

CONWAY SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2009

1 A meeting of the Conway School Board was held on Monday, November 9, 2009 at
2 6:30 p.m. in the Loynd Auditorium at the Kennett High School.

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4 **Members present:** Chair Sheryl Kovalik, Assistant Chair Kelley Murphy, Dick Klement,
5 Syndi White, Janine McLaughlan, Rick Breton, and Randy Davison. Carl Nelson and
6 Assistant Superintendent Bob Gadomski were also present.

7 **Signing of Manifests (6:20 p.m.)**

8 **1. Call to Order (6:30 p.m.)**

9 **2. Salute to the Flag**

10 **3. Approve Minutes of 10-26-09**

11 **Motion:** by Dick, seconded by Rick, to review and approve minutes.

12 **6 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained (Sheryl).**

13 **4. Personnel**

14 **A. Consider Regular Personnel Changes**

15 **1. Election of David Vogel as Math Teacher at KHS**

16 **Motion:** by Kelley, seconded by Janine, to consider, discuss, and
17 vote on item. **7-0-0.**

18 **2. Election of Winter Coaches**

19 **Motion:** by Kelley, seconded by Janine, to consider, discuss, and
20 vote on item. Kelley reviewed evaluations and stated everything is
21 good to go. **7-0-0.**

22 **5. Presentation of School Programs/FYI ITEMS**

23 **A. KHS Student Representative – None.**

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25 **RECESS BOARD MEETING FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING at 6:33.**

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27 (Jane Gray of SAU 9 joined the Board. SAU 13 representative was not present.)

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29 **Presentation of Elementary School Budgets**

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31 **(1) Pine Tree School – Laura Jawitz** stated her target budget included the
32 increases allowed by the board: health insurance, fuel oil, gas, electric; and
33 Pine Tree had the \$60,000 rotating maintenance fund. After allowed
34 increases were subtracted, there was an overage of \$11,435. Most of that
35 was due to the SONH retirement costs that had gone up which the district has
36 to pay into the state and dental insurance cost increases. If that did not have
37 to be absorbed, she would not have had to make any cuts. She did have to
38 make cuts so she went to a cut that she doesn't recommend because then
39 you will see it on her request to reinstate it to the program. She wanted to
40 make sure that the Board understood it is not something that she totally
41 backed up. She cut the reading specialist from 5 days a week to 4 days a
42 week, saving a little more than \$9,000. She changed art from 3 ½ days a
43 week to 3 days a week. Student enrollment has decreased over the years
44 and she believes this is something they can absorb for probably two years.
45 The third year out, as you remember that grade that has one teacher will be
46 going back to two teachers, so eventually that will have to be absorbed again.
47 Basically, this is how she arrived at her budget. **Sheryl** summarized that the

48 budget had increases that she couldn't control of \$53,585 which included
49 health insurance, fuel oil, and electricity. Sheryl reviewed Laura's choice was
50 to cut some programming that she could most bear. She is asking the Board
51 to forgive the \$9,240 which is the fifth day of the reading specialist. Laura
52 added that the big difference between the budgets is that Pine Tree has a
53 very experienced staff so the cost is all in salaries. Laura provided enrollment
54 and class sizes. The wish list was also enclosed. **Dick** asked if the increase
55 in retirement is totally due to the change by state legislature. Becky Jefferson
56 stated "yes". Becky stated the current rate is 7.49%. The district budgeted
57 less than that for this school year due to the state legislature, so they are
58 short for the current school year they are in, and they are reducing it again the
59 following year so this budget is actually containing both years from budget to
60 budget. **Dick** asked for clarification regarding electricity. The actual for 2008-
61 09 were \$38,000; the budget this year is for \$36,000; proposed up to
62 \$40,000. Laura stated that this is the number that Jim Hill gave her as a three
63 year average. Becky noted that Jim also adds a percentage increase on
64 those as well. **Randy** stated he knows Laura's school does a great job and
65 she is in a precarious position due to that fact that she does have a lot of
66 experienced members on staff. His concern is that compared to the two other
67 elementary schools, she is running at approximately \$2,300 per pupil over
68 and above the other two elementary schools. When he did the numbers, he
69 is for fairness and equity regarding the complete district. He noticed it was
70 below state average and her enrollment stays around the same. He stated
71 this is an observation and the board needs to look at numbers regarding the
72 population being served. We are spending \$2,300 more per pupil at Pine
73 Tree than we are at the other two elementary schools. Becky stated four
74 years ago when they did a program budget, there is a base cost of keeping
75 the building open and that is regardless and that is the operation of the plan.
76 That cost is there whether you are up 10 students or down 10 students. This
77 is something to keep in mind when you look at per pupil cost items. Also,
78 Pine Tree has the \$60,000 rotating funds this year. Randy stated he
79 eliminated the \$60,000 and divided it by how many students there are. Laura
80 stated there are some multi-school districts that do not put staff within the unit
81 base budget for that reason. We do not trade teachers around so there is no
82 choice. Sheryl doesn't think she would recommend any change. She would
83 be looking at the cost of our elementary education across the district and as
84 long as we are seeing good results at each of the buildings, she wouldn't
85 think we would shuffle experienced staff around. **Janine** asked if 2008-09
86 spending on the phone was \$4,600 with a proposed budget figure of just over
87 \$7,000. Was this due to the new phone system or additional lines? Laura
88 stated they had a first year of maintenance that was covered under the
89 contract? **Jim Lefebvre** asked for clarification of 2210 Course
90 Reimbursement, the CEA Contract line, and how this figure was arrived at.
91 Carl responded that by contract they have to put \$50,000 into the budget and
92 it is located in each of the five school buildings' budgets.

