

Board of Trustees

July 13, 2011

MEETING SUMMARY

The following are highlights from the Comal ISD Board of Trustees meeting on Wednesday, July 13. The next regular board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 24 at 6 p.m. in the board room of the Support Services building located at 1404 IH 35 North in New Braunfels.

Oath of Office to District 1 Board Member

Stephen Smith of New Braunfels was sworn in to serve in the District 1 seat until May 2012.

School Bus Advertising Program

The school board, on a 3-2 vote, agreed to enter into a contract with Creer Creer Advertising and Marketing of San Antonio to place advertising on school buses. Under the agreement, Comal ISD would receive 70 percent of the fee paid by businesses to place the ads and Creer would receive 30 percent. Creer estimates that the district could make more than \$375,000 per year, nearly the equivalent of three new buses. The district would have final approval of ad content. The contract stipulates that content will not conflict with regulations of Texas Education Agency, UIL, NCAA or that includes advertising for alcohol, tobacco, political candidates or issues, or violent or anti-social behavior.

Redistricting Advisory Committee

The school board unanimously approved a Redistricting Advisory Committee (RAC) of the following members: Nellie Verlinden, Stephanie Anderson, Tim Scotch, Matt Quill, Scott Watson, Donna Holmes, Alan Buxkemper, Amy Freund, John Taylor, Greg Matula, Chrisanne Salinas and Tom Potter. The two remaining openings will be filled prior to the first meeting of the RAC in early September. The purpose of the RAC is to draft a recommended plan for redrawing the district's seven, single-member district boundaries in accordance with federal law and district policy.

Employee Retention Bonus

The school board unanimously approved a retention bonus for qualifying district employees. Approximately \$1.5 million will be swept from the 2010-11 general fund for an estimated bonus of \$750 for each qualifying employee. To qualify for the bonus, employees must have: worked a minimum of 90 days during the 2010-11 school year and qualify for a year of Teacher Retirement System (TRS) service, and remain employed through Nov. 1, 2011.

Employee Insurance Rebate

The school board unanimously approved a rebate in health insurance for qualifying employees. The \$738,000 amounts to approximately \$500 for each qualifying employee. To qualify for the rebate, employees must have: continuously participated in the health insurance program from 2009 to the present and must be currently enrolled for 2011-12; if new to the program in 2009-10, must have been enrolled a minimum of 90 days and qualified for TRS service; and remain employed through Nov. 1, 2011. Employees hired after 2009-10 are not eligible.



BOARD REPORT

Continued from Page 1

2011-12 Proposed Budget

Dr. Marc Walker gave the board an update on plans for next year's budget. He said reductions in the 2011-12 budget total \$3.7 million, with \$3.2 million reflected in reduced revenue and an additional \$519,000 needed for additional staff.

He assured the school board that the new budget recommendation includes a 22-to-1 class-size ratio at the elementary level and a slightly higher level at the secondary level. As a result, an estimated \$3.4 million in teacher positions that had been eliminated in earlier budget projections will be "re-funded," he said. Typically, administration projects student population by campus, and staffs up front according to those projections. However, as a result of the district receiving budget estimates from the state so late, campuses have already completed their class schedules, staffing and allotments. So, administration will allocate the staff as dictated by class size growth.

To reach the \$3.7 million reduction, administration is recommending cutting campus staff and budgets by \$880,000; reducing central office staff and budgets by \$2.5 million; and cutting \$388,638 in miscellaneous funds including athletic budgets and technology.

As to the district's \$60 million fund balance, administration will recommend setting aside \$29 million for special projects that include the construction of an elementary school to relieve Startzville and Rebecca Creek elementary schools, the purchase of land for future schools, and preconstruction work for a new middle school and high school on the east side of the district and a new middle school on the west side of the district.

The district will begin the 2012-13 school year with a budget that will require \$4 million in staffing cuts and an enrollment that will require 47 more teachers.

The school board is expected to vote on the budget at the August 24 regular meeting.