

**Central Community Unit School District 301
Board of Education Retreat Minutes**

Where: Central High School LMC
Date: August 13, 2011

Meeting: Retreat
Time: 8:00 a.m.

Board Members Present

Doty, Steve	Y
Gorman, Jeff	Y
Perry, Rich	Y
Rabe, Laura	Y
Roberts, Mike	N
Weigand, Gary	Y
Diaz, Rose	Y

Administrators Present

Stirn, Todd	Y
Rabenhorst, Greg	Y
Cope, Ron	N

Roll Call Roll call was taken at 7:58 a.m.

1. Roll Call

2. Activity -- Portrait of a Central Graduate. Discussions covered the new culture of teaching and getting staff teaching both content and instructions. The new administration at the high school has revamped department chairs and teaming with them, they are looking at how we can better utilize them as teacher leaders. Department chairs need to be focused on data, student engagement and instruction. The high school has three new dept chairs this year. They are strong leaders who know how to lead their groups. The teachers will listen to the department chairs better than administrators. The department chairs need strategies and professional development. Some other school districts have changed the titles from department chairs to curriculum leaders. Department chairs will need time to work with their teachers and collect good feedback to go back to the principal. Department chairs will not be evaluators, but peers coaching teachers in proper instructional techniques, and department level conversations will focus on improvements and weaknesses. The feedback will come from within the department without administrative input so that the teacher will not be anxious that the feedback will be used for evaluation. Departments will look at what is working, and focus on improvement. Building trust is an issue knowing we want staff to improve instruction and that the purpose of peer visits is not about identifying weaknesses. The culture that is focused on continuous improvement needs to be fostered. The focus should be on improving student instruction and engagement and staff development can come from teachers articulating and coaching each other. Teaching teachers the skills how to teach the content. More professional development and coaching will be necessary to help teachers master the skills to teach the content through various methods. Some teachers may not be able to grow, and the new evaluation system will enable teachers to be released for poor performance.

Middle School Level Instruction-- some changes will include better note taking strategies and consistency of note taking expectations. The middle school math strand needs to be adjusted so that the majority of students will be ready for algebra in 8th grade. Another issue is that parents need to make education a priority over student extracurricular activities. Many children are over involved and education is secondary to activities. Parent education is needed to teach the problems that can develop with over scheduled kids. Simple messages are needed to get this information to parents. Website development and brochures that focus on the college level readiness are in progress.

College readiness needs to be promoted as early as the elementary stage. Banners hanging in hallways and staff wearing college clothing will help kids see different university names. Exposing kids to colleges at an early age will help students gain excitement and allow them to see the atmosphere of college by taking field trips to area universities. Field trips also needed to be more content based Great America vs. The Holocaust Museum was an

example that was cited. Involve PTO's in promoting the college trips and universities will need staff and training to allow student tours, possibly student ambassadors.

Middle School Transition Plan

East side families have a lack of knowledge of CMS. Middle school transition communication will begin in September. The State of the District, Fine Arts Festival, and academic walks will be held at CMS. Student council members will do meet and greet type activities. Opportunities for 5th graders to see PKMS will be scheduled as well as the 7th graders visiting CMS. Visits could occur as early as February. District 6th graders will be together from 6th grade through high school.

The middle school principal position will be posted in early December. Interviews will begin in January, with approval by the Board at the January meeting. Jeff Hermann, Cindy Mecum and Theresa Kolkebeck will assist in staffing. In September the district newsletter will go out and explain the transition. During October the buildings will send out additional information in building newsletters. The transition information will be sent home all year.

Elementary Enrollment

Options – grade level centers, closing buildings.

Strengths—traditionally 301 has had k-5 buildings at some point we had grade level centers. Heavy growth has occurred in the Elgin corridor. Districts that have grade level centers like them but initially had a lot of community resistance. Grade level centers allow for curriculum integrity. More focus is allowed at each grade level. Some advantages include: Grade level centers allow each school to focus on the educational and social needs of each student they also allow for focus areas to make it instructionally sound class sizes have better balance and staff members can be reorganized. The disadvantages include: students will no longer attend neighborhood schools, there will not be an attachment to any one school, and siblings could be separated. The primary reason to ever consider grade level centers is based on enrollment numbers. When growth returns it will likely be on the east side of the district, and the infrastructure for housing already exists on the east side of the district.

Dr. Stirn reviewed enrollment history:

PV has had 3-4 boundary shifts. 28 classrooms of 25 kids – the building could house 700 students – no more additions. Still on well and septic. Enrollment 587 note 3rd & 4th grade they are the highest enrollment numbers.

CT no boundary shifts – it appears the boundary shift was not perfect, but classes are pretty much balanced. The building has 28 classrooms, and it can hold 700 students. Country Trails was built to allow an addition. The kitchen/cafeteria would need to be enhanced if an addition was put on the building.

HBT --from 1996 – 2000 the district had grade level centers, that was the highest enrollment HBT has had. HBT houses early childhood and NIA will be moving to HBT in 2012 (5 classrooms)

LL – highest enrollment was in 02/03, Windings is the major subdivision and the other housing developments are much smaller. LL has 11 classrooms. Bigger issue—kindergarten enrollment this year is 16. Investigations can be done to assist in population. Teacher collaboration and quality instruction suffers with stand alone classrooms. Instruction goes beyond test scores the lack of a pair of teachers has a negative impact on teachers, they have no one to share instructional ideas, they feel isolated. When teachers are alone they tend to have no one to bounce ideas off of.

Lily Lake options include – continue to monitor enrollment, fully examine attendance boundaries, Grade level centers could possibly include Lily Lake. Any transition will take two years, and it cannot happen before 2013. However better demographic information is still needed. Jeff Gorman would like to see other options. Grade level centers could allow for the district to offer all day kindergarten.

A follow up meeting is needed – all options need to be weighed prior to any decision being made
Lily Lake could house early childhood and possibly pre-school to feed into our schools, and grade level centers would

work well with the new curriculum initiatives.

The Board would like to meet again to examine the benefits of a larger peer group, research on grade level centers, how small is too small from the education/social learning aspect.

The next meeting will be held at 5:30 on September 8th in CHS conference room

Committee Assignments:

CCC -Jeff

DLT - Laura

Finance – Steve

Foundation – Rich, Rose

Facilities - Mike

EPC - Gary

Adjourn

Doty, Gorman, Perry, Rabe, Weigand, Diaz

Absent: Roberts

Recording Secretary