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94 **(2) Conway Elementary School - Brian Hastings** presented his budget and
95 referred to page one, the summary page. He noted the allowable increases
96 for health insurance and utilities. He was able to meet this by budget by
97 having one retirement and one teacher that went back to part time and is
98 working in another building. They were able to realize some savings in that
99 area. If you look at those three main areas, the overall increase in the budget

100 meets that target of \$20,246. He also provided his enrollment by class size
101 per grade list and his special request section. **Rick** asked for explanation on
102 savings in electricity within his budget. Becky stated Jim Hill does his
103 numbers based on prior year and she recommended that Jim Hill address this
104 on the 19th when discussing maintenance. Brian stated they have also made
105 a conscious effort to turn lights off, etc. Sheryl stated she would be curious to
106 know the utilization of the buildings year round. **Randy** asked how Course
107 Reimbursement (page 8, regarding Dept. 17) actual for 2008-2009 was
108 double from what was adopted? Is this because of a lot of new hires? Brian
109 stated they do a lot of staff development as a building and it is a priority.
110 Becky added that \$50,000 in the CEA contract for course reimbursement.
111 We exceeded the \$50,000 so we didn't give back 100% on the dollar for
112 course reimbursement. This year we paid 85%. Conway EI took a bigger
113 portion of that \$50,000 this year. You are not going to see us keep moving
114 the money around; we just have a \$50,000 pool to work with. Sheryl stated
115 we need to understand how much of our professional development is
116 improving our mid and veteran teacher's skills versus bringing our newer
117 teachers up to speed. Becky stated that Brian had 2 or 3 staff working on their
118 masters. **Dick** asked for clarification that Pine Tree spent just over \$6,000
119 less in course reimbursement, so it's a matter of who took courses and he
120 thinks this is healthy. **Randy** wanted to point out a concern with the
121 enrollment. It seems like every year the projected enrollment for kindergarten
122 is always off and is actually inflated. By doing this, it actually pushes the per
123 pupil spending down by inflating it. He really would like to know how Brian
124 justifies projecting an enrollment at the kindergarten level of 40 every year
125 when it actually comes in around 30 and the other two elementary schools
126 are targeted right on. Carl stated that this projection is based on what we
127 have in pre-school, sibling lists, and history. Randy stated that historically he
128 challenges it because it is off consistently by almost 10 every year. Sheryl
129 explained that even if it is off by 10 it does not change the budget. Brian
130 stated if you look over the 11 years he has been principal, you are going to
131 find that the kindergarten numbers have been as low as 28 and has been up
132 around 50. It is not inflated. There is absolutely no benefit to him to inflate
133 the numbers. It does not have anything to do with a per pupil cost at this
134 time; it is a ball park number that he puts out every year. There is absolutely
135 no benefit or reason for him to put out a number that is not accurate. **Janine**
136 referred to page 10, the line item for strategic planning. He also had the
137 same amount for 2009-10. Is this a continuation of a program? It was
138 explained that it is a continuation of the planning process. **Jim Lefebvre**
139 drew attention to 2220 educational media. Last year it was discussed at the
140 high school level the significant short fall of books. If there is the same
141 problem at Conway EI, where would this be reflected in the budget. Brian
142 responded that they do not have a major issue with this. Mark commented
143 that they do bill for missing books. **Randy** asked Brian how many rooms still
144 have carpet in them. Brian responded that there are a couple in first grade
145 that have issues but they are in pretty good shape.

