

**TECUMSEH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**October 10, 2016 Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Tecumseh Public Schools' Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m., by President Amstutz-Wild, in the High School Media Center.

**Board Present:** Members K. Amstutz-Wild, R. Hart, D. Johnson-Berges; S. Linn; G. Johnson; J. Rice; & E. Tritt

**Board Absent:** None

**School Present:** K. Coffin, Superintendent; J. Pfund; L. Church; D. Thelen; R. Francis; S. Bailey; G. Mills;  
A. Mensing; C. Lewandowski; R. Hilderley;

There were approximately 45 visitors present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Member Linn led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**GOOD NEWS**

**Recognition of TVA Graduates:** The Board and administration congratulated and recognized TVA student graduates, Michael Lewis and Ashland Miller, on their successful completion of coursework, and to be graduating from the program.

Mrs. Cathy Lewis, Michael Lewis' grandmother, thanked the staff and Board for their support and compassion for Tecumseh students. She stated she is very proud of the fact her grandchildren graduated from TPS.

**Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX) Program:** Mrs. Angel Mensing, along with Liz Fraker, CIS Graduation Coach, spoke about the ROX program, now in its second year at the high school. The mission of ROX is to "equip girls with the knowledge and skills necessary to live healthy, independent, productive, and violence-free lives." Girls in the program participate in 20 sessions covering topics such as communication, managing social media, safety and self-defense, healthy relationships, stress and coping, women in the media, body image and beauty, leadership development, and career/future planning. The Board also heard from students involved in the program as they shared experiences and what they have learned from being involved in the program. The group thanked the Board for their support of the program.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:** No comments made.

**AGENDA - BOARD**

**REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** With no revisions to the agenda, it was moved by Member Johnson-Berges, support by Member Linn, to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.

**SCHEDULED REPORTS:**

**2015-2016 District Audit Presentation:** Mr. Brian Nofzinger, certified public accountant with the firm Gross Puckey, Gruel, & Roof, P.C., presented information to the Board regarding the 2015-2016 district's financial audit. Mr. Nofzinger stated the firm has issued an "unmodified opinion" which is the highest rating the district can receive regarding its financial reports and standing of the district. He stated he is confident that the Board has been receiving sound, accurate, financial statements on a monthly basis and he feels that the Board has made sound, wise decisions based on the financial statements, as there were no material modifications that had to be made for this to be accurate. Mr. Nofzinger stated there were no difficulties with management, and there were no deficiencies to report. He reviewed all aspects of the financial reports including the governmental wide funds,

and the combined balance sheet. Overall, the district ends the 2015-2016 fiscal year with a 21.2% fund equity, which is above the state recommend level of 15%. While the Board was satisfied with the report, a concern was expressed with the timing of the report. The new state guideline requires districts to file audit information by before Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> which means the board had to approve the auditor's report despite having received it only three days prior. Member Debbie Johnson-Berges stated there is a lot of financial information to get through in three days and that she was disappointed it didn't come earlier to give Board members a little bit more time to look at it. Member Jim Rice agreed it would be better to have the report earlier in the future, but indicated he felt comfortable approving it in light of Mr. Nofzinger's presentation. Superintendent Kelly Coffin said that since the district's fiscal year ends in June, followed by a month for district officials to make sure they've captured all the expenses from the previous year, the auditing firm has only August and September to conduct the audit. She reminded Board members that the State will be adjusting the deadline to file the report up another 15 days next year and suggested the Board should plan for two board meetings in October (next year) to ensure they have enough time to review the information and that the auditors have time to have a comprehensive audit.

**Patterson School Improvement Report:** Mrs. Maggie Emerick, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, presented information to the Board regarding school improvement goals in the area of science at Patterson Elementary School. She outlined some of the activities the students are working on and the process they go through with investigations, critical thinking, small group work, predictions, and that the data and models are then shared publically with other students. Mrs. Emerick stated she attended the NGSS training and Tecumseh was chosen as the only district in the county to participate in the program to prepare a plan for the State.

