

HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of Special Meeting
April 15, 2010

**Call to Order/Roll Call/
Pledge of Allegiance** The special meeting of the Homer Community Schools Board of Education was called to order on April 15, 2010 at 6:20 p.m. in the Homer High School Media Center by Board President Gary Tompkins.

Members Present: Gary Tompkins, Dick Folk, JoAnne Miller, Josh McCullough, Chad Rocco

Members Absent: Kevyn VanWert, Derek Allen

Others Present: Superintendent Rob Ridgeway, Olga Holden from the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), Tom Salow, Scott Salow, Rick Cooley, Duane Sitkiewicz, Drew Bordner

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION None

OLD BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

The meeting was called to review the district's 2009-10 goals and modify them as necessary for the 2010 – 2011 school year. The goal setting process, based upon MASB's Data 2 Results Model, was started in Homer in 2006 and has been used annually to evaluate progress over time based upon academic performance data, student enrollment, free and reduced lunch, graduation rates, household composition, education level of district residents, MEAP scores, ACT scores, student to teacher ratio, budgets for materials and supplies, long-term debt, etc.

Review of District's Goals
from 2009 – 2010

Superintendent Ridgeway reviewed the district's 2009 – 2010 goals:

- How are we going to make sure we are making progress?
 - What should we do differently?
1. Student achievement – We are meeting or exceeding state standards in over 50% of the areas and we keep going up, not down.
Professional learning teams:
75% of our teams are meeting and making progress. They are organized in elementary by grade level, MS by grade level and teachers have common planning time, and HS by content area. School improvement teams are looking at other common district assessments in addition to MEAP, ACT and the Michigan Merit Exam (MME).
 2. Curriculum alignment – Curriculum is aligned well, and it is now a natural process to look at weak areas on tests and make changes to improve.
 3. School Improvement – Building teams are making reports to the board and are working on their own to make plans to improve. Teams are teacher-led.
 4. Professional development – Needs more long-term planning to make it more intentional. More outside help is needed to get to the next level. Using the CISD was suggested.

5. Communication – The website has been improved, and the School Messenger contact system has been implemented. The newsletter is now in The Homer Index and on the website.
6. Board goals – Goals are to provide a safe, innovative, quality learning environment to prepare students with skills for success in the 21st century. Concerns about bullying are being addressed. Technology is continually being updated, but there is a lot more to do. The Board is working hard to get staff and community input. Receiving input from the community is going to be critical if the Board of Education moves forward with a bond issue for facilities.

Review of MEAP Data

Gary Tompkins presented an educational data audit update of grades three through nine. Third grade is our first all-day kindergarten class. Third grade exceeded state standards in math, but they were lower than the state in reading scores in this grade and in others.

Reading scores did increase, but there is concern about low reading scores in elementary and why they are low. There is a need to have consistent programming in all grades.

- Reading scores went up in 5th grade, and 5th grade was strong in science.
- 6th grade beat state average in math and social studies, but not in reading.
- 7th grade beat state average in math by 14 points but was .2 points below in reading. There is a strong upward trend in math from the 2005 - 2006 academic year.
- 8th grade beat state average in math, reading and science.
- 9th grade did not beat state average in social studies. This class was 2.8 points below the state average.

Conclusion - Even with a 55% free and reduced lunch population, student scores are at about the state levels. This is unexpected with the higher free and reduced lunch population. The scores across the board are very solid, but there is always a concern about the weak areas, reading and also 9th grade social studies where scores have exceeded the state average only in the last five years.

Key Issues Facing the District

Superintendent Ridgeway explained two key issues facing the district:

1. Facilities – A 60 year old building and the perception of it as it continues to deteriorate.
2. Reading – As a district, we need to find the right program for the elementary and middle school. The district needs a consistent program that will fit well with what students are being measured by.

Following are comments from the administrative team and Board:

Drew Bordner

1. Need to be consistent in what we do.
2. The staff changes that will take place next year and the impact it will have on the school culture.