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147 **(3) John Fuller School – Mark Zangari** reported that after allowable increases,
148 he had to find \$9,000. The core instructional program is well intact. Buildings
149 are getting updated with new electrical systems, furniture, etc. It is a solid
150 budget in terms of educational programs. He noted some line items went up
151 and some went down and reviewed those. Most lines were trimmed by a few

152 hundred dollars. The wish list highlight item would be an additional classroom
153 teacher. There is potential for class size reduction policy change. Carl
154 passed out a memo from Christine Thompson to explain class size reduction
155 changes. In the past five years, Mark has had 1 to 1 ½ classrooms funded by
156 class size reduction. The potential impact of the change would be three
157 teachers across elementary school. Bob Godamski reviewed that the class
158 size reduction money may have to be used toward professional development
159 so that we have highly qualified teachers. Initially when you hear highly
160 qualified teachers, you would expect them to all be at that level. At the
161 Elementary level is a little less cumbersome because if you are certified K-8,
162 you can teach any configuration and any grade level as long as you have that
163 certification. As you move up in grade level, it becomes more specialized.
164 **Dick** asked of those children going from 4th to 5th grade, are any of those
165 children trying to use school of choice. Mark stated over a period of time they
166 have had about 35 but that doesn't happen every year. He does not know the
167 answer by grade. Dick stated given this, school of choice, class size wise,
168 needs to be considered. Carl stated that the administrators do review this
169 and provide their recommendation to him. **Randy** believes Dick's point is
170 valid and the administration needs to review this. Sheryl noted that policy
171 allows school of choice provided there is not a financial impact to the district.
172 It is pretty well laid out in the policy. **Randy** noted in regard to regular
173 education aide, he has three on staff. **Rick** noted two schools have a
174 problem with carpet. Can this be put into a warrant article and be taken care
175 of. **Carl** explained it could be but if it was voted down, it's a no go. Sheryl
176 noted the public has been very happy with the rotating maintenance fund.
177 Mark stated carpet removal has been a priority with the rotating funds. They
178 are through the asbestos abatement part of it. Sheryl stated it would be
179 worthwhile to see what the number would be to make all of the rugs
180 disappear.

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182 All building administrators request and recommend full day kindergarten (for
183 the future).

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185 **Jane** had a question on Support Services, 504 Compliance. Pine Tree has
186 no money for it, John fuller has \$250, and Conway El has \$1,000. Where this
187 had been lowered, is this a question for Pam? Mark stated it is still a civil
188 rights thing. If we had 504 plans that call for services, special ed does not
189 pay for those services but we still have to include them in our budget. **Jane**
190 also stated there is no money for Summer of Learning in Pine Tree's or John
191 Fuller's budget, but it was increased at Conway El. Why and how is it
192 working what about the kids in Pine Tree or John Fuller? Laura and Mark
193 stated they plan on using Title 1 monies for the programs. **Jane** asked if the
194 administrator's salary (performance piece) is that 2%. Carl stated "yes". **Dick**
195 stated it would be easier for him to understand per pupil cost at the middle
196 school and the high school, if all those special ed dollars are rolled against
197 the middle school and the high school. When we get to the elementary
198 school, there is this Unit 2 that encompasses all three elementary schools. Is
199 there some way we could have Unit 2 appended so it says of this money, this
200 is going here, that's going there, so then we would be comparing apples to
201 apples. You have an elementary full burden rate, all costs included, middle
202 school all costs included, then HS all costs included. And then we will have
203 an idea of what education is costing us per school. Becky explained how

204 some items cross all five buildings and some numbers for, example in unit 10,
205 are district wide, across the board. Sheryl stated the board would like to
206 understand what costs we are not counting as elementary that are, in fact,
207 elementary costs; just for Unit 2. **Jim Lefebvre** asked if the salary for special
208 ed aides included 1.5 additional aides? Have all the other schools had an
209 opportunity to factor this in? Briand and Becky both stated “yes”.