**First Student Transportation Update:** Mr. Jason Szteiter reported that the State of Michigan bus inspections came in at 100% satisfactory of all buses at our site. He spoke about the opening of school and that things went smoothly which is a credit to the coordination of building administrators. He also spoke about the donations he provides to the district through trips and events. Mr. Szteiter stated overall, things are going great in Tecumseh and having helped out at other districts, what we have in Tecumseh is unique.

**Monthly Finance Report:** Mrs. Judy Pfund reviewed the monthly financial reports. She reported that the reports will start to look more normal now after the audit work as things begin to hit the appropriate budget lines. She spoke about the on-site audit from MDE of our Title I programs. She stated the audit went well and was completed in 1-day as opposed to the 2-days which was scheduled. She stated the auditor looks at district policies and procedures, inventory of equipment purchased with federal funds, payroll information, and if things are charged to the proper function and object codes. The MDE auditor reported no findings and the district will receive the MDE report within a few months. Mrs. Pfund also reported that the district received \$11,853.00 from SET-SEG as our portion of the MASB-SEG property/casualty pool distribution which is returned to members.

**Monthly Facilities Report:** Mr. Josh Mattison updated the Board regarding the maintenance budget, spoke about the "Help Desk" system that will be in place for staff to report work orders through, stated that work on the maintenance building has started, and that the work at the elementary buildings with the LED lighting will start at Herrick Park as soon as the material arrives.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Strategic Design:** Dr. Coffin spoke about the strategic design plan which was developed by school administrators, teachers, and 65 community members who came together in August to identify the mission and beliefs regarding learning, along with core values, significant spheres of living, future conditions, outcomes when students graduate, and vision statements in each of the eight spheres of life. Dr. Coffin stated the Strategic

Design will help take the district from an industrial age to a modern age that uses technology to focus on an individual student's strengths and the way they learn best to make them successful when they graduate. Dr. Coffin stated the current educational system is set up in an industrial age era, but now there is a need to transfer that to a shift in mindset from adult convenience to learner center, one in which educators organize to get the desired outcomes. Dr. Coffin stated TPS already has the technology to customize the learning environment for all learners and that it is necessary to prepare students for life, and not just more school.

Dr. Coffin stated the new mission came from many hours of work from the group, stating that the mission of TPS is: Uncompromisingly learner centered. Our mission inspirationally states the reason that our learning community exists. She stated this will be our filter for all decisions in the learning community. Dr. Coffin stated the mission serves as a blueprint for our district.

Dr. Coffin stated along with the new mission and beliefs, the group developed a universal vision statement that represents what the district will look like, feel like, and be like when operating at its best: "We are a dynamic learning community taking bold steps to ensure all learners are inspired and empowered for life."

Dr. Coffin stated while much work was done to develop the Strategic Design, there is much work to do. The next step will be to identify leaders to begin implementation, even though there are pockets of this type of transformational work being done across the district; she is hopeful that within five years the learner-center way of educating students will be fully in place.

In summary, Dr. Coffin stated the exciting piece is that this is now being talked about as a county-wide initiative as well. Dr. Coffin said this will provide all students the ability to have an equal opportunity no matter where they live. Dr. Coffin stated the strategic design overview can also be found in its entirety on the TPS website and she thanked everyone who had a part in this process.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

**2015-2016 District Audit:** It was moved by Member Linn, support by Member Hart, to approve the 2015-2016 district audit. All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.

**Strategic Design:** It was moved by Member Rice, support by Member Johnson, to approve the Strategic Design as presented. All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **AGENDA – ADMINISTRATION (District Business)**

**CONSENT AGENDA:** It was moved by Member Johnson-Berges, support by Member Rice, to approve the Consent Agenda which included minutes from the September 12, 2016 Board Meeting. All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.

