

Board of Directors

May 4, 2009

4:30p.m., LEA Office

PRESENT: Jenni Absalon, Marcia Benner, Julia Doerr, Linda Freye, Matthew Hoffman, Jan Olmstead, Deb Rasmussen, Arlene Rea, Daniel Ross, Tammy Schafer, Karen Shelton, Resa Wiltse

ABSENT: none

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Studer, Jim Rea, Jan Stamper LEA Retired , Rita Bennett-In Coming Board member

CALL TO ORDER: Arlene called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of April 20, 2009 were approved as printed.

BUDGET REPORT: Marcia Benner

The Financial Report for March 2009 was shared with the Board. There were no irregularities. The Corporate Resolution with First Nebraska Educators' Credit Union was prepared for Board approval. Marcia read the document for the Board. See ACTION ITEMS.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:

President's Report—Arlene Rea

SPED Forums—Two forums have been planned – May 7 & 14. Arlene asked Board members to help moderate discussion. It is important that all teachers attend; this is not just for Special Education teachers.

Scholarships and Grants—Arlene announced the winners: STAR: Taylor Mack of Southwest High School; SOAR: Jeff Morrison of East High School; Barbara Buckingham Patronsky: Jolene Walker of Clinton; Christa McAuliffe: Dan Bundy of Park. There was much student interest in the student scholarships. Many thanks to the committee members for their work. LEA supports students and educators continuing their education.

ProCom Action Plan—ProCom will meet on May 11th to review Action Plan and make a report. (Update: ProCom was postponed to May 20, due to Dr. Gourley being ill on May 11.)

District Health Insurance—Results from the survey conducted by LEA to current participants in the Educators Health Alliance Plan indicated that the most preferred deductible was \$350 for health insurance. Next year's deductible for Blue Cross Blue Shield for certificated staff will be \$350.

Calendar 2010-2011 – The Calendar Committee has proposed a calendar very similar to the calendars we have followed for the past few years. This calendar contains a Fall and Spring Break and first semester ending in January. The committee looked at and discussed a calendar that finished first semester at Winter Break. The committee felt that it would be very important for all impacted by this configuration to understand the implications-it could mean a very early start in August and new teachers starting in July. The district will work with the community to determine the next steps.

Arlene expressed a Thank you to Daniel Ross for his work on the Professional Practices Commission. Karen Shelton has been appointed by Governor Heineman for the vacated seat on the commission. Congratulations, Karen.

Financial Report—Jim Rea

Sharon Kresse, Ameriprise Financial, presented an update on the financial assets of the LEA. As you would expect from the current financial climate, our assets have been impacted. However, LEA has responded in a sound and reasoned manner based on the advice from Ms. Kresse. She reviewed with the Board how the LEA portfolio is currently invested. It is her recommendation that the Board of Director refine and update the current investment strategy to reflect the current market trends. Ms. Kresse will work with the Executive Director to refine that strategy for Board approval.

LEA-R Report—Jan Stamper

Jan had no report.

Appraisal Committee—Linda Freye

The second Teacher Appraisal Forum had a much better teacher turn-out. Thank you to all who attended either of the forums. The joint presentation approach by members from the district and from LEA was strong and sent a positive message about collaborative endeavors.

LEAF Fundraiser—Jenni Absalon

Preliminary numbers show the fundraiser made about \$5,500 which is similar to past years. Ten percent of the proceeds will be donated to the NSEA Children's Fund. There was great support for the fundraiser from LEA members and from the community who donated cash, baskets, and/or other items.

NSEA Board Report—Marcia Benner and Jenni Absalon

EHA (Educators Health Alliance) hired Kurt Genrich as an administrator to help market EHA and to answer the myriad of questions by members and locals. Stimulus Money—Local negotiators are encouraged to use the money for teacher salaries. NSEA Building Update—The move back to the NSEA headquarters is scheduled the weekend of July 17, 2009. With the many windows on the east side of the remodeled building, the view of the Capitol is breath-taking.

Capitol District DA Report—Linda Freye

LEA membership was highly visible at Delegate Assembly April 24 and 25 with all 45 delegates were present, plus others who have state offices. LEA made up the majority of the attendees representing Capitol District. Susan Stake from Waverly will be the next Capitol District President.

UniServ Director's Report—Dan Studer

Dan reports he has been working with a member regarding a parent complaint filed against them, helping a member through medical accommodations and a possible reassignment within LPS, has met with a member and their principal re: job performance concerns, has met with a member to advise them re: relationships with a colleague at their mutual site, is advising a member who has had job performance concerns brought to their attention by the site's administration, has advised a member re: a parent complaint following the member's intervention during a physical altercation between two students at the site, and met with a member and representatives of Human Resources and resolved the issue discussed to the member's satisfaction.

Legislative and Association Update—Jim Rea

Transition Discussion—On Tuesday, April 28, Jenni, Jan, and Marcia spent the day with the LEA staff and planned many of the phases of the transition.

