

Minutes CESE Annual Meeting, June 7, 2014

Out-going president Terry Dunbar called the annual CESE meeting to order on Saturday, June 7, 2014 after a picnic lunch at the home of Steve and Karen Brugge. Terry introduced long-term CESE members David Hsi, Margaret Mavetich, Robert Walko, and Kurt Steinhaus.

Next was a demonstration by Dave Thomas. He took two cannon balls made of iron oxide (Fe_2O_3) and wrapped one of them in aluminum foil. He touched the balls together, and no reaction occurred. Then he applied a glancing blow with one of the balls along the other, and sparks appeared. This was because the impact provided the activation energy required to produce the "thermite" chemical reaction. Dave explained that this created "iron rich microspheres" in the process.

Terry then asked the agenda to be approved. Jesse Johnson moved, and Steve seconded the motion which was approved.

Terry presented next year's slate of officers:

President: Patty Finley
Vice-President: Lisa Durkin
Treasurer: Steve Brugge
Secretary: Marilyn Savitt-Kring

Other CESE board members are Marshall Berman, Cindy Chapman, Terry Dunbar, Jack Jekowski, Jesse Johnson, Kim Johnson, Becky Reiss, Jerry Shelton, Dave Thomas, Becky Reiss, and Ken Whiton.

Board member Nikki Dennis later resigned from the board as she will be accepting a new job and leaving the state.

Board member Marvin Moss resigned his position but still wants to be a member of CESE. There were no new nominations. Jesse moved, and Steve seconded that the slate be approved. Motion carried.

Terry began his outgoing presidential speech. He hopes that there will be a respectful dialog with the Public Education Department (PED). However, sometimes they listen, and sometimes they don't. He said he is proud of an organization like CESE that uses data. Jack showed some that Kim had generated on graduation rates. This morning's *Albuquerque Journal* (6-7-14) reported the latest teacher evaluations. Terry said his own evaluations in the past were good, but this time they were not, even though over time he has improved as a teacher. The current methods of evaluations are supposed to be objective, but they aren't. Teachers are up in arms, and they are leaving the profession. Steve, a mid school science teacher, plans on retiring next year.

Terry taught at a school that had high test scores, but the principal said the school could be better. They should teach “like your hair is on fire.” What is expected is that the emphasis should be on curriculum and test results, but Terry wanted a human touch. He had taught at Rio Grande High School, where the test scores were low, so Terry started a chess club. He was sure the kids could do well at chess. At first, there were only a few members, but the numbers increased. Over the years, they developed into a top chess team and beat the Albuquerque Academy. His kids had different backgrounds, and he wanted them to feel and be smart.

Terry also coached a soccer team, at only 70 cents per hour. It was a good experience even though they didn't win that many games. He did, however, get to know his students. Terry also took his kids on field trips to the Sandia Mountains to study life zones. They also went to the Bosque del Apache, where, on one occasion, they saw a herd of deer with coyotes on the side. The coyotes brought down a slow, sick deer. Terry had some great experiences teaching, and he didn't like focusing totally on standards.

Relating to CESE, kids have asked, “You don't believe in evolution or global warming, do you?” Terry said textbooks have nothing on climate change, and these 16-18 year olds will have to deal with this in the future. Terry wants them to learn about this in school.

He is now teaching at an “at risk school.” He has done well, but “his hair was not on fire.” If a student is in trouble, he meets with teachers, parents, and the principal. They know which students are most likely to graduate. They do more than expected once the “maturity gene kicks in.”

Good teachers are leaving the profession because their evaluation scores are low. Terry said he is proud to be part of CESE, as CESE takes these issues seriously.

He thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve, and Terry handed the presidential gavel to Patty, who was a former teacher and engineer. She said she is honored to become CESE president.

In her teacher training coursework, Patty was taught that a well-written test would show a bell curve when scored. It turned out that most tests resulted in a “double hump” curve; scores either fell on the low end or the high end of the range, with few in the middle. She thought at first that this was a test writing problem of her own, but working with mentor teachers and others in the schools, it seemed to be a common finding. So does this mean that there is no such thing as an “average” kid, academically? Her experience was that this is an expectation of parents, that each child is special, implies that no child can be average.

She also found that emphasizing testing and grades pressures students and that increases the likelihood of cheating. The best way to teach students is to find a way to relate to them as humans. Stories connect with people better than data or facts presented without a narrative. That is, having a story to tell the facts works better than trying to convince people using data alone.

Patty said she is proud to part of CESE and happy to serve. Patty then recognized Kim.

Kim presented an appreciation plaque to Dave Thomas from CESE to recognize all the work he has done. The plaque was signed by past presidents Ken Whiton, Kim Johnson, Terry Dunbar, and Marshall Berman. Dave thanked us for the honor.

Kim Johnson said data is not up on our website (as of this writing). Jack Jekowski, Ken and Kim met with state Senator John Sapien. They discussed Walt Murfin's method of evaluating schools' performance. Senator Sapien has set up a special joint session of the LESC and Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) in Las Vegas, NM for August 27th, where he would like Kim to present the CESE methodologies and describe the issues we have identified with the current PED evaluation systems.

Kim requested anecdotal incidents regarding individual teacher evaluations, such as Karen Brugge's receiving a low score because she was absent from school due to major surgery.

Terry thanked Steve and Karen for hosting the picnic. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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