

**Minutes of the Board of Education  
Unified School District No. 435  
Dickinson County**

**Abilene, Kansas**

**December 19, 2012**

The Board of Education of Abilene Unified School District No. 435 met for a **special meeting** at the District Office at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 19, 2012. Dinner was provided.

The meeting was **Called to Order** at 6:03 p.m. by President Dr. Kari Porter-Murray with the following members in attendance:

Mark Wilson  
Dale Koop

Gregg Noel  
Barb Brittan

Debby Barbur  
Randy Gassman

Others attending all or part of the meeting were Dr. Denise Guy, Keith Blackburn, Angie Schneider, Chris Cooper, Ben Smith, Will Burton, Greg Heinrichs, Dave Canfield, Ron Wilson, Tom Schwartz and Debra James.

It was moved by Mark Wilson to approve the **Agenda**. Gregg Noel seconded and the motion carried.

Keith Blackburn of HTK Architects was in attendance to update board members on the **Facility Study** and to help them begin to develop a master plan for the district. Handouts were distributed that outlined each building's existing square footage versus their suggested square footage. These handouts detailed each building room by room. Aerial pictures and drawings for each building were also included.

A summary of each building was then given. All of our buildings fall short of the needed square footage. Each elementary building needs a cafeteria or gym to alleviate the time it takes to set up/take down lunch tables and scheduling issues. Another need that all three buildings share is the lack of space/privacy for the nurse, counselor, physical/occupational/speech therapists, etc. A lot of these services are currently taking place on the stage or wherever there happens to be room that day. Kennedy is in the best shape. McKinley and Garfield are in need of more administrative space. Garfield needs more classrooms. Within the handouts was a proposal showing the square footage information if we were to build a new 4th - 5th grade building. The new building would be the suggested square footage, taking into account the existing modular units. It also included a gym and cafeteria.

Keith stressed to the board that we need to get a master plan into place and improve the buildings that we have so we don't get to a point in time where everything needs fixed at the same time. According to him, several schools west of Abilene haven't spent any money on their buildings for 80 years and now they can't afford to. Some of them will not be able to survive this situation and will have to combine with other districts.

With that in mind, he brought the board's attention to a proposal for a K-5 building. Keith personally doesn't believe that that would be a good fit for Abilene, but it would be more economical. He wants to make us aware of all possibilities. Much discussion ensued. General consensus is that at K-5 building

wouldn't be conducive at benefiting the students. Our current attendance center setup makes it easier to meet the needs of each age group. Administrators also felt that this setup allows for more personal relationships with the students and parents.

There were no proposals for other buildings.

Keith said that the middle school is currently the most stressed building. The special education department has grown so much in recent years that they have taken over a lot of the administrative area. This situation isn't good for students, staff or administration and needs to be addressed. Garfield is next in the stress line.

Board members requested administrators to re-visit the results of their building re-configuration committee findings. They found no benefit to doing any re-configuring of the grades in the buildings.

Keith was queried by board members on how it would work to move Garfield to the middle school, move the middle school to the high school and build a new high school. He said that is doable. A lot of schools have purchased land just outside of their towns and built new high schools and sports complex's there. Board members asked how it would work if the sports complex didn't move. The answer was that would create logistics issues for practices, etc. Keith said the approximate cost of a high school/sports complex would be \$50,000,000.00 and \$30,000,000.00 for the high school alone.

Board members and Keith then listened to each school administrator talk about the most critical needs at their buildings.

According to Ben Smith, athletic issues (not enough practice/storage room); lack of space for administrative team, nurse, FACs class & cafeteria; old elevators; not enough parking and electric issues top the list at the high school. Will Burton added the auditorium and locker rooms to the list. Electric issues were also stated by Will. Both administrators agree that there are some issues with our vocational building. The square footage is too small, machines are too close and the storage is inadequate.

Separating special education from the administrative space topped the list at the middle school. Ron Wilson has had complaints from parents regarding the effect that distractions of the current set up will have on the students. Ron agrees as the special ed curriculum is life skills oriented. Other needs are more band space and possibly a larger gym or commons area. Whenever there are programs, there is standing room only.

Chris Cooper's list for Garfield includes: more space for teachers to work/eat lunch; gym; heating/air; electric issues; parking/accessibility; more classrooms; more administrative space and more black top.

With the addition a few years ago, Tom Schwartz said that McKinley is in pretty good shape. Among their needs are: more administrative space; more space for teachers to work/eat lunch; cafeteria; larger kitchen with walk-in freezer/refrigerator; electric issues and more parking.

Greg Heinrichs said that Kennedy is a nice space since they also recently received an addition. Space is always tight during programs. He also feels that an area for indoor recess would be beneficial. The logistics for student arrival/bus loading/unloading makes Greg very uncomfortable and he'd like to see it addressed.

With the recent tragedy at Newtown, CT, security at each of the buildings was part of the discussion.

Board members questioned Keith about the use of metal buildings for practice and storage. He said that is a option, but not if we are considering longevity. If the wind catches the metal, the roof will leak a lot.

Dr. Porter-Murray reminded all that the initial reason to do a facility study was to address the needs at Garfield which was in line for an addition when the market crash of 2008 happened. Keith believes that the district would have a better change of passing a bond issue if needs at each building are addressed. The board requested that HTK discard the plans for K-5 building, work towards a master plan for the district (with emphasis on Garfield) and bring more information to our next meeting on how to address the current needs of our sports complex. Keith agreed and said that he will be contacting administrators to re-visit some of the buildings, looking more closely at the needs mentioned.

Board members believe that the infrastructure (plumbing, electric, etc.) at some of our buildings needs to be addressed. Keith said that is not HTK's specialty and we would need to contact local businesses for that or accept one of the Trane options presented at our regular meeting on December 10, 2012.

Keith will need at least an hour at one of our regular board meetings for his next presentation. A date has not yet been agreed upon.

Board members thanked Keith for his hard work on this project.

A 5 minute recess was called at 8:25 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:30 p.m.

At 8:30 p.m., Mark Wilson made a motion to go into **Executive Session** for consultation with an attorney for the board which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship and to return to open session in this room at 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Dale Koop and the motion carried. Debra James and Dr. Guy were invited to join the executive session.

The meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

At 8:45 p.m., Barb Brittan made a motion to go into **Executive Session** for consultation with an attorney for the board which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship and to return to open session in this room at 9:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Randy Gassman and the motion carried. Debra James and Dr. Guy were invited to join the executive session.

The meeting reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Barb Brittan to **Adjourn** the meeting. Randy Gassman seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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CLERK

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PRESIDENT