

Board of Education Special Meeting  
April 05, 2011  
Schuyler Central High School Gymnasium

Meeting called order by President Jedlicka at 5:05 PM.

Board members present - Misek, Brabec, Semerad, Vavricek, and Parr. Others present were Superintendent Stevens, Principals Comley, Grammer, and Vrba, assistant principal Cline and Director of Facilities Mundil. All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors present were Ryan Stearns and Joseph Hewgley, representing Hewgley and Associates, and Brad Carne, representing the M.E. Group.

President Jedlicka declared the meeting was preceded by advance notice and declared to be an open session.

#### BUILDING & GROUNDS -

Mr. Stearns presented several plans depicting the planned addition at SES. These plans included grading, mechanical, electrical, heating and cooling, EPA, demolition, and storm water. In the existing kitchen, one wall will be removed; in the commons area all floor covering will be removed and replaced; front windows and one door will be removed in the library and used in another area of the building.

New classrooms are similar in size to existing classrooms but will have individual thermostats. White boards will be raised to accommodate older children and larger lockers will be installed. A full size gym will feature three levels of lighting. An alternate gymnasium plan would include bleachers. The exterior walls will be tilt-up concrete painted to match the existing school building. The board discussed the angled ceiling above the computer room and the location of the new driveway and parking area.

The project will take twelve to fourteen months to complete and should be ready by the fall of 2012 or the contractor would incur liquidated damages.

A thirty-minute recess was declared at 6:30 PM. The meeting reconvened at 7:00 PM.

#### PLANNING -

Superintendent Stevens welcomed a large group of parents and patrons to the discussion of rural school in the SCS system.

Principal Grammer shared positive educational values and educational concerns of rural schools. He stated that a teacher who teaches multiple levels of math and reading requires 90 minutes each per curriculum level, grades four thru eight thus making it difficult to offer a full curriculum to the same students in PE, family and consumer science, music, and art. He pointed out that rural teachers are doing a great job and are aided by older students mentoring younger students.

A report from Derry Stover, Environmental Health Analyst for Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services showed that radon levels at District 504R are still above the acceptable 4.0 level. Redirecting airflow in air vents and additional

caulking has not had the desired effect; it is hoped that power-venting might help to lower the radon levels.

A request from patrons of District 504R to reinstate preschool brought a response from Principal Comley. He visited with Melody Hobson from the Early Childhood Department for the State of Nebraska. She pointed out that it would not be against the law to group preschool with K-3 children; but it would be more desirable to group preschool with kindergarten. In addition, more staff would be required, as well as compliance with NDE rules 10 and 11, 35 square feet per child, the classroom would need to be a "hands-on based," and the teacher would need an early-childhood endorsement.

Superintendent Stevens presented an unofficial expenditure summary broken down per school building. This summary gave cost per pupil for each of the following: SES - \$6131; District #24 - \$6978; SMS - \$8286; District #1 Richland - \$7396; and District 504R - \$10,153. The official audited overall cost-per-pupil in SCS is \$9666.

At this time SCS receives \$6 million dollars in state aid. Within the next two years a projected shortfall of \$1.5 million is expected in state aid. For the 2011-2012 school year there will be a shortfall of \$946,398.

Projected enrollment for 2011-2012 for the three rural schools are as follows: District #1 Richland - 71 students; District #24 - 65 students; and District 504R - 25 students. Considering the financial shortfall and the projected increase in enrollment at SES and SMS, one teacher would be moved from District #1 Richland to SMS and a half-time teaching position would be moved from District #24 to SMS. If the decision to close District 504R is made, two half-time teaching positions would be moved - one to District #1 Richland and one to District #24, and one full-time teaching position to SES. Superintendent Stevens pointed out that it is not uncommon to move staff within a district to where a need exists and the talents of the employee can best be put to use.

Audience comments and questions centered on students attending other school systems in neighboring communities or transferring within the district, graduation rates at SCHS, reading scores, residency in the SCS district, cash reserves, education received at the rural schools, and the use of modular classrooms.

Motion by Jedlicka, seconded by Parr to adjourn at 9:13 PM, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathie Marking  
Recording Secretary

