

# **BOARD BRIEF**

## **Regular Meeting**

### **September 22, 2008**

AT THE September 22, 2008 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

#### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Dreyer reported that the committee met this evening prior to the Worksession. Patwood Roofing was out today repairing the gym roof leak at Central. The maintenance staff is working through the list of projects that need to be addressed at Gillette. The committee will be setting up a meeting with the Recreation Director to discuss facility use issues. Parts to repair the air conditioning unit in the server room are on order and will be installed as soon as they arrive. The committee also discussed whether the Board should have an energy management policy to address minimum and maximum temperatures for heating and cooling. Mrs. Nyquist suggested that this would probably best be handled through administrative procedures. Dr. Rovtar indicated that this would be discussed at the administrative level.

Negotiations Committee – Mr. Meringolo reported that the negotiations session scheduled with the Teamsters for September 10<sup>th</sup> was cancelled by the Teamsters. The next meeting is planned for September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met prior to the Worksession meeting this evening and reviewed the Bill Lists. The figures on the agenda are all correct. For the next meeting the Board Secretary and Treasurer's Reports will be presented for approval.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Nyquist reported that the Policy Committee met on September 16th. There is an addenda item this evening to delete three policies which are duplicates/outdated. The Board will be doing a second reading on the Equipment Policy this evening. At the next meeting the Policy Committee will probably be recommending a revised form to accompany the policy. The Committee also discussed the request that had been received to approve a fundraising activity for the fencing program at Central School which is run through the Work Family Connection After school program. The policy committee reviewed the Board's policy and determined that since this is not a school sanctioned activity and they are not requesting to do the fundraising on school property or through the schools, the Board does not have jurisdiction over this. The parents will be responsible for collecting any monies as it cannot run through the Central School Activity Account.

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

Dr. Rovtar presented a report on the District Enrollment for 2008-2009.

She stated there are two matters which she wished to report on this evening. The first deals with the 2008-2009 district enrollment. The state Budget Guidelines Document, which is promulgated annually, does not contain any state proscribed method for how districts are to prepare the enrollment projections that are included in Section A1 of the Advertised Budget. The state did certainly review and approve the enrollment projections as part of each annual budget that was reviewed and approved by the County Superintendent's Office – I know from first hand experience. I did these reviews and approvals for 41 districts for ten years. The County Superintendent has the authority to request that the projected enrollment numbers be revised if they feel that the numbers are unreasonable or do not appear to be in line with the district's enrollment trends. Built into the supporting documentation, which is a part of the budget review process, is a calculation of the reasonableness of the district's projection (a percentage range of allowable increase/decrease is used). This document is specifically reviewed by the Executive County Superintendent. The Executive County Superintendent accepted the enrollment projections submitted as part of Long Hill's 2008-2009 budget.

There is no formula that the state mandates that districts must use. Furthermore, the enrollment numbers themselves do not cause an increase in local property taxes. Local taxes rise due to increased appropriations – higher costs for salaries, benefits, special education services, transportation, energy and utilities, and educational supplies, materials and equipment.

Budget Enrollment Projections – looking at the actual numbers of students on roll in February 2008 when the 2008-2009 budget was prepared and the enrollment that was projected:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Actual Feb. 2008</b>	<b>Projected 2008-2009</b>	<b>Actual Sept. 2008</b>
SKIP/KIT	17		21
Kindergarten	94		78
1	104		96
2	116		111
3	113		118
4	122		111
5	117		121
6	141		115
7	121		135
8	116		118
Out of District	11		11
<b>TOTAL</b>	1072	1078	1035

We projected an in-district enrollment of 1078 students for September 2008. Our actual enrollment at the present time is 1,035 students or 43 less than projected. The reality of a smaller enrollment, however, is not that taxes were raised unnecessarily. The reality is that 43 students spread over 9 grade levels plus preschool would not have allowed us to reduce our current levels of staffing, given the class sizes ranges that the Board wishes to maintain to provide for an appropriate student/teacher ratio as stated in Board Policy.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Average Class Size</b>	<b>-1 Teacher Class Size</b>
8	118	5.25	22.5	27.8
7	135	5.5	24.5	30
6	115	5	23	28.75
5	121	6	20	24.2
4	111	5	22	27.75
3	118	5	23.5	29.5
2	111	5	22	27.75
1	96	5	19	24
K	78	5 sections (2.5 staff)	15	19.5
SKIP	*			
KIT	*			

- Enrollment in these specialized programs is limited by special education code.

