

BOARD BRIEF

Regular Meeting

January 26, 2009

AT THE January 26, 2009 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – In Mr. McCarthy’s absence, Mr. Dreyer stated that the Finance Committee met this evening to discuss the development of the 2009-2010 budget. We are still waiting to receive information from the state that will provide direction to the district in terms of the development of the budget. The Committee also reviewed the bill list, which is in order. The Finance Committee resolutions #3, 4, and 5 should state that the reports are for the month of October, not November.

Negotiations Committee – Mr. Meringolo stated that the committee has received a formal request from the Long Hill Education Association to open negotiations. The committee will be meeting this Wednesday night to review the board’s proposals and to determine a date for the initial meeting with the LHEA.

Presidents’ Council – Ms. Becker reported that a meeting of the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the Watchung Hills sending districts was held last week. At this meeting, only the Board Presidents were in attendance. There was a discussion of district budgets. Watchung will be holding a community day. This is a project that began 5 years ago. It may be something that we may want to look into. The group discussed the regionalization/consolidation discussions that are taking place at the county level. The group also discussed curriculum issues. There will be another meeting of the group prior to the school election. Ms. Becker indicated that this effort to foster communication between the districts has grown into a very productive group.

SUPERINTENDENT’S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar further expounded upon Ms. Becker’s comments regarding regionalization/consolidation. The accountability legislation requires the Executive County Superintendents to develop plans to eliminate non-operating districts and to consolidate or regionalize K-8 districts with or into K-12 districts. The optimal district is K-12 with an enrollment of 5,000 students. The Executive County Superintendent (ECS) is required to submit a plan to create these “model” districts to the Commissioner of Education by March 15, 2010. Originally the Somerset County Executive County Superintendent had requested that funding be provided for a feasibility study that would take Long Hill out of the Watchung Hills Regional District and substitute Green Brook in our place. Dr. Rovtar indicated that she has now been invited to be a member of the Somerset County committee which is working on regionalization. The Executive County Superintendent has now amended her request to include Long Hill Township as part of the Watchung Hills Regional district. Dr. Rovtar attended the Somerset County committee meeting last Friday and explained to the Executive County Superintendent that removing Long Hill Township from the regional district would not be well received by the Long Hill community as we have 50 years of taxpayer investment in the creation and expansion of the high school facilities.

Dr. Rovtar also stated that all districts received a letter from Commissioner Davy on January 16th suggesting that the districts immediately freeze all discretionary spending. The budget outlook is bleak. Districts have been told that they should expect that state aid will be held flat for 2009-2010 and that would be a best case scenario. This state still has not released the budget software that will allow Mr. Esposito to perform the necessary budget calculations. While the Governor is slated to deliver his budget message on March 10th, that is after the statutory March 4th budget submission date and we have not yet received a budget/election calendar from the Department of Education.

BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE

Mr. Esposito stated that tomorrow is the bid opening for the privatization of custodial and maintenance services. One bid has already been received and two more are expected to be received prior to the 10:00 a.m. bid opening. The bids will have to be reviewed for completeness and then analyzed. The attorney will also review the information before any recommendation would be made to the Board.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Harrington stated that she was present as the Township Committee Liaison to the Board of Education. She stated that she was concerned that the Somerset County Superintendent was not aware of Long Hill's close proximity to the Watchung Hills Regional District. The Township has a considerable investment in the high school district assets. She expressed the willingness of the Township Committee to become involved in preserving our position in the regional district. The Township Committee could also involve our local legislators in the matter, if necessary.

Mr. Gianakis asked a question about item #12 on the agenda regarding the approval of neuron-developmental evaluations. Dr. Rovtar explained that there was a typo in the resolution. There are four student numbers listed, so there are four, not two, evaluations to be approved at \$650.00 each for a total of \$2,600.00

Mr. Gianakis asked what the difference was between the evaluations in item #12 and item #14 on the agenda. Dr. Rovtar explained that #12 was for neurological evaluations and #14 was for a psychiatric evaluation.

Mr. Gianakis asked how a member of the public could have their input at a board meeting if they were not able to attend the meeting. Ms. Becker indicated that input or questions can be sent to the Board President. Letters can also be sent to the Board. Letters might not be read in public if there are issues involving confidentiality.

