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## **Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes of December 1, 2008 Meeting**

The eighth meeting of the full Transportation Advisory Committee met at 6:30 on December 1, 2008 in the PHS Study Hall. Thirty-six members were in attendance as well as the press.

Facilitator Carol Lensing was unavailable so Superintendent Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:30 and welcomed the group back.

A motion was made and seconded to reconsider the last action of the committee at its November 24 meeting. By a narrow margin, the group at that vote to recommend that the younger children start earlier and the older children start later. Subsequent to that vote a number of members on both sides of that issue had expressed concern and disappointment that the group was so divided. In the interim, a member who happened to be on the winning side on that vote had sent an e-mail to all members asking for reconsideration in order to attempt to reach a compromise that everyone – or nearly everyone – could agree with.

In the discussion of the motion there was obvious agreement that the two issues that divided were:

- Sleep research that suggests that older adolescents benefit academically from a later start to their school day dictated older students start later.
- Middle School activity schedules which are beyond the control of the district (Prairie is but one vote in a conference) cause an increasing amount lost classroom time as the start and end of the day is delayed.

After discussion, the group approved the motion to reconsider and asked Superintendent Whitehead to present a compromise solution to the group. He presented a proposal to have:

- 5-6 intermediate students and 7-9 middle school and ninth grade academy students start early (8:00 AM was used in the example presented). That would minimize significantly the amount of class time missed by activity participants for travel to away events.
- K-4 and 10-12 students start later (8:55 was used in the example presented). That allowed the 10-12 students (older adolescents) to start the day later which should help them perform better academically.

He explained that this was a compromise that would not satisfy every problem or immediately win the support of every patron but that it is educationally defensible and a significant improvement over the current system. He presented information showing the positive and negative aspects of this option – labeled option 4 earlier – along with suggestions to minimize the impact of each negative. See attachment entitled Win/Win Proposal?

The group discussed the proposal as a large group, asked many questions, and offered many comments about that proposal. When there were no more questions, it was moved and seconded to adopt the plan as proposed except that:

- The starting times should no earlier than 8:00 for the early starting schools and no later than 9:00 for the late starting schools.
- The stagger between starting times should be as brief as possible but no longer than one hour.



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- The committee's recommendations include a strong recommendation that the Board forbid or discourage middle school activity practices earlier than 6:30 AM.
- The committee should review the performance of the proposed system in May 2010 and every two years thereafter to see how it is working.
- The committee recommends that the development of a sidewalk system, marked crosswalks, provision of safe parking, and appropriate traffic controls be constantly on the minds of Board Members. As the area around the school continues to develop, urbanization of 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue roadbed will undoubtedly result. As that happens, the committee recommends full walking access to all surrounding neighborhoods.

The committee voted by secret ballot on this motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 30 in favor, 1 opposed.

Following the vote, the group used the earlier definition of "consensus" to see if it had been achieved. Those questions are:

- Do you understand the proposal?
- Have you had an opportunity to express your opinion on it?
- Can you live with the proposal?
- Will you speak well of it when you leave the group?

A "thumbs up/down" signal by each member present indicated 100% agreement with the four consensus questions. Consensus was achieved.

The group was urged to attend the 7:00 PM, December 15 School Board Meeting to support the proposal as it is made to the Board and to accept a certificate of recognition for their efforts in the study.

Eight volunteers agreed to help construct the written recommendation that will be presented to the Board at that time.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dick Whitehead  
Superintendent