

January 11, 2001 Regular Board Meeting

Agenda Item No. 13. High School Swimming Program (moved up as Agenda Item No. 12.).

Dr. Morgan summarized the staff report (on file in the Clerk's Office). A group of parents approached the Division with a proposal to implement and fully fund (no cost to the Division) a high school swimming program on a club basis at each high school. This group is seeking official recognition of the club programs so that they can participate in Virginia High School League (VHSL) sanctioned competitions. A facility for this program is available at the Fairview Pool, where an all-weather bubble has been installed. A formal proposal from the group is provided as Enclosure 1 – on file.

Legal counsel has advised that the establishment of a new team sport (and the endorsement of the team for VHSL-regulated activities) should be presented for Board approval because of the absence of specific policy to address this kind of proposal. In addition, legal counsel advised that if the concept of a fully parent-funded program were accepted, a formal agreement between the parent group and the School Board should be developed and adopted because of the unique nature of the proposed arrangement. The major issues to be considered relative to this proposal are as follows:

- *The precedent that would be set by approving the implementation of sports which would not be supported financially by the Division* - In addition to swimming, there is interest in the community in starting high school teams in boy's volleyball and ice hockey and in starting a middle school athletic program. These programs could be started and operated under a similar arrangement if the Board was amenable to setting the precedent for doing so. However, this would also establish a two-tiered athletic program, with one tier funded by the Division and the other funded externally.
- *Control over a swimming program, if implemented* - Staff would recommend that if the Board accepted this proposal, schools would exert the same control over a parent-funded team as over all other athletic teams, and that funding for the team be deposited into school financial accounts and managed at the school level.
- *The Division's responsibility if funding from parents is not adequate to meet all costs* - Staff would recommend that if the Board were to accept this proposal, any formal agreement should clarify that the Board would be under no obligation to make up a financial shortfall or to maintain the program in the absence of adequate finances. However, it might be difficult for the Board to actually discontinue a program that has been implemented, even if it was funded externally.
- *Access to all students* - Staff would recommend that if the Board were to accept this proposal, no student could be denied access solely based on financial circumstances.

The Principals of the Division's three comprehensive high schools have provided a recommendation concerning this proposal, which is provided as Enclosure 2 -on file. There are no direct budget implications, as the proposal is presented. Responsibilities of existing school staff would increase to provide administrative supervision for an additional team. In the longer term, the Board would have to consider whether or not it would want the School Division to ultimately assume the costs of a swimming program. Receive for information and public testimony. Provide direction as appropriate.

Dr. Ward opened Public Comment.

Mr. Jim Firster is a parent of a swimmer and organized the swimming proposal that is being presented to the Board. He asked the Board to consider approving the swimming proposal immediately so that students are able to compete and excel in a sport that they love. His presentation is on file in the Clerk's Office.

Ms. Janelle Mason is a Monticello High School student and swimmer. She has been swimming for approximately 10 years and would like to be a part of the Monticello High School Swim Team not club. She would like to swim competitively. She encouraged the Board to approve the swimming proposal.

Mr. Drew Jamison is a Monticello High School student and swimmer. Swimming is a great sport. It not only helps a person physically but also socially. He asked the Board to approve the swimming proposal for Monticello High School.

Mrs. Liz Hespenheide is a Monticello High School parent. She read a letter from David Stryder who could not attend the meeting. The letter is on file in the Clerk's Office. Mrs. Hespenheide also supports a swimming program in the County.

Ms. Erin Patterson is a Monticello High School student and swimmer. She has been swimming for approximately 10 years. It would be very meaningful to swim competitively for Monticello High School. She asked the Board to approve the swimming program.

Mr. Giorgio Carta is a parent of swimmers in the County. He supports the establishment of County high school swim teams. Swimming is a great sport that is all-inclusive and accessible by all. He expressed concern with the current proposal because the program would run under the complete support of parents. He feels that to ensure equity and fairness, this type of program must run under Division direction.

