

Board Briefs

September 2008

Meeting Dates

Board meeting dates are the fourth Monday of the month, with a few changes due to holiday and calendar issues. Additional work sessions may be scheduled, but those will not be televised.

Please Note: July through December, regular Board meetings will be held in South's Wicking Library. January through June, regular Board meetings will be held in the North library. Work session locations vary.

Next Meetings:

Board meeting at 8 p.m., Monday, October 27, in South's Wicking Library, 11 Grosse Pointe Blvd., Grosse Pointe Farms.

Board meetings 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.

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\$500,000 donation given to GPFPE by Boll Foundation

The largest single donation to the GPPSS was presented by the Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education for Board of Education acceptance. The John and Marlene Boll Foundation had previously offered the \$50,000 match for the F.A.S.T. Reading Challenge, and pleased with the results, they generously donated \$500,000 to the GPFPE. Of that \$200,000 will go toward finishing the pool fundraising initiative and equipping the fitness facility. The Bolls will work with the GPFPE to allocate the remaining \$300,000 in alignment with the district's strategic plan. The South natatorium will now be named the John and Marlene Boll Athletic Center.

Four other GPFPE grants accepted by the board

The Board of Education also accepted three grants and a directed gift from the GPFPE: \$3,500 for Challenge Day; \$6,600 for a Grosse Pointe North Easy Access to High School Writing Success pilot; \$12,022 for a district-wide program Using Picture Books as Models in Writing; and \$37,000 to close out the F.A.S.T. Reading Challenge. That gift brought F.A.S.T. donations to \$164,000 to date.

Three reports on the learning results and environment were presented

The district's annual report presentation was held this month prior to the State's October 15 deadline. It included MEAP, MME, ACT, SAT, NWEA and Grosse Pointe Writing scores and celebrated required components such as our 95% attendance rate, 91% parent participation rate and 97% retention rate. All school annual reports are being presented in their respective buildings at Back to School or PTO meetings and all reports are available on the district website. Dr. Allan then presented a new Learning Report that benchmarked our district against itself and other public school systems, similar to the financial benchmarking report. State testing -- MEAP and MME -- are favorable in most areas (in some cases very favorable). Areas for improvement and district focus are elementary and middle school math and K-12 writing. A quick summary and the entire report are linked from the agenda on the website. Principals Bearden and Diver presented an update on the *High School 2.0* initiative highlighting achievement levels for various student groups and technology needs.

Tax levy means slightly lower taxes for residents and lower revenue

No tax hearing was necessary this year, as rates actually decreased because of a State business tax structure change. For a home with a taxable value of \$125,000 (\$250,000 sales value), this will translate into just over a \$10 reduction.

Regular Board business - legal counsel, reinstatement, policy matter

The board voted 6-1 to approve the administration's recommendation to retain Clark Hill as general counsel. The board voted 7-0 to appoint the reinstatement panel through December or until a new panel is seated. This panel provides recommendations in cases where families wish to have students reinstated to the district. In a 4-3 vote the Board approved a revision to policy 5611 making it possible for families to appeal any separation over two days to the superintendent. Previously the principal's decision for separations under five days was final.