

EASTLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT #308
STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT
October 1, 2014 4:05 p.m.
Bill Woessner, President
Presiding

MEMBERS PRESENT: Janet Golden, Karl Henze, Connie Lower, Steven Snider, Jennifer Sturtevant, and William Woessner.

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Mark D. Hansen, Darcie Feltmeyer, Monica Burkholder

OTHERS PRESENT: No public was in attendance.

➤ **3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE:**

Superintendent Hansen provided a status report on progress made on the District's 3-year Strategic Plan. As for co- and extra- curricular programming, trend data shows that the percentage of students participating in activities is being sustained and increased overall. Cross Country, WYSE and Lego League were identified as recent additions to a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities for Eastland students. Trend data shows the following activities with generally *increasing participation*: golf, cross country, softball, FFA, FCCLA, WYSE. Activities showing a trend of *decreasing participation* include: football, boys' basketball, speech and the fall musical. Participation levels in most activities has stayed the same or similar despite enrollment declines of about -3.6% annually for the last five years.

➤ **TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:**

The status report on transportation showed that all tasks included in the 3-year strategic plan are completed. Eastland has reduced total miles traveled annually by 52,000 miles from the total traveled in 2009-10, saving an estimated \$30,000 per year in expenditures. Also, by sharing transportation services for some programs with Chadwick-Milledgeville, another \$15,000 per year has been saved. Finally, by contracting to lease rather than purchase buses outright, the District has managed to replace ten (10) old buses with new buses over the last three years. The average miles on each bus in the fleet was 92,000 in June of 2008, with seven (7) of the buses over 120,000 miles. In June, 2014, the average miles on each bus in the fleet was 55,000 miles, with no buses over 120,000 miles. The District has managed to operate balanced budgets in the transportation fund over the last three years despite reductions in state and local revenue.

➤ **FACILITIES UPDATE:**

Dr. Hansen reported that the situation with facilities is similar to that of transportation. By adding to the high school and improving spaces within the old high school building, the District has been able to reduce from three to two attendance centers. All tasks on the 3-year strategic plan are completed including the goal of having window air units in most instructional spaces that are not air conditioned. As a result, Eastland has not had to release early due to heat over the last two school years. In the summer of 2013, a new flat roof was installed on the Eastland Jr/Sr High School in Lanark. During the 2013-14 school year, the District spent almost \$50,000 more than budgeted for utilities. About 65% of these costs were due to fees charged for gas used on "critical

usage” days during the winter of 2013-14. He cautioned that the buildings are showing signs of wear and tear, particularly floors, doors, door closures, boilers, and HVAC units. Costs for repairs have been higher in the last two budget years, but the budgets have been balanced as the District enters a phase of less need for new construction or remodeling work. The District is due for a 10-year Health/Life Safety Review that may reveal some additional facility improvement needs.

➤ **TECHNOLOGY REPORT:**

District Technology Director Eric Haan provided a status report on technology improvements. All students in grades 2-12 now have access to laptops at a 1:1 ratio during the instructional day, with 7th-12th graders allowed to take them home every day. The goal is that students in grades 3-12 will have access 24 hrs/day facilitated with backpacks that allow them to take their devices home. The District continues to upgrade the network infrastructure, installing new switches and otherwise ensuring robust wired and wireless systems throughout the district. This is necessary to ensure that the network can handle the traffic of all students, staff and guests – traffic that continues to increase every year. In addition, the District plans to switch phone service to VOIP that will be carried over the I-Fiber connection, reducing costs for that service. Eastland continues to host Moodle – a digital learning environment – for six (6) other school districts, with the ability to expand to others in the future. Director Haan shared information on the new Amplify tablets that may be leased starting in 2014-15 in place of the current laptops in grades K-6. Teachers have evaluated the devices for instructional use at the lower grade levels. Superintendent Hansen added that investment in professional development will be critical to sustaining and improving on the current level of technology implementation.

➤ **FINANCES:**

Dr. Hansen identified Senate Bill 16 (SB16) and the possibility of a “cost shift” for teacher pensions as the chief threats to finances. SB 16 seeks to equalize education funding in the state by giving more funding to districts that are low in property value and high in rates of poverty. To pay for this, the bill reduces state aid to districts with higher property value per pupil. Preliminary indications are that Eastland would lose about \$506,000 of the \$617,000 of state aid it currently receives. In addition, there is talk in state government of shifting the state’s burden for teacher pensions to local districts. On a positive note, preliminary calculations show that the total assessed value of property in the district will increase for the 2015-16 school year after declining for four consecutive years. The District’s financial rating during this period of time has remained “Financial Recognition,” the highest rating in the four-rating index used by the State Board of Education. It will take at least one election cycle to determine if the threats become realities, and whether increases in EAV will be sufficient to mitigate for losses in state funding if they do.