**ACTION ITEMS:** No items scheduled.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Coffin reported the Technology Department has added a student-technician division to assist with Chromebook repairs. Two students are now spending a portion of their day fixing broken Chromebook screens. She stated the students are very excited about this role and it is the plan to expand the opportunity to allow for additional students to work in both the middle and high school settings. Additionally, this has allowed the Tech Department to focus on other technology repairs.

Dr. Coffin stated she attended the county-wide strategic planning meetings and through the process, customized learning will now be an area of focus across the county. She stated she will continue to serve on the steering committee for this goal area and she looks forward to working with county leaders to transform the educational experiences for all learners in the county.

Dr. Coffin reported that a group of teachers and administrators will be taking a trip to Elizabeth, PA on Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> to a 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade STEM school in the Elizabeth Forward School District. The program features an integrated approach to learning. She stated the group hopes to gain insight about how this will look in Tecumseh through the reorganization process.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

##### **Building Updates:**

**Tecumseh High School** – Mr. Mills thanked the Board for their support of the TVA graduates. He stated that was truly an example of customized learning. Mr. Mills also updated the Board regarding the new high school courses the Board approved last spring. AP Economics has 22 students enrolled, AP World History has 62 students enrolled, and the Peer-to-Peer course has been wonderful to see general ed and special ed students working together which helps with problem solving and self-esteem issues. He stated his daughter is now considering becoming a special education teacher after having participated in the class. Mr. Mills also spoke about Michele Vanhala, a Knows Fellow teacher at THS, and the positive impact she is having on students in Science.

**Tecumseh Middle School** – Mr. Hilderley spoke about the e-cyber mission projects at the middle school through the science department.

**Herrick Park** – Mrs. Francis spoke about the school improvement goals in the area of science and how staff are aligning science with reading.

**Patterson** – Ms. Deidra spoke about the math alignment work at the elementary level and the work with Mike Bloomquist which helps with the accountability for learning piece for staff.

**Sutton** – Mrs. Bailey spoke about the flexible grouping that is taking place at Sutton and how co-teaching provides additional supports for struggling learners.

**Tecumseh Acres** – Mr. Lewandowski spoke about how staff members meet regularly to discuss student needs and determine how they can help meet the needs of students where they are.

**Student Support Services** – Ms. Church stated she is very excited about the new Instructional Assistant Handbook which will be shared with staff this week.

#### **ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT AGENDA (Nov. 14, 2016)**

##### **Good News:**

- Kids for Kids Summer Program

##### **Report/Discussion Items:**

- Technology Update
- Middle School – School Improvement Report
- Annual Summer Tax Resolution
- MASB Conference Update
- Closed Session for Superintendent's Evaluation

##### **Action Items:**

#### **CLOSING**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No comments made.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:** President Amstutz-Wild complimented Dr. Coffin on her work at the county level with customized learning. She also stated the best part of being a Board member is the graduation of students.

Member Hart commented about the wonderful comments from Mrs. Lewis (the student's grandmother) in which she complimented the district on support for her grandchildren.

Member Rice stated he is very excited about all of the things shared at the meeting and that he is so proud of our district.

Member Linn thanked Mrs. Pfund and the business department for all of their work on the audit. He also stated he has seen first-hand the benefits of the ROX program with the swim team and it's great.

**ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION:**

At 9:06 p.m., it was moved by Member Rice, support by Member Hart, to adjourn to closed session, pursuant to P.A. 267 of 1976, Section 8, Subsection (c): For strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement if either negotiating party requests a closed hearing. Roll call: Members Amstutz-Wild, Hart, Johnson-Berges, Linn, Johnson, Rice, and Tritt. Motion carried 7-0.

At 9:55 p.m., it was moved by Member Rice, support by Member Johnson-Berges, to return to open session. All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.

At 9:56 p.m., President Amstutz-Wild adjourned the meeting.

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Debbie Johnson-Berges, Secretary, Board of Education