

Special Board Minutes (Draft)

Tuesday, October 4, 2016 @ 5:00 p.m.

Administration Board Room

Present: Wendy Bremner-Chair, Brian Gallup, Velden Calica, James Running Fisher, James Evans, Kristy Bullshoe. **Absent:** Steve Conway, Brenda Croff

Ms. Bremner called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve the agenda with the following change: remove Termination Hearing: Wannette Wells. Second by Mr. Running Fisher. All in favor/Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

ITEMS OF ACTION

Out of State Travel: Motion by Mr. Gallup to approve out of state travel for Darcy Tatsey & Misty Tatsey, Blackfoot Language Symposium in Lethbridge Alberta Canada (\$625.40). Second by Mr. Calica. No public participation. No board discussion. All in favor/Motion carried.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

NAFIS Update: Board members reported on events during the Nafis Fall Conference in Washington, DC. Mr. Gallup was re-elected for 2 more years to the NIISA Board of Directors. Board members emphasized the importance of attending the conference and stated that it is an asset to Browning schools to have someone from our school district on these boards. Board members discussed the following problems with the senators and congressmen: Boarding Dorm closing on holidays, child protection, hunger rates in the state, portion sizes/control with school meals, importance of attendance and how it affects Impact Aid. Tester and Daines are both on the appropriations committee; the House proposed \$23 million and Senate proposed \$8 million. Everyone was asked to get out and vote and do not vote for sequestration. Every vote affects education and the funding for our schools. The booklet the board takes to DC is very important and each administrator was asked to think about information to put in the booklet about how the cuts to Impact Aid would affect each school and the whole district. Ms. Bremner stated that students would be great advocates for Nafis and the district should think about having an incentive or a contest for a couple students to represent BPS. Mr. Rouse also met with Alfred Lott, who is Director of Impact Aid. Mr. Lott will also be at NIISA in Vegas this year.

Browning Public Schools Transportation System: Wayne Hall stated his concerns about BPS routes, overcrowded buses and not enough drivers. Mr. Hall asked the board for information on what they are hearing. Ms. Bremner stated that she has heard there is no supervision on buses besides the drivers which needs to be addressed; there is overcrowding on buses going on sports trips, kids cannot stretch out; bus is full to capacity; and a lack of drivers. Mr. Evans has heard that the buses are coming for kids too early in the morning. Mr. Calica stated that he has been told that 4 year olds are being dropped off when no one is home. Mr. Hall stated that 4 year olds will be monitored by high school students riding on the buses as monitors and also noted that transportation provides a lot of service to the 4 year olds; they watch the older kids making sure that the 4-year olds are not bothered; make certain that they are on the right buses which is an issue. However with a full load of kids the drivers cannot get off the buses to walk the child to their door as it is very dangerous to leave the other students alone on the buses and a lot of times the drivers cannot get hold of a parent when there is no one at home.

Mr. Rouse stated that there will be 6 high school students hired as bus monitors with 2 spots to fill. On Wednesday, Mr. Hall and Mr. Johnson will be training with the student monitors so that they can be on the buses on Thursday. Mr. Hall stated that there are cameras on the buses that help with monitoring too. Also, when a student is misplaced, Jolene Vance and Harold Madplume do a phenomenal job of tracking the kids.

Mr. Hall stated that there is a shortage of drivers for activities, which will continue to be a problem and parents will continue to complain. When there is an activity run, bus drivers are chosen at random, and if one is driving an activity bus, the district is short a bus driver. Mr. Hall stated that the state requires that all bus use is to be paid for and if 2 buses are needed for an activity it will be an added cost for activities department.