Mr. Mike Patterson is a Monticello High School parent. A high school swim team would be different from any other community swim clubs, including practice time and costs. If the paperwork is processed within the next seven to ten days, then the swim team would be allowed to compete before attending the State Championship. Swimming takes commitment and dedication. He asked that the Board support the proposal.

Mr. J.J. Bean is a swim coach. He encouraged the Board to support a County high school swimming program. There is community interest for this type of program. The current proposal is parent-funded with support and control by the high school. Swimming is the fastest growing sport. In the proposal, there are scholarships available for those individuals that are unable to afford the fees. He presented a petition signed by over 300 individuals supporting a County swimming program. (Petition is on file in the Clerk's office.)

Ms. Allison Firster is a Monticello High School student. She has been swimming for approximately 10 years. She would like swimming to be recognized as a high school sport. Since the opening of Monticello High School, there has been an interest in a County swimming program. She feels that if the Board allows them to swim in the State Competition, then the swimmers would make the Division proud.

Mr. Jason Wynne is a senior at Monticello High School. This would be his last year to compete at the high school level. Swimming is a great sport. He asked the Board to consider making the swim club a team.

Mr. Doug Fonder is a citizen of Roanoke, Virginia. Some schools in the Roanoke area have high school swimming programs. Patrick Henry High School began a swimming team a few years ago, and it is now one of the largest sports at the school. A swimming team has also been started at Cave Spring High School. He thinks that the proposal is a great way to get a swimming program started. He feels that the Division should be responsible for hiring the coaches so that the students receive the best. He asked the Board to support the proposal.

Ms. Jann Balmer is the President of the Jefferson Swim League. She has been involved in swimming for many years. Swimming is becoming a popular sport with a lot of community interest. Swimming is also a life long sport where many skills are learned such as time management and goal setting. She asked the Board to consider the high school swimming program.

Mr. Bruce Sullivan is parent. He is enthusiastic about swimming and supports a County swimming program. He expressed concern that the proposal does not have permanence. He suggests that the program be thought out thoroughly and that it be done in a manner that will last for a long time.

Mr. Ray McGrath supports a countywide swimming program. He feels that the County should fund a swimming program and not parents.

Dr. Irving Jones is the Monticello High School Principal and spoke on behalf of the high school principals. The Principals are not opposed to a high school swimming program but there are some concerns that need to be addressed. The concerns are 1) a name attached to a team or a club sport that the school has little control over is problematic; 2) no single

organization associated with the high schools allow five days of school related absences during a sports season; 3) in addition to swimming, the schools have received requests from parents and students for adding team and club sports to compete in areas of gymnastics, diving, ice hockey, etc.; 4) if in the future, there is not enough parent funding to continue the program, will the program be dropped or will the school fund it?; 5) there is a gender parity issue; 6) it is the opinion of the principals that the proposal presented under represents the cost of transportation and heating; and 7) if the Board feels the need to add sports at the high schools, then it should be done through the high school not with outside groups.

Mr. Boyd asked Dr. Jones if these issues were discussed with the parent group proposing the swim team. Dr. Jones said no, the principals had little time to prepare a response to the proposal.

Dr. Ward asked that the Mrs. Johnston read aloud the wording of the petition and to then pass it to all Board members for review.

Dr. Castner said that he is interested in the high school principals supporting the program. He suggested forming a representative group to discuss the issues raised by staff and the Board. He would like to provide more information to the Board. He then asked Mr. Firster for the timetable for the State Championship. Mr. Firster said that the State Championship is February 9 and 10. The ultimate goal is to participate in the championship, ideally though, the swimmers would like to participate in a meet before the championship.

