

Northside Educational Improvement Council

I. 6:00 p.m. General Meeting Called to Order

Jill Palmer opened the meeting by welcoming the committee and then asked Dr. Folks for comments. He started by saying he was amazed how much goes on in the summer. There are more kids in summer school at NISD than about 90% of the smaller districts in our area.

Members Present: Mary Adams, Diane Aguilar, Susan Allain, Robbie Bland, Christi Evans, Isabel Fears, Nancy Fox, Matt Foxhall, Lisa Holmes, Abby Kested, Robert LeBlanc, Janis Lappeus, Beverly McCarthy, Sunday Nelson, Kathryn Nicholson, Jill Palmer, Rosemary Perez, Dori Peterson, Tesilia Soliz, Miranda Snider, Ché White, Anne Best

Staff Attending: Dr. John Folks, Dr. Linda Mora, Sara McAndrew, Linda Zarakas, Don Schmidt, George Torres

Dr. Folks discussed the economic stimulus package being proposed, the state of the economy, and the state legislature. He mentioned that the economy is affecting public schools not so much at the campus, but at the district level. NISD earned about \$6 million in revenues. There is a 98.6% collection tax rate this past year which is down from 99%. This means a \$3-4 million dollar difference from last year. The number of homes in foreclosure are the most in San Antonio since the depression. The state's revenue is down \$9.1 billion. Alternatively, Texas is fortunate because it hasn't seen the effect of economic downturn like the rest of the nation. NISD is going to have to be conservative. Dr. Folks cautioned that there probably would not be a retention stipend this year. That being said, NISD is in better financial shape than other districts in Bexar County. The state legislature hasn't really helped the situation and we are now waiting to see what happens during this session. There is \$1.9 billion in property tax relief funding coming to schools, but when it is spread across the state it is not a lot of money. The country's economic stimulus package will mean about \$200 billion in Title/IDEA (Special Education), \$45-\$46 million for construction for over two years possible; but again, don't count on it for relief. There is no question the economy has effected our growth. The district is up about 200 students in the elementary level; 19 students at middle school; but 650 down at the high school level. These numbers are about 600 below the projection for this year. The district is 2,600 students above the same time last year. Next year the district will not grow as anticipated. The simple fact is that we don't get as much money if there are less children.

Dr. Folks went on to say that the district is basically putting a freeze on positions other than classroom teachers. The basic question is, "Would we rather have salary increases or people losing their jobs?" Employees need to be thankful they have a job and income. Our state's legislature needs to hear everything they can about putting money into schools. Property value growth and money should stay with local school districts.

He anticipates that there will be some relaxation on accountability issues, and hopes that unfunded mandates will not arise. He is also not convinced that end-of-course tests are the best way to go. Lastly, he mentioned that the climate in Austin is a little different now and is more favorable to listening to the problems of school districts.

II. Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2008

Dori Peterson motioned to accept the minutes; Mary Adams seconded the motion with corrections to typos made as noted by Beverly McCarthy.

III. Discussion of Summer School Programs

Dr. Mora led the discussion on summer schools. The draft proposal will be reviewed by the Academics Committee. There will be an adjustment for the alignment of cluster campuses because lunch needs to be available at campuses that have over 50% economically disadvantaged students. There are 17 clusters for elementary schools and 4 bilingual campuses. The draft proposes to use Rudder, Zachary, Jordan, and Ross as cluster sites. Summer school will again be four days per week. Brandeis High School will host the high school summer school. The proposal lists course offerings exhibiting the district's effort to add course offerings so students can meet the 4x4 requirements.

Newcomer students who have not been in school before must meet eligibility criteria. Colonies North, Mead Middle School, and Brandeis High School will host the ESL programs.

TAKS Blitz program is offered for students that still need to pass exit level test. There will be summer credit retrieval for students who meet at-risk criteria. Special education students who have failed TAKS-M will have the opportunity to take support classes. There will be summer credit retrieval for students who meet at-risk criteria.

