

Minutes of the REGULAR Meeting of the Board of Education  
Community Unit School District No. 4, Champaign County, Illinois  
Mellon Administrative Center, 703 S. New Street, Champaign, Illinois  
February 9, 2009 Within the Boundaries of Said District

Regular Meeting

Board President Dave Tomlinson called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Board Members Present**

Nathaniel Banks, Arlene Blank, Kristine Chalifoux, Sue Grey, Scott MacAdam, Greg Novak, Dave Tomlinson

**Staff Members Present**

Superintendent Arthur Culver, Deputy Superintendent Dorland Norris, Assistant Superintendent Beth Shepperd, Assistant Superintendent Michael McFarland, Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas, Special Projects Administrator Joe Davis

**Guests**

Representatives from CFT, and local media and other interested persons

**Approval of Agenda**

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Scott MacAdam, to approve the amended agenda. The motion carried on voice vote. Operation Hope in Garden Hills Update moved – first report.

**Public Comments**

Savoy Mayor Bob McCleary spoke in support of building a K-5 school in Savoy. Patrick Thompson commended Board member Chalifoux for her recommendations related to cutting energy costs.

**PTA Council**

Nancy Holm thanked the Board and Administration for attending the Founders' Day dinner. She also shared concerns regarding the overcrowding at Centennial.

**Reports/Discussion**

Operation Hope in Garden Hills Update

Joan Walls, Assistant to the City Manager for Community Relations, provided a brief update on the Garden Hills program. She thanked Champaign Unit 4, City of Champaign, and the Park District for their guidance and support. Operation Hope is a collaborative partnership between Champaign Unit 4 schools, the City of Champaign, the Champaign Park District, and other local social service agencies designed to aggressively develop proactive youth programs that will serve the needs of student residents of the Garden Hills neighborhood.

Assistant Superintendent Mike McFarland shared the following highlights regarding Operation Hope at Garden Hills. The Operation Hope initiative is a collective effort of local agencies that are taking a proactive approach to dealing with the issues facing communities. Because hopelessness is the root of many societal problems, a collective decision was made to use systems, programs, and people to remove the barriers to success and build bridges of hope for the

students in Garden Hills. When problems emerged last summer in the Garden Hills community, the city and other local agencies rose to the challenge and effectively addressed the issues. Operation Hope is attempting to model the previously reactive approach with the hope that pro-activeness will produce more systemic long-term results.

**Goals of the Garden Hills Youth Pilot Program:**

- To provide youth between the ages of 5–19 residing in the Garden Hills neighborhood opportunities to participate in organized recreational, educational, and career-oriented programming during the summer months and after school.
- Through facilitated activities, engage youth who are in danger of dropping out of school, academically challenged, or at-risk for becoming involved in criminal or delinquent behaviors an opportunity to discover and develop their talents and skills.
- To promote a positive self-concept in youth by providing a safe, supportive, and structured environment.
- To provide programs that encourage and promote family interaction and support.

The team conducted an evaluation to determine the success and impact of the pilot program on the Garden Hills neighborhood during the summer and the progress made on school-year activities through October. Data was collected utilizing participant and parent surveys, neighborhood resident surveys, attendance records, face-to-face interviews, and police observations. Following is an assessment and/or status update on each activity provided as part of the overall initiative, as well as observations from the neighborhood and police personnel working in the Garden Hills area.

- a. Garden Hills Summer Day Camp:** Provided K-8 students a safe and healthy place for children to be when school was not in session and offered a broad range of daily recreational activities. Summer Day Camp was held at Garden Hills Elementary School for eight weeks over three sessions, beginning on June 9, 2008 and ending on August 8, 2008. The Champaign Park District coordinated the Summer Day Camp, and sessions took place Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Specific activities included swimming, arts and crafts, teambuilding, playing various sports, and preparing creative and healthy snacks. The children participated in field trips to Prairie Farm, Skateland, Sholem Aquatic Center, and the Virginia Theatre. In addition to offering recreational activities for elementary school aged youth, the program engaged middle school aged youth as volunteer Junior Camp Counselors to serve as mentors for the younger children. Finally, all day camp participants were encouraged to partake in a civic involvement activity.

***Program Enrollment:*** A total of 75 slots were provided for children to participate in the program. Enrollment reached full capacity before the program began. The residual enrollment for the entire summer was 65 children.