RESOLUTIONS

- Accepted the minutes of the January 12, 2009 – Worksession Meeting – Public Session

Financials

- Approved the List of Bills for January 15 - 26, 2009 for payment as follows (as attached):

Bill List for January 15 – 26, 2009	
Fund 10	\$
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 359,424.14
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 20,598.72
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ 923,140.63
Total	\$1,303,163.49

- Certified that as of October 31, 2008 after review of the Board Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6:20-2.13(B), and sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the year.
- Accepted the financial reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer of School Funds for the month ending October 31, 2008.
- Approved the transfers for October, 2008.

- Resolved that the Long Hill Township Board of Education, in conjunction with the Watchung Hills Regional High School District, will conduct the Annual School Election on Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at which times the polls will be open from 2:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. The Board set the date and time for the drawing for position on the ballot for the voting machine in connection with the 2009 Annual School Election for 3:00 p.m. on March 11, 2009.
- Approved the following resolution for membership in the Morris Essex Insurance Group:
WHEREAS, a number of Boards of Education in Morris and Essex Counties have joined together to form a Joint Insurance Pool as permitted by N.J. Title 18A-.18B and;
WHEREAS, said Pool was approved effective February 10, 1984 by the New Jersey Commissioner of Insurance and has been in operation since that date and;
WHEREAS, the Pool contains elaborate restrictions and safeguards concerning the safe and efficient administration of the public interest entrusted to such a Pool, and;
WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Long Hill Township has determined that membership in the **MORRIS ESSEX INSURANCE GROUP** is in the best interest of the District;
NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Education of Long Hill Township does hereby agree to renew membership in the **MORRIS ESSEX INSURANCE GROUP** and hereby accept the Bylaws as approved and adopted. The renewal term is from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary/Business Administrator is authorized to execute the application for membership and the accompanying certification on behalf of the District and;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary/Business Administrator is authorized and directed to execute the Indemnity and Trust Agreement and such other documents signifying membership in the Pool as are required by the Pool's Bylaws and to deliver the same to the Executive Director.
- Authorized the Superintendent to apply for the following Investors Savings Bank Charitable Foundation grant:

<u>Purpose of Grant</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>
Acquisition of VersaTrans Bus Routing Software	\$11,460.00
- Accepted the funds for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Fiscal Year 2009 as follows:

Title II Part A	\$23,120
Title IV	\$ 1,733
- Canceled the district's transportation contract with the Somerset County Educational Services Commission for student #999903 effective January 23, 2009. The student will no longer need transportation to the previous placement.

Special Education

- Approved the payment of \$2,600.00 to Dr. Vanna Amorapanth for four neuro-developmental evaluations (\$650.00 each) for students #7140608289, #9668020560, #124 and #125.
- Canceled the district's tuition contract with The Phoenix Center effective January 23, 2009. Student #999903 has been discharged from this school placement as per the school's request.
- Approved the payment of \$800.00 to Dr. K. Feingold for a psychiatric evaluation for student #77002.

Curriculum

- Approved the field trip as listed below:

February 26, 2009	Newark Museum	All Fifth Grade students (120)
Funded through	Newark, NJ	12 teachers, 6 parents
a grant from F.O.R.C.E.		

Policy

- Approved the second reading of the following policy:

4131/4131.1	Staff Development; In-Service Education/Visitations/Conferences
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OTHER

- Approved the submission of the Long Hill Township School District's 2009-2010 Local Professional Development Plan to the Morris County Professional Development Board.
- Approved the following revision to the 2009-2010 District Calendar.

Change Thursday, October 29, 2009 from a full day to a four-hour session day for parent/teacher conferences.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Nyquist reminded Board Members to provide her with information regarding any board training they have taken.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Becker stated that it is just about the time of the year for conducting the evaluation of the Superintendent. The Board has previously spent a great deal of time developing forms to be used for this process. New Jersey School Boards Association also has evaluation forms. Ms. Becker will send copies of both forms to the Board Members to review. A decision as to which form to use will then need to be made. New Jersey School Boards will tally the forms at no cost to the Board, but the Board President would still need to write the final evaluation report based on all of the input received from Board Members.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Gianakis asked if the public could know what is the cost of the current custodial and maintenance services. Mr. Esposito indicated that he could provide that figure that would reflect the costs for salaries, benefits and supplies.

ADJOURNMENT

FUTURE MEETING DATES

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

February 23, 2009 – Regular Meeting – Gillette Board Office – 7:30 p.m.

March 9, 2009 – Worksession - 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.**