

BOARD BRIEF

Regular Meeting

September 8, 2008

AT THE September 8, 2008 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Negotiations Committee – Mr. Meringolo reported that a negotiations session was held with the Teamsters last Wednesday. He will report on the meeting in private session.

Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Dreyer reported that the committee met this evening prior to the Worksession. He distributed copies of the listing prepared by Mr. Schwartz which details the work that had been completed this summer. The no parking signage at Gillette and Central will be modified to provide for greater visibility. The principals indicated that there were some leaks from tropical storm Hanna this past weekend. Maintenance has been notified. The maintenance department is also getting the fields ready for the soccer season. Mr. Dreyer asked Mr. Schwartz to develop an Annual Maintenance Plan to list daily, weekly, monthly, seasonal and annual custodial and maintenance work that needs to be completed. A meeting will be set up with the new Recreation Director to review responsibilities and procedures with regard to use of the gyms.

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met prior to the Worksession meeting this evening. A change to the bill list was noted due to the inclusion of a duplicate payment. The correct total of the September 8th Bill List should be \$174,529.90.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Nyquist reported that the Policy Committee will be meeting tomorrow. She requested that the second reading of the Equipment Policy be held until after the committee review.

Transportation Task Force – Mrs. Scanlon reported that Lt. Kesselmeier indicated that the Department of Transportation will be out to measure the intersection at Long Hill Road/Basking Ridge Road/Church Road/Old Forge Road on Wednesday. It is expected that the stop signs to finalize the 5 way stop at that intersection will be installed by Friday. A crossing guard can then be posted at that intersection.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar reported thanked all of the staff: administrators, teachers, secretaries and custodian and maintenance personnel for their efforts in preparing the schools for the opening. Things have gone very smoothly. The district kicked off the school year with a very exciting inservice program at Watchung Hills Regional High School on September 2nd. The joint program with WHRHS and Watchung Borough featured Alan November as the keynote speaker. Teachers learned about exciting ways they can use technology in the classroom to enhance instruction. The final portion of the program focused on climate change and how students can and should be involved in trying to address this issue.

The subscription busing program is working well and the traffic flow at the schools is being managed well. The police have been very helpful in this regard. There are always a few glitches in busing during the first few weeks of school, but the problems are being resolved as quickly as possible.

In the absence of Mr. Blinder, Technology Supervisor, Dr. Rovtar indicated that all of the new servers have been installed, integrated and working well. All critical systems are functioning. All teacher computers have been set up at Gillette. Alex is working on the Central and Gillette library systems and the technology lab at Central. He is trying to get the remaining teacher computers up and running as quickly as possible. It is difficult when the technology department consists of just one person with some random volunteer help.

Dr. Rovtar indicated that the district's new website was launched over the summer. While parts of the site are still under construction, there is a growing amount of information available on the website. She thanked Mr. Meringolo for all of the technical assistance he has provided in getting the site up and running.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wetherell reported that there was a great deal of transition at Gillette School over the summer. Because the school was the site for the Extended School Year program, nine of the classrooms were not available for cleaning until mid-August. There were also 12 staff members who moved to new classrooms. She thanked the custodians for going above and beyond the call of duty. Their efforts were very impressive. Dr. Wetherell also thanked the police for their help with transportation issues. The parent volunteers who have been riding the buses are also greatly appreciated.

Thursday will be Patriot's Day at Gillette and all students are encouraged to wear red, white and blue. Back to School Night will be held on Monday, September 15th.

Letters have been sent to all teachers asking them to choose their committee assignments for the current school year.

ADMINISTRATORS AND TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR'S UPDATES

Mrs. Dawson reported that she met with the Millington School faculty on September 3rd. One of the building goals is to maintain the promise and excitement of that first day of school throughout the year. September 11th will be Red, White and Blue Day at Millington School. On September 15th and 16th grade level meetings will be held to review the Code of Conduct. Back to School Night will be held on Wednesday, September 17th. Grades 2 and 3 will begin at 5:45. Grades 4 and 5 will begin at 8:15.

Training on the new mathematics textbooks and materials for teachers of grades 3 through 5 will take place tomorrow.

School calendar information is being posted on the website. The school is trying to go paperless.

Recycling of paper and plastic is in full swing at Millington. The Bully Busting program will be implemented this year.

First round interviews for the second grade maternity leave position have been conducted. Candidates will be teaching a demo lesson this week. It is expected that a recommendation for appointment will be made at the September 22nd meeting.

Mrs. Dawson thanked Mr. Esposito, Mr. Schwartz and her staff for all of their help with transportation since school opened.

