

BOARD BRIEF

Regular Meeting

January 12, 2009

AT THE January 12, 2009 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

Mrs. Dawson introduced a group of fifth grade students from Millington School. The students spoke about the Astronaut for a Day Program and their trip to the Buehler Space Center in Paramus. The students described the activities they participated in including working with bulky gloves to simulate the conditions that astronauts work under and other tasks involving communication skills, geology and team building. The students also spoke about the field trip to the Buehler Space Center which allowed them to experience a simulated space mission.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Technology Committee – Mr. Meringolo reported that the Technology Committee met on January 7th. The committee discussed two items. The first is the need for the district to upgrade the present telephone system, not the telephone handsets, but the operating system, which can no longer be supported with a maintenance contract as parts are no longer available. We are awaiting a proposal that will incorporate voice over internet (VOIP) for communication between the buildings. The technology committee will review the proposal when it has been received.

The committee also reviewed the proposals for a new student information system. The existing SASI software will not be supported after August, 2010, so new software must be selected. The committee is recommending the Genesis software, which is in use at Watchung Hills Regional High School. The administrators and the committee feel that the Genesis is a better product in terms of meeting the district's needs for state reporting and is more user friendly for the teachers and support staff who will be using it.

Community Relations – Mr. Carbone reported that he will be meeting soon with Mr. McCarthy and some of the other committee chairs with regard to the 2009-2010 budget. Mr. Carbone also reported that he has become an active member of the Senior Citizens group. His involvement with the group has been very positive and he is looking forward to better communication between the school district and the Senior citizens.

Township Liaison – Mrs. Scanlon reported that the Township Reorganization meeting was held on January 5th. Mr. Vitoreira was re-elected Mayor. Mrs. Harrington was sworn in and will serve as the liaison to the Board of Education. The next Township Committee meeting is scheduled for January 14th. Mrs. Scanlon reported that Justin Lizza, the township Engineer, has submitted his resignation. She indicated that the Safe Routes to Schools grants through the NJ Department of Transportation were awarded on December 22nd. No Morris County grants were awarded. We did not receive any information as to why our application was not successful.

Curriculum Committee – Mrs. Scanlon reported that the Curriculum Committee met last week. There are two curriculum guides on the agenda for approval this evening. Dr. Wetherell provided a great overview of the curriculum work that is ongoing. The world language curriculum in French and Spanish is being revised to be better aligned with the high school. New textbooks for French and Spanish are being recommended for next year. The focus of the January 19th inservice will be curriculum work.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Scanlon reported that the committee will be meeting again this week and will have some policies to recommend for a first reading for the January 26th meeting. Policies on pupil records and administration of medication are being revised to comply with changes in state statute and code.

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy stated there are no bills on the agenda this evening. They will be presented at the January 26th meeting. The Finance Committee met this evening for a preliminary discussion on the 2009-2010 budget. The district will once again be dealing with a 4% cap on the tax levy. The district has a number of questions on the budget process that have been posed to the Executive

County Superintendent's Office and we are waiting for answers. The same adjectives that were used to describe the budget process last year will once again apply: hard, painful, severe and difficult.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar wished all present a Happy New Year. This time of the year is budget time and due to the financial situation in Trenton, it is likely that the process this year will be more complicated. Given that state revenues this year are short of the budgeted amount in the state budget, the Governor is looking to make mid-year adjustments to the state budget. Thankfully none of the proposed changes will have a direct impact on our budget. The possibility does exist that our state aid might be reduced in 2009-2010.

Following the last Board meeting, Dr. Rovtar had checked on the school calendars in the other sending districts and found them all to use the NJEA convention week for their parent/teacher conferences. She will be meeting with the other superintendents next week to discuss the 2009-2010 calendar. A recommendation will be made at the January 26th meeting to add one additional half day for conferences in 2009-2010.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wetherell reported that the first grade teachers received notification that a F.O.R.C.E. grant they had submitted for a document camera and projector had been approved. She thanked F.O.R.C.E. for their generosity. Gillette School had ice cream and "wear your favorite color" spirit day last Friday. Kindergarten registration for 2009-2010 is scheduled for January 14th and 15th. The Rainbow Fish assembly program will be held tomorrow. Dr. Wetherell also provided an update on the curriculum work that is taking place in the various core content areas.

ADMINISTRATORS AND TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR'S UPDATES

Mr. Cimino thanked the PTO for the holiday luncheon that was provided the final day before the winter recess. Tomorrow is the 7th grade Victorian Tea. On Wednesday there will be a geography bee with the winner moving on to competition at the regional and potentially state and national levels. The Forensics team participated in the consortium competition last week under the leadership of Mrs. McCoy. The Knowledge Bowl and the Volleyball Tournament are the next consortium activities that will be happening. The high school orientation for 8th graders is scheduled for this week. On Friday evening, January 16th, all 8th graders from the four sending districts have been invited to attend the WHRHS boys basketball game for free. Arrangements have been made to allow the students to watch the inauguration next week if they would like to. Mrs. Berlin is also the recipient of a F.O.R.C.E. grant to provide funding for a laptop computer that can be used with the smartboard in her classroom.

Mrs. Dawson reported last Friday was "Button Day" at Millington School. The visiting poet spent time with all of the 4th grade classes today and will be back for another day next week. Mrs. Dawson thanked the PTO for their support of this program. The third grade will have International Day on January 30th. On Monday's inservice day, the second grade teachers will be working on scoring and analyzing the math assessment dealing with word problems that students will be taking this week. The third through fifth grade teachers will be focusing on the writing program and developing practice assessments that will mirror what students are expected to do on the NJASK. Mrs. Dawson also thanked F.O.R.C.E. for approval of grants to provide replacement novels for the language arts curriculum. The students at Millington School will be having an assembly to view the inauguration.