Board members noted or asked the following that staff answered:

1. Some Board members would like for students to swim in the State Championship as a one-year "pilot" program and staff to review the concept of swimming being a permanent high school sport. Dr. Castner asked that the Board allow him additional time, until January 25, 2001, to prepare more information. **There was Board consensus for staff to provide the Board with additional information regarding the swimming proposal on or before January 23.**

2. Some Board members are concerned with setting precedents and the need to look at policy implications if the proposal is approved.

3. Some Board members suggested that Albemarle County consider building a swimming pool.

4. Concern was expressed that the Athletic Directors have no guidelines that set criteria for what sports are offered. Some Board members would like for staff to discuss this issue further and report back to the Board A policy may need to be developed.

5. Concern was expressed that RFPs were not sent out for the rental of a pool. Are there legal implications or insurance problems because there were not RFPs sent out? Mr. Trank said that under the Procurement Act, unless the services involve more than \$30,000, there is no requirement to solicit bids. Dr. Morgan said that the insurance carrier will not cover diving, but it will cover swimming if it is a school-sanctioned activity in which the Division has control. Also, a rider would have to be purchased to cover Fairview Pool because the Division is renting it.

6. Some Board members expressed concern that the proposal was brought to the Board at such a late date.

Mr. Boyd offered a **motion** to direct the Superintendent and staff to work out a temporary proposal so that Monticello High School is able to swim as a high school team in State meets and in the State Championship for the current year, and for a long-term proposal to be brought to the Board at a later date. Mr. Grant **seconded** the motion.

Dr. Ward asked for discussion. Ms. Rodriguez asked if the new proposal information, as stated in the motion, would be provided to the Board. Mr. Boyd said that staff would implement the proposal without the Board reviewing it again. Mr. Cummings supports a swimming program but will vote no until more information is provided. **Roll was called, and the motion failed by the following recorded votes:**

AYES: Mr. Boyd, Mr. Grant, and Mr. Koleszar.

NAYS: Dr. Ward, Ms. Rodriguez, Mrs. McKeel, and Mr. Cummings.

Motion failed by a 4:3 vote.

There was Board consensus for the Superintendent to meet with a representative group of the swimming program and staff in order to work out a proposal that addresses the issues raised by Board members and staff about the program. (This section ended at 8:28 p.m.)

June 7, 2001 Regular Board Meeting

Agenda Item No. 18. High School Swimming Program. (Out of Sequence).

Dr. Morgan summarized the staff report (on file in the Clerk's office). In January, the School Board approved a short-term pilot for a high school swimming program and directed Dr. Morgan to work with other staff and appropriate community members to develop a longer term proposal concerning possible implementation of this sport.

To this end, a work group was assembled consisting of staff and parents from the three high schools to develop a formal policy concerning the addition or elimination of high school athletic programs and a specific recommendation concerning high school swimming.

Using the proposed policy the group developed as a framework, the group completed an analysis of the possible implementation of a high school swimming program along with an accompanying recommendation for the Board to consider. The analysis and recommendation were completed using the specific application form to add a high school interscholastic sport included as part of the group's proposed policy.

Based on its study of the issue, it is recommended that the Board provide \$25,000 per year for two years to support a pilot for varsity swimming (grades 9-12) at all three high schools. The continuation of the pilot beyond the first year would be subject to review by the Board next spring; however, the idea is to allow two years to determine if varsity swimming is viable in the long term. After two years, the criteria outlined in the proposed policy on addition or elimination of sports could be used to determine if swimming should be continued.

At its June 7 meeting, work group members were present to discuss its recommendations with the Board and to answer any questions Board members had.

As indicated, the pilot would cost \$25,000 per year. This funding could be taken from the Board's Reserve, which is \$106,748, including \$10,000 for a teacher recognition program through the County Student Council. There was strong sentiment within the work group that it would be inequitable expect parents to fully fund the two-year pilot program, although this is how the short-term pilot this past winter was supported.

Dr. Ward opened Public Comment.

Ms. **Beth Carta** is a parent and a swim team supporter. She reviewed the positive aspects of having a swimming team. She asked that the Board adopt a swimming program for the County high schools.

