

Easton School District No. 28
Special Meeting of the Board of Directors
March 14, 2016
Jennie Marie Giovenale-Austin Library

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Kathie Stratton at 6:30 P.M.

Attendance:

Board Members Present: Chris Helgeson, Kathie Stratton, Anna Dodge, Lynn Lopez, Ken Everaert

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Patrick Dehuff, Lisa Henderson, Marilyn Fudge, Wandah Messinger, Jenny Jensen, Becky Houle, Ofelia Todd, Becky Houle, Brian Todd, Cece Badda, Steve Jensen, Amanda Zimmerman, Katie Razez

Guests: Seneca Dehuff, Alden Dehuff, April Dehuff, Aiyana Henderson

Pledge of Allegiance

Approve Agenda: Anna Dodge made a motion to approve the agenda for the March 14, 2016 Special board meeting. Lynn Lopez seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Combined Sport Program: Board Chair, Kathie Stratton, stated that the boards' objective is to have a sustainable sport program. This was an agonizing decision for the board two years ago and will be again as the decision on whether, or not, to extend the agreement is made. The feedback has been both for and against the combined sports program. Dr. Dehuff thanked everyone for attending the meetings. He thanked the board for their dedication and time. Wherever this decision goes, we all respect each other's opinions. Dr. Dehuff has e-mailed information pertaining to the issue to board members as soon as it was received, to keep the board informed and up to date.

There were several previous questions from the board that Superintendent Dehuff answered. One of the questions was, "Are we locked into a four-year contract if we extend the combined sports program?" The WIAA responded to this question, stating that either district can dissolve the combined sports program, at any time without penalty. Another question was whether Easton students could utilize the track at Cle Elum-Roslyn School District if the combined sports program with Thorp School District is dissolved. The Athletic Director at Cle Elum-Roslyn School District checked with the Superintendent and Facilities Director and confirmed that Easton Students would be allowed to use their track. Another question had to do with the finances of a combined sports program vs. previous years before the combine. A summary of the overall costs for the last several years was given to the board. The second sheet has details on the transportation costs. The costs from the 2014-15 school year have an extra sport (football) than the previous several years listed in the comparison. Lynn Lopez thanked Superintendent Dehuff

for the additional information, and how it was broken down.

Each board member was provided a packet of information that included financial information, a letter that was received earlier today, and letters and survey responses (from students and parents) that had been previously sent by e-mail to board members. Kathie Stratton asked the board if they felt they had enough information to vote at this meeting. The board unanimously said yes. At 6:45 pm, Kathie Stratton requested a ten-minute recess for the board members to review all information provided. At 6:55 pm, the board was asked if they had any further comments. Chris Helgeson said that he attended Easton School and played sports. The students have always been welcome at Cle Elum, and have enjoyed playing there. The students who played with Cle Elum always felt part of the team and proud to be from Easton. Even if we combine, there is still a high chance that we won't have a football team due to the number of players needed to keep a healthy team. Cle Elum has a track for us to practice on, and tennis courts, and they offer golf and many other things that our kids are welcome to participate in. We don't need to combine with Thorp to be a competitive team. Three years ago, our volleyball team was undefeated. Although there were students who are not currently in High School who signed the students' letter that was submitted, many of those who signed would be affected by a four-year commitment. The drive time for the kids and wear and tear on the buses when there is very little effort or support by Thorp is hard to justify. Lynn Lopez said that people had not understood the financial portion of the contract. She thanked Dr. Dehuff for providing and explaining the financial information. We need to listen to the kids, all of the kids. We need to pay attention to their concerns. Lynn suggests opening Easton School sports to other students to play here. Anna Dodge said that she has listened to all of the students and that this is a very tough decision. Ken Everaert said that everyone who attended the last meeting on March 8, 2016, had an opportunity to read the survey responses. He feels the pros of the combined sports program outweigh the cons. He stated that our first priority as a board is to do what's best for the students, not the community, teachers, or coaches. The students come first. We want to keep secondary students at Easton School. Some kids leave because of limited choices for elective classes or sports opportunities. Easton School could end up being forced to combine with another District. He said that his son would be transferred to Cle Elum-Roslyn High School if Easton School is unable to provide a consistent sports programs. Mr. Everaert said that he appreciated fellow board member Chris Helgeson's comments, but we have to look at the history. We only have one senior this year and he said he knows of three 8th grade students who will not be returning next year.

Kathie Stratton thanked her fellow board members for their comments and said that no matter how the board members voted, the opinions expressed were heard and the letters and survey results taken into consideration. At this point, Mrs. Stratton called for a vote on whether Easton School would extend the agreement to combine High School sports with Thorp School. There were three yes votes and two no votes to extend the combined High School sports program. Kathie Stratton asked Superintendent Dehuff to work with Thorp School District in developing a plan to increase Thorp's student participation in the combine. Kathie Stratton thanked the board for all the time attending extra meetings and reading through the financial information, letters, and survey results to reach a decision.

Lynn Lopez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris Helgeson seconded the motion and the

motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 pm.


Patrick Dehuff
Superintendent


Kathie Stratton
Board Chair