



Community Unit School District 308

SERVING ALL OR PARTS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF
AURORA, JOLIET, MONTGOMERY, OSWEGO, PLAINFIELD, AND YORKVILLE

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

East View Elementary School – Room 30

Monday, April 6, 2015

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

I. Roll Call

*Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Board of Education Member and Committee Chair
Mr. Greg O'Neil*

The attendance sheet was used in place of an official roll call

Members in Attendance: Alexa Backus, Tracy Collander, Anne Elwood, Kevin Harris, Brian Valek, Natalie Winkfield, Melissa Woolever

Dr. Matthew Wendt, Superintendent, Dr. Paul O'Malley, Associate Superintendent

Board Member: Greg O'Neil

Guests in Attendance: No guests were present

Members Absent: Michael Blaylock, Sherry Bochenek, Amanda Mancke, Jamil Nichols

Recording Secretary: Ursula Coan

II. Approval of Minutes from March 23, 2015 Meeting

*A motion was made by Mr. O'Neil to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2015 meeting.
All members in attendance agreed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.*

III. Planning/Discussion SD 308 Springfield Visit, May 6 and 7

Greg O'Neil talked about the breakfast SD 308 sponsored last spring for our local Legislators. Last year we went to Springfield prepared with brief presentations. He is hoping that each of the three sub committees will be able to do that this time. After that it will be pretty informal and there will be time to speak to the Senators and Representatives about our issues. Greg stated that we made an impact last time we were there, he felt that our concerns were heard. Senator Manar held an evening in Oswego a few weeks ago and he still has the presentation about the school funding formula that that was presented to him last year at our visit. The Senator stated that he was incorporating some of those ideas. This is how you impact

Springfield, you don't just complain, you need to go and make a case. Anyone that can make it should go. It is a great experience.

Dr. Wendt explained that this year could be a little different, because the district has several waivers pending before the general assembly and before they make their way through the full house, they have to make their way through several committees. Oftentimes Dr. Wendt gets 24 hour notice to testify on a bill, so it might or might not come to fruition, that it will happen on the date we are visiting Springfield.

The Legislators will want to hear from you, because you are representing the tax payers. We have several waivers out there, PE waiver, Online Learning, a High School Credit for Junior High Students. We just received word that the Gifted Ed organization from the State of Illinois is going to jump on board with us on that. That can be a game changer on the state level.

The GSA cut was approved, therefore it is no longer true that we are funded at 89%. With receiving a cut mid-year, we are now funded at less than 89%. We are getting less per student every year and we are losing about 1 million dollars. The state needs to fund it or they are pulling the rug out from under our educational system.

We will meet on Wednesday (May 6) for dinner so everyone can get to know each other better and then we will host the breakfast in the morning for the Legislators. The presentations should not be too long, they just don't have the attention or the time for that. We need to be focused on quality, not quantity and be prepared to give them a hand out to look over later.

Ursula will send out an e-mail with the information and will ask you to RSVP whether you can join the group or not.

Our district has issues that no other district in this state has. We are one of the few that is still growing and we encompass three counties. Even if the state stays with the archaic number of approximately \$ 6000 per student and they would pay it at 100%, that would give us between 7 and 10 million more then we get now.

The Unfunded Mandates will get their attention, there is a lot of movement behind that. It is much bigger than just education. Waivers could be discussed also. Waivers could be put under other legislative issues.

Is there any follow up strategy? We did not do that last year, but the group thinks it is a good idea to do that.

Dr. O'Malley indicated that we do have an infographic on the GSA that could be provided to the committee members.

We are updating the list of Unfunded Mandates and that document should be presented on behalf of the committee. It was suggested to reach out to the Lieutenant Governor, Evelyn Sanguinetti. Her office recently formed a taskforce for Unfunded Mandates.

We will address School Funding Reform and GSA. Dr. Wendt was talking about the possibility of consolidating school districts in the State of Illinois, since we can't tax people enough to run this kind of model.

Kevin Harris suggested that we set time up with the assistants of the legislators to go deeper with the issues. Maybe as a follow up after breakfast? Should we reach out to Senator Manar again as well?

Unfunded mandates and SB 1 are for every district, but Construction Grant is just for our district. We could get a big tax relief with the construction grant.

IV. Other Legislative Issues – Dr. Wendt

Dr. Wendt will extend his gratitude to the Legislators for getting behind our waivers.

HB 2657 is a big deal for us. We are the only state in America that will not accept a teachers license from another state. Very difficult tests are required to get an Illinois license.

It is impacting our district and we are losing people because of this. If you have passed a similar test in a previous state, it should count, or you can have a year to take the test and get a provisional license in the meantime. There is nothing really available to study for the test. Statewide today, we have about 1000 people that fit into that category. That is what HB 2657 is about.

This is an example of why this committee was formed. We need to prioritize and it would be a great accomplishment if we could grow this to include other districts, like Plainfield.

V. Sub Committee Discussion/Report

Sub committees met for discussion on what to present in Springfield.

VI. Public Comment (3 minutes each)

There were no individuals present for public comment.

VII. Adjourn

A motion was made by Mr. Greg O'Neil to adjourn. All present were in favor to adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 27 at 5:30 OEHS – Room C217