Special programs are offered for children with disabilities that extend the school year for critical skills. A fine arts summer camp is offered and funded through Title I or Learning Tree. In addition, an elementary science camp will be held for 4th graders who need extra help in science. The Gifted and Talented camp will be at Knowlton for elementary and middle school students. Lastly, the STEP program through City of San Antonio and Urban Ministries/YMCA sites will be changing due to clusters.

IV. Approval of 2010-2011 School Calendar

Dr. Mora presented the two calendar options. Both have a total of 10 staff development days, all the legal holidays and 6 early release days for elementary and middle schools. The primary difference between the calendars is the placement of Spring Break. Option I lists March 14-18 and Option II lists March 7-11. Both options begin school on August 23 and ends school on June 2.

Dr. Mora asked for feedback and there was a concern with both options posting the last nine weeks of school lasting 11 weeks. A suggestion was made to end the third nine weeks on April 1 thereby equalizing the grading periods. This will be reviewed. President Jill Palmer called for a vote with 19 members voting for Option I and 1 member voting for Option II.

V. Other Issues

Dr. McAndrew discussed planning for graduation by reviewing the PowerPoint which is now on the district’s website. She voiced that it is critical to communicate with parents about the 4x4 requirements. Work will be done to facilitate accessing the PowerPoint. A committee member suggested that some vignettes from former NISD students be posted as testimonials.

VI. Adjourn

Jill Palmer requested the meeting to be adjourned. Dori Peterson motioned with Robbie Bland seconding the motion. The next meeting on March 3 is cancelled due to state TAKS testing. The next meeting is scheduled for April 7. However, there is additional TAKS testing on this date. It is to be determined when the next meeting will be held.

The Northside Educational Improvement Council (NEIC) is the district decision-making committee established in accordance with Texas Education Code Sec. 11.251, and 11.252. NEIC has 39 members, including staff, parents, business, and community members. The purpose of NEIC is to involve professional staff, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the district’s and campuses’ educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. Staff are elected for a two-year term by their staff peers; parents, business, and community members are appointed by the Board for a two-year term. NEIC meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of each month, in the Northside Board Room at 5900 Evers Road, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are open to the public. Items to be considered for the agenda may be submitted to either Jill Palmer, NEIC President, at Helotes Elementary School, (397-3800) or Linda Mora, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, at Central Office, 5900 Evers Road, 78238 (397-8635). Agendas of all meetings are posted at Central Office and at each school; minutes of all meetings are posted at each school.

NEIC MEMBERS:
STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:
Primary: Mary Adams, Carson Elem.; Belinda Lerma, Krueger Elem. Intermediate: Jill Palmer, Helotes Elem.; Sue Casey, Scarborough Elem. Elementary Specialist: Diana Aguilar, Ed Cody Elementary. Middle School (Academic Core): Lisa Holmes, Jordan M.S., Anne Best, Jefferson M.S. (Other): Monica Pohovich, Jordan M.S. High School (Academic Core): Beverly McCarthy, Health Careers; Dori Peterson, Stevens H.S. (Business): Miranda Snider, Brandeis H.S. High School (Other): Vacancy. Special Campuses: Abby Kested, N.S. Vocational. Counselors: Kathryn Nicholson, Comm. Arts. Librarian: Janis Lappeus, Stinson M.S. Nurse: Nancy Fox, Leon Valley Elementary. Elementary Administration: Sunday Nelson, Ward Elem. Secondary Administration: Susan M. Allain, Connally M.S. District-Level Prof. Staff : Rosemary Perez, Dir., Compensatory. Paraprofessionals: Robbie Bland, Holmgreen Center.
PARENT REPRESENTATIVES: Debbie Byrnes, Robert J. LeBlanc, Lis Krimbill, Ché White
PTA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Tesilia Soliz
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES: Christi Evans, Dave Gannon, Isabel Fears, Nancy Medrano
BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES: Matt Foxhall
President – Jill Palmer; Vice President – Beverly McCarthy; Secretary – Sue Casey