

MONTROSE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
FACULTY ROOM – CHOCONUT VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MEETING DATE APRIL 29, 2009 7:00 P.M.

Community Advisory Committee Meeting

29 APRIL 2009

Community Advisory Committee Members Present: Sharon Salsman, Bill Chaney, Maureen Shelp, Jim Shelp, Dolores Quinn, Ken Lattimore, Kirk Van Zandbergen and Connie Burgh

Board Members Present: Chris Caterson, Doug Wilcox, Kathy Mordovancey and Mary Homan

Administration Present: Mike Ognosky

Meeting commenced at 7:00 PM.

Items Discussed:

I. Mike Ognosky took the roll and noted the attendance as listed above.

II. Old Business: The following item was presented under Old Business

- **Governor's proposal on school consolidation:** Mike Ognosky distributed a newspaper article from the Harrisburg Patriot in response to a question asked at last month's meeting regarding school consolidation. A bill was introduced in the General Assembly on Tuesday that would provide funding for the study of school consolidation as proposed by the governor during his budget speech in February. That proposal would require the legislature to offer two consolidation proposals for consideration to the body of the General Assembly. The governor would like to reduce the number of school districts from the current 501 to 100 each with at least 5,000 students. Updates on the progress of this legislation will be provided at future meetings.
- **Gambling revenue update:** In response to a question from last meeting, Mike Ognosky distributed an information sheet from the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue on the gambling revenue generated from the past year to be utilized for property tax relief in Pennsylvania to eligible farmstead and homestead

properties. The release indicated that \$770 million will be available for such a purpose – that is an amount equal to last year. The next step in the process is at the county level as each county must identify the number eligible for a property tax rebate and the amount of the rebate to be delivered. As was the case last year, it will be noted on your tax bill with the appropriate reduction. That announcement from the county should come shortly.

- **Economic Stimulus Funds update:** In response to a discussion at last month's meeting, Mr. Ognosky distributed a summary of the potential funding available to the district through the economic stimulus proposal. There is a potential for Montrose to receive just over \$1.3 million to be utilized for specific and limited purposes over the next 2 fiscal years. That money will first be distributed to the state level and it will then be determined exactly how much, and in what funding source, that money will be then distributed to individual districts. Again, this will remain as an agenda item at future meetings.
- **Advanced Placement examination information:** In response to a question at last month's meeting, Mr. Ognosky distributed a study completed by the Guidance Department of the High School analyzing the results of Advanced Placement examinations taken by students over the past three years. Three years ago the District enacted a procedure that required AP students to take at least one AP exam at the conclusion of the school year. Those exams are then graded and students can be given college credit for the result at the discretion of the college and/or university. Depending on the institution, credit can be given for a score in the range of 2 to 5. According to the study, of the 92 examinations taken, 73 of our students scored 2 or higher, 51 scored three or higher.
- **Energy Ad Hoc Committee Update:** The five projects recommended by the Energy Ad Hoc Committee to the board for action were discussed. The five projects total \$160,000 and include the following: a wind study which will provide an in depth report on the wind conditions at the Junior-Senior High School; an upgrade of the heating system at the Junior-Senior High School to include new, electronically controlled zone valves, loop supply temperature sensors and control modules; a heating system upgrade at Lathrop Street Elementary School to include removal of outdated energy management equipment and the installation of a new control system; heating system upgrade at the Choconut Valley Elementary School to include retrofitting pneumatic units in the kitchen and gymnasium; and, the upgrading of the heating and ventilation system in the Junior-Senior High School gymnasium.

III. New Business: The following items were discussed under New Business:

- **Explanation of the School District Curriculum Cycle Process:** Mr. Ognosky distributed a copy of the school district curriculum cycle as well as the goals to be accomplished by each department during each year of that cycle. He explained that we are currently in the second full six year cycle. Each year the district budgets \$225,000 to be utilized by the curriculum areas designated for that year in the upgrading of materials, textbooks, etc. to be utilized in that curriculum. Each year those departments designated analyze the current state and national

standards and provide the necessary changes for their curriculum in order to align with those standards. Curriculum teams encompass all grade levels in that curriculum area. For example, a math curriculum team includes members from K-12 that analyze and review the curriculum for redundancies and gaps.

- **Review of the current senior project format:** Mr. Ognosky distributed a copy of the current senior project format that outlines the different portions of the project to be completed by a student in 10th through 12th grade in order to meet the requirements as outlined by the district and required by the state of Pennsylvania for graduation.

IV. Open Forum: The meeting was then opened for discussion on any item by members of the committee:

- Mr. Chaney asked a question regarding the “bolts” that secure the benches to the floor in the boys’ team room. Recently, a student was injured by stubbing a toe on those bolts and required stitches to treat the wound. Mr. Ognosky explained that the District is aware of the incident and it is being addressed by Mr. Clapper, Director of Facilities. Currently, the bolts extend approximately one inch out of the floor and are a concern. This has been in place since the original construction 15 years ago. Also, Mr. Chaney asked if the district was aware of the drainage issue behind the backstop of the baseball field, Mr. Ognosky explained that the District is aware of the situation and he would discuss it with Mr. Clapper as to a potential remedy.
- Mrs. Salsman discussed a concern about the availability of textbooks at each grade level (specifically in the Language Arts curriculum) for each student. Mr. Ognosky explained that when the curriculum team met they decided that in certain areas they would provide specific texts for classroom use only. Given the concern not only from Mrs. Salsman but other parents, one of the hopes is to utilize economic stimulus funds, should they become available to the district, to meet this request.
- Dr. Lattimore suggested that a wind study might not be required at the high school as it may be the windiest spot in the county. Mr. Caterson explained that the Energy Ad Hoc Committee felt the same initially, but other studies conducted in the county at equally windy areas suggested that the conditions present were ‘borderline’ for the success of a windmill so the Committee decided to proceed with the recommendation. Dr. Lattimore also asked about the current procedures in place for the granting of “bonus points” by classroom teachers in the high school for non-curricular activities. He felt it watered down the value of the grade for the course. Mr. Ognosky will communicate this concern to Mr. Tallarico, High School Principal.
- Mrs. Quinn asked a question regarding the mound of dirt in the rear of the Choconut Valley Elementary School left behind during the recent well project. Mr. Ognosky will discuss this with Mr. Clapper.
- Mrs. Mordovancy had a concern about the outdoor port-a-johns at the Junior-Senior High School noting that the condition of the equipment prevents the door

- Mr. Shelp asked if the coaching staffs of the athletic teams are provided the opportunity to visit the elementary schools in order to generate interest among students who will be attending the high school to participate. Mr. Ognosky explained that coaches have not made that request, but it certainly would be a good practice and would be supported by the administration.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28th in the Community Learning Center of the Junior-Senior High School at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by

Mike Ognosky