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211 Next Budget Committee Meeting is 11/18th at 6:30 p.m. in KHS for HS, Middle
212 School, and CTC.

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214 The Budget Committee Meeting closed at 7:21 p.m.

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216 **RECONVENE REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

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218 **7. Old Business**

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220 **A. K-8 Educational Research Committee Report Discussion**
221 Syndi provided an overview and further explanation of what the K-8
222 Research Committee found. She gave the following presentation.

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227 **K-8 Education Research Committee Report**
228 **Committee Report**

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230 Data gathered and recommendations made to assist with the decision making process
231 to restructure K-8 education in the Conway School District.

232
233 October 2009

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235 **Committee Members**

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237	Megan Croce	Jim Lefebvre
238	Ingrid DeWitt	Karen Umberger
239	Kim Dougherty	Mark Zangari
240	Jackie Esmay	Peter Malkin
241	Bob Gadomski	Kelley Murphy
242	Syndi White	Sue Powers
243	Carl Nelson	Kevin Richard
244	Wendy Grzesik	Crystal Turner
245	Brian Hastings	Randy Davison
246	Laura Jawitz	Deb Hill

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249 **Subgroup Assignments**

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- Move Grades 5 & 6 to KMS & add full day Kindergarten
 - Move Grades 5 & 6 to KMS and close one elementary school
 - Move Grade 6 to KMS and add full day Kindergarten
 - Move Grade 6 to KMS and close one elementary school

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K-8 committee recommendations

- Do not close an elementary school at this time
- Keep grade 5 in the elementary schools
- Continue to explore the benefits/draw backs of moving grade 6 to KMS
- Involve SAU 13 schools in all reconfiguration discussions
- Continue to explore the option of full day Kindergarten

Budget Considerations

• Approx. savings of closing one elementary school	\$759,000
• Approx. increased costs at KMS for adding Grade 6	\$164,500
• Approx. increase (Conway) tuition at KMS	\$195,600
• Total savings (Conway)	\$398,900

Cost impact for sending towns when adding Grade 6 to KMS

• Albany’s annual cost increases	\$ 26,920
• Eaton’s annual cost increases	\$ 4,223
• Madison’s annual cost decreases	\$ 28,594
• Freedom’s annual cost decreases	\$ 11,704
• All changes in tuition agreements must pass a district vote in each town.	

Sheryl stated she appreciates all who worked on committees and subcommittees.

8. Public Comments on K-8 Education

Jim Lefebvre asked if the \$365,000 savings on school is this a per annum savings? Yes. Sheryl clarified that the reason for the differential prices and savings for the other sending towns is assuming they are not sending their 6th graders. Carl stated that there are two who indicated they are not interested in sending their kids. Randy stated as a member of the committee it was put nicely. Educationally we need to hone in on the transition piece. He doesn’t think that two years at a middle school is time enough for a student to acclimate themselves to the surroundings and then to make their way through a system. He was on the committee with Karen Umberger and they both feel we need to look at a per pupil cost of education. As we go forward with this, adding numbers to the middle school, it could take care of itself because point blank it looks like it is

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305 over staffed already; there is a team already in place that could handle the load
306 of students that would be coming to the middle school. Karen put in her notes
307 that a concern of the budget committee was the cost per pupil rate. The middle
308 school spends 13,000 per pupil and the remaining schools are around \$9,000 per
309 pupil. The enrollment in the Conway schools has dropped over the past five
310 years. These are concerns that as we move forward on this committee, not only
311 education and the transition piece, but financially to the people who are paying
312 the taxes. Sheryl would like to hear a specific recommendation from the
313 committee that they are recommending a more in depth and community involved
314 approach be taken immediately to move us toward getting the 6th grade into
315 middle school for a variety of different benefits both educationally and
316 economically. The work done so far is not thorough enough to take action at this
317 time. **Dick** cautioned that he feels that the financial numbers may not be close to
318 accurate. He would like this to be re-looked at before we look at whether this
319 makes sense or not. Just buildings, spaces, numbers, how much would it cost,
320 and how much does it not cost. **Sheryl** stated that Andy Griegel should be
321 involved on this from a physical plant standpoint. **Jim Lefebvre** stated he
322 understands the 9th grade has a team teacher concept and they are considering
323 that concept for the 10th grade. If that is the case, there is a question about the
324 process or way we have done it. Sheryl responded that it has only been hinted
325 at that the 10th grade may be working in that direction. Sheryl stated she expects
326 that somebody from the committee make a motion that a committee be formed to
327 do the more complete homework on evaluating all of the variables associated
328 with considering moving the 6th grade to the middle school. Syndi asked if Sheryl
329 wanted her to address, in a separate committee, the idea of the full day
330 kindergarten issue for research. Randy stated his only concern being on the
331 committee is that the stakeholders within the field that were on this committee
332 remained stagnant; status quo cannot exist. He thinks it is time to move forward
333 with this as a board.

