

Port Angeles School District
216 East Fourth Street, Port Angeles, WA 98362-3023, 360.457.8575

**Minutes – Elementary Transaction Team Meeting
Wednesday, March 21, 2007**

Attendees:

Kate Wenzl, Jeanne Wolfley, Michele Haworth, Doug Hayman, Kathy Millar, LeAnn Johnson, Nancy Pack, Debra Roos, Holly Juskevich, Loren Engel, Karen Fox, Vicki Helwick, Leah Bauman, Ron Jones, Theresa Rothweiler, Nolan Duce, Mary Hebert

Meeting Opening:

Mrs. Hebert welcomed the members and informed them that some of the information about the recent school board meeting in the newspaper article was incorrect.

Elementary Transition Team Report 6:

Mrs. Hebert then began to review with the members the information in the *Elementary Transition Team Report 6* dated March 12, 2007.

As Mrs. Hebert reviewed page 1 under Table 1: *Program Topic Recommendations and Results*, she reminded the members that their strings-grade 6 recommendation - with additional staff, was not approved by the Board of Directors. As stated in the March 7 meeting minutes, the Board of Directors was again looking at the music program decisions. (The Elementary Transition Team members' band-grade 6 and general music-grade 6 recommendations have been approved by the Board of Directors.)

Transportation -Cost and Dismissal Times Discussion:

On page 2, she reviewed the *Instruction Time* and the information about cost mentioned under Transportation. "Cost related to equalizing dismissal times at elementary schools were analyzed by the team. If Dry Creek ran on split dismissal, it would add an additional four buses at \$100,000 per bus for \$400,000, and a recurring cost for driver labor and miles would be \$70,474. This would produce a total first year cost of \$470,471 for a longer instructional day at Dry Creek Elementary School."

Discussion arose around the split dismissal. One member asked why the inner city schools have this split dismissal time. After several minutes of discussion she emphasized that the point she was trying to make is that all the students would fit on the available buses if there was a common dismissal time. She suggested that the primary students could possibly have a longer recess time so that their instructional time would be equitable.

Explanations followed. One member stated that he recently had occasion to determine the number of students who could be accommodated on each bus and found that there are a maximum of 52 students that could be accommodated per bus. With the elementary students, three students can be put in each seat x 26 seat and therefore 78 elementary students can be accommodated per bus.

Mrs. Hebert explained that the problem lies during the dismissal time. If there were to be a common dismissal time, there isn't enough time between the dismissal time and the time the children are scheduled to be picked up. There would be children who would have to be at school really earlier and other children who would be at school really late since there are not enough buses. It is imperative that after dismissal time, there are no students left at school without proper supervision. With a split dismissal time, fewer buses are needed since the buses make several runs. (In the mornings, there is also a staggered arrival time whereby students are dropped off at the different times. Again, it is only because of split (staggered) pick up/drop off times in the mornings and afternoons that the school district is able to service students with the currently available number of buses.)

One member asked about doing a double run of the buses to/from Roosevelt Elementary, as the school district had previously done at Monroe Elementary. (*Please note that the Elementary Transition Team had voted not to go through the process of making suggestions to the Board of Directors for renaming the 'new' elementary school. At their meeting of March 19, 2007, the Board of Directors approved this recommendation by the Elementary Transition Team. Therefore, by default, the school's name will be Roosevelt Elementary School. This will be the name used in the meeting notes hereafter.)

He was informed that there were old, outdated buses that were sold and not replaced because of cost. Therefore, currently there are seventeen buses, fewer buses than before.

Mrs. Hebert informed the members that the funding is what is prohibiting the school district from purchasing more buses. This expense is funded through the money voted for through the passage of the levy, not from the money provided by the state. Therefore, the money for additional buses would be taken from the programs. Since the school district is charged with maintaining the same level of programs, while still remaining within their current budget, purchasing new buses is not a viable option.

More discussion followed. As stated in *Elementary Transition Team's Report 6*, "The team is struggling with the fact that two elementary schools do not provide the same number of average hours per grade level." A member was concerned about the hours at Dry Creek and if these hours jeopardized students' instructional time. The minimum hours of instructional time required by the state are 1000 hours. As noted on Page 2 under *Table 3: Basic Education Hours and Schedules*, "The table indicates that none of the schools is currently offering less than the required number of basic education hours annually."

