

# Hawthorn Board of Education

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## MINUTES REGULAR BOARD MEETING HAWTHORN BOARD OF EDUCATION JUNE 27, 2005

MINUTES of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Hawthorn Community Consolidated School District Number 73, Lake County, Illinois, held in the Conference Room of said School District at 7:30 p.m. on the 27th day of June, 2005.

The meeting was called to order by Mary Jane Rattner, President, at 7:33 p.m., and upon the roll being called, the following members of the Board of Education answered present: Donna Gaidamak, Anne Hoffman, Tim Shanahan, Annie Christie, Bill Coli, and Mary Jane Rattner. Absent: Jose Hernandez.

### Public Comment Period

Mrs. Rattner requested those wishing to address the Board to come forward. Hearing none, the meeting proceeded.

### Student and Staff Accomplishments, Recognitions

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

### Staff Presentations

#### PTO Presentation

Carrie Pasquesi, Past PTO President, and Sarah Noreen, PTO President, presented to the District a check in the amount of \$70,000 representing funds raised by the PTO on behalf of the students of our District and to be distributed to each building on a per capita basis. This equals approximately \$19 per student. In Dr. Joe's absence and on his and the Board's behalf, Sue Zook thanked the many PTO volunteers and parents of the District for their support. Mary Jane Rattner also thanked the PTO noting their efforts are very much appreciated by students, teachers and the Board. Mr. Coli noted past years donations by the PTO specifically earmarked for building playgrounds. He suggested a plaque be placed at each playground recognizing the PTO for their generous donations and efforts. Mrs. Christie added one of her most rewarding activities was as a member of the PTO. From the participation of parents and community members in the PTO's fundraising activities, it is returned to the school. Raising their voices in song, the Board offered a special thanks to the PTO.

### Writing Scores

Sue Zook provided a report on the District's writing scores. Grade level score charts were distributed, with Dr. Zook noting grade level charts will be posted on the District's website within the next couple of weeks. She began stating prior to the 2004/05 school year, the State did writing samples for grades 3, 5 and 8. Through these ISAT writing scores, we felt the need to focus more student energy in writing. A little more than a year ago, teacher training began in Six-Traits Writing, a framework for teaching writing with emphasis on ideas and organization. Through Six-Traits, all students and teachers will speak the same language about writing. Teachers will be capable of collaboratively scoring writing in the future. This year, students were administered writing samples in the fall and spring to measure growth over the year, which samples are sent to ECRA for scoring, a company who has been scoring writing for schools across the state, SAT, colleges entry essays, and they score consistently with the Six-Traits Writing rubric. For the first year, student growth is promising and positive. We are emphasizing writing to improve achievement in other areas.

In the fall, 0% of our students scored 4 or better. On Six-Traits, grades K-2 were scored on four of the six traits, and they are scored on a six point rubric which is defined as follows: 1 represents seriously deficient/experimenting with writing; 2 - unacceptable or emerging; 3 - marginal or developing; 4 - acceptable or adequate; 5 - commendable and 6 - excellent or experienced writer. Individual student reports went home in June with student report cards. A comparison by grade level of students receiving a score of 4 or better between the fall and spring writing samples was provided:

Grade	Percent Receiving 4 or Better in Fall	Percent Receiving 4 or Better in Spring
K	0%	62% and 18% at a 3 or 3.5

1	18.2%	70%
2	52.8%	83.3%
3	45.1%	79%
4	80%	79.1%
5	67.3%	63.6%
6	44.5%	58%
7	57.3%	66%
8	62.7%	68.8%

In fourth grade, the overall integration score went up slightly, however, organization is an area to work on with these students as 5th graders next year. Also, the same is needed for next year's sixth grade students. With third through eighth grade writing samples compared to the national norm score, students fell above the national norm in all areas. If we continue to train teachers and work with students, we will see the scores rise as well as achieve improvement in other areas.

Responding to Mr. Coli's question concerning comparison in national norm, Dr. Zook stated the national norm consists of all students that ECRA works with -- over 1 million. This includes a wide range of schools with very diverse student populations. Noting significant increases between fall and spring, Mr. Coli questioned the lower score in fourth grade. Dr. Zook noted in fall, grades K-8 wrote in response to the same prompt. ECRA said to align grade levels to a certain kind of writing. In spring prompts were different in individual grade levels. Teachers will know in the fall what they will write to and it will be the same in the spring. Kindergarten prompt was using pictures and words to tell about something. Aspen kindergarten students succeeded with high scores. Over time this will be a factor to see improved student achievement in other areas. The goal is by June 2010 for students to score a 4 or better.

Tim Shanahan questioned if there would be data available for entering next year whereby we can determine, for example, how much first grade students may have regressed from their 62% kindergarten score when taking the fall writing prompt. Sue Zook responded this is the first year we have done this and we will be able to track students -- regression of students does happen as evidenced by fall MAP testing. This will give teachers very good information.

### **Board Member Workshop**

Donna Gaidamak and Anne Hoffman recently attended a 2-1/2 day conference for new board members. An overview of this workshop was provided. Relative to the 1-1/2 day presentation covering Foundational Principles of Effective Government, sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards, Anne Hoffman provided an overview as to how the infrastructure of the school board is built to include: (1) defining the roll of the school board; (2) connecting the board with the community; (3) the board employs a superintendent; (4) the board delegates authority; (5) the board monitors performance; and (6) the board takes responsibility for itself. Two other aspects covered during the 2-1/2 conference included: (1) analyzing, comparing and discussing effective and ineffective practices of boards and its members, always referring back to the unified board agreement; (2) practice decision-making skills. Mrs. Hoffman stated the conference was an outstanding experience and she learned everyone's role and was pleased to be a participant.

