

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting –
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I have a number of updates to share with my esteemed colleagues this evening.

First, the policy committee consisting of Randy Banks, Charlie Wilson and me met twice since our last get together and mapped out a plan to convert the roughly 1000 pages of our policy manual into the NEOLA format. As with all things educationish, we piloted our plan on a small section of the NEOLA policy manual and drew a number of conclusions. First, there is no longer any doubt that our policy manual needs to be updated. All three of us discovered, reading the current policy manual word for word, that there are policies which are out of date, no longer the current practice or simply contain misinformation. For example, if we had Board of Education candidates this year who read our policy manual to figure out what the requirements were, they would have collected half the signatures they really needed and filed 15 days after the deadline. While that's a trivial example, it goes to illustrate the larger point. Our plan will go something like this. Each member of our team will be responsible for 1/3 of the policies. We will match the NEOLA templates with both our current policy and current practice. If substantial edits are required to bring the NEOLA policy into compliance with current practice and/or the current policy, we will use our NEOLA consultant to provide some context to the default NEOLA policy and make sure our edits are not in violation of some state or federal law. Once a policy is completed, it will receive a first reading and then be placed on the web site. We anticipate these will happen over the next 9 months, so you can expect a lot of first readings, particularly in the first part of 2016. The existing policies will remain in effect during this process. At some point, we will adapt all of the new policies en-masse. It is not our intent to create or change policy during this process. In those cases where it is unavoidable, we will highlight those for the Board and the public. Otherwise, you can assume that the differences will be fairly small. During the conversion phase, it's possible that because of some new state law, we might have to change an existing policy as well as a NEOLA version that has had a first reading but hopefully, that won't happen too often.

Last week, I attended the regional meeting of the Alliance for a High Quality Education. The Alliance remains interested in finding a solution to the TPP reimbursement issue. Unfortunately for Worthington, their focus remains, rather myopically in my opinion, on getting a favorable result for the second year of this biennium, FY17, and in making sure that no school district loses total state money that year over FY16, so their solution is going to be based on total resources, meaning that if you have a gain under the formula, that gain entitles the state to take more of your TPP than if you don't have a gain under the formula. This is counterproductive for Worthington. Rep. Duffey and a number of other members of the legislature have been working on a solution that would elongate the phase out period regardless of gains under the cap. This is a better long term solution for

Worthington and one which I hope the education community can get behind. One thing is clear – Worthington should be supportive of anything the General Assembly comes up with because the status quo is probably a worst case scenario. The General Assembly will be very specific that any accommodation to TPP dependent districts will be final. They want to put an end to the uncertainty surrounding TPP reimbursements, which is another goal I hope we share.

The Alliance members present then turned to a subject which is not yet on the radar for most districts, but will be – and that is the escalating costs of College Credit Plus. By increasing the number of ways for high school students to earn college credit, the state is slowly transferring some of the costs of college tuition onto the backs of traditional K-12 districts. One real-world example was that of a college chemistry class. The cost of the class, between textbooks and supplies (let alone tuition) could easily run \$1000. If the student takes the class while in college, that burden belongs to the student. If the student takes the class while in High School, that burden falls to the taxpayers of the district the student lives in. Once parents start figuring this out, the demand for college credit and the associated costs will escalate and K-12 districts will have that much less money to spend on everyone else. Some of our Alliance colleagues had some interesting numbers already and were preparing to raise the alarm. It's my hope that we can track this in Worthington and perhaps apprise our representatives of the negative financial impact to our district.

Kudos to the parade organizers for the Thomas Worthington Homecoming parade, a community event that assures that people along the parade route have a sufficient supply of candy to distribute come Halloween. As always, the event was tons of fun but honestly, not anywhere near as much fun as the Worthington Warrior Race a few weeks back. There were 1500 kids signed up for this race, which represents about 1 in 4 elementary school kids in the district and despite of (or perhaps because of) a steady drizzle that made a muddy course muddier, most of the kids braved the wind and the cold to challenge themselves to the one mile obstacle course. Our intrepid Superintendent, Trent Bowers also ran the course and so did I. Trent wrote an excellent blog post this morning titled “running at the back of the pack” and when I read the title, I just assumed he was talking about me but instead, he spoke of two Worthington Estates students and their physical education teacher. The blog post hit home with me because I didn't discover the joy of running until I was well into my 20's. I suspect that if I had the benefit of Worthington's elementary physical education teachers instead of New York's “Chess for the non-athletic kid” version of physical education, it might have been different for me, just like it was different for the kids that Trent wrote about. As for the race, I was in the back of the pack but still managed a respectable time and after the race, which lasted all of 10 minutes, I went looking for our Superintendent to congratulate him on participating but I suspect that by the time I finished, he was already half way to Thomas Worthington for the football game that evening.