

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Special Meeting – Work Session
March 24, 2009

The Shelby City Schools, Board of Education met in Special Work Session on Tuesday March 24, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. at the Professional Development & Technology Center, 39 S. Gamble St., Shelby Ohio.

The following board members were present; Bruce Briggs, JoAnn Nelson, Randy Terman, Doug DeVito and Lorie White. Administrative personnel present included Bryan Neff, Superintendent, Diane Ervin, Assistant Superintendent, John Gies, High School Principal, Paul Walker, Dowds Principal; Scott Harvey, Maintenance Coordinator, John Kinton, Central Principal; Richard Hostettler, Food Service Coordinator; Keith Rittenhouse, Technology Coordinator; Kelly Kuhn, Auburn Principal; Mark Harvey, Transportation Coordinator; Sheri Mitchell, Special Education Coordinator; Pat Lewis, Athletic Director; and Elizabeth Anatra, Treasurer.

1. The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance to the flag and affirmation of the district's vision statement.

The Shelby City Schools will be a place:

- where all students are proud to attend
- where the staff is proud to work
- where parents are proud to send their children
- that the community is proud to support

2. Mr. Briggs advised those present that anyone wishing to address the Shelby City Board of Education on school matters may do so by being recognized by the chairperson. Persons are requested to identify themselves and give their address before speaking. A maximum of thirty minutes is established for public input. If there are several speakers, each one should be concise and limit remarks to three minutes.

No Visitors were present. A request was made that anyone wishing to comment on any agenda item notify the president so that an opportunity to speak on the item during discussion could be given.

No one requested an opportunity to comment

A request was also made that anyone wishing to comment or make suggestions on items not on the agenda notify the president so that a time now or later in the agenda could be assigned for discussion. No one requested an opportunity to comment on items not on the agenda.

A request for any additions or corrections to the agenda was made, there were none.

3. Leadership Team Work Session

Mr. Briggs opened the meeting by reviewing the district mission statement. He urged everyone present to speak freely. The meeting began with a review of OSBA materials on Board/ Administrative responsibilities. The following points were covered.

The School Board

1. Envisions a community's education future and then formulates the goals, defines the outcomes and sets the course of the district.
2. To maintain its focus on the end results, a board must free itself of unnecessary, time-consuming administrative details.
3. The board should focus on addressing three main questions: What? Why? How much?
4. What?
 - a. What are we trying to accomplish? To what end?
 - b. What are our goals and policies? How do they support our mission?
 - c. What are we trying to accomplish?

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5. Why?
 - a. Good decisions are based upon good rationale.
 - b. A school board that is serious about leadership will push itself to make decisions it *knows* are right.
6. How much?
 - a. How much is enough to meet our performance objectives?
 - b. How much in the way of resources are we willing to allocate to get the job done?
 - c. The board uses “how much” questions to maintain accountability.
7. How well?
 - a. How well has the board, superintendent, treasurer, and staff executed the plan?
 - b.
8. The tools available to the board to answer these questions are:
 - a. Continuous improvement plans
 - b. Policy manuals
 - c. Community input
 - d. Performance objectives

The Superintendent and Administration

1. The superintendent’s primary focus is on “the means to the ends”.
2. How? When? Where? By whom?
3. The tools available to the superintendent and administration are:
 - a. Detailed implementation strategies
 - b. Procedural guidelines and regulations
 - c. Organizational designs and staffing patterns

4. The superintendent is the primary conduit between the board and the staff.

Common Ground

1. There are times when the board will “invite” the superintendent to help with tasks that are board duties, like new policy development. A superintendent may “invite” the board to make recommendations on a new, high-profile operational procedure.
2. Assistance and collaboration is OK, but ultimate responsibility does not transfer.

