

SALINE AREA SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

5:30 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER** of the Board/Administrative Goal Setting Meeting of June 17, 2008, at 6:00 PM.

Board Members Present: Trudy Driscoll, David Friese, Paul Hynek, Bari Livsey, David Medley, and Lisa Slawson

Board Member Absent: Kim Van Hoek

Board Member Elect: Chuck Lesch

Board Student Representative: Sarah Lucas

Central Administration: Doug Bacon, Ann Callan, Eric Diroff, Sean Enright, Jody Gielinski, Scot Graden, Nancy Grecko, Julie Harsh, Eddie Jackson, Wanda Killips, Steve Laatsch, Suzy Ladd, Jim Letcher, Sheila Light, Cyndi McLennan, Carol Melcher, Brian Puffer, David Raft, Betty Rosen-Leacher, Les Sharon, Jesse Stevenson, Tim Timoszyk, Gloria Tyler, Cherie Vannatter, Tom Wall, and Ben Williams

The group was divided into seven groups and began discussing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, which are facing the Saline School District. Attached is the information that was generated and compiled within these groups.

The information was divided up into three major categories: Academic, Financial, and Organizational. The discussion began with the Academic area:

The major areas that were identified were General Education/Special Education Connections, At Risk Students (Secondary), Transitions between schools, Decision-Making, and Gifted and Talented.

Some of the potential goals, which were discussed, were:

- All Core classes meet as departments and grades 6-12 to ensure smooth transitions and continuity).
- Review building and grade transitions in both social and academic areas.
- Provide a consistent, tailored instruction to all students at all grade levels and in all courses.

- Develop a support system intervention for at risk students. Provide support for both the student and the parents/families.
- Research implementing a co-teaching model.
- Reduce failures and loss of credits by 25%.
- Increase number of students taking AP courses by 10%.
- Increase ACT average score by 1% (from 23 to 24).
- Establish baselines for academic instruction and processes – where we are, what do we do, where are we going, state of the district.

The group consensus was that a preliminary goal for academics could be to establish a process to measure and report on individual student growth. A possible Board goal could be continued improvement in student achievement.

The next area discussed was identified was Financial. The major concerns were: Fund Balance, State Economy, Competitive Marketplace, Cost Structure (contracts, energy, health care), and Unfunded Mandates.

Some of the potential goals, which were discussed, are:

- Need to set target percentage for fund balance next year.
- We will not borrow money for cash flow.
- Alleviate money on general fund for projects.
- Initiate a program to educate the public about the financial need related to infrastructure (sinking fund) – do follow up with other districts that have been successful.
- District needs to educate the community that Saline Area Schools staff members are maximizing performance and showcasing all the things that are happening. We can't ask for more money if everyone isn't performing at maximum capacity.
- Sell used technology and textbooks.
- Increase fund balance
- Continue to share points of pride with community. Let people know how possibly passing a sinking fund would benefit them. Explain how it would help our schools and our students.
- Work on partnership with the Saline Foundation, which is critical to new revenue streams.

A preliminary goal was established to engage our community in conversation regarding the state of our financial district. A possible Board goal could be to explore alternative areas for increasing fund balance while maintaining programs.

The last area identified was Organizational. The major concerns were: Rigid, Complacency, Lack of Vision, Limited Communication, Accuracy of Perceptions (Media, Drugs), Not Approachable, Competitive Marketplace, and Vision Statement.

The discussion focused around the following ideas:

- Develop consistency around sited-based decision-making.
- Plan and implement a marketing plan for all departments – focus on the positive. Prompt people to ask the question – “What aren't you doing in this district?”
- More positive communication and celebration of successes at the Board Meetings.

- Superintendents Corner in the Saline Reporter.
- Catchy Slogan
- Improve internal and external communication and accuracy of perceptions.
- We need to be more transparent. We need to admit our shortcomings and explaining better what we do poorly.
- Define Roles and communicate to staff – whom to call in each department for information.
- Adequately funding people in support area so they can accomplish their jobs.
- Public Relations and Marketing Plan
- Communication and Decision Making

Board President Slawson indicated that two possible Board goals in this area were to educate, implement, and engage the community about the new Policy Manual as well as continue professional development for the Board Members.

Superintendent Graden thanked everyone for coming and indicated that this was a great start to establishing the goals for the upcoming year. He asked the group to fill out a little questionnaire before leaving for feedback on the how they felt the meeting went and what improvements could be made in the future.

The responses were as follows:

- Went well – bringing the Board and Administration Team together.
- Appreciated all groups being represented and the mix at all the tables.
- Really enjoyed discussions and interaction of those attending.
- Collegial group – easy to take risks – safe environment.
- Sometimes lost focus with conversation.
- Liked getting to know different people in different roles.
- Good start – more help/guidance on what goals area and how to write them would have facilitated discussion.
- I enjoy the opportunity to express my opinions. I feel that this group values each other's thoughts.
- All groups were heard.
- Some very good and diverse ideas were shared.
- I feel like some of the goals need to be refined in much greater detail. Make them obtainable.
- Difficult to process at the end of the evening.
- Very well organized! Every idea could find a voice and everyone was heard.
- Good discussion about difficult topics.
- So helpful to hear from staff members!
- Learned the Board needs to ask more questions.
- Having dinner was great!
- Scot getting everyone to participate was great.
- Well – good food, good topics and tools.
- Improve – move a little quicker near the end.
- I liked the group brainstorming – dinner was great!
- The dialogue was positive.
- Able to be honest without repercussion.

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- We should do this more than once a year!
- Some of the time discussions seemed to already be done when we had to go into small groups – redundant.
- It wasn't threatening to state your opinion.
- I enjoyed the positive atmosphere and the focus!
- We heard from everyone.
- Good Meeting – long day – good communication.
- Help design a vision for Saline Area Schools.
- Good, lively discussions.
- Some hesitancy among staff to be totally honest.
- Initial list of SWOT's was very enlightening.
- Actual goal writing went too long.
- I appreciate meshing the groups.
- Need to re-evaluate each trimester!
- Dinner good – small groups – all ideas were welcome.
- Good discussions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Hynek, Secretary

By: Patti Waltz, Recording Secretary