Mrs. Christie suggested the information relative to the role of the school board be placed on the District's website as an informational piece for the community. Mr. Coli added that evaluating takes place on an on-going basis.

Donna Gaidamak reinforced what our Board is already doing. She referred to the Steve Covey quote, "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." It was a wonderful experience to meet with new and experienced board members from across the state, and she came away with an understanding of how to be a more effective board member as well as a wealth of resources available to the Board. Consensus building exercises and ways to work as an effective member of the Board were covered.

During the second day, a Law and Finance presentation was made with the following items addressed: (1) School board meetings and records, Illinois Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act. I now have a much better idea of when we have Open or Closed Meetings, Special Meetings and how all of these should be recorded and how the Act applies to our phone calls and emails that we send to one another. (2) We discussed the Illinois School Code, the guidebook for all schools in the State. (3) Five different sources of law that govern schools in the State were discussed from the U.S. Constitution, U. S. Congress to the Illinois Court, General Assembly and local school board policies and the impact of all on our local education. (4) Finance discussion focused on the responsibility of the board as it relates to the school's finances. Items covered included establishing clear expectations for maintaining the financial health of our district; establishing outcomes and priorities that should be reflected in our budget; board rule

that the financial plan set by the administration serves the priorities of our district; setting policies and limits on staff governing budgets, preparation and related business procedures. Monitoring income and expense of the district and the current and long-term financial health of the district was reviewed. Different sources of funding to the district were reviewed as well as the tax system. In the area of budgets, items reviewed included legal requirements, auditing and how to classify expenditures on a budget. Purchasing and control processes, bids for goods and services for the district were also covered.

Mary Jane Rattner stated she remembers attending this workshop, finding it a bit overwhelming but useful. There is a tremendous amount of information to absorb, and of concern at the time was how much time one needs to absorb same before feeling you could use it. This is just part of being a new board member. Anne Hoffman stated she is working with Dr. Joe to create an introductory packet for new board members. It was very helpful to learn where your resources are. Mrs. Rattner stated the Board has and will continue to maintain a working relationship to get the work done with Donna Gaidamak adding there was much discussion about speaking together as a united front. Mrs. Christie recalled from that workshop the actions and conversations of other boards and was pleased to be a part of a board that is united. Also, as a Board, we have completed a self evaluation twice. Tim Shanahan stated the Illinois School Board Association is a wonderful mentor and greatly assisted the Board in updating the District's policy manual. Bill Coli referred to the earlier quote adding, you have to understand where you want to go before you can get there. This Board has done just that, we know what our goal is and work to achieve same. We have an amazing staff and administration to assist us in reaching our goal as well as the support of the PTO and parents.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mary Jane requested a motion for approval of items contained in the Consent Agenda

- 06/05.122 Meeting Minutes, Regular Session, 6/17/05
- 06/05.123 Amended School Calendar for 2004/05
- 06/05.124 School Treasurer Appointment for 2005/06
- 06/05.125 Board Meeting Schedule for 2005/06
- 06/05.126 Expenditures Report - June 2005
- 06/05.127 Financial Report - May 2005
- 06/05.128 Personnel Report
  - (A) Resignation of one (1) certificated staff member - Becky DeForest, 2nd grade Dual Language Teacher, Elementary North
  - (B-D) Approval of three (3) certificated staff members:
    - (B) Deborah Segarra-Munoz, 2nd Grade Teacher, Townline Elementary
    - (C) Nicole Lucente, Speech/Language Teacher, placement undecided
    - (D) Evelina Skowron, 50% Social Worker, Townline Elementary

Annie Christie moved and Tim Shanahan seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda items, as presented.

Discussion ensued concerning items contained in the Consent Agenda. Bill Coli questioned the amendment of the 2004/05 school calendar with Alan Hahn responding the District was closed for one day due to snow requiring students to attend school one additional day. The Board must approve the extension of that one day by amending the school calendar. Pertaining to the lack of a second meeting in December, as reflected on the 2005/06 Board Meeting Schedule, Mrs. Rattner stated last year the Board held only one meeting in December. The second meeting in December conflicts with the District's winter break period.

Hearing no further discussion, Mrs. Rattner requested a roll call vote. Annie Christie, Tim Shanahan, Donna Gaidamak, Anne Hoffman, Bill Coli and Mary Jane Rattner voted aye. 6 ayes; 0 nays. Motion carried.

Sue Zook introduced the following new staff members present at the meeting: Deborah Segarra-Junoz and Evelina Skowron following which the Board congratulated and welcomed each as a member of Hawthorn's staff.

### **Action Items**

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

### **President's Report**

Mrs. Rattner stated the Board is attempting to organize a retreat but have been unable to obtain consensus on a July or August date. She stated they may delay same until the end of September.

**Superintendent's Report**

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

**Discussion Items**

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

**Committee Reports**

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

**Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business to come before the Board.

**New Business**

There was no new business to come before the Board.

**Announcements**

There were no matters of this nature on the agenda.

**Informational Items**

The Board was provided for informational purposes the following: (1) 2004 Tax Distribution #3. Mr. Hahn added another distribution of taxes is expected tomorrow.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Jane Rattner requested a motion to adjourn. Annie Christie moved and Donna Gaidamak seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting of the Board. Voice Vote: 6 ayes; 0 nays. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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Mary Jane Rattner, President

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Annie Christie, Secretary