

Webster Co. School Board Hears Boys' Soccer Proposal

Written by Dennis Beard Wednesday, 29 September 2010 11:43



WEBSTER COUNTY, KY - In less than one hour of the Webster County Board of Education's open session portion of its meeting Monday evening, members heard two reports, approved a series of "consent agenda" items as part of a single motion, and tabled bids for paving of the Webster County High School Track.

The meeting began with a report from Webster County High School Athletic Director Matt Bell, who told the board he had spoken to state officials regarding a previous request to implement a boys' soccer program at the high school. Bell said the main issue preventing formation of a boys' soccer team is the restrictions imposed on the school by Title IX, a federal law that includes a mandate that each school and district must have the same number of male and female athletes.

"It's not about the number of sports, but about the number of girls versus the number of boys participating in athletics, as well as the amount of money being spent," Bell said, adding that he is planning to attend a training in December to learn more about the Title IX program.

He said the state officials he spoke with recommended the district develop an intramural program to determine the level of interest before proceeding further, and board members encouraged Bell and the booster club sponsors who attended the meeting to work through the high school's Site-Based Decision Making council to develop such a program.

Also during the "community input" portion of the meeting, Webster County District Assessment Coordinator Kim Saalwaechter presented recent No Child Left Behind state test results, including a Kentucky Association for School Councils "transition index" report that indicated all elementary schools in the district are either on track to reaching 100 percent by 2014, or are already at that target. Most of the middle schools and WCHS are also on track. Dixon and Slaughters middle schools were classified as "declining" in the report, due to a slight decrease in scoring at Dixon between 2009 and 2010, and no change in index score at Slaughters during the same time frame.

Saalwaechter said all the elementary schools in the district deserved praise for bringing novice reduction levels to less than five percent. Before discussing middle school results with the board, Webster County School District Assistant Superintendent - who conducted the meeting as acting superintendent in the absence of Webster County School District James Kemp (Kemp was at a scheduled training) - told the board Providence Elementary, which was included in the district's compiled test scores for the first time this year, deserved a special note of praise for its improvements in scoring.

"We are particularly proud of Providence," Lossner said. "We really need to make that noteworthy to the public."

In other business, board members approved a proposed "2010-2011 working budget," which Lossner said included approximately \$18 million in state funding, but didn't include a recently awarded \$550,000 federal allocation.

"The reason (the federal allocation isn't included) is we just entered into preliminary discussions on how we're going to spend that money," Lossner said.

He told the board Kemp has recommended the district "sit on the money" due to expectations of deficits in the state's Medicaid funding. He also pointed out the district has already been notified of additional cuts of 1.5 percent to both the Family Resource Center and Community Education programs, and cautioned the board about spending money that might be needed. Webster County Board of Education Chairman James Nance agreed.

"We have to make sure we don't do something we can't regroup from," Nance said.

Next, the board tabled a pair of bid proposals for paving of the WCHS track after members agreed more study of the bids and the differences in the proposals is needed.

The board also approved a proposed "food procurement plan" from Webster County School District Food Services Director Cathline Townsend. According to information provided, the plan is part of a required set of documents for participation in the National School Lunch Program.

Near the end of the open session portion of the meeting, members approved a list of "consent agenda" items, including a contract with Trover Health System for a Delta State Rural Network Development program, the declaration of a district-owned trailer as surplus property, and several standard monthly reports.

A list of personnel changes in the district was presented for board review. Changes included the employment of Deana Blanchard, Shane Brinkley, Jamie Daniel, John Hess, Kaley Owens, Jessica Pride, and B.J. Riden as substitute teachers; the employment of Pat Hammack, district-wide Delta Project specialist; Mandrea Fambrough, FMD instructional assistant, Dixon; Steven Hook and Stacy Brown, full-time alternate bus drivers; Cathi Blankenship, Sebree Elementary cook/baker; Amy Sauls, Annex cook/baker; Kristi Alexander, substitute instructional assistant; Tom Welshans, WCHS head baseball coach; Brad Brown, WCHS boys/girls tennis coach; Joy Stewart, WCHS second assistant softball coach; and Jennifer Kincaid, Sebree Elementary academic coach; the resignation of Gayle Steib, annex cook/baker; Anette Woodring, Sebree Elementary SDI instructional assistant; Thomas E. Herron, full-time alternate bus driver; Denise Brown, Providence Elementary Title I instructional assistant; and Mary Steely, Sebree Elementary academic coach.

During a review of board concerns and new business, the board approved a motion to cancel its meeting scheduled for Monday, Oct. 4, and also approved holding a board retreat as a special called meeting on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 15 and 16 at Pennyrite State Park.

The board then went into closed session to discuss pending litigation, conduct student hearings, and select a district architect for its upcoming planning committee. Following the closed session, the board approved the appointment of Clotfelter/Samokar as the architect for the project. The Lexington-based architectural firm was reportedly the only one to submit a request for consideration on the project.