Another Meeting Needed

Since there were other members who were concerned with the question of common dismissal time vs. split dismissal time, and transportation costs, Mrs. Hebert asked the members if they would want Mr. Eldred, Director of Pupil Transportation Center, to come to the April meeting. It was agreed that Mr. Eldred would be invited to the meeting on April 11, 2007 so that he could explain the transportation costs and why the split dismissal time is necessary. Mrs. Hebert suggested that members email their questions and concerns to Mr. Eldred before that meeting so that he can come to the meeting prepared to answer their questions. She also informed the members of Mr. Eldred's email address: jerry_eldred@pasd.wednet.edu. (This is not a 'regular' meeting and the sole topic/agenda item for this meeting will be transportation issues.)

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM ELECTIVES

On Page 3: under *Elementary Program Electives*, the music schedule was determined at the last school board meeting. The Board of Directors agreed that the music electives now offered to the 6th grade students will not be changed when the 6th grade students are incorporated into the elementary schools. The Board of Directors said that there can not be an extension to the school day.

Please see *Appendix A* on page 6 for specific information. Every 6th grade student who wants to take music as his/her elective (band, orchestra and strings) 5 days a week may do so. This means that there is less time for other electives. The members were informed that the music team had brought to the elementary principals a schedule that will work.

There was further discussion about the amount of time the 6th grade students spend per day in music. One member pointed out that she has seen information from research done that has proven that those students in grades 6-8, who are engaged in music instruction, are more engaged in their other subjects. (The 6th grade students currently have 2 electives per day.)

One member reviewed the difference between her (current) 6th grade students' core instructional time vs. students at Dry Creek Elementary School. She concluded that the current students at Dry Creek and the current 6th grade students at Roosevelt Middle School have comparable instructional time. Mrs. Hebert informed the members that the Board of Directors based their decision on this information and agreed to the Elementary Transitions Team's recommendation with regard to music electives.

Since music will be offered for 6th grade students 5 days per week, one member suggested that perhaps parents could be given the opportunity to suggest an elective for their children, depending on their needs. Perhaps, if a student were having trouble in math, the parent could suggest his/her child take a math elective (rather than a music elective.) Because this was not a decision to be made by the Elementary Transition Team, it was decided that, although this was an interesting topic, it would not be pursued by members.

Physical Education Schedule

The Elementary Transition Team has not yet made their decision regarding the physical education schedule. On page 3 under *Nutrition and Fitness Report*, it is stated that “The salient point of the Nutrition and Physical Fitness Task Force’s recommendation about teaching time for physical education in grades 1 through 12 dealt with the requirement of the 100 minutes of physical education and health instruction. The task force recommended that minimally 60 of these minutes need to be taught by a certified physical education instructor.”

Mrs. Hebert then asked the members the following question. If the current physical education implementation were kept the same beginning in the 2007-08 school year for K-6, would the members agree to keep the current physical education schedule? There were no dissenting ‘votes’ to her question, and therefore, it was agreed by the Elementary Transition Team that the current physical education program would be kept the same as the current schedule, which is as follows:

Kindergarten: one day per week for 30 minutes (unless all-day program is approved)
Grades 1-3: two days per week for 30 minutes each
Grades 4-6: two days per week for 40 minutes each

Bubble Classes:

Mr. Engel reminded the members that Hamilton Elementary School has two spaces for bubble classes. He and Mrs. Hebert have spoken and have identified these spaces for future use.

Roosevelt Elementary School also has several spaces that will accommodate bubble classes.

As pointed out, bubble classes occur every year but in different grades.

All-Day Kindergarten Decision:

The decision regarding the kindergarten program (all-day or not) will be decided by the Board of Directors in April, 2007.

Thanks Offered to the Members:

Mrs. Hebert thanked the team members for all their thoughtful discussion, insights, expertise, commitment and their perseverance in the difficult decision making process.

Meeting Adjourned:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40p.m.