

The Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation Board of School Trustees called a special session to order at 6:05 pm. The meeting was held at the Knightstown Community High School located at 8149 W. US 40, Knightstown, IN 46148. Those in attendance were:

Attendance:

- Board Members: Wade Beatty, Steve Dalton, Mark Fort, Kevin Knott, Leah Kopp, Thomas Schaeztle, and Timothy Wehr
- Central Office Staff: Gary Storie, Superintendent; Lori Swincher, Payroll/Benefits Coordinator
- Educational Services: Tom Mandon
- Media: Jeff Eakins, Bethany Tabb
- Patrons: Approximately 61 patrons

I. Call to Order

Kevin Knott took roll and noted all members were present. He then asked all to stand for the Pledge to the American Flag.

II. Strategic Planning Work Session

Kevin Knott gave an opening statement informing the public this is a work session and if time allows, comments may be allowed later. He asked the public to write down questions, but regular business needed to be conducted.

The Board President stated the corporation Athletic Director had been suspended and that was all he was prepared to comment on.

The Superintendent updated the public on the threat of the swine flu as well as an update on the trip to Mexico mentioned during the last regular session. He stated the trip may be cancelled. The sponsor is staying on top of the situation and the board will be informed of all decisions.

Kevin Knott wanted to address some concerns regarding the possible closing of Kennard Elementary School. He read a statement asking to take this issue off the table for this school year. Mark Fort wanted to make clear that we need to look at all options, not just Kennard. Thomas Schaeztle asked the Superintendent for a time line. He responded, late June would give enough time to change bus routes and prepare schools for any change. Leah Kopp informed the public that the thought to close Kennard has only been discussed during the last couple months. Steve Dalton wanted to reassure the public this had not been previously discussed. He also stated he and Timothy Wehr had been discussing the closing of Knightstown Intermediate School as another option. He personally is leaning in that direction, however all options will be researched.

Thomas Schaetzle stated he is the main proponent in the strategic planning sessions. He reiterated his opinion to hire a consultant to perform necessary research to ensure everything is properly discussed. He also informed the public of the belief statements the Board created. He also stated the Board intends to follow those statements and copies will be made available upon request. Kevin Knott again stated his desire to table the issue as more research needs to be gathered in order to make the right decision. The Superintendent answered the question regarding the financial status if nothing is done. He stated the corporation would be fine.

The floor was opened for public comment.

- Ellis Holder, 102 N. Vine Street, Kennard, IN – Stated he is a concerned parent and does not agree with hiring a consultant.
- Richard Riggle, 211 Illinois Street, Shirley, IN – Stated “perception is reality.” He does not feel Kennard has representation on the board.
- Shirley Heck, Carthage/Kennard Elementary Principal - Thanked Kevin Knott for touring Kennard Elementary and examining the building. She also thanked the board for taking time to make a decision.
- Jason Groce, 201 S. Vine Street, Kennard, IN – Asked Steve Dalton about a statement he made during last meeting about an additional cost to corporation taxpayers in the amount of \$300 per family. Steve Dalton explained the figure was based on numbers from the Administration Building to the Board President. He also stated he needs to see more accurate figures. Jason Groce asked if more buildings would be built with the savings. Kevin Knott answered it was a possibility.
- David Erwin, 6474 W. 300 S, New Castle, IN – Stated the community concern was due to the fact only Kennard Elementary was presented to be closed and other schools were not mentioned. Steve Dalton stated other options would be researched and presented.
- Jr. Doubman, 102 W. Plum, Kennard, In - Applauded Kevin Knott for taking the time to tour Kennard. He does not want to see any school closed. He believes grades five and six should return to the elementary; however junior high should remain separate from high school. He also asked who oversees the buildings. Kevin Knott informed him the corporation has a facilities Director.
- Gerald Leonard, 6675 S. Grant City Road, Knightstown, IN - Asked what could be done with the money from the refunding of the bonds. He also stated he was against closing a school to build athletic facilities.
- Tracy Back, 106 Martindale Street, Kennard, IN – Stated how involved families are at Kennard Elementary and asked how this would affect transportation expenses.
- Cory Wilkerson, no address stated – Expressed his view, “parents have rights to protest.” He does not think the building can be sold, therefore it will sit vacant. That is not saving money.
- Keith Ferrell, 2925 S. 400 W, New Castle, IN – asked if a savings was created in salaries, why is closing Kennard still an issue.
- Kenneth Hunter, 145 High Street, Kennard, IN – asked the same question as Keith Ferrell.
- Jere Riggs, 6733 S. Grant City Road, Knightstown, IN – He informed the board his career is in Strategic Planning and offered to volunteer his services in an effort to save money.

