

Finance Committee Meeting

August 13, 2019, 6:00-7:00 PM

Carlynton Junior-Senior High School

Cougar Collaboration Center

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Board President Jim Schriver. Vice President Joe Appel, Treasurer Marissa Mendoza, and Directors Jude Frank (arrived at 6:25 pm), George Honchar, LeeAnne O'Brien, David Roussos, Christine Simcic, and Kelly Zaletski were present. Additionally, Solicitor Bill Andrews, Acting Superintendent Joseph Dimperio, Director of Finance and Fiscal Affairs Chris Juzwick, and Director of Pupil Services Rachel Ander attended the meeting and seven individuals, including State Representative Anita Kulik, were in the audience.

Dr. Dimperio and President Schriver welcomed Representative Kulik.

- Overview of district's finances
 - ✓ Mr. Juzwick discussed how the district is striving to reduce expenditures while maintaining the integrity of educational programming in the face of a shrinking fund balance. Mr. Juzwick said the district will continue to streamline and assess needs for the district and make efforts to creatively manage spending. He mentioned the formation of a Carlynton Cyber Academy, created to curb outgoing costs that cover students enrolled in non-affiliated cyber or charter schools and the effort to streamline the transportation budget. President Schriver brought up the issue of rising pension costs and the burden it places on school districts.
 - ✓ Director Simcic further addressed the issue of cyber/charter schools and the exorbitant cost per student. She cited House Bill 526, designed to require parents to pay for their child's education in a cyber/charter school if the school district of residence offers its own full-time cyber education program. The district currently pays \$1.242 million for the education of children in the district who attend cyber/charter schools. Representative Kulik said she fully understands the burden and suggested a letter writing campaign to local state representative, members of the state education committee, and state leaders. She also referenced Propel Montour, a charter school located in the Montour School District; a majority of its students are not Montour residents and yet the district carries the burden due to its location. Rep. Kulik said a big issue with cyber/charter schools is lack of oversight. Director Roussos stated, in reference to HB 526, that if parents are required to pay for cyber/charter school and they decide to return to the home school (Carlynton), there would still be a student cost to the district.
 - ✓ Dr. Andler spoke about the growing ESL population in our schools. Last year, the district served over 100 ESL students at a cost of \$360,000 that covered ESL teachers, interpretation services, translation services, and evaluation services. Federal funding via Title monies provides a smidge of the costs; about \$4,000. With the growing number of ESL students across the state, Dr. Andler stressed the need for funding.
 - ✓ President Schriver recapped the discussion with Rep. Kulik, adding that the continued use of the fund balance is not sustainable and asking if there has been dialogue in Harrisburg over these issues. She said there has been with little agreement on how to address the

issues. She said the House is cognizant of the troubles facing school districts and sees the need for a balanced and equal education for all children.

Audience member/parent Melissa Wiater asked about scheduling given the change to the Parkway Career and Technical Center schedule (vo-tech students will now be attending Parkway in the afternoon versus the morning). She said she hopes her son can still be scheduled into the scholar's classes he had hoped to take this year.

Parent Kelly Lawton questioned the online grading system, asking why grades were only posted at certain times during the year. As an educator, she said she sees the value in using an online grading system so students and parents can follow progress or realize if help is needed in a particular subject. She urged board members to address the matter with teachers.

Parents Christy and Michael Constantine expressed concern over the new Parkway schedule, in particular, the fact that students will be required to eat their lunch on the bus while traveling to Parkway. Dr. Dimperio explained that students will receive the benefit of taking more academic classes at Carlynton, but because of the time schedule, there was no other option than to provide boxed lunches for those being transported to Parkway. He said he knows it is not the ideal situation and he will continue to work with the director of Parkway to seek a better solution.

Parent Nicole MacMurdo asked for information about a rumor pertaining to the sale of the Crafton athletic field. Board members said there is not any information to share at the time. Mrs. MacMurdo said the grass and fields were well maintained during band camp and they appreciated it.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm with board members transitioning into an executive session in the superintendent's conference room.