***Participant and Parent Satisfaction:*** The Summer Day Camp proved to be a very positive experience for participating families. Based upon survey feedback from parents, 23% of them stated that their child or children had an above average experience in the program, and 77% of them rated their child or children's experience as excellent. Additionally, all of the parents responding to the survey stated that the program, including their experience with staff exceeded their expectations. All parents responding to the survey stated that the program had a positive impact on their child or children. More than half of the families said their child or

children stayed home last summer, and that this was their child or children's first experience participating in a summer day camp. When asked in what ways this program was beneficial to their child, parents indicated that the summer day camp offered the following:

- A safe environment with constructive activities and responsible supervision
- A chance for their children to interact with others and develop social skills
- Positive role modeling and new experiences for their children
- A variety of activities and something to do that would otherwise not be available

**Community Service:** During the last week of the day camp, 50 children and youth prepared and delivered greeting cards to residents of the Helia Healthcare Nursing Home. Upon delivering the greeting cards, the children also sang camp songs to the residents.

- b. Operation Hope:** The Unit 4 School District coordinated programs and activities for high school students of Garden Hills during the summer and throughout the school year in the areas of career and vocational experiences and academic exposure and support. Civic development was another feature of Operation Hope, and the school district coordinated community service activities throughout the year for program participants. Summer activities centered on employment readiness training and job search assistance (career/vocational experiences) while also including some academic exposure activities. During the fall, the program shifted emphasis to academic exposure and support activities while also continuing to provide career and vocational support to participating students.

**Program Enrollment:** Twenty-two students participated in summer activities, and enrollment increased to 40 in the fall. According to program staff, the fall demand exceeded the 40 students enrolled, principally due to interest from students who do not reside in Garden Hills. The majority of the participants are students of Central High School.

**Participant and Parent Satisfaction:** Surveys received from summer and fall participants indicated that all of them had a positive experience and/or derived a benefit from the program. Most of the summer participants who responded to the survey indicated that they were more productive in the summer of 2008 than in the summer of 2007. All parents responding to the survey expressed a favorable opinion about the program's impact on their child. Following is a summary of examples of what participants stated they learned from participating in the program and how parents felt the program impacted their child.

**Summary of Student Responses:**

- How to communicate better and how to act in a working environment
- How to get along with different people and put priorities before everything else
- How to use time wisely and prepare for college and jobs
- How to persevere and achieve whatever you desire

**Summary of Parent Responses:**

- Improved work ethic, attitude, and responsibility
- Improved employability skills and awareness of what it takes to secure employment
- Inspired interest in going to college and having a positive outlook on life
- Enhanced ability to obtain job experience

***Career /Vocational Experience:*** Throughout the summer and fall of 2008, the Unit 4 School District coordinated workshops on resume writing, interview preparation and job search techniques, and resources for Operation Hope participants. Of the 22 summer participants, 19 obtained employment. There were a total of 12 students employed during the fall, including eight fall enrollees and four continuing participants from the summer who either maintained employment from the summer or secured a new job in the fall. The following 15 organizations were among the employers of these students: University of Illinois, Champaign Park District, Jerry's IGA, Burger King, Sonic, Hardee's, Windsor Square Nursing Home, Schnucks, Kids Plus, Americall, Steve and Barry's, Freedom School, Menards, Linens and Things, and Toys R Us.

***Academic Exposure and Support:*** While summer activities focused mainly on vocational and career experiences, participating students who did not have a work conflict participated in a college tour to Eastern Illinois University. During the fall, two additional college tours have occurred, one to the University of Illinois and the other to Parkland College. Students have also participated in a series of college preparation workshops and a college recruitment expo at Parkland, featuring representation from over 100 different colleges. In addition to college preparation activities, student participants received academic support through individual consultation with Unit 4 staff, sometimes including meetings with parents as well. Academic support was made available to students on a group level through the School District's partnership with the New Hope Church of God In Christ. Through this partnership, students had daily access to after-school tutoring at the church. Additionally, students met on Monday and Friday afternoons for tutoring and job search activities. Unit 4 provided one teacher, and along with the City, provided several computers for this activity. Unit 4 also committed to tracking the academic progress of Operation Hope participants. As of mid-November, all students were passing their courses and had met the District's attendance standard of 95%. Two students have been accepted to Illinois State University and Eastern Illinois University. One student received the Adam Van Memorial Drug-Free Scholarship.

***Community Service:*** Students have conducted two community service activities so far through their participation in Operation Hope. One activity involved a group of students delivering neighborhood surveys on the Garden Hills Youth Pilot Program to residents of Garden Hills. The other activity involved students helping to install signs in the community for marketing the Unit 4 Attendance Knock-On-the-Door Campaign. Students will continue to participate in various community service activities throughout the year.