- Marissa Groce, 201 S. Vine Street, Kennard, IN – She stated she wanted the focus to be on the kids and not the town. She is in favor to moving grades five and six to elementary and grades seven and eight to the high school.
- Joyce Vickery, 1757 S. 400 W., New Castle, IN – She does not believe having ten year old children on the same bus with older students for long periods of time is a good situation.
- Carolyn Groce, 7557 W. 100 S., Shirley, IN – Asked if the board had reviewed the information she presented several months ago on a four day school week. She also had questions about a 60 day timeline to close Kennard. Kevin Knott stated 60 days would not be adequate to make a decision of this caliber. Mark Fort and Steve Dalton confirmed.
- Janet Sparks, Third Grade Teacher at Kennard Elementary – Invited all board members to visit and see firsthand all the great things that happen at Kennard.
- Ron Womack, PO Box 18, Kennard, IN – Stated many meetings were held after the tornado of 1974 and one statement he recalled was “don’t put all eggs in one basket.” The governor is now calling for consolidation and he (Ron Womack) does not agree.
- Jeff Johnson, 11 N. Main Street, Kennard, IN – Informed the Board of a meeting held in Kennard to gather facts in support of Kennard Elementary School remaining open. He does not want to see a separation of community support and the students best interest. Kennard students are in an environment conducive to learning and that is what the community wants.
- Melissa Toth, 4642 S. 625 W., Knightstown, IN 46148 – Stated she is not choosing one way over another, she wants the focus to be on what is best for the students. She does not want to see personal attacks. She questioned if the teachers are going to Knightstown, why won’t the same opportunities be available there.
- Julie Snyder Clerk, Treasurer, Kennard, IN – Kennard is currently looking into “Safe Routes to School”. In light of their efforts, has the option to close central office been explored instead of a school?
- Ellis Holder, 102 N. Vine Street, Kennard, IN – Stated he does not want to make this a personal attack. He asked people to call and write their representatives and governor to protest the closing.

Kevin Knott informed the public he wanted to dispel thoughts of a decision. He thanked all in attendance for their discussion and turned the meeting over to Gary to discuss the possibility of a facilities consultant.

The Superintendent asked for guidance from the Board. Does the Board wish to push to get Kennard closed in the next few months or do you resolve not to close Kennard next year? He stated there is not enough time to gather the data the Board requested and close Kennard for next school year. Kevin Knott and Steve Dalton agreed there is not sufficient time to close a school for the 2009-2010 school year. However, they still would like to examine all numbers.

Timothy Wehr asked if a phasing of fifth and sixth grade back to their respective elementary schools would be a better choice to make rather than to do it all at once. The Superintendent stated this would need research and reiterated the board has made the decision not to close any building for the following year. Wade Beatty asked if he had the manpower or expertise to gather the necessary

information. The Superintendent stated no. Wade Beatty moved to look at all facilities and hire Educational Services to facilitate this. Thomas Schaetzle gave the second. After some discussion Thomas Schaetzle withdrew his second. Kevin Knott then stated, the Superintendent has informed the board he does not have time to compile the information requested, therefore, it is in the best interest to use a consultant. Steve Dalton disagreed and stated the financial numbers are presented and he does not feel a consultant is needed.

Kevin Knott asked Tom Mandon, Educational Services, if different samples are available for the board to review. Tom Mandon informed the board samples can be available. They will take a broad approach and not offer only one scenario. After much discussion, Leah Kopp gave the second to Wade Beatty's original motion to hire Educational Services. More discussion ensued; Timothy Wehr moved to amend the motion to see a contract with amount listed before committing. Thomas Schaetzle gave the second. No vote was taken on either of the previous two motions.

Steve Dalton moved to table the issue until a contract is made available. Timothy Wehr gave the second. Roll call vote was taken. Wade Beatty-no; Steve Dalton-yes; Mark Fort-yes; Leah Kopp-yes; Kevin Knott-yes; Thomas Schaetzle-yes; Timothy Wehr-yes. Motion carried 6-1.

Tom Mandon suggested a study begin the first part of the next school year. Thomas Schaetzle asked for advice on how to prepare for such a study.

Jeff Eakins asked about the situation and circumstances surrounding the Athletic Director. Kevin Knott moved to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to suspend David Bradford. Thomas Schaetzle gave the second, motion carried 7-0.

Kevin Knott moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 pm.

PRESIDENT

MEMBER

VICE PRESIDENT

MEMBER

SECRETARY

MEMBER

MEMBER