time. Nick stated that 1st Quarter, there were 9 students under academic probation, and if they were at a 0 F rule 3 students would be affected. In the 2nd Quarter there are 13 under academic probation and 3 would be affected right now. It was discussed that low follow through outside of school, or non-participation is a factor. It was discussed that if all students finished their homework, they should get a passing grade. Unfortunately, that is one of the biggest issues, again not following through.

Wayne Cummings presented his idea for the policy. He would like to see with the grading percentage changed to 60%, In order to participate no F's, 1 F you would be on probation, but

you can retain eligibility after 15-day window. The kids falling through the cracks need someone here to help them inside of school. They need a mentor here.

Cindy Baumgartner stated the kids have many opportunities with the smaller classrooms, the after school program, and Mrs. W. the math tutor.

Jim Cesar stated the 60% grading scale move in 2017-2018 should help more kids to succeed and obtain 0 F's.

Jeff Hopkins stated currently the Block Algebra class is struggling. He thought they get taught their lesson, have time to do it in class. He stated if you get your homework done, you are going to pass. If you get your homework done you should kind of understand it.

Sue Lederer stated she would like to see 0 F's, with the 60% grading % change. If you receive the 1 F you will be put on probation and need to attend the after school homework center. If you receive 2 F's you are ineligible.

Mark Bacon asked Nick out of the students who are receiving F's how many are going to the homework center after school? Unfortunately, Nick didn't have the information at that time. But said he could get it, they have a signup sheet.

Nick stated the kids need to commit, but they need structure and a chance to get eligible. Encouraging kids to become a part of the extra-curricular activities.

Wayne stated we need kids to reach out to other students to help them.

Jim Knutson stated if they went with the No F rule he would vote No at this time. In Block Math if they are having F's there has to be a problem and we need to find the problem, why are they flunking? Are they trying to play catch-up because they are not understanding from the prior year. Jim stated he would like to see a minimal GPA (Grade Point Average) instead of the No F rule. So even if a kid is struggling in an area they don't understand, they are still allowed to participate with 1 F and a minimal GPA.

Cindy stated peer pressure helps and teams should help each other out.

Sue said she would like to see this used as a promotion of the after-school homework center program to coheres other students who need to go.

The board asked Annette Carrol, 9-12 Math Teacher her opinion, Annette stated this No F's may deter kids from taking AP (Advanced Placement) Classes. Jim K. asked Gary and Annette

their opinion on the GPA? Gary Knuth, 9-12 Industrial Technology Teacher, said it is a safety net. Is it any different then kids having all D-'s, as to having 5 A's and 1 F for GPA?

Nick said modest students might want to try AP and they won't because if they get the 1 F, they are out of sports.

Wayne stated do your homework, you are going to pass? How far are we going to bend? We have already gone from 70% to 60% grading.

Jim Knutson said let's hear from the Administrative Team. Tony would like to see the 60%, 1 F eligible policy. Whatever the board decides, run it in place for a year, look at the policy again. Is it working? This is by far the most looked at policy in all schools. Every school has their own policy and none of the schools do it the same. Use the homework center and get the grades up! They lowered it to 60% and now the kids should be able to pass. He can live with the 0 F's, 1 F to the homework center 2 or more F's ineligible.

Shawn Jepson said, if you want to participate, go to the homework center and get the help that is needed. Mark asked Shawn, will it help the younger students. Shawn stated we need to adapt the policy that fits our kids, not other schools.

Nick said, speaking for me! I definitely like the idea of probation. (Taking the student, to the next level) continue trending of the other way! HS in an experience, that is what we all think of in years to come. 0 or 1 F? I understand the argument of going to 0 F's to play, but I don't know though if it is right for our school.

Gary stated, the ideas of the students having to go to the homework center. From an Academic aspect, that is the reason we are here, after school is great. But from the coaching aspect you are going to miss practices, on a daily level. It will be tough on the student to try to train, and then be at the competition level. You are not there! The board than asked if he talked to the kids about their grades? Gary said if you are a coach, it's a daily speech of how you have to keep your grades up to get here. If they are failing and can't play, you remind the student they put themselves in that situation now they have to get out of it. Mark stated he is in favor of going to 60% and 0 F policy. With multiple F's there has to be an ineligible level.

