

# **BOARD BRIEF**

## **Regular Meeting**

### **February 9, 2009**

AT THE February 9, 2009 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Becker stated that the Board had received a proposal from a resident with regard to the "Shop to Earn" program that might generate some income for the district. Ms. Becker said she had done some web research on the company and based on some of the blog comments and other information she had read, she did not feel that this was something that the district should engage in.

Dr. Rovtar stated that the Board received a letter of resignation from Mr. Hamma who will be retiring effective April 1, 2009. There is a resolution on this evening's agenda to accept his resignation.

#### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Negotiations Committee – Mr. Meringolo stated that the Negotiations Committee had met last week. He will provide an update to the Board in Executive Session.

Buildings and Grounds – In Mr. Dreyer's absence, Mr. Butterworth reported that the Buildings and Grounds Committee met this evening. The Committee discussed the custodial bid results. The Board will discuss legal issues associated with the bids in Executive Session.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Nyquist reported that the Policy Committee had an extensive meeting last week to review the revisions to the policy on administering medication. This is a very important and complex policy. The policy has been revised and follows the state guidelines. The committee is writing a second policy to address issues associated with Anaphylaxis to Food and Other Substances. That policy is not yet ready for a first reading. The committee felt strongly that it should be a stand-alone policy and not part of the administration of medication policy.

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met this evening. There is a typo on the total of the Bills List. The correct total should be \$439,874.54. The committee is also recommending the approval of the financial reports for November. Mr. McCarthy said her would defer speaking on the budget to Dr. Rovtar and Mr. Esposito.

Community Relations Committee – Mr. Carbone stated that the committee will be scheduling meetings with the various township groups over the next month to six weeks to discuss the proposed 2009-2010 budget.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Dr. Rovtar reported that the Board finally received the Election Calendar. If the Board determines that a waiver is needed, the budget submission deadline is February 23<sup>rd</sup>. The regular budget submission deadline is March 18<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Rovtar indicated that some staff reductions are anticipated due to the decline in student enrollment. The district will still have increases in benefits, special education costs and has budgeted for the purchase of textbooks. The Board is very aware of the current economic situation and trying to create a budget that will allow us to provide a Thorough and Efficient education, as required, in the most fiscally prudent way possible. We are trying to keep the budget at the 4% tax increase. A presentation on the tentative budget will be made at the next Board meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Dr. Wetherell reported that curriculum committee meetings were held today. Good progress is being made. Dr. Wetherell has started and Understanding by Design Study Group which is open to teachers at Gillette School. The second round of the Dibels testing took place and progress was measured from the first administration in the fall. This feedback is used to help teachers select appropriate

strategies in helping students acquire early literacy skills. The Gillette faculty used part of the day on the January 19<sup>th</sup> Inservice to discuss the various strategies that can be used to help students with these skills. To date there are 71 students registered for Kindergarten in September. There are 8 additional packets that have been taken out and not returned. For Valentine's Day, the SKIP, KIT and Kindergarten students made valentines for the patients at Lyons Veterans Hospital. The first grade students made valentines for the Senior Center. Dr. Wetherell described the Gillette School fitness challenge program which has been running for the past 5 weeks. Staff members have been able to accrue points and win prizes based on exercising and making health decisions. A member of the Harlem Wizards basketball team visited Gillette School and was very enthusiastically received.

## **ADMINISTRATORS AND TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR'S UPDATES**

Mr. Cimino stated that the Central School students have been participating in various consortium events over the last few weeks. The science, volleyball and general knowledge competitions have involved our students. The middle school has also been focused on many activities associated with the transition to the high school for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Mrs. Molendyke will be meeting with groups of students tomorrow with regard to the scheduling process. Mr. Cimino has posted a PowerPoint presentation on the website to provide an overview of the high school course selection process. Report cards went out today. The marking period was extended by one day due to the snow day. On February 17<sup>th</sup> the spelling be with St. Vincent de Paul School will be held. The last basketball games of the season will be held this week. The Honor Band will perform in concert at Valley View School in Watching tomorrow evening. On Wednesday they will be on our visiting all of the middle schools in the regional area. Mr. Cimino indicated that he had received an inquiry from another district relative to our pay to play program.