Mr. Blinder explained that the conference room has been decorated with examples of student work using the Kidspiration program. This program allows students to develop their skills in language arts and math in addition to learning some basic computer skills. Mr. Blinder then played an audio tape which featured a number of the students describing the work they had done.

BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE

Mr. Esposito stated that last week he and Dr. Rovtar met with representatives from Investors Savings Bank. They have presented a proposal for the district to bank with them. The district currently uses PNC Bank as our primary bank. Mr. Esposito will be meeting with representatives from PNC to see if the bank is willing to submit a competitive proposal.

The bid for the privatizing of custodian and maintenance services was sent out to 12 firms. Three firms attended the mandatory pre-bid meeting last week. Mr. Esposito took the company representatives on a tour of all three buildings. As a result of the pre-bid meeting some revisions and clarifications were made to the bid specifications. An addendum to the specifications requires us to delay receipt of the bids by a week. The new date for receipt of the bids will be January 23rd.

Mr. Esposito discussed the proposed resolution to increase the subscription busing fees for 2009-2010. A recommendation is being made because this information will be included for the Kindergarten registration this week. We want to make sure that we tell those parents what we expect the subscription busing fee will be before they indicate their interest in the service. Currently the district is subsidizing the per pupil cost. Next year the route costs will increase. Without increasing the fee, the Board's percentage of subsidy will increase.

A discussion on the subscription busing program and fees took place. The current board subsidy per student is \$277.00 for Gillette/Millington and \$239.00 for Central. Without an increase in the subscription busing fee, the board subsidy would rise to \$294.00 for Gillette/Millington and \$254.00 for Central in 2009-2010. Dr. Rovtar stated that she believed the Board's intent in implementing the program last year was to eventually have it be self-supporting. We need to take a look at the budget priorities and make sure that we are spending money where it makes the most difference for our students academically. Since courtesy busing is not required, it is a difficult decision for the board to make, but it is difficult for the district not to reduce the subsidy.

After much discussion, it was decided to amend the wording of the resolution to state that the Board is adopting an increase in the "tentative" subscription busing fees to indicate that there may need to be further revision in the future.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Barbara stated that she feels that if the board were to privatize the custodian operations, the district would lose a lot. The board should consider the loyalty of the currently employees.

Mr. Gianakis asked if the current staff would remain if the district privatized the operation. Mr. Esposito explained that the service management company would have the option to hire our current employees.

RESOLUTIONS

- Accepted the minutes of the December 15, 2008 – Worksession and Regular Meeting – Public & Private Sessions

Finance

- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.
- Adopted the following resolution to request a waiver of the district's participation in the Special Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2009-2010 school year.

Whereas, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3 provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the district's participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2009-2010 school year, and

Whereas, the Long Hill Township Board of Education desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that it projects having fewer than 30 Medicaid eligible classified students,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Long Hill Township Board of Education hereby authorizes the Chief School Administrator to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in the County of Morris as appropriate request for a waiver of the requirement of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3 for the 2009-2010 school year.

- Established the following tentative fees for subscription busing for the 2009-2010 school year:

Individual student fee	\$350.00
Maximum fee per family	\$800.00

Special Education

- Approved the payment of \$650.00 to Dr. Vanna Amorapanth for a neuro-developmental evaluation for student #201560. The evaluation is part of the re-evaluation process for this student.
- Approved the termination of the district's contract with Above and Beyond Learning Group effective December 18, 2008 at the provider's request. Services were being provided to student #999903.

Personnel

- Approved the following appointment:

<u>Sport/activity</u>	<u>Advisor</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Boys' Baseball	Marco Freyre	\$2,557.01*

*Stipend to be paid from existing activity account balances and/or pay to play/participate fees paid.

- Appointed Marie Laurita as a maternity leave replacement teacher for the preschool disabled class at Gillette School for the period February 10, 2009 through June 30, 2009 at the Step 1 BA salary of \$42,595.00 prorated.
- Appointed Barbara Schwartz to provide 30 sessions of remedial reading instruction to a student in accordance with the student's 504 plan. Compensation to Ms. Schwartz will be at the contractual rate of \$25.00 per session.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2008-2009 school year:

Ann Chapman	Mary Driver	Carolyn Mazzucco
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Technology

- Approved the acquisition of the Genesis Student Information System for implementation beginning July 1, 2009 at a cost not to exceed \$18,000.00 for the 2009-2010 school year (including set-up costs).

Curriculum

- Approved the field trip as listed below:

May 29, 2009	RVCC Planetarium	All Third Grade students (117)
\$10.00 per student	North Branch, NJ	5 teacher, 1 nurse and 20
parents		
Parent paid		

- Approved the curriculum guides as listed below:

Prejudice Reduction, Holocaust and Genocide Curriculum – K-8
Computer Integration – K-8

Policy

- Approved the second reading of the following policies:

2120

Organization Chart

Job Descriptions

Substitute Teacher

Teacher Assistant

Guidance Counselor – Central School

District Guidance Counselor

- Approved the first reading of the following policy:

4131/4131.1

Staff Development; In-Service

Education/Visitations/Conferences

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Gianakis stated that parents with only two children don't benefit from the family cap, only families with three or more children can benefit from it.

ADJOURNMENT

FUTURE MEETING DATES

January 26, 2009 – Regular Meeting – Gillette Board Office – 7:30 p.m.

February 9, 2009 – Worksession Meeting – Gillette Board Office – 7:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED AT ALL BOARD MEETINGS
THE BOARD BRIEF DOES NOT REPRESENT OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION.**