Jim Knutson stated he knows responsibility has to be taken, but with the high free and reduced, parents not speaking English at home, no homework help at home, and the challenges these kids face should it be changed to No F's?

Wayne again stated, we changed it from 70% to 60%, we need to make them take some responsibility.

Jeff Hopkins made a motion to change to Option 4, 0 F's, 1 F on probation (including daily T-C homework center attendance to be decided later) 2 or more F's you will be ineligible. Sue Lederer seconded it. Jim Knutson stated he doesn't agree with it. The survey numbers are low, and changed from last time. We are going away from the survey. Jim Knutson and Jim Cesar voted no. Vote was 5-2, motion carried on a voice vote.

The next questions by all, were- Are we going to be able to enforce the homework center afterschool program? Will the students ask other students for help? Do all failing students have to go to the homework center? Try to see if this works. We need to offer solutions. Time frame of the homework center needs to be discussed. They used to have 3-week grade checks from teachers for eligibility years ago. Do all the teachers get their grades in daily or some by project. Mark stated if one student has a grade in for a project due, even though it is not due yet, the grade for other students will be affected.

Nick stated that he just learned how you can pull the grades in an auto post from Skyward. Parents can get them through email if we have their correct emails. Parents phone numbers and addresses may change on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Jeff liked the idea of 15 days, that's a chance to check grades 3 times a quarter or 12 times a year. So a student would have more opportunity to become eligible. However, if you get 2 F's at that time then you will become on probation. It was stated you should not be practicing if you have 2 or more F's. Need to have answers to all of these before we can take a vote.

Mark said he didn't think 3 weeks is enough quality time he thinks six weeks should be a better time line.

Sue Lederer made a motion that the time frame to change ineligibility to eligibility after the quarter grade eligibility checks will be in 15 school day increments. At that 15 day check you can move from probation to eligible or ineligible to probation or even eligible with no more F's. Auto post grades them through Skyward will be utilized. Jim Cesar seconded; motion carried on a voice vote. Jim Knutson voted no.

Question 2, All activities: timelines have to be looked at. Timing will be a factor, if you add these. The board was looking at what other schools do and how they break them down (categories, levels, steps). Jim Knutson stated that kids are not all interested in the same things and are not going to learn certain subjects if they are not interested in them. Example: we on the board have all different jobs and interests. So FFA is going to be more important to some.

Jim C. doesn't believe you should be on homecoming or on a float if you have 3 F's.

It was decided to table Question 2, referring to other clubs/activities added to the co-curricular policy #370.00AR, to another meeting.

Mark said we would move on to Item B on the board agenda- The 2017-2018 school year calendar. Mark passed out the calendar and Jim Cesar presented the information that the committee of Tony, Shawn, Nick, Jim and Mark had presented to the staff. Tony stated that the teachers must work 186 contracted days, but the 180 days' calendar for students is no longer in effect as long as the students reach the minute's State requirement. So this calendar presented had 179 days. The question was asked why would you start on September 1 for one day and then have a longer weekend. Nick stated the first day is always so chaotic, it's better for the students to get that done and start fresh on Tuesday of the next week. It also meant we have to start another week in June and attend on a Monday rather than finishing out the school year on a Friday. It was asked how we picked the Spring break and it went around the ACT testing and make up testing dates, and all the testing in the Elementary. It just worked out better going with the Easter Holiday. Wayne asked if next year, the committee members be listed on the email going out, as it stated the board had developed the calendar, he was questioned but didn't have the answers because he was not involved in the process. Tony stated he will list those involved in the future.

Mark Bacon made a motion, Jim Cesar seconded it. Motion was carried unanimously on a voice vote to adopt the 2017-2018 School year calendar presented tonight.

Next Special Board meeting date will be decided at the Regular Board Meeting January 24, 2017 as there wasn't enough days to get another Special Meeting in before the State School Board Convention.

Adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Recorded by: Wendy Hetzel

Recorded second by Sue Lederer

Submitted by:

Peggy Buckholt, Clerk