Rick Cooley

1. Reading.
2. Increased class size.

Scott Salow

1. Instruction schedule – MS schedule is a model and technology is being used as it should be.
2. Sustaining our present education and work place culture.

Tom Salow

1. Continue to develop cohesive curriculum that addresses needs.
2. Be intentional with our instruction in using best practices.

Gary Tompkins

1. We can't become complacent.
2. Facilities.

Dick Folk

1. Facilities – cost of maintaining old buildings vs. having what we need.
2. Need to be better than the state standards in student assessments.

JoAnne Miller

1. Continuous improvement in all areas.
2. Facilities.

Josh McCullough

1. Be better than state averages in student assessments.
2. Facilities – safety concerns and need facilities that support more technology.

Chad Rocco

1. Reorganizing our organization and administration.
2. Sustain the culture of continuous improvement in the workplace

The 2009 – 2010 goals were discussed by each person and suggestions were made for the 2010 – 2011 goals.

Homer Community Schools
Board of Education Goals 2009—2010 2010 - 2011

- 1. Student achievement:** Homer students will ~~meet or~~ exceed standards for state assessments and meet requirements for graduation. We will continue to strengthen professional learning teams as part of the culture to sustain progress and use data to identify and focus on areas for **continuous** improvement.
- 2. Curriculum alignment:** The curriculum will be continually updated to be aligned with state benchmarks vertically K-12 and horizontally within each grade. Decisions will be data-driven.
- 3. School improvement:** Continue to grow, develop and empowerment of teacher-led school improvement teams to increase student achievement **and advance the culture of high expectations.**
- 4. Professional development:** Develop a long term, research-based professional development plan to ensure, sustain, and provide resources for effective professional development for ALL staff to support student achievement and curriculum alignment.
- 5. Communication:** ~~Further~~ **Continue to** strengthen internal and external communication utilizing various strategies including ~~technology~~ **a focus on community input.**

6. ~~Board Goals~~ Learning environment: Provide a safe, innovative, quality learning environment to prepare students with skills for success in the 21st century. Using inclusive internal and external input, ~~develop a facilities plan and~~ **implement** a three to five-year ~~financial plan to maintain or improve upon our current financial standing~~ **facilities plan**.

7. Financial stability: Improve our current financial standing.

The proposed goals will be discussed for adoption at the May 17, 2010 Board of Education meeting.

Tips on Hiring

HCS is expecting ten teacher retirements at the end of the 2009 – 2010 school year. Olga Holden from MASB gave the Board the following tips to consider when hiring teaching staff:

- Candidates who have a professional background in teaching should get extra points.
- A teacher’s 4th – 9th years of work are the most productive.
- If an applicant has been in a 5-year college program, they have had more experience to draw on.
- Use experience-based questioning, and don’t trust any writing sample that’s done in advance.
- Include some “culture” questions, e.g., “What environment do you work the best in?”

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JoAnne Miller, Secretary Board of Education

Homer Community Schools

Board of Education Goals 2010-11

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- 2. Curriculum alignment:** The curriculum will be continually updated to be aligned with state benchmarks vertically K-12 and horizontally within each grade. Decisions will be data-driven.
- 3. School improvement:** Continue to grow, develop and empowerment of teacher-led school improvement teams to increase student achievement and advance the culture of high expectations.
- 4. Professional development:** Develop a long term, research-based professional development plan to ensure, sustain, and provide resources for effective professional development for ALL staff to support student achievement and curriculum alignment.
- 5. Communication:** Continue to strengthen internal and external communication utilizing various strategies including a focus on community input.
- 6. Learning environment:** Provide a safe, innovative, quality learning environment to prepare students with skills for success in the 21st century. Using inclusive internal and external input, implement a three to five-year facilities plan.
- 7. Financial stability:** Improve our current financial standing.