Concordia University—After receiving calls from FRs about emails and phone messages left for them at school from Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska, LEA held a meeting with representatives from the university. It was explained that contacting our FRs without contacting the LEA first was considered a violation of the board policy of Lincoln Public Schools. It was agreed by all parties that FR's will no longer be contacted by

phone or email. LEA and Concordia University will work together in appropriate ways to let our members know about the degree programs offered.

NSEA H1N1 Contingency Plan—LEA will use the same plan as NSEA.

LEA will make the phone switch to Time Warner on May 7, 2009. This change should save LEA about \$200 a month.

Salary Focus Group—May 12 will be a rehearsal for the presentation to the focus group and the Board is invited to attend. On May 14, a focus group of twelve members who represent a cross section of ages and experience will listen to the presentation. It will center on reviewing the salary schedule.

At the April 28, 2009 Board of Education meeting, a LIBA representative presented information concerning a variety of concerns. Among those concerns was the statement that LPS should not be paying the salary of the LEA president. Unfortunately the LIBA representative did not have all of the facts. In fact, LEA members pay for the salary of the LEA President. Correspondence will be drafted to let LIBA know of the wrong information presented to the Board of Education. LPS will also respond in writing to all of the issues raised by the LIBA representative, including the salary of the LEA president.

OLD BUSINESS: Karen reported on the Executive Director's Appraisal from FR Council. Board members will be sent an appraisal electronically on Tuesday, May 5th. On May 15th the committee will meet with Jim. The information will be shared with the LEA Board on May 18th.

NEA Membership Grant – Phase One has been finished. Phase Two is on the drawing board.

NEW BUSINESS: none

ACTION ITEMS:

On behalf of the LEA Board of Directors, I move the approval of the Corporate Resolution which indicates the changing of the officers from Arlene Rea to Jenni Absalon; Jenni Absalon to Marcia Benner; Marcia Benner to Jan Olmstead and their ability to conduct the financial business of LEA as of June 5, 2009. No second required. (The entire document is on file at the LEA Office.) Voting YES: Absalon, Benner, Doerr, Freye, Hoffman, Olmstead, Rasmussen, Rea, Schafer, Shelton, Wiltse Voting NO: none Absent/Not Voting: Ross

COMMENTS, CONCERNS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jenni asked about MANDT Training, where teachers are taught how to work with students who become violent. Teachers are required to take a two-day training with yearly renewals. Because of the lack of training, some buildings are without trained teachers. *Response: The safety committee worked with Special Education Services. Courses are available in the summer. Training can also be requested by individual buildings. See next response.*

In response to a Board member's question, *Dan reported that the LPS Personnel Handbook contains the following: "Staff will report and may intervene in fights or physical struggles which take place in any school building or on the school grounds. The degree and force used shall be as reasonable as necessary to restore order and protect the safety of the combatants and surrounding persons." Further, Dan reminded that members have access to the NEA Educators Employment Liability Insurance should an individual take action against the member. He also clarified that the LEA-LPS Best Practices of Student Discipline handbook states: "De-escalation training that includes verbal de-escalation techniques is available to all staff through Mandt classes. These classes are offered during the school year and summer months. Classes can also be made available to specific buildings," and that staff interested in the training as a group (or groups within a staff) should request the training and negotiate with their administrator that the training be a part of the building's FLEX time.*

Jenni Absalon reported that several events have been planned to honor Arlene. After the regularly scheduled Board meeting on May 18th dinner will be held at the Green Gateau. At the May 21 FR Council, LEA will serve cake to FRs and guests. On May 29, LEA will host an open house from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. All LEA members and staff are encouraged to attend.

Resa Wiltse: There were some problems accessing the NSEA website to update emergency information for RA. *Response: Arlene contacted NSEA and an incorrect website was listed in the materials. Arlene forwarded the new address to the RA delegates.*

Karen Shelton shared concerns of class size in comments made by LPS School Board member Barbara Baier in a newspaper article for her candidacy, “Institute a district-wide behavioral program to give teachers and parents tools to help students improve behavior. Some schools now use a program called Behavioral Intervention Support Team. She said using it district-wide could create a cultural change in schools that would require fewer para-educators and could allow for slightly larger class size, since teachers wouldn’t have to deal with as many misbehaving students.” *Response: Arlene contacted Barb Baier about the newspaper article and received a lengthy response from Ms Baier indicating that she had been misquoted in those few sentences after spending over an hour with the reporter. Ms Baier’s written response showed a greater sensitivity to the behavior issue and its ramifications and her response was forwarded to the LEA Board.*

Matthew Hoffman informed the Board that on May 18th he graduates with his Masters of Education from Doane College. Congratulations Matthew!

Julia Doerr reported that Holocaust speaker Jen Marlowe, author of Darfur Diaries, will speak at 1:30 p.m., May 5, at Southwest High, on May 5, in the evening at Berean Church and May 6th in the evening at 1st Plymouth. The evening events are open to the public.

ADJOURNMENT: Arlene adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Benner

Marcia Benner

Secretary-Treasurer