- c. **Summer Recreation Program:** This program provided opportunities for teenage youth to participate and be transported, if needed, to the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club Extended Teen Night Program. The purpose of this program was to provide recreational opportunities to promote positive self-image and encourage positive behaviors to assist youth in becoming self-sufficient adults. Specific program activities revolved around the following themes: character and leadership development; educational and career development; the arts; and sports, fitness, and recreation. Based on a sample survey of summer participants, 94% of them were between the ages of 13 and 16. Approximately 90% of the participants attended the Extended Teen Night Program at least two nights per week, and 15% of the participants were from the Garden Hills Neighborhood. The Boys and Girls Club provided transportation to more youth from Garden Hills than any other area where transportation services were offered.

- d. Summer Thrills at Garden Hills:** This program was designed to provide six Thursday night family entertainment events (two a month) at Garden Hills Park. Beginning in June and ending in August, children and families were able to enjoy movies, sports, concerts and other fun activities at the park. Featured events for this past summer included the following: “A Carnival in the Park,” “A Movie in the Park,” “Family Game Night” and entertainment from the C-U Superstars. Attendance at these events ranged from 65 to 200 people. The Park District had to cancel two of the six planned events due to rain.
- e. Lighted School House:** This after-school program occurred during the fall and spring of the school year. The Lighted School House provided students, residents, and families of Garden Hills a recreational setting for a variety of classes, programs, and activities and also offered students assistance in core academic subjects. During the first months of the program, the Lighted School House activities included regular arts and crafts activities, sport and gym activities, dance/creative movement, a field trip to the movies, a Girls Scouts/Boy Scouts visit, and a bowling field trip to the Illini Union. The attendance in this growing program served between 16-25 children per evening during the first month of operation.
- f. Neighborhood Observations:** Staff undertook an effort to gain input from the neighborhood residents regarding their impressions of the summer component of the Garden Hills Youth Pilot Program and its impact on youth behavior in Garden Hills. Staff collected information from a small sample of residents through surveys and from members of the Neighborhood Association at one of its regular meetings. More than 90% of the residents responding to the survey were familiar with the United Garden Hills Neighborhood Association and their monthly meetings. Eighty-four percent of the residents indicated they were familiar with the program, and half of them either had a family member or knew of someone who participated in the program. This provided some indication of how connected survey respondents were to their neighborhood and, hence, the reliability of their opinions. When asked the question “Did you see an improvement in youth behavior this summer (2008) compared to 2007,” 64% of the respondents said yes, 16% expressed no opinion, and 16% said no.

The Neighborhood Association unanimously indicated at its October meeting that the program was successful and was having a positive impact on youth behavior in the neighborhood. Some specific comments from neighborhood association members and residents, reflecting feedback on summer youth programming in combination with other interventions (police and property maintenance) associated with the broader Garden Hills initiative, included:

- The day camp was very valuable to kids, and they are now taking pride in school and in their neighborhood.
- The Lighted School House is making a difference, as kids now have a place to go in the evenings.
- There was less trouble with groups gathering on Bradley Avenue.
- There are fewer nuisances and blighted properties in the neighborhood.

**g. Police Observations:** Police officers working in the area have also spoken favorably about the impact of the youth initiative in Garden Hills, in combination with community policing strategies undertaken in the area. According to the police personnel working in the area, calls for service have declined in the area since last year and can be largely attributed to the combined efforts being undertaken in Garden Hills.

The program was assessed by data collected via participant and parent surveys, neighborhood resident surveys, attendance records, face-to-face interviews, and police observations.

City Manager Steve Carter thanked everyone for their cooperation/collaboration on the program. He expressed appreciation to the Board for their leadership and commended Dr. McFarland for being an outstanding Unit 4 representative.

#### Academic Spotlight – Academic Academy

Principal Rhonda Howard provided a brief update on the Academic Academy. The Academic Academy is a comprehensive alternative program designed to meet the needs of non-traditional students in a nurturing environment. The Academy opened to students in August 2008 as a result of the hard work and dedication on the part of District Administration, the Board of Education, and the Alternative Education Task Force. The Academic Academy has served between 45 and 55 Champaign high school students throughout the current school year. Seventy-three percent of students at the Academy receive free or reduced lunch. The Academy offers flexible scheduling, small class size, APEX and teacher taught courses, career planning services and a self-paced curriculum. The Academy's school schedule is divided into five six-week academic sessions, giving students the flexibility to block schedule their day and focus on three to four courses at a time.