Mr. Blinder reported that there was a memory problem with one of the servers. Mr. Esposito assisted him in correcting the problem. A back-up CD has been created for emergency recovery. Mr. Blinder spent approximately 20 hours, evenings and weekends, to complete the project. On Friday, he will be working with the consultants to fix default permissions and network security rights to provide greater system protection.

In Mrs. Dawson's absence, Dr. Rovtar gave the report for Millington School. On January 30<sup>th</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students enjoyed a very successful International Day. Thank you to the parent volunteers who made this day such an enjoyable experience for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. On February 4<sup>th</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students participated in the annual Book Bowl Parade. All students read a book and then created a 3-D depiction of a scene from the book on a shoe box. Students also attached summaries of the book. The students paraded through the hallways to show off their "floats" in the parade. Report cards were sent home on February 6<sup>th</sup>. Assemblyman Jon Bramnick will be visiting on February 19<sup>th</sup> to talk to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students about government, particularly how bills become laws and how citizens can participate in the democratic process. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Nettune will speak to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students about the importance of proper oral hygiene. One of the Wizards basketball players visited Millington today. He was very well received by the students and generated great interest in the upcoming game on February 27<sup>th</sup>. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will travel to the Newark Museum to examine various works of art. Mrs. Dawson expressed her appreciation to FORCE for making this trip possible.

## **BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE**

Mr. Esposito stated that the Financial Disclosure Forms have been distributed to the board members. Please complete them and return them as soon as possible. Do not leave any areas on the form blank. Mr. Esposito indicated that he had received an inquiry from a neighboring district with regard to our subscription busing program. The second part of the state budget software was released late Friday afternoon. Mr. Esposito has been working to input all of the budget data so that the software program calculations can be run. The paperwork for the custodial/maintenance bid is still being reviewed by the attorney. Mr. Esposito said that he had been told that there might be misinformation circulating in the community with regard to the custodial/maintenance bid. Mr. Esposito said that the bid specifications call for the buildings to be open the same hours as we currently have. Community groups would be able to access the facilities they way they currently do. There would be no charges to the community groups, just as there are no charges now. The contractor would replicate the current services and in fact there

would be an increase in manpower over the current staffing levels. Our current costs for the salaries, benefits and supplies, etc. are \$1,000,000. If we award a contract, we would be transferring the responsibilities to the company. The savings to the district would be the difference between the million dollars and the bid amount the company submitted. There are still some operations and maintenance costs that would continue to remain in the district's budget, for repairs and other projects.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Gianakis had asked at the last meeting what the current cost of the custodial services was. Mr. Esposito indicated that the current cost of the services we would be replacing is \$1,000,000.

Mr. Gianakis asked about the Dibels testing and why parents were not informed of the results. Dr. Wetherell responded that the Dibels test is not an achievement test, it is a diagnostic test that is used to by the teachers to guide instruction. If there were concerns with the student's development of early literacy skills, that information could be communicated to the parent through the report card or through a parent conference.

Mrs. Gronske said that she was glad that Mr. Esposito cleared up the misinformation about the custodial bids. She asked whether the current employees could make a proposal regarding costs for services. Mr. Esposito explained that the savings come not only from the salaries and benefits but also from the purchasing power of the service providers who purchase supplies and materials in bulk for the various school districts they serve.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

- Accepted the minutes of the January 16, 2009 – Regular Meeting – Public and Private Sessions

### **Financials**

- Approved the List of Bills for February 2-9, 2009 for payment as follows (as attached):

Bill List for February, 2009	
Fund 10	\$
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 411,814.48
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ 5,149.00
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 22,911.06
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$
Total	\$ 439,874.54

- Certified that as of November 30, 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 November 30, 2008.

- Approved the transfers for November, 2008.

- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.