Conceptual versus Tangible

1. The board must focus on “conceptual” questions.
 - a. Difficult because they are not black and white.
 - b. Often cannot be answered quickly.
 - c. Forces external, forward-thinking, results-oriented focus.
2. The superintendent and administration must focus on “tangible” questions.
 - a. Answers contain black and white details.
 - b. Decisions are often easier to reach.
 - c. Focus is on internal and known variables.
3. Boards are tempted to focus on “tangible” questions instead of the harder “conceptual” questions.
4. Boards that micromanage are guilty of two faults:
 - a. Trying to do the superintendent’s and administration’s job.
 - b. Neglecting the board’s leadership responsibilities.
5. “Ironically, micromanagement problems often stem from the superintendent’s control over the creation of the board’s agenda, which is frequently so loaded with management information that there is no room for a true board leadership agenda. Those wanting to end micromanagement problems should start by developing ways to streamline board approval of administrative action items and create an authentic board agenda that forces discussion toward education issues and future results.”

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6. A Foundation of Trust

Board, superintendents, and administration should commit to the model shown below:

	Board	Superintendent & Administration
Focus	End Results The Plan	Means Execution of The Plan
Sequence	First	Second
Questions	What? Why? How much? How well?	How? When? Where? By whom?
Tools	Mission Goals Policies Continuous Improvement Plan Standards Appraisal/Evaluation of Results	Strategies Procedures Regulations Assignments Documentation Results
Methods	Vote	Recommend

The discussion turned to a review of Board Policy BBA, “School Board Powers and Duties. Each of the following ten duties listed in the policy were discussed. The policy lists the following duties:

The Board’s major responsibilities are to:

1. select and employ a Superintendent;
2. select and employ a Treasurer;
3. determine and approve the annual budget and appropriations;
4. provide needed facilities;
5. provide for the funds necessary to finance the operation of the District;
6. consider and approve or reject the recommendations of the Superintendent in all matters of policy, appointment or dismissal of employees, salary schedules, curriculum, selection of textbooks and other matters pertaining to the operation of the District;
7. require reports of the Superintendent concerning the conditions, efficiency and needs of the District’
8. evaluate the effectiveness with which the District is achieving the educational purposes of the Board;
9. inform the public about the progress and needs of the District and to solicit and weigh public opinion as it affects the District and
10. adopt policies for its governance and the governance of its employees and the students of the District.

A general discussion of goal setting followed. It was stressed that the board and Administration need to collaborate to create good goals. The North Central Accreditation process was discussed as a model of the goal setting process. Mr. Neff mentioned goals as articulated in the last Success Newsletter as another example of goal setting.

The recent Board Self Evaluation was reviewed in detail. It was noted that community feedback on these issues is needed. The difficulty of designing a questionnaire that receives a broad response was mentioned and several previous survey attempts were discussed. Other vehicles for providing public information such as the Success Newsletter, the district website and other technology were discussed. Management of controversial issues needs to include communication, response based on the needs of kids and the district’s overall goals.

Trust was brought up in the context of the self-evaluation results. It was suggested that the board sometimes needs to ask questions that seem intrusive in order to build balanced pictures of a situation. When this happens it may be helpful to keep the overall situation more in mind than the details.

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The board is aware that it has the responsibility to represent the district positively in the community but may also question administrative concepts in some situations. It is understood that differences of opinion will occur. This can be minimized by having clear Board goals, priorities and positions on issues that may arise communicated in advance.

Management of complaints was brought up, specifically the question of when a complaint or comment should be handled on the spot and when it should be referred to administration. Mr. Neff suggested a framework for initial responses, that would allow for investigation before a commitment to a course of action was made. It was stated that the Board is willing to channel all complaints to the superintendent if they are kept informed on the response. Other issues such as blogs, concerns that affect family members of board or administration were discussed.

Special interests that may affect the board or administration were discussed briefly.

In conclusion Mr. Briggs thanked everyone for their time in completing the evaluations. Measurement of goals was suggested as a topic for future work-sessions.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. DeVito at 8:03 p.m. and seconded by Mrs. White
Vote Yes; Mr. DeVito, Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Terman, Mrs. White and Mr. Briggs.

Bruce Briggs, Board President

Elizabeth Anatra, Treasurer