The Academy has experienced many successes in its first year, including improvements in student attendance, gains in reading comprehension (TABE) and math (WRAT) assessment scores, and increases in credits earned. To date, the Academy has awarded 153 credits to 52 students. By the end of the Academy's third session (February 10, 2009), seven seniors will have met graduation requirements. Approximately nineteen seniors are on track to meet graduation requirements in May, 2009.

Additionally, Academy staff collaborated to develop several building-wide incentives at the beginning of the school year to improve attendance, behavior and academic achievement. During "Attendance Wednesday," students who have had perfect attendance (without any tardies) for the week receive an award. Students who are "Caught Being Good" receive a small prize and their name is entered into a monthly drawing for a larger prize. Each week, students are recognized for their academic achievement on the Academy's "Wall of Fame."

#### Consent Decree Update – Climate & Discipline

Executive Director Dedrick Martin shared the following information regarding climate and discipline as reported in the last Quarterly Report to the Court Monitoring Team. The purpose of the District's Collaboration and Operational Plan is to set forth a comprehensive framework for improving the District's educational programs and opportunities for African American and non-African American students. Some of the stated objectives of this plan are:

- Seek to provide educational tools and alternative resources that eliminate unwarranted disparities in student discipline and attendance at alternative schools.

- Seek to use discipline as an intervention strategy and only as a means to improve student behavior.

The Unit 4 administrative team is focused on accelerating progress in the area of climate and discipline because we are clear on the implications a safe and orderly environment have on improving student learning. Administrators across the District have engaged their respective faculties in collaborative teams in order to capitalize on the collective knowledge of all. Proactive plans to impact the quantitative indicators are occurring across the District. Plans are in place to address areas of concern.

### **District Discipline:**

#### General Points:

- As of SY2009, students with **no** disciplinary incidents increased from 80.4% (1120) in SY2008 to 88% (1792) in SY2009.
- In SY2009 there was a decrease in total Suspensions, Detentions, and In-School Supervision actions and an increase in Parental Contacts and Warnings.
- The percentage of students with disciplinary actions decreased from 19.6% in SY2008 to 12.3% in SY2009
- In SY2009 94% of African American students were never suspended compared to 92% of African American students in SY2008.
- The percentage of African American students with one or more incidents decreased by 10.9% from 34.1% (1166 out of 3421) in SY2008 to 23.2% (805 out of 3475) in SY2009.

### **Elementary Discipline:**

- Ninety four point eight percent (1560 out of 1646) of African American students were never involved in a disciplinary incident in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter SY09.
- Ninety-seven percent of African American students have never been involved with one or more incidents of Suspension.

### **Middle School Discipline Incidents**

#### General Impact:

- In SY2009 the percentage of all students with disciplinary incidents decreased by 2.3% points from 21.4% in SY2008 to 19.1% in SY2009.
- The percentage of African American students with one or more disciplinary incidents decreased by 3.7 percentage points from 38.5% in SY2008 to 34.8% in SY2009.
- Suspension Actions have decreased from 132 incidents in SY2008 to 113 incidents in SY2009.
- The percentage of African American students involved in one or more incidents decreased from 38.5% in SY2008 to 34.8% in SY2009.
- Ninety-one point three percent of African American students had no incidents resulting in Suspension. Two percent of African American students had more than one action of Suspension.

### **High School Discipline:**

- The percentage of students with one or more disciplinary incidents decreased by 22 % from 44% in SY2008 to 22% in SY2009.

#### African American Impact:

- The percentage of African American students with one or more discipline incidents decreased from 74.4% in SY2008 to 41.7% in SY2009.
- Sixty nine point four percent (429 out of 618) of students involved in one or more disciplinary incidents were African American.
- African American students involved in Physical Acts and Disruptions decreased by 9% from 87% in SY2008 to 78% in SY2009.
- Suspension actions decreased from 223 incidents in SY2008 to 164 incidents in SY2009. In School Supervision decreased from 553 incidents in SY2008 to 425 in SY2009.
- Of the students with one or more disciplinary actions, African American representation decreased from 74.4% in SY2008 to 41.7% in SY2009.
- Eighty-nine percent of African American students had no suspension action. Three percent of African American students had more than one action of suspension.
- Fourteen students had two or more actions of suspension during SY2009. In SY2008 26 students had two or more actions during the same period.