➤ **CORE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES:**

A status report on core academic outcomes was shared. District initiatives in math curriculum and instruction have resulted in academic gains for five consecutive years. The percentage of Eastland students demonstrating math proficiency according to state standards is significantly higher than the state average, and improving yearly. Another positive indicator is the lack of an achievement gap at Eastland High School. For 11th graders tested in the spring of 2014, the percentages of low income and non low-income students meeting state standards in reading and math were virtually identical. Superintendent Hansen said this is uncommon and commendable.

➤ **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Although there was improvement over 2013, percentages of students demonstrating reading and language proficiency in grades 3-8 are just slightly above the state average, and significantly below the percentages of the same students meeting math standards. These scores were corroborated by other assessments of student reading improvement during 2013-14, which showed that 16% more of the students met their yearly growth targets for math as compared to reading. ISAT scores for elementary science are not helpful in predicting student performance on measures of science proficiency at the high school level, making it difficult to determine if students are making growth towards science proficiency in later grades. While there is evidence of students making extraordinary growth in science proficiency in high school, the percentage of students meeting state standards for science is similarly below the percentage of the same students meeting them for math.

➤ **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARIES:**

Principal Feltmeyer presented a School Improvement Plan summary for Eastland Elementary with two (2) priorities and task plans:

1. Reading

- Teachers will create units and assessments (based on essential grade level skills) that connect to Science/Social Studies by using informational text(non-fiction) emphasis
- Teachers will implement with fidelity Stephanie Harvey instructional strategies in grades K-6
- Teachers will begin implementing Guided Reading and Literature Circles in grades K-6.
- Common planning time (one prep time) will be dedicated once per week for curriculum/assessment development.
- Teachers will begin using Michael Heggerty Phonemic Awareness strategies in grades K-2
- Administration and staff will develop a K-6 schedule that allows grade levels to move students to guided reading groups based on their reading level

2. Math

- Teachers will create units and assessments (based on essential grade level skills) during one planning (prep) per week.

Principal Burkholder presented a School Improvement Plan summary for Eastland Jr/Sr High School with three (3) priorities and task plans:

1. Science

- Teachers will analyze data from MAP testing and will take the test themselves to identify areas for emphasis
- Teachers will train on the use of the Learning Continuum to better align instruction to individual student needs
- Professional development on the Next Generation Science standards will be provided

- Science curriculum will be mapped and course sequences considered

2. Individualized learning and differentiated instruction

- Teachers will analyze student progress from multiple points of data
- Response to Intervention RTI strategies will be improved, including
 1. A new RtI Reading program in grades 7-9
 2. Reteach lessons in math 7th-10th
 3. Reteach lessons in English 9th & 10th
 4. Enrichment lessons in 7th & 8th grade Learning Labs
 5. 7th & 8th grade science and writing enrichment activities
 6. 7th & 8th grade math interventions activities
- Teachers will receive professional development on differentiating instruction within the classroom
 1. Professional development
 2. Use of Learning Continuum
 3. Groupings in class based on assessment scores
 4. Leveled questioning within regular education classroom
- 8th grade students taking 9th grade algebra based on assessment data

3. Life after high school preparation

- All students will develop individual learning plans
- Programs of Study will be aligned to transition students from school to the workforce
- Career exploration activities will be implemented/expanded
 1. Career and college fairs
 2. Career day activities
 3. Work-based study opportunities
 4. Guest speakers

Superintendent Hansen reminded the Board that all teachers were in the process of implementing local measures of student growth for their subject areas so that data on student growth in all curriculum areas will eventually be available for analysis and improvement planning.

➤ CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by **Sturtevant** and seconded by **Henze** to enter into closed session at 6:32 p.m. to discuss:

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

Roll call vote showed Golden, Henze, Lower, Snider, Sturtevant and Woessner voting aye.

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Henze and seconded by Snider to exit closed session at 6:59 p.m. Voice vote showed all ayes. **Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Lower and seconded by Woessner to approve closed session minutes. Voice vote showed all ayes. **Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Golden and seconded by Henze to approve the following personnel actions:

- Approve and accept the notice of intent to retire of David Giedd as custodian effective October 31, 2014;
- Approve and accept the notice of intent to retire of Jim Ditsworth as Special Route Bus Driver effective immediately;
- Approve the re-assignment of Joe Gillis from Special Route Driver for WACC Life-Skills/Thome Special Route Driver to Special Route Driver for the Freeport Life-Skills Program;
- Approve the re-assignment of Dan Beyer from substitute bus driver to the WACC Life-Skills/Thome Special Route Driver;
- Approve a motion to continue posting the following vacancies:
 - Sub Bus Drivers
 - EJSHS Custodian
 - Assistant Spring Play Director

Roll call vote showed Golden, Henze, Lower, Snider, Sturtevant and Woessner voting aye. **Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Snider and seconded by Golden to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. Voice vote showed all ayes. **Motion carried.**

These minutes are not official until approved by the Board of Education.

William Woessner, President

Janet Golden, Secretary