Ms. Bremner asked what the problem is with hiring bus drivers. Mr. Hall stated that there is an issue of hiring quality drivers, the pay is low and there is a shortage of drivers nationwide. A bus driver can make \$25 per hour outside of the school and they don't have to take an ear beating from parents. Mr. Hall stated that driving bus is a hard job and the pay is low. Browning schools has a large bus fleet and the drivers don't just sit around; they also have 75 vehicles to maintain with 2 mechanics doing tires, oil changes, maintenance, etc. Mr. Hall stated that he has 5 more people that have applied to drive, however one of the requirements is that they must have a CDL and the district is short drivers with 5-6 drivers driving activities buses which continues to affects the route buses and creates over crowded buses and no bus monitors. Mr. Hall invited board members to ride the buses to see what is happening.

Mr. Hall reviewed a list of buses and drivers that will be out with activities. State law mandates schools to purchase a room for activities drivers and they cannot be bothered for 8 hours of uninterrupted rest. Mr. Hall noted that drivers have to have great memories to remember all the kids on their buses.

Mr. Hall stated that all in town routes are legal and these routes have brought in more money but, now, it is hard to cover all the new routes. Transportation tries to provide door to door service and with the new houses that are being built behind the hospital, the routes will shift and it will increase routes in a new direction. BPS can continue to add more routes but we will still need drivers. Mr. Hall stated that there are people getting CDL's all the time and they will need physicals. Drivers can put in 40 hours per week easily but if they have 40 hours and take an activity trip they have to be paid overtime. Mr. Hall stated that Browning Schools takes their students on bus trips more than any other school in the state. If there is any extra money in the transportations budget, Mr. Hall donates it to kid activities, i.e. prom, new years, etc.

Ms. Bremner asked what the board can do to help. The Board recently asked to have activities increased, so they cannot cut the activity trips.

Mr. Hall stated that Browning falls into the national category of being short on drivers. The district's drivers work in the shop with staff, some drivers are truant officers and they run non-stop, some drivers work in the office keeping billing and mileage in order, they also haul boarding school students to their school and to some activities. Mr. Hall noted that hauling boarding school students is an issue; 100 + kids (2 buses). Mr. Hall stated that BPS and Boarding school will have to split the expense also Mr. Hall will have to request approval of another bus at county transportation meeting because Boarding school has activities and BPS bus is overcrowded. Mr. Running Fisher asked if the district has asked Boarding school to put chaperones on the buses. Mr. Hall stated that he has discussed this with boarding school and they cannot pay. BPS has not been able to get a roster of the boarding school ball players to see who is riding the buses for activities and it is putting a burden on our busing. Mr. Gallup stated that boarding school is letting kids out early on Thursdays, they play basketball two nights a week, and they over load our buses to get to their practices and games which is an issue. Mr. Hall stated that there are 30+ extra kids, movie night, swimming, teams, etc. and there has to be a funding mechanism for boarding school to pay the district. BPS is providing a lot of care for the Boarding School students. Mr. Hall noted that BPS does not haul any students out of our district to attend any other school. BPS do not pay for any kids except kids that are in isolation.

In response to other issues, Mr. Hall stated that he has reviewed each drivers extra duties and the buses have been running at the same times for years, and kids are not being dropped off early. Mr. Hall has 7 route positions available plus the radio operator that need to be filled. Mr. Hall stated that he feels that he can manage having the buses going to the boarding dorm and he is working on the problems with 4 year olds.

Ms. Bullshoe asked what the responsibility is for bus drivers and stated that when the school board gets complaints they could be open minded if they know their responsibilities. Mr. Hall stated that the driver's responsibilities include keeping the kids safe, being proactive, taking additional steps with the children because of the problems the kids bring; sometimes the drivers have to drive and deal with the issues when they have stopped.