Current results from the SY2009 reveal that the high schools are making positive incremental gains in reducing the percentage of African American students involved in disciplinary actions. However, in order to meet the goals of the Consent Decree the positive gains must be accelerated at all levels. The prior focus on reducing incidents and disparities by implementing culturally responsive discipline management systems has proven to be effective at the elementary and middle school level. This strategy is now showing potential for having a similar impact at the high school level. The initial results are encouraging. With a more thorough analysis of the relationship of other variables impact on educational outcomes it is anticipated that our energy and efforts will be even more effective and larger reductions in disparities will emerge throughout SY2009.

All principals are trained and have provided their faculty with training in implementation of the Student Code of Conduct prior to the beginning of the school year. Also, the District will continue intense training in culturally responsive approaches to instruction, teaching students from diverse backgrounds, and behavior management of a diverse student population.

The Department for Achievement and Pupil Services monitors progress towards District, department, and Consent Decree goals routinely and provides quarterly reports to the Court Monitor.

#### Enrollment Projections

Director Roger Grinnip shared information regarding enrollment projections. Several variables affect the enrollment projections for the District. These variables include actual live birthrates for residents living within the boundaries of the District, mobility of the population, and shifts in residential building patterns. Two instruments utilized to calculate enrollment are the Demographic Study completed in 2008 by Cropper GIS and the *Gardner-Wohlers Enrollment Project System*.

The District used the actual live birthrates and ten years of history to produce the Gardner projections. These projections include special education students attending schools within the District, but do not include those enrolled at special schools outside the District. Additionally,

these projections do not include any numbers for Champaign Early Childhood Center as this is a limited enrollment school.

A following chart includes the Gardner and the Demographer projections for 2008/2009 compared to actual enrollments. It further compares both sets of 2009/2010 SY projections to “rolled up” student numbers for next year.

Grades	SY 2008/2009			SY 2009/2010		
	Gardner Projections	Demographer Projections	*Actual Enrollment	Gardner Projections	Demographer Projections	**08/09 Enrollment
K	738	734	709	645	744	694
1st	740	724	743	722	732	709
2nd	729	735	754	751	736	743
3rd	708	705	704	748	719	754
4th	661	664	665	698	703	704
5th	696	695	698	665	660	665
6th	648	661	668	681	688	698
7th	608	617	617	651	654	668
8 <sup>TH</sup>	617	620	628	614	615	617
9 <sup>TH</sup>	803	841	820	719	752	628
10 <sup>TH</sup>	729	788	684	745	734	820
11 <sup>TH</sup>	638	610	601	651	709	684
12 <sup>TH</sup>	607	600	551	564	573	601
TOTAL	8922	8994	8842	8854	9019	8985

\*Special schools such as READY, Pavillion, CECC, etc. not included

\*\* Moved up one year & averaged the two projections for K

#### Development of Planning Committee for District Facilities

Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas shared that in 2006, BLDD Architects performed a comprehensive review of all district facilities. The resulting report was based on interviews and feedback from school principals, district administrators and district maintenance staff. The Board of Education then extended this review of facilities to the community through its “Great Schools Together Planning” process. That committee charged the Board with developing a plan for the school facilities as well as the overall educational structure of the district.

As part of the above process, the Board of Education also directed administration to develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Administration provided a copy of the first draft of the CIP.

One of the most important aspects of the Draft Capital Improvement Plan is the establishment of a Planning Committee for District Facilities. It is recommended that the Committee develop a plan for:

1. The usage and modernization of existing school facilities.
2. The acquisition and financing of new facilities.
3. The educational structure of the district (K-8<sup>th</sup> grade facilities as an example).
4. The drafting of a financing plan.
5. The development of a strategy to implement the above plan.

Central to the formation of this Planning Committee is its makeup. Possible candidates for the Committee include: Board members, administration, building representatives, union

representatives, Champaign and Savoy representatives, University/Parkland College representatives and members of the community including parents and PTA representatives.

Board member Chalifoux provided a brief update regarding Vision Committee discussions related to the development of a CIP.

#### High School Redistricting Update

Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas provided a brief update related to the high school redistricting plan. Due to the significant overcrowding at Centennial High School, displeasure expressed by many parents of students at Centennial, and the disparity between low income students at the two high schools, the Administration has concluded that is necessary to redistrict the high schools for the 2009-10 school year. The District contracted with McKibben/Cropper Demographics. On January 31, 2009, Jerry McKibben presented two alternatives to parents at both Central and Centennial High Schools. He also stated that due to concerns expressed by parents at the January 31, 2009 meetings, the Board President and Superintendent made the decision to delay the process for a year. This will allow for more public input and participation in the process.

