

Trinity Area School District
Minutes of the
Education Committee Meeting
January 26, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.
Board Room - Trinity Hall

Members of the Committee: Dennis McWreath (Chairperson); John Keisling; Dorothy Tecklenburg and JoAnn Standish

Committee members present: Dennis McWreath; John Keisling (arrived at 10:40 a.m.); Dorothy Tecklenburg and JoAnn Standish. Board members present: Scott Day (arrived at 10:55 a.m.)

Others present: Paul Kasunich, Superintendent; Judy Walz, recording secretary.

Community members present: Kelly Proudfit, Kerri McIlvaine, Cindy Dobich, Brenda Williamson, Traci Hoffman, Carolyn Miller, Rachel Kluskey, Renae Lacock, Jane Ann Songer, Eric Quadenfeld and several other community members.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am. by Mr. McWreath

Public Comment

Kelly Proudfit, South Strabane Township, noted that she had circulated a petition in support of the Full Day Kindergarten program which would be presented at the board meeting on February 3.

Dr. Kasunich indicated that the solicitor was in the process of reviewing the proposed letter regarding attendance at the high school.

Dr. Kasunich noted that the survey of parents regarding Full Day Kindergarten was being overseen by one of the administrators and the data was due back on Friday (January 28). He stated that empirical data for Trinity was still being gathered and indicated that some changes were made to the first grade curriculum when FDK was instituted, but not to the second grade curriculum.

Discussion was held regarding the possible elimination of the FDK program and reverting to a half-day program. Questions were posed by community members regarding the reasons for consideration of the FDK program being eliminated and if data was the driving force behind all educational decisions. It was noted that teacher and parent feedback would be considered.

It was questioned if the public would be able to review what data was being used to make the decision regarding the kindergarten program, as well as the results of the teacher and parent surveys.

Questions were also raised regarding the decrease in staff if a half day program was reinstated and how cost would be considered in the decision.

Discussion was held regarding changes to the curriculum in first and second grade due to the Full Day Kindergarten program.

Mr. Keisling discussed the Full Day Kindergarten pilot program held at Trinity South.

Mrs. Tecklenburg urged the community members to keep in mind that Board members vote based on the best way to use resources available.

Questions were raised regarding Kindergarten registration and if a decision would be made before that time. Mr. McWreath indicated that registration would not take place until a decision was made.

Mr. McWreath reviewed reports regarding possible changes to configuration of the schools, citing the educational audit compiled by Dr. Manley. Community members urged the board members to consider the ramifications of having fifth graders at the middle school and eighth graders at the high school.

Carolyn Miller, North Franklin Township, questioned what changes could be made now to alleviate overcrowding at Trinity West.

Mr. Day noted that there are several options on the table for the future, including half day kindergarten, redistricting and moving students from Trinity West to Trinity North. Mr. McWreath indicated that any of these could be instituted as early as the 2011-12 school year, but reiterated that the closing of Trinity South was not being considered for the next school year.

Mr. McWreath thanked the parents for attending the meeting and noted that topics for the next meeting would include primary centers; results of the parent survey; the prior survey done regarding FDK; other districts' use of IQ testing (Terra Nova); revised first grade curriculum due to FDK; and the elimination of General Studies at the high school. He noted that the next meeting is scheduled for February 9 at 10 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.