

EDINBURGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Edinburgh, Indiana

March 21, 2011

The Board of School Trustees met in special session at 5:15 p.m. on this date at the Administration Building, 202 S. Keeley Street, Edinburgh, IN 46124 with Cathy Hamm presiding. All members were present.

Also attending were Richard Arkanoff, Jackie Crawhorn, Kevin Rockey and Todd Tobias.

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROBATION HEARING

Mr. Rockey distributed information regarding the high school's Academic Probation. Mr. Rockey explained the general understanding of school performance and accountability explaining the differences between PL221 & NCLB (No Child Left Behind), which all schools are held accountable for. Mr. Rockey stated that in no way was he trying to make excuses and that our school does need to improve. Our staff has worked hard in areas showing need for improvement, and we did improve in those areas. We now need to concentrate on getting better in all areas. In Indiana, 4% of all elementary schools are on academic probation, 8% of all middle schools, and 49% of all high schools. Seeing that almost half of all high schools in Indiana are on probation doesn't seem right. If a test is given and 50% of the students fail that test, we would know that we need to go back and take a look at what's wrong. Mr. Rockey stated he does not believe that high schools are doing that much worse than elementary and middle schools. Mr. Hardin asked if the formula is the same for all levels. Mr. Rockey stated no, the formulas are different due to the different types of testing, etc. that is taken at different levels. Hopefully the state will go back and compare these results. Mrs. Taulman stated according to the chart, in 2007 the percentage of high schools on academic probation was 14%, in 2008 the percentage was 10% and in 2010 it went up to 49%, while the middle school level did the complete opposite with their percentages going from 12% in 2007, 11% in 2008 and 8% in 2010. Mrs. Taulman stated it seems that something is not right with the high school numbers. Mr. Rockey stated it looks as if something is different in the way things are figured.

Mr. Rockey stated the accountability of the number of students is tough due to tracking students that move in and out of the district, for example. Mr. Rockey stated even if the high school was at the top of the chart, they would still be looking at weaker areas to see what can be done to improve. Mr. Rockey stated to him it seems to be a way to say Indiana's high schools are failing and to justify why the state should endorse charter schools.

Mr. Rockey stated the next chart shows that 24% of elementary schools, 52% of middle schools and 82% of high schools did not make AYP in 2010. Again, it doesn't seem that the measuring stick is equivalent at the different levels. Mr. Rockey stated the school is taking this issue seriously but are also taking into consideration that it seems that high schools are being measured differently.

Mr. Rockey went over the high school's School Improvement Plan with the Board. Our first goal was to focus on increasing our graduation rate which included offering extra lab times, credit recovery through the ERC, etc. Our graduation rate has gone up, which shows that you get what you focus on, plan for and work on. We now need to work on our Reading Comprehension scores. There were a few students that were not able to take the Math portion of the test due to either being expelled or moving to a different school during testing time. We're looking into seeing if there is anything we can do. Mr. Rockey talked about what the staff are currently doing and will be doing to improve Reading Comprehension scores. One thing being done is sustained silent reading. The simplest thing to do is to take field trips, talk about history and math at work, and how everything affects everything else vs. sitting in a classroom. We can't do that for everyone, so the next best thing is to read about those things. With more reading you get more discussions with the students than ever before. It's fun and refreshing to see that our student enjoy it and we try to find books

that are interesting to them. Silent reading is key and research shows that the more you read the better your reading comprehension. Another focus is going to be state-wide standards and expecting all students to know the words on the Academic Vocabulary List which can be found online on the high schools website. A student is expected to know the words and understand the context of what those words mean. There are posters throughout the high school that shows a list of what every student is expected to know, not the overall knowledge but the key words and concepts to push them into the next level. Every class takes a pre-test at the beginning of the school year and another at the end of the school year. The test shows student understanding and by doing this school-wide, shows that it's important enough that all classes school-wide are concentrating on it as a group. Mr. Rockey asked if anyone had any questions. Mrs. Taulman asked if the school is using E2020. Mr. Rockey stated different things are used for different students and E2020 is geared more for ERC students and several students who do not go to ERC but do independent study in the office. The Board thanked Mr. Rockey.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Taulman moved and Mrs. Weddle seconded a motion to adjourn the High School Academic Probation Hearing at 5:40 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

CATHY HAMM, PRESIDENT

GUY HARDIN, MEMBER

KIM WEDDLE, VICE-PRESIDENT

JUSTIN LOLLAR, MEMBER

ALICE TAULMAN, SECRETARY