### **Special Education**

- Approved Cambridge Behavioral Health, LLC as a district provider and also for the provision of home instruction for student #999903. Home instruction will be provided to the student as follows:

20 hours of therapy per week at a range of \$65.00 - \$75.00 per hour

5 hours of consultation per week at \$110.00 per hour

Home instruction will begin January 26, 2009 and continue until an academic placement is found for this student.

- Approved the provision of home instruction for student #5986153941 for ten hours per week beginning February 9, 2009 and continuing until the end of the 2008/2009 school year.
- Approved payment to parents of student #3493945835 for VB/ABA behavior therapy. The student is to receive 10 sessions per month, 1 hour each session, at a cost of \$65.00 per session. Services to be provided by Child's Play Center for the period October 4, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

### **Personnel**

- Accepted, with regret, the resignation of Charles Hamma, from the position of maintenance man effective April 1, 2009.
- Approved the appointment of the following person to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2008-2009 school year:

Bonnie Perkins

### **Policy**

- Approve the first reading of the following policies:  
Policy 5141.21 Administering Medications

### **Other**

- Approved the following revisions to the 2008-2009 Scheduled Meeting Dates for the Long Hill Township Board of Education.
  - Cancellation of Regular Meeting on March 23, 2009
  - Addition of Meeting on March 30, 2008 – Public Hearing on 2009-2010 Budget
  - Cancellation of Worksession Meeting on April 20, 2009
- Approved the following Agreement between the Long Hill Township Board of Education and Paul Tiajolloff, district architect to complete and close out the 2004 referendum contract:
  - WHEREAS, on August 11, 2004, the Long Hill Township Board of Education ("Board") entered into an agreement with Paul K. Tiajolloff, Architect, LLC (the "Architect") for the performance of various architectural services for the Long Hill School District ("Project"); and
  - WHEREAS, a dispute arose as to the Board's obligation to provide the Architect with final payment for services under Invoice 08-06 and as to the Architect's obligation to close out the Project and to provide the Board with a completed design consultant certification ("Certification") which is required prior to the Board's receipt of payment from the State for the Project; and
  - WHEREAS, terms of settlement of said dispute have been agreed to by the parties and are premised on (i) the Board's payment of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500.00) as total final payment to the Architect (the "Final Payment") for the closing out of the Project; (ii) the Architect's release of the completed Certification to the Board; and (iii) the Board's processing the Certification and receiving final payment from the State for the Project; and
  - WHEREAS, the Board agrees to hold Final Payment in an escrow account held by Board's Counsel, pending (i) the Architect's release of the completed Certification to the Board; (ii) the Board's Business Administrator's transmittal of the Certification to the State; and (iii) final payment from the State to the Board; and
  - NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes and approves the sum of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500.00) as total Final Payment to the Architect for all services rendered; and
  - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board is authorized and directed, to escrow, with Board's Counsel, the \$3,500.00 Final Payment to the Architect to be held pending receipt of final payment from the State for the Project; and
  - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Board's Counsel is authorized to prepare all necessary documents to memorialize these settlement terms in writing.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Becker indicated that the consensus of the Board seemed to be that they would prefer to use the Long Hill-created form for the evaluation of the Superintendent. The goals information will be inserted and then the forms will be sent out to the Board.

Mrs. Nyquist stated that she still has not received information from all of the board members on which training programs they have attended.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Gianakis asked why the Board was providing at home therapy to students. Dr. Rovtar explained that this type of ABA therapy is required as per the student's IEP. There are instances when this type of at home therapy is deemed necessary by the Child Study Team. If it is included in the student's IEP, federal law requires that the district provide it.

Mrs. Kehoe asked what the date of the Reorganization meeting was. Dr. Rovtar said that it has been scheduled for April 27, 2009.

Mrs. Gronske stated that 60 of the faculty members have volunteered to play or participate in some way in the Wizards game on February 27<sup>th</sup>. The Central School cheerleaders will cheer and we will also have a group of students to perform the national anthem. It should be an exciting and fun community event.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

## **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

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.**