Assistant Superintendent Mike McFarland shared the following information related to the plan to redistrict both high schools:

- Timeline for redistricting action steps
- Specifics on the redistricting process
- Structure & objectives of community forums
- Next steps
- February - Community Forum #1 (discuss criteria for developing redistricting options)
- March – Board adopts criteria for redistricting process. Community Forum #2 (redistricting options – pros/cons)
- April – Community Forum #3 (review district selected options with implementation plan – pros/cons) Community Forum #4 (review district selected options with implementation plan – pros/cons)
- May – present district recommended options to Board for discussion
- June – present district recommended options to Board for approval
- August 2009 – voluntary implementation plan for SY2009.
- August 2010 – implementation of redistricting plan SY2010

Board member Novak suggested moving timelines up due to the seating of new Board members in April. He recommended December 2010 instead of September 2009.

#### 2009-2010-2011 Financial Update

Chief Financial Officer Gene Logas provided a brief financial update. Due to the deepening recession and the effect it is having on the current year's budget and on planning for the 2010 and 2011 budgets, the Board of Education was updated on these changes. While all school districts are feeling the effect of the economic downturn, Unit 4's strong financial condition and proactive identification of changing revenue sources puts the District at a significant advantage to weather the economic storm. Mr. Logas shared the following information:

- District more than doubled fund balance from \$10.5 million in 2005 to \$22.0 million in 2008.

- Evaluated by ISBE as having highest level of financial solvency for 2007 & 2008.
- Ran consecutive surpluses in 2007 & 2008 of \$1.7 million and \$3.8 million.
- District reacting proactively to changes in revenue sources that do not control (interest earnings, general state aid, property taxes).
- Biggest changes in revenue occur in 2010-11 (have been identified, strong fund balances to assist, time to react strategically).
- Plan & procedures to minimize the FY09 projected deficit which includes implementing “no cost” energy efficiency changes identified by Board member Chalifoux; review remaining energy efficiency ideas that contain upfront costs & implement those with greatest cost benefit outcomes; examine all personnel replacement requests for potential reduction; non-essential travel outside of state will require approval from the Superintendent; purchases must be made via a purchase order; requisitions above \$5000 reviewed by CFO & Superintendent; practice of utilizing teachers to substitute on an hourly basis should be avoided if possible; administrators must refrain from calling attorneys unless absolutely necessary; reduce amount of catering for district functions; before & after school program should avoid utilizing existing hourly employees whenever possible; all budget managers required to perform written analysis of actual/budgeted expenditures through December 2008.

#### Student Assignment Plan

Deputy Superintendent Dorland Norris shared the Administration’s recommendation to postpone action on the student assignment plan until the Monitoring Team and Plaintiffs’ counsel have had further opportunity to provide input regarding the proposed changes to the plan.

In light of the scheduled expiration of the Consent Decree in June 2009 and the Supreme Court’s 2007 ruling in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District*, the Unit 4 administrative team has explored the feasibility and efficacy of race neutral student assignment plans for student assignment after the expiration of the Consent Decree. Accordingly, with the assistance of Dr. Michael Alves, Unit 4 has explored alternatives for student assignment after the expiration of the Consent Decree, and has shared information with the Monitoring Team and Plaintiffs’ counsel.

Dr. Alves analyzed the implications of using socioeconomic status (based on free and reduced lunch eligibility) in place of race, but otherwise maintaining Unit 4’s current choice plan. Dr. Alves concluded that a socioeconomic controlled choice assignment lottery would continue to accommodate a high degree of rank-ordered school choices and that a SES lottery that was based on the actual percentage of low income and non-low income students in the lottery applicant pool would likely produce the results that are most similar to the District’s race conscious kindergarten controlled choice assignment lottery. Dr. Alves also concluded that a socioeconomic controlled choice lottery will work to prevent the re-segregation of black and non-black students in the District’s elementary schools. The key factors that appear to support this hypothesis are the distribution of black and non-black rank-ordered school choices and the fact that over three-quarters of the District’s black kindergarten applicants were low-income.

