

Anderson School District #41
Special School Board Meeting
March 30, 2010

A special school board meeting of the Board of Trustees, Anderson School District #41 was held in the Spanish Room at the Brown School, March 30, 2010 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Board of Trustees, Chair Joe Long presided.

Chair Joe Long called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m.

Trustees Present Joe Long, Walt Zidack, Chris Catlett, Cynthia Bradford Lencioni

Trustee Absent Kristi Mills

Staff Present Jeff Blessum, Superintendent/Principal, Linda Svensrud, Business Manager, Jeff Vick, Heidi Fasting, Betty Layton, Elizabeth Wagner, Nancy Becker, Laura Scholz

Attending Betsy Webb, Dan Clark, Ann Prescott

Action

May 4, 2010 Election
General Fund Levy

Discussion was held regarding an amount to ask for in the General Fund for the May 4, 2010 election.

Motion to place a \$20,000 General Fund levy amount on the ballot for the May 4, 2010 election

Motion: Trustee Zidack
Seconded: Trustee Lencioni – passed unanimously.

Trustee Election There are two trustees running for two 3-year terms.

**Trustee Strategic
Planning Session**

Trustee Catlett introduced Betsy Webb and Dan Clark from the Local Government Center, at Montana State University. They will direct the Strategic Planning Session this afternoon.

Betsy Webb and Dan Clark gave background information about themselves and the Local Government Center. The Center has evolved over the years. Their mission is found in the Montana Codes Annotated (MCA), and their goal is to help local governments appreciate the decisions they make today and understand what impact their decisions have on the future.

Betsy stated they are both parents and struggle with the same issues as the school board members.

Trustee Long gave Betsy and Dan some background information regarding Anderson School. For a few years, enrollment at Anderson School was increasing, but recently enrollments have been declining, therefore, budgets are also decreasing. He would like to figure out the school mission, vision and how to get there.

Trustee Catlett shared his thoughts regarding issues he feels the school is facing, i.e., small class sizes, enrollment issues, losing older students, retaining the valuable staff, staff and professional development and community fundraising. Trustee Zidack shared the boom and bust background of Anderson School and planning for future expansion. How to physically expand the school in order to

retain quality teachers and maintain an environment they wish to teach in as well as maintain small class sizes at the lower grade levels are challenges facing the school district. There are many out of district parents wanting to bring their students to school in the lower grades, but many students leave as they get into middle school.

Trustee Lencioni wants students to be contributors, business owners, etc. in a macro environment, and be able to think about various aspects of keeping what is working and adding/swapping out what needs to be changed. Distance learning is now an option available to schools. We need to continue looking at ways to increase levels of community involvement and figure out ways to reach out and build the team. Health and safety is very important as well, and meeting or exceeding best practices at Anderson School is a high priority.

Results of a board member survey sent out prior to the planning session were discussed. Areas to be discussed in the retreat were:

- Assets and strengths of Anderson School
- Critical issues facing Anderson School
- Success factors of Anderson School
- Barriers to the vision of Anderson School
- Other areas to be looked at

Board members were guided by Betsy and Dan in discussion of the above issues. Other areas highlighted during the retreat were:

- Potential areas for funding the school
- Steps for the school to follow
- Making sure there is good communication among community members
- The board can also serve in a leadership role within the community to connect the community.

Tasks to be addressed by board members were also discussed. Future agendas will include time for board members to talk about the Strategic Planning session along with goals for board members. A list of tasks will be compiled to be discussed at future board meetings. Specific tasks will be given a time frame for completion.

At the conclusion of the retreat, board members identified what they gained from attending the retreat:

- Involving the community
- Refocus the mission enabling process
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Short and long term goals
- Triangle and what was done to see the breadth and scope of the retreat
- Certain set of goals to accomplish in order to make the process work
- Tie actions taking to goals so Jeff and Anderson staff are doing the right thing every day
- It is a relief to have a stable board, and to have the current Superintendent on board
- Structure, momentum, organization, starting point for school, and triangle of greater community.

A suggestion was made by Dan Webb to post the Anderson School Mission Statement and a reflection of the guiding principles about programs at Anderson School at every board meeting. This will keep the momentum going and help keep the decision making process at the forefront.

