

# ON BOARD

BY - THE - MINUTES REPORT

November 2015

## Board approves energy savings project

Board members had a full slate of items to consider at their November regular meeting. The passage of three resolutions paved the way for construction to begin on energy savings performance upgrades district-wide.

Schneider Electric Buildings America was employed to provide retrofitting of lighting fixtures, HVAC equipment and plumbing, which, over time, should recoup the \$4.5 million upgrade through energy savings. The project with the most savings impact will be lighting, replacing older fixtures with LED lights. Work should begin in December with no interruption of the school day as work will be performed after school hours and during the holidays.

Only one minor detail remained to be resolved in the contract and Board President Ted Oats was given the authority to finalize the contract so work could begin.



## In other action...

The Board approved:

- district and campus improvement plans. Federal Program Coordinator Carol Petty said that CISD had paid over \$22,000 this semester to Texas A&M University-Commerce for dual credit tuition. Over 148 courses were taken by CHS students this semester, which marks the first year CISD has paid tuition for dual credit courses.
- 2014–2015 CISD financial audit from Rutherford, Taylor and Company, PC, Greenville, Texas. The District received an unqualified opinion, which is the best possible. Principal partner Mike Taylor said the fund balance was \$4,797,856, which is a “very good fund balance for a district this size.”
- waiver for state testing days allowing secondary students who are not taking TAKS tests to arrive later in the day to free more staff to administer the test,
- cast all votes for John Sands for the board of directors of the Hunt County Appraisal District,
- cast all votes for Allen Beeler for the board of directors of the Delta County Appraisal District and

*The CHS Band was recognized by the Board for advancing to the Area UIL marching competition — the first time in seven years. Shown left to right are Gary Monroe, retired band director from Mesquite ISD who is standing in Dave Polk's absence, Assistant Director Elizabeth Bialecki and seniors Zane Belcher and Jackson Singleton.*



- TASB Local Update 103. Superintendent Blake Cooper said plans were on track for compliance with the Office of Civil Rights timeline which required additional ADA signage and an accessible entrance for Commerce Middle School.

*CES student representatives led the pledges to the United States and Texas flags.*



## Superintendent's report...

- Enrollment is 1616, up 13 students from last month. Mr. Cooper noted that enrollment is the highest it has been since the 2009–2010 school year.
- Mr. Cooper announced the Highly Qualified Teacher Status as being 100% at ACW and CMS; however, CES is at 96.15 percent and CHS is 94.85 percent. The District HQ percentage is 97.75. Two teachers are working toward certification and achieving HQ status.
- Commerce ISD will participate in the Christmas Parade on December 5. Board members and administrators will ride on a lighted trailer.
- The Winter Arts Festival will be held at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, December 10 at CHS. He said he expects great student performances and art exhibits at this sixth annual celebration of the season. Over 20 vendors will have handmade and commercial items for sale.
- EdcamPalooza was held at CHS on November 14 and over 100 teachers from area schools attended. The unconference was participant-driven where attendees post what they want to learn and organizers match sessions up with teachers who can lead each particular one.
- Representatives of a school in Breckenridge, CO, visited with organizers Heather Kilgore, Cari Sturch and Al Shipp to see how the project was organized. Wanting to replicate the experience for teachers in their own area, the Colorado educators said they were taking back much more (knowledge) than they expected.
- Mr. Cooper said he would be leading the Board's Team of Eight training in December, which is a required continuing education requirement of all school boards. He said the focus would be to develop a strategic direction for the district.

The next regular Board meeting was set for Thursday, December 17, with executive session at 6 p.m. and the regular meeting at 7 p.m.

## Proposed charter school causes concern for area educators

Superintendent Blake Cooper expressed his concern for the establishment of an open enrollment charter school proposed by Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Charter organizers say the school, which would be located in Greenville, would expand to 1300 students within five years.

"I have worked hard to establish a strong partnership with the university in the last seven years, and I believe Commerce ISD and the university have both benefited from it," Cooper said. "We should be working together instead of duplicating services. Our proposal to have an area STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) school in partnership with A&M-Commerce has been on the table for two years. Now, the university has changed its course and plans to take students away from our area schools. It is very disappointing," he continued.

In one meeting, Cooper said organizers including Dr. Arlene Horne, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, said they were targeting low socio-economic and private and home-schooled students. In a meeting with the Greenville City Council, students with parents who are engineers were targeted as potential attendees, according to Cooper.

Cooper pointed out that the charter schools on which the A&M-Commerce proposal is modeled are not diverse in terms of their enrollment. The University of Texas at Tyler Innovation Academy has 80 percent white students and 35 percent low-socio economic.

Charter schools may select their students. They do not have to enroll special education students or English language learners.

The Board tabled a resolution to express their disapproval of the charter school until they could meet with Dr. Dan Jones, president of Texas A&M University-Commerce, about the issue. That meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m., November 30, at the CISD Administration Building.

### BOARD MEETINGS

7:00 • 3315 Washington

#### 2015

Thursday . . . December 17

#### 2016

Tuesday . . . . . January 19

Monday . . . . . February 15

Thursday . . . . . March 24

Monday . . . . . April 18

Monday . . . . . May 16

Monday . . . . . June 20