Dr. Alves also reviewed Unit 4’s assignment process for its three middle schools. Dr. Alves reviewed the student composition at each school considering race, free and reduced lunch status, gender, special education status, ESL status and achievement levels. These data indicate that

each Middle School Cluster has an equivalent K-5 enrollment-base by race and most other factors. Accordingly, the Unit 4 administrative team has determined that it does not need to recommend modification of Unit 4's assignment process for middle schools at this time. However, the Unit 4 administrative team is considering whether to recommend allowing students at Booker T. Washington Elementary School to choose which middle school they attend, similar to Stratton students, to make BTW more attractive to Champaign parents.

The Unit 4 administrative team recommends the following approach to student assignment after the expiration of the Consent Decree:

1. Continue with a Controlled Choice assignment policy
2. Discontinue use of racial classifications in the Controlled Choice assignment policy and instead use SES as determined by free and reduced lunch status
3. Maintain the other elements of the current assignment policy, including sibling and geographic priorities
4. Current student assignments will not be impacted by the change in the lottery system – that is, current student assignments will be grandfathered
5. The middle school cluster model appears to be effective and does not need to be modified at this time

The Monitoring Team and Plaintiffs' counsel have stated that they would like further opportunity to provide input regarding the proposed changes. At this time, the Unit 4 administrative team is waiting for such input. The Unit 4 administrative team has also held community forums to gather community feedback regarding the proposed changes. Community feedback was largely positive and supportive of both maintaining a choice based plan and using SES in place of race.

Maintaining the District's current student assignment plan after the expiration of the Consent Decree will risk liability for violation of the United States Constitution.

### **Action Agenda**

#### High School Restructuring Plan (Exhibit "A")

Scott MacAdam moved, with a second by Sue Grey, to approve the High School Restructuring Plan at an estimated cost of \$408,523. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

Dr. Lizanne DeStefano, University of Illinois, spoke about the collaboration with Unit 4. She also commended the team for their work on creating an excellent plan for the restructuring of Central High School.

Assistant Superintendent Michael McFarland shared the following information regarding the plan to restructure Central High School. Central High School failed to make AYP for five years and the District is now required to develop a campus restructuring plan that will show "substantial promise to increase student learning so that adequate yearly progress for all students will be achieved." The current model of high school has been rendered obsolete. Improvement of educational outcomes at the high school level represents our greatest, clearest challenge to providing equity and excellence and, therefore, provides us with a perfect opportunity to bring about fundamental change.

Unit 4 educators and stakeholders are committed to meeting this challenge and have developed a Central High School Restructuring Plan to guide the collective efforts of all stakeholders to

ensure that students are making adequately yearly progress on the state assessment and are achieving high levels of learning.

There are five restructuring options provided by No Child Left Behind, but only four available in the state of Illinois.

NCLB Options for Restructuring:

1. Reopen as a charter school
2. Turnarounds with new leadership and staff
3. Enter into a contract with a proven entity
4. State takeovers (not available in Illinois)
5. Other major restructuring involving whole school reform

The Central High School Restructuring team leaders elected to implement a turnaround plan with new leadership and staff (option 2) and fundamental change involving whole school reform (option 5).

The Central High School Restructuring Plan is based on Mass Insight's "Framework for Turnaround of Under-Performing Schools" and is supported in their seminal report entitled the "Turnaround Challenge," as well as by vetting by educators, policymakers, and reform experts nationwide. Its guiding assumptions rest on evidence from research on school interventions and effective education practice over the past ten years.

The Restructuring Plan is founded on best practices in high school reform and has been aligned with the Strategic Plan developed by the Vision Committee. The plan, when implemented with fidelity, will transform Central over the next five years to become a consistently high performing high school.

Staff development is an integral part of the Restructuring Plan. All professional development will be aligned to meet the goals of the Restructuring Plan and to produce Central graduates who meet the Central Graduate Profile. Campus leaders and all teachers will be required to participate in a Summer Instructional Capacity Building Academy that will occur over the next five years. In addition, campus leaders will also be required to complete a year-long turnaround academy focusing on key leadership actions necessary in a school turnaround.

Staffing Allocations:

- 1FTE will be needed to provide targeted support classes during the school day for ninth and eleventh graders
- 2 FTE's will be needed to create freshman teaming and implement freshman transition activities
- 2 FTE's or 4 support personnel will be needed to organize study halls and closed lunch for ninth and tenth graders
- 1 FTE will be need for a counselor or similar position to organize college/career initiatives
- 1 support personnel will be needed to assist with student services, and college awareness initiatives

It is anticipated that a large portion of the cost for this plan will be offset by aggressively seeking grants related to high school reform. We have contracted with Elliott Merenbloom, a national scheduling consultant, to review scheduling efficiencies throughout the district. It is expected that the projected total FTE allotment could be reduced as a result of his recommendations and by a reallocation of FTEs across the district.