Board members noted or asked the following that staff answered:

1. Would the teams be practicing everyday using the same facility? Mr. Kanipe said that the practice would be everyday but not all at the same facility.
2. Some Board members are interested in swimming being a sport where students are not cut from the team; if a student tries out, and then the student is on the team. Dr. Morgan said that the pilot is based on 40 students per school for budgetary reasons. Mr. Barnes said that the best budget was presented in order to allow students to compete. The coaching stipends are not according to the County policy, and some items will need to be supplemented from other sources. If there was a case where all students that tried out for a team were qualified, then support would be solicited to allow all of the students to remain on the team.
3. Why was the UVA swimming pool not considered for use? Mr. Kanipe said that there is a cost associated with using UVA facilities.
4. Are there concerns about liability if students provide their own transportation to and from practice? Dr. Morgan said that it would be similar to that used for pre-season practice. Mr. Trank said that he did not believe that this would increase the Division's liability insurance.
5. Some Board members would like more information in the application on how to determine whether the pilot is a success. Dr. Morgan said that language can be incorporated that looks at the criteria for deletion and whether there are issues that need to be addressed. **There was Board consensus for similar language to be added to the policy.**
6. How long can the decision for a swim team be delayed in order for staff to have enough time to prepare? Mr. Kanipe said that the Athletic Directors would need to know an answer before the beginning of August. Dr. Castner said that he is comfortable with the proposal, but he has some long-term reservations about the program. He is not interested in building swimming pools in the County.

There was Board consensus for this item to be placed on the June 28, 2001 Consent Agenda for action.

June 28, 2001 Regular Board Meeting

Agenda Item No. 5. Consent Agenda

- 5A. Minutes: May 9, 2001 Special Meeting; May 16, 2001 Special Meeting; May 24, 2001 Regular Meeting; June 6, 2001 Special Meeting
- 5B. Approval of Migrant Federal and State Applications
- 5C. High School Swimming Program
- 5D. Proposed Policy IGDAA, *Addition or Elimination of High School Interscholastic Teams or Sports*
- 5E. Donation to Meriwether Lewis Elementary School

5F. Curriculum Revision: World Geography
5G. Curriculum Revision: Civics and Economics
5H. Authorization of Signatures in the Absence of Superintendent
5I. Revisions to Policies BBA and CBA
5J. Learn and Serve Grant
5K. Virginia Commission for the Arts Art Education Grant
5L. Golden Apple Award Staff Development Stipend
5M. FY 00/01 AIMR Food Services Reappropriation
5N. FY01/02 AIMR Food Services Appropriation
5O. Donation to Monticello High School
5P. Personnel Action (plus addendum)
5Q. FY01/02 Reading for Excellence Act Grant Award
5R. EL-Civics Grant Lease
5S. Additional SOL Training Initiative Funds (added)
5T. Donation to Summer School (added)
5U. Adult Education Mini-Grant (added)

Mr. Grant pulled the May 9, 2001 minutes for a separate vote, and Dr. Ward pulled item 5I for revisions suggested by Mr. Koleszar. Also, Item 5C, High School Swimming Program, was pulled for a revision, and 5S, 5T, and 5U were added.

March 21, 2002 Regular Board Meeting

Agenda Item No. 11. Report on Pilot Swimming Program. (Out of Sequence)

Dr. Morgan summarized the staff report (on file in the Clerk's office). In the spring of 2001, the Board approved a two-year pilot for high school swimming. At that time, the Board directed that it receive a report at the end of the first year of the pilot.

A summary of the first year of the pilot is provided as Enclosure 1 (on file). The Athletic Directors of the three comprehensive high schools were present on March 21st to answer questions from the Board. \$25,000 to continue the pilot for its second year has been included in the Board's Funding Request. Staff recommends that the pilot be continued for its second year and that another report be provided to the Board in March of 2003. This report would include a recommendation as to whether or not the program should be continued on a permanent basis.

