

Board Briefs

November 2011

Next Meetings:

The next regular meeting at 8 p.m., **Monday, December 19**, in the **South** High School Library, 11 Grosse Pointe Boulevard.

Board meeting dates and agendas are listed at www.gpschools.org and posted in the Central Administration Building at 389 St. Clair Ave., Grosse Pointe, MI 48230.

You can now watch the school board meetings via www.gppstv.phanfare.com on Comcast channel 20/902 and AT&T channel 99, or listen to the podcast on the district website.

Mark Your Calendar:

- Partnership for Different Learners meeting 7 p.m., Thursday, 12/1, Barnes Gym
- Parcels Holiday Bazaar, Saturday 12/3 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- South 8th grade orientation meeting, Monday 12/5 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium. North's incoming student orientation is 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, 1/10/12 in the PAC
- Holiday Tea at 1 p.m., 12/7 in the PAC

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Board meeting opens with a celebration students and staff

Many recognitions were celebrated. Tower advisor Jeff Nardone was congratulated for earning the National Scholastic Press Association's highest honor for his contributions to high school journalism. South's girls cross country team was celebrated for winning the state championship and Coach Zaranek for being named Michigan's Division I cross country coach of the year. Ninety Advanced Placement Scholars were honored for their exemplary performance, earning scores high enough to garner college credit from their AP tests. Then these Distinguished Employees were commended: Jonathan Byrne, North High School; Cheryl Gawel, Poupard Elementary; Tudi Harwood, South High School; Helen Landuyt, Barnes Early Childhood Center; Stefani Makowski, Defer Elementary; Cindy Manetta, Special Education; Deborah Raab, Mason Elementary; Alma Reygaert, Brownell Middle School; Michael Spears, North High School and Technology; Janet Truance, Administration Building.

District earns another clean and unqualified audit

Representatives from the district's new auditors, Plante Moran, presented a clean and unqualified audit report. There was one finding for a one-time only EduJobs grant out of the 17 projects in the federal grant report. Plante Moran thanked the business office for their diligent efforts, particularly during this year of transition. They also presented highlights of financial challenges for the district to keep in mind during future budget development. Board Treasurer Brendan Walsh then shared the "2011-12 Financial State of the District and Projected Effect of Employee Contracts" as part of the continuing Financial Transparency Series looking at revenue and expenses overall, per pupil and by category (see www.gpschools.org). With the current state budget projections, including increases in the state mandated MPSERS retirement rate, the contract formula is triggered. This will result in a projected average salary reduction per employee of approximately -2.65% in 2012-13, -10.19% in 2013-14, and -5.62% in 2014-15 to keep fund equity at the agreed upon minimum of 10% of the annual general fund expenditures.

November action items approved unanimously

The first general appropriations at amendment (GAAA#1) was approved, amending the budget to account for the slight increase in enrollment as well as the June staffing cuts that were later restored, and ensuring alignment with the latest Budget Modeling Utility (BMU). The Human Resources report and minutes were also approved 7-0.

Pilot high school course previewed and program of studies discussed

A course entitled "Strategies for Reading and Writing" was previewed. The goal is to help students entering freshman year with a two-year deficit in reading and writing competence. Both high schools have almost 70 students who fall within that 26th-50th percentile on the NWEA test. The pilot course will be available to students at both schools pending board approval. The 2012-13 High School Program of Studies has two other changes. The *Theory of Learning* course is moving from the Interdepartmental category to being an English pilot, and the *Living on Your Own II* course will now be available as a 0.5 math credit if taken in the senior year. The document will be available online in the Academics section of www.gpschools.org and in the high school and central offices.

December Action items focus on policy updates and basic board business

Per suggestions from NEOLA and the policy committee, Bylaw 0167.1 is being clarified in regard to the impact of abstentions, 1241 will reflect time parameters for non-reemployment of the Superintendent, 1420 will require annual school administrator evaluation per current law, 2340 will allow district-sponsored trips to Canada without Board approval when there are no travel alerts, and 8540 changes language to comply with recent federal legislation under the Health and Hunger-Free Kids Act. Also in December, the board will discuss their 2012 meeting calendar and interest in board officer positions.