Projected stipends, summer enrichment, and college visits (\$27,000)  
 Projected FTE cost (\$375,000)  
 Projected cost for modification of food service (\$6,523)  
 Projected total (\$408,523)

The Central Restructuring Oversight Committee will evaluate the implementation of the plan on a quarterly basis and provide recommendations for improvement. SMART goals developed by Central Action Teams, as well as Adequate Yearly Progress standards set by No Child Left Behind, will be used as quantitative measurements of effectiveness of implementation.

Board members made the following comments/recommendations:

- \$408,000 (paying in two years rather than all at once)
- Negotiating with CFT
- Posting positions
- Concerns regarding possible cuts in fine arts & foreign language
- Approving the plan at a cost of 10% less and figuring out a way to make it work

Superintendent Culver recommended going forward with the plan and modifying the plan later rather than submitting the plan after the due date. The plan needs to be submitted to the State by February 13, 2009.

#### Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

It was the Board's decision that the Closed Session Minutes remain closed.

#### **Consent Agenda**

Greg Novak moved, with a second by Sue Grey, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board of Education approved the following Consent Agenda items:

#### Donation

The Board of Education approved the donation for skating passes from Skateland for students at Barkstall, Bottenfield, Carrie Busey, Dr. Howard, Garden Hills, Kenwood, Robeson, South Side, Stratton, Washington, Westview, Edison, Franklin and Jefferson valued at \$37,518.00. The donation required approval by the Board of Education as it is \$5,000.00 or more in value.

#### Board Minutes

The Board of Education approved the November 24, 2008 and January 12, 2009 Board meeting minutes as presented.

Bills & Treasurer's Report (Exhibit "B")

The Board of Education approved the Bills and Treasurer's Report as presented.

Human Resource Changes (Exhibit "C")

The Board of Education approved the Human Resource Changes as presented.

**Executive Session**

Arlene Blank moved, with a second by Kristine Chalifoux, to adjourn into *Closed Session* in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2c) to consider Personnel related to employee appointments, employments, compensation, dismissals, complaints, staffing allocations 120/2(c)(1); Student Discipline 120/2(c)(9); and Pending Litigation in Johnson, et al. v. Board of Education of Champaign Community Unit School District #4, Case No. 00-1349 (U.S.D.C. Central District of Illinois) 120/2(c)(11). The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board convened into *Closed Session* at 10:22 p.m.

The Board convened into *Open Session* at 11:35 p.m.

**Open Session**Student Discipline

Greg Novak moved, with a second by Scott MacAdam, to expel student #640765 from Centennial High School for the remainder of the 08/09 school year and reassign to READY for violating Conduct Code #18 (Physical Confrontation with Staff) of the Champaign Unit #4 Student Code of Conduct. The student may return to the regularly assigned school following the expulsion period provided the student has completed the requirements of the alternative school. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 4. Nays 2. Abstained 1. Board members Banks and Tomlinson voted Nay. Board member Grey abstained.

The Board convened into *Closed Session* at 11:36 p.m.

The Board convened into *Open Session* at 11:45 p.m.

**Open Session**Student Discipline

Sue Grey moved, with a second by Nathaniel Banks, to expel student #660005 from Central High School for the remainder of the 08/09 school year and reassign to READY for violating Conduct Code #23 (Theft) of the Champaign Unit #4 Student Code of Conduct. The student may return to the regularly assigned school following the expulsion period provided the student has completed the requirements of the alternative school. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

Greg Novak moved, with a second by Kristine Chalifoux, to expel student #660016 from Centennial High School for the remainder of the 08/09 school year and the entire 09/10 school year and reassign to READY for violating Conduct Code #14 (Gang-Related Activities) and Conduct Code #19 (Physical Confrontation with Student) of the Champaign Unit #4 Student Code of Conduct. The student may return to the regularly assigned school following the expulsion period provided the student has completed the requirements of the alternative school. The motion carried on roll call. Ayes 7. Nays 0.

The Board convened into *Closed Session* at 11:47 p.m.

The Board convened into *Open Session* at 11:50 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Greg Novak moved, with a second by Kristine Chalifoux, to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 p.m. The motion carried on voice vote.

*Board Approved: March 9, 2009*