Board members noted or asked the following that staff answered:

1. Albemarle High School spent the most money out of all three high schools for travel costs. Did the savings from Western Albemarle and Monticello High Schools cover those costs? Dr. Morgan said no.

2. There has been an interest in increasing the number of meets from five to ten. Dr. Morgan said that this issue would be a consideration after completion of the two-year pilot. What is a normal number of meets for a swim team? Mr. Barnes said ten; however, the Virginia High School League (VHSL) is proposing to increase the number of contests for all athletic events beginning next year. Dr. Castner expressed concern that the VHSL did not consult with Superintendents about this issue. If the number of meets is increased, will the VHSL pay for the increased costs to individual school systems? Mr. Barnes said the cost for athletics will increase if the number of contests increases, but he does not know if the VHSL will cover those increases.

3. During the pilot years, is attending only five meets enough for state qualification? Mr. Barnes said yes. He also noted that Western Albemarle and Monticello High School swim teams did not compete in a regional event due the fact that they could not find a large enough pool in the area to host the meet.

4. Were any students cut from the teams? Mr. Barnes said that Monticello High School did not make any cuts. If the cost increases as the number of competitions increase, what is the chance that students will need to be cut? What is the cost per student on the swim team? Mr. Barnes said that girl's basketball, indoor track, and swimming will all occur during the winter season, so he does not anticipate the number of participants increasing greatly. The expenses for the program include travel and uniforms. Female uniforms cost approximately \$60 and male uniforms are less. Do participants pay for anything? Mr. Barnes said that the students wanted to purchase warm-up suits, but they were donated by the Falcon Club and some other athletic teams within the school. If the costs increase, could parents/students make up the cost difference? Dr. Castner said that the swim program is a two year pilot, and increases should be discussed at the end of the pilot when it will be decided whether the program can be fully absorbed in the existing budget.

5. Did some of the students on the Albemarle High School team pay to be on the swim team due to exceeding 40 participants? Dr. Morgan said yes, some parents requested to pay so their children could participate on the team. Some Board members suggested that if Monticello and Western Albemarle High Schools were under the 40-student limit, then the extra funds should be used to reimburse those parents. Some Board members asked how the swim program funds were distributed, whether by the school or for the entire program. **There was Board consensus for staff to provide information about the budget process for the pilot swimming program.**

February 12, 2003 Special Meeting (Budget Work Session)

Revenue Update.

Swimming Program: Mr. Struiksma provided a summary of the swimming program for the Board. He met with the athletic directors who said that the program could be continued within current funding. The swimming program received great interest and participation, and the coaches and directors are excited to continue it. The cost estimate would increase from \$25,000 to \$37,000 for use of a UVA pool for 10 meets. Mrs. McKeel February 12, 2003 said that the program was budgeted for \$20,000. Dr. Castner said that if the number of meets is doubled, as has been requested, then the coach's stipend should also be increased, and the cost for transportation would increase. In order to take the program off of pilot, it could remain at the current funding level or the Board could allocate \$5,000 more per year toward full service. The athletic directors requested that it become a regular program and taken off of pilot status. Mrs. Moynihan asked how the cost increases for the program would be funded. Dr. Castner suggested taking the program off of pilot status and once the budget is balanced the Board could decide if revenues were available to consider expanding the current program. **There was Board consensus to take the swimming program off of pilot status with a formal vote at the February 13th meeting.**

February 13, 2003 Regular Board Meeting

Update of Revenues and Expenditures.

Dr. Ward suggested that the swimming program be taken off of pilot status. Mr. Boyd asked if the Board would receive another report from staff. Dr. Castner said that staff would recommend that the swimming program be taken off of pilot status. Mrs. Moynihan offered a **motion** to take the swimming program off of pilot status and to include it as a regular

program in the athletic budget. Mr. Koleszar **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed unanimously.**