Mr. Cimino reported that Central School has had a very smooth start. He thanked the custodial staff for their efforts. Their work was complicated this summer by having to work around the various contractors that were in the building. The maintenance staff, teachers and secretaries all contributed to the great opening. He also thanked the volunteers who helped prepare mailings and upgrade computers. The drop off and pick up situation is working very well with one exception. Mr. Cimino indicated that he plans to speak to parents at Back to School Night to discourage them from parking up Central Avenue and having their children walk up to the cars. This causes students to cross the driveway where cars are entering for the carpool line and is a potentially dangerous situation. Since the car line moves quickly, there is no reason for parents not to come into the line to pick up their Central students. He thanked the police for their assistance with traffic, bus and pedestrian control.

Mr. Cimino indicated that a number of parents have asked why Horizon reading is not offered in 7th and 8th grade. He will be discussing this issue with the administration.

Back to School Night at Central will be held on Tuesday, September 16th at 7:00 P.M.

BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE

Mr. Esposito reported that he has been extremely busy over the last several weeks dealing with transportation issues. There were a few additional last minute bus subscribers. There were also a number of new enrollments that came in up until the day before school opened. At the present time, we have between 210 and 215 subscription riders. This represents approximately 52% of the eligible group of 400 students. The software we use is a DOS-based system that is very antiquated. He will be exploring a new software package for transportation to be included in the 2009-2010 budget. If there are any discrepancies with regard to the mileage calculations, Mr. Esposito indicated that he would review them individually. The revenue from subscription busing is approximately \$63,000. Mr. Esposito reminded everyone that the \$300.00 charged does not cover the full cost of providing the transportation. The actual cost per student is closer to \$600.00. While the board has generated this revenue, there have also been some unanticipated expenses this year. For example, a one-on-one aide needed to be hired for a

student at a salary of \$28,000. We also have two students who are currently being considered for out-of-district placements. Those tuition amounts were not included in the budget. It is doubtful, therefore, that the subscription busing money can be used to restore programs or purchase textbooks. In terms of consolidating routes, a new software package will facilitate this task for next year. This year we have at least 33 students assigned to each regular bus.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A parent, who resides near a busy intersection, requested that the Board of Education make an exception to the subscription busing policy to allow her three children, who attend St. Vincent’s School, to ride the bus without paying a fee.

Mrs. Becker responded that we cannot make exceptions to the policy, because if we made an exception for one family, we would have to make exceptions for many families. Mrs. Becker suggested that if the parent had a hardship, she should contact Mr. Esposito and Dr. Rovtar. Fees can be waived in cases where the family meets the criteria for free lunch. Payment plans can also be arranged.

RESOLUTIONS

Minutes

- Approved the following minutes of the Long Hill Township Board of Education
 August 18, 2008 – Board of Education Regular Meeting – Public & Private Sessions

Financials

- Approved the Payrolls for July 1, 15 and 30, 2008 and August 15, 2008 and the List of Bills for August 19-28, 2008 and September 8, 2008 for payment as follows:

Payroll for July 1, 15 and 30, 2008	
Fund 10	\$155,780.13
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$274,351.78
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$430,131.91

Payroll for August 15, 2008	
Fund 10	\$ 77,821.93
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$110,138.20
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$187,960.13

Bill List for August 19 to 28, 2008

Fund 10	\$ -0-
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$157,489.24
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$157,489.24

Payroll for September 8, 2008

Fund 10	\$ 850.00
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$173,679.90
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$174,529.90

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

Personnel

- Adjusted the salary for Lauren O'Donnell, Teacher Assistant at Gillette School, to reflect the fact that she possesses New Jersey Teacher Certification. In accordance with the contract between the Long Hill Education Association and the Long Hill Township Board of Education Ms. O'Donnell is entitled to receive a stipend of \$1,500.00. Total salary for 2008-2009 for Ms. O'Donnell will therefore be \$28,843.00.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2008-2009 school year:
Christine Brown
- Rescinded the appointment of Frank Donnelly, Teacher Assistant at Millington School, for the 2008-2009 school year.

Discussion

The Board discussed a fundraising request that came from a group associated with the Work Family Connection aftercare program at Central School. After brief discussion, it was decided that this matter would be referred to the Policy Committee for review. It is expected that the Policy Committee would make a recommendation for the September 22nd meeting.

Dates to Remember:

- September 22, 2008 – Regular Meeting – Gillette Board Office – 7:30 p.m.
- October 13, 2008 – Worksession – Gillette Board Office – 7:30 p.m.
- October 27, 2008 – Regular 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.**