

Our Mission

*Educating and inspiring each student
to navigate successfully
in a global community*

EAST GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kent County, Michigan

BUDGET HEARING of the East Grand Rapids Board of Education

High School Little Auditorium
2211 Lake Drive SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Monday, June 8, 2015

MINUTES

The **BUDGET HEARING** of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education, Kent County, Michigan, was held on Monday, June 8, 2015, High School Little Auditorium, 2211 Lake Drive SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Present: Michelle Rabideau, Elizabeth Welch Lykins, Beth Milanowski, Robert Wolford, Natalie Bernecker, Mark Hessler, Brian Coles

Absent: None

Administration: Dr. Sara Magaña Shubel, Jeanne Glowicki, Kevin Philipps, Kathy Wisniewski, Doug Jenkins, Jenny Fee, Steve Wojciechowski, Lori Johnston, Tim Johnston, Peter Stuursma, Bill Behrendt, Caroline Breault-Cannon, Anthony Morey, Craig Weigel

Meeting Called to Order

President Rabideau called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Acknowledgment of Guests - None

Board Secretary's Report: Communications to and from the Board – Beth Milanowski

The Board received communication from the following persons on proposed budget reductions:

Michelle Coffill	Brian Hamrich
Mary Elderkin	Jennifer Metz
Ashley Francis	Venta Norris
Emily Gorashko	Kathryn Stieler

The Board received communication from Jessica Homrich and Zach Wiener on special education services.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION

President Rabideau provided an overview of the format for tonight's budget hearing and explained that no decisions have been made regarding budget reduction recommendations and that no decisions will be made this evening. She thanked community members who have expressed their concerns and raised important questions as we face devastating budget cuts. The Board of Education appreciates those who have sought to better understand the complexities of public school funding. She shared that the district published the Community Budget Guide as a tool to provide continued transparency and information to community members with the goal of assisting in understanding the complexities and challenges of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools' annual budget. She invited Dr. Shubel to make some remarks and introduce our presentation.

Dr. Shubel shared that the budget development process is thorough and starts months in advance of tonight's budget hearing. Our goal this school year continued to be to seek input from our stakeholders regarding budget priorities. In addition to the multiple budget presentations given at various venues throughout the school year, we published and disseminated the Community Budget Guide. Despite the small increase in state funding and the generous contributions received through EGRNow!, we still have to make significant budget reductions in order to adopt a structurally balanced budget. She shared that the political rhetoric surrounding public education is always centered around school districts needing to operate more like businesses; however, no successful business can continue to maintain high standards, let alone thrive in a competitive environment without having significant financial resources on an ongoing basis. Our business is personnel driven and in order to provide our service which is TEACHING, LEARNING, and LEADING, we need to receive adequate resources from the state. She shared that historically current and past boards and administration have maintained financial stability in EGRPS through increased efficiencies and careful monitoring of expenditures which allowed us the opportunity to have enough equity to use over the past five years in order to make budget reductions as far removed from the classroom as possible. The recommended 2015-2016 proposed budget, including the staff reductions and/or eliminations are emotionally challenging for everyone and are only being brought forward after an exhaustive effort on our part to explore all options as we strive to achieve a structurally balanced budget.

Budget Hearing: 2015-2016 General Fund Budget

Kevin Philipps reviewed the General Fund Budget. The 2014-2015 Final Budget Amendments were shared as well as the variances from the amended budget of net operational changes in revenues and expenses. Philipps shared the 2015-2016 Budget Assumptions (State Funding) and presented the 2015-2016 Proposed Budget which included budget reduction recommendations in priority order. He shared that the budget process has been ongoing since September 2014, and a board budget workshop was held in January 2015. Following the workshop, staff and community workgroups met on three separate occasions, and input from these groups was presented at the May board meeting. Philipps reported that all recommendations from the various groups were considered as the budget recommendations were developed.