Mr. Rouse talked about the 4 year olds and who is responsible for the older kids and if there is going to be someone at the house for the kids. Mr. Hall stated that it is not actually the district's responsibility, but we take the responsibility, and go above and beyond for all kids. The buses go door to door which is an issue that he is trying to change. Ms. Bullshoe asked for a copy of the job description for bus drivers. Mr. Hall stated that the driver keeps the bus clean; the bus driver is not the counselor; the driver talks to the kids through the PA system; the driver maintains order and keeps the kids safe; they keep track of every kid and remembers where every stop is. The driver is looking in the mirror 70% of time because of behavior and this should not be happening. Mr. Hall has told the drivers don't deal with the parents, have them go to him. Many times the parents blame the driver for things, i.e. kid getting hurt, bullying, etc. Parents demand action immediately such as not allowing the driver to drive. Mr. Hall asked board members to let him know if there are any issues. Jercy Matt suggested that the drivers become more involved with MBI which deals with behavior. They will be more informed on how to deal with these issues. There needs to be more open communication, information in local paper, so parent/s knows what is happening, rules, policies, etc. The district needs to do a better job communicating to parents about what bullying is and find resolutions to make it stop happening. Parents need training too. Wayne Bullcalf, bus driver, stated that they deal with 70 different personalities on the buses every day.

Mr. Hall stated that Lisa Bullcalf sends out referrals and 2-copies of rules to the parents at the beginning of every year; the parents sign the page saying they went over rules with their child. The parent keeps a copy of the rules. Last year with monitors riding buses, they had 17 referrals in September and this year there are 45 referrals for September and no bus monitors. John Salois stated that it helped a great deal using bus monitors in Harlem; it helped keep kids in their seats which was a big thing. Mr. Gallup stated that the district is re-fixing the same problem encountered 2 years ago.

Mr. Hall ordered special vests for monitors to wear so that kids can see who is in charge. If they can see someone is in charge, they will be less apt to cause problems. If a kid is lost when boarding the buses they will see the vests and know who to go to for help. Jennifer Wagner stated that they still have problems even with their staff wearing those vests. The Browning Elementary TA's walk their small children to the buses. Mr. Hall stated that the vests will eliminate some of the problems. Also, Mr. Hall stated that they need to find a solution for kids that have no one at home, especially 4 year olds. Parents tell the drivers to just drop their kid/s off and they will be home in a bit. But the driver can't do this; parents have to put more effort into helping the bus department. The drivers are required to keep the kid/s on the bus and bring back to transportation. Ms. Bremner stated that there is a mandatory reporting process and parents that are not at home consistently when children are dropped off should be reported. Ms. Bullshoe asked if there is policy or procedure in place. Mr. Hall stated that they would call CPS. Mr. Hall also stated that parents will call him at home at 8 or 9 at night and he does ask if they are just now looking for their kid. Mr. Hall stated that he will still help find the kid/s even if they are not bus students but stated that he needs board support and parents need to be responsible.

Mr. Gallup stated that he has no issues with transportation department; they do a good job and they are appreciated. Wayne Bullcalf stated that the boarding dorm team rides the bus all week and he has counted 25 older students on the bus and they take up a lot of room.

Ms. Bremner stated that the charter bus is full and kids are getting cramped up and they need to be given more time to get where they are going so the bus could stop more often. Last year the kids were trying to get dressed on the buses and this is a privacy issue. Mr. Hall stated that he has told the coaches they need to leave on time. Ms. Bremner felt they need to leave earlier and asked if Mr. Hall has talked to Tony Wagner. The transportation needs

to decide when the buses should leave and they need to work closer with activities. Also phone reception needs to be discussed with Mr. Holm and a suburban should be following the buses especially through the mountains. John Salois stated that they do communicate with one another, and look at timeframes and weather issues, and try to maintain a balance because of student education. They do not want to have a lot of dead time as it creates discipline issues.

Mr. Running Fisher felt that having bus monitors will solve the problems with the younger kids, the overcrowding will continue because of not having enough drivers. They just need to work on everything from year to year. Lisa Bullcalf was asked to bring stats back to the board for review after this first year with bus monitors.

Mr. Hall suggested having another conversation with the board to give updates and data, and follow-up on how things are working.

Motion by Mr. Running Fisher to adjourn at 7:15 p.m. Second by Ms. Bullshoe. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

_____ Carlene Adamson, Board Secretary

_____ Wendy Bremner, Board Chairperson

_____ Stacy Edwards, District Clerk