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335 **Motion:** by Syndi, seconded by Rick, to form a committee to further study
336 moving 6th grade into the middle school. **7-0-0.**

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338 Dick wanted to take all discussion of costs and take it out of the discussion of
339 that committee. A separate committee should take care of cost data and
340 additional expenses. Sheryl will get back to everyone with committee chairs and
341 membership.

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343 **Motion:** by Kelley, seconded by Janine, to further look into establishing a full
344 day kindergarten. **7-0-0.**

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346 As with the previous motion to form a committee to further study moving 6th
347 grade into the middle school, Dick wanted to take all discussion of costs and take
348 it out of the discussion of the committee that looks into establishing a full day
349 kindergarten. A separate committee should take care of cost data and additional
350 expenses. Sheryl will get back to everyone with committee chairs and
351 membership.

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356 9. Instructional Issues

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A. Consider First and Second Reading and Adoption of Revised policy IGDJ (KHS Student Activities Code)

Motion: by Dick, seconded by Kelley, to review, discuss and approve.

Kelley provided an overview. The Co-Curricular Committee (CCC) was handed the activities policy late in August, early September asking them to update it and move forward. Specifically at that point in time there were a couple of recommendations made to the CCC, one of which involved getting the new substance abuse policy into the activities code because the substance abuse policy that was in the activities code which has not been reviewed since 2005 did not reflect the current policy in the student handbooks. The CCC has tweaked the activities policy and inserted a new sportsmanship piece which is holding to a higher level, our athletes, our coaches, our fans and holding them accountable for their actions at the athletic events. Some may wish this code went 24/7; 365 days per year with the students, but enforcing and policing this would be hard to do. The next step was that they adjusted all athletic forms and they are now actually part of activities code. After this evening, they will be linked through the website. Kelley clarified content of the code. Much discussion ensued around student participation, behavior off school grounds, eligibility, coaches establishing their own contracts with athletes, etc.

Amendment to Motion: by Dick, seconded by Kelley, to vote to accept the code, as amended (the policy on pages 4 and 5 to make it consistent with the substance abuse policy and the language correction). **7-0-0.**

This doesn't preclude a second document (contract) if the athletic director wanted to create one for athletes. Janine reminded the Board that this includes all activities (drama, band, etc.) not just athletics. Sheryl recommended that a vote be taken and honor the work of the co-curricular group.

Motion: by Dick, seconded by Janine, to encourage high school principals to develop a contract for students involved in co-curricular activities that holds them to a higher code of behavior and emphasize that we are concerned with off campus behavior. Randy's document taken into advisory; send it to Carl he will make sure Neal gets it. **7-0-0.**

9. Business Affairs

A. Consider Approval of Consolidated Agreement

Motion: by Kelley, seconded by Rick, to review and approve. **7-0-0.**

10. Administrators' Reports – SAU board meeting on 11/12th at Eaton Town Hall.

A. Committee Reports – None.

B. Set Date and Time for Deliberative Session (Monday, March 1, 2010)

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at 7:00 p.m.)

Motion: by Kelley, seconded by Janine. **7-0-0.**

11. Board Members' Issues- Board Discussion - none.

12. Public Comments (time permitting) – Lloyd was disappointed to hear that there was nothing for off campus behavior noted in the student activities code. He hates that coaches should be responsible for punishment. Kelley stated they also have the Coaches Council. Lloyd wants the public to know that we are the best at sportsmanship!

13. Adjournment

Motion: by Rick, seconded by Janine, to adjourn. All in favor.

The regular Board meeting ended at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Xann Teryek
Recording Secretary