Special Education restructuring was outlined, and Kathy Wisniewski, Director of Special Education, presented details of the restructuring at all building levels. Restructuring of elementary world language, art, music, and physical education was outlined, and Anthony Morey, Wealthy Elementary Principal, presented details on the restructuring. The "ABC Schedule" outlined in the presentation in Enclosure #4 was developed to provide all elementary specials experiences for students on a rotating basis throughout the school year while maintaining current staff members in the district.

Philipps described middle and high school general education teaching staff reductions, and high school guidance restructuring was detailed by Jenny Fee, High School Principal, with the outcome of delivering services in a different way.

Philipps provided a summary of budget recommendations totaling \$778,000. EGRNow! contributions for the 2015-2016 school year totaling \$255,000 will offset the budget reductions. Philipps reported that there are budget risks due to student enrollment and collective bargaining agreements. Budget Assumptions were detailed for the 2016-2017 Forecast of revenues and expenses. Philipps described the factors involved in maintaining a structurally balanced budget.

In summary, Philipps reported that the proposed 2015-2016 budget is structurally balanced which requires significant budget reductions with the loss of some programs and services for students. The district will continue to work on maintaining structural balance and feel that the 2015-2016 budget provides the best possible educational program for students based on the resources received.

A discussion was held among the board throughout the presentation.

President Rabideau thanked Philipps, the entire administration, staff and community workgroups, EGR Schools Foundation, and the whole community for their support of our schools.

Public Comments – President Rabideau explained the ground rules and opened the floor for public comments.

The following persons commented on proposed budget reductions:

Sue McLain – 2920 Pioneer Club Road
Courtney Moskal – 2041 Tenway Drive
Holly Lampen – 2317 Wilshire
Sarah Pellegrini – 2544 Richards Drive
Anne Petruzzi – 2254 Boston Street
Amy Loftus Tuitel – 917 Pinecrest
Daniel Brown – 2519 Hampshire
Emily Verwys – 2243 Heather
Stephene Diepstra – 1759 Deepwood Drive
Michelle Patterson – 2046 Tenway
Wendy Kettler – 1609 Franklin St.
Tina Murua – 2650 Hall Street
Michelle Day – 950 Rosewood
Amy Marlow – 1440 Sherwood Ave.
Christine Adams – 1741 Danby Lane
Matt Klein – 3010 Oakwood Drive

Claudine Duncan – 1621 Amberley Ct, commented on support of the EGRNow! campaign.

John Inhulsen – 615 Cambridge, commented on legislative issues.

Gary Barnes – 1720 Oxford Drive, commented on IB.

Samantha Cornell – 311 Rosewood Ave., commented on IB.

President Rabideau thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. She shared that the engagement from our community is always welcome and would like to see staff and community members in attendance at board meetings all year long. She explained that the board and administration have been working on the budget since the fall and have been addressing reductions for many years. She shared that this is not something that has happened overnight, and the proposed budget including staff reductions and eliminations is emotionally challenging for everyone. There are no simple decisions, and the budget process is complex. The board's job is to assure that we are providing the best possible academic programs for our district, and students are first and foremost as we strive to achieve this goal.

ACTION ITEMS - CONSENT AGENDA

Background: In order to save time during the meeting, we are using a Consent Agenda. Items in the Consent Agenda include those that are routine or have been previously discussed by the Board of Education. Any board member may request to have any item removed for a separate discussion and vote.

Recommendation: Motion to approve the items in the Consent Agenda, Numbers 6 through 8.

Approval of Minutes of REGULAR Meeting of 5/11/2015 (Enclosure #6)

Approval of Payment of Bills – May 2015 (Enclosure #7)

Approval of Proposed Latin Curriculum (Enclosure #8)

Member Welch Lykins moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 6-8. Member Bernecker seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent - None

Assistant Superintendent of Business - None

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction - None

The next board meeting will be held on Monday, June 15, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. at the High School Little Auditorium.

ADJOURNMENT

President Rabideau adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Milanowski, Secretary
East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education

* Minutes for this meeting will be available in the Superintendent's Office at 2915 Hall St. SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506. The phone number is 235-3535.

** If you plan to attend and have a special need and require accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact Dr. Sara M. Shubel, Superintendent, at 235-3535.

jmm 6/9/2015