The only grade level where teaching staff might possibly have been reduced is Kindergarten. Our P.M. sections of Kindergarten are small by anyone's definition. The assignment of AM and PM has for a long time been a function of where a family resides in town. The Kindergarten bus routes have been drawn up to accommodate this. The population distribution, however, is not equally spread between these two sections creating a sizeable difference in the class sizes for morning and afternoon Kindergarten. The reduction of a half-time position at the Kindergarten level would have generated approximately \$22,000 in savings. This savings would have been negated by the \$23,000 that it would have cost us to add an additional Kindergarten bus route. So while the classes are small, we are actually doing right by our students by spending on a teacher, with direct educational benefit, rather than a bus. The cost of mid-day transportation has always been a factor in this design. For 2009-2010 we need to take a hard look at whether changes can be made to better balance the class sizes while still having efficiencies in transporting our Kindergarten students. This will be done in conjunction with a thorough analysis of all of our bus routes as we consider revising, rebidding and reducing the overall number of routes in the district.

The second matter is an Open Public Records Act Complaint that was filed against the district.

A couple of weeks ago Mr. Esposito, as Custodian of Records for the district, received a complaint that was filed by Walter Luers on behalf of "Anonymous" challenging the practice that the district had been using of requiring that a separate Record Request Form be submitted for each document requested. The practice had been instituted largely to assist in the record keeping aspects of these OPRA requests. I believe, however, this practice is in violation of OPRA, so we have stopped it and now allow multiple documents to be requested on one form. When we received the complaint, we did submit a letter to the Government Records Council. The letter indicated that we had changed our practices and had supplied the information requested to the person who had made the OPRA request. We explained this to the Government Records Council with the hopes that the matter could be considered resolved. The complaint process does allow for mediation to resolve complaints. Late last week, Mr. Luers indicated that he does not intend to withdraw the complaint as in his words, "nothing protects us from a future change of policy by Long Hill, unless Long Hill is subject to an order from the GRC." I was really hoping to avoid wasting Mr. Esposito's time on this, but he now must go through the formal process of completing the Statement of Information and submitting it so that the complaint can be investigated by the Government Records Council. What a waste of valuable time and taxpayer money.

One additional matter that I wanted to address is the situation at Central with regard to workbooks and supplies. I have asked Mr. Cimino to speak to the Board on this topic. Mr. Cimino address the Board and explained that one of the teachers had misspoke at Back to School Night when she stated that workbooks were not being ordered because the Board couldn't afford it. Mr. Cimino indicated that while it was his responsibility to submit the orders, many things were not ordered at the end of the year for a variety of reasons. When the teachers returned in September, they were told to "red line" their budgets and to prioritize the things that they could not live without. The orders are now being processed. Workbooks are being photocopied until the new ones arrive. The Board discussed the ordering process with Mr. Cimino at length and stated that they hoped that procedures would be put in place to prevent this from reoccurring.

#### **BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE**

Mr. Esposito reported that the auditor was in to complete his onsite work last week. Things went very well and there are no major issues. He did indicate that the Board needs to build up its surplus. He will come to the December Board meeting to present the audit findings. Mr. Esposito is working on the development of specifications for bidding the custodial and maintenance services. On Thursday he will be attending a workshop on the new accountability regulations that is being presented by the Department of Education. This is "report season" for the New Jersey Department of Education with numerous reports being filed over the next month or so including the Application for State School Aid, the District Report of Transported Resident Students, and many others. The transportation issues have quieted down and things appear to be running fairly smoothly.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A parent representing the fencing program explained their fundraising request. She had arrived after the Board's discussion of this matter, so Ms. Becker explained that there was no need for Board approval of their fundraising activity. The parent asked how fencing might go about becoming a sanctioned sport in the district. Ms. Becker said a presentation would have to be made to the athletic director.

Mrs. Barbara asked why the questions to Mr. Cimino were done in public session as it seemed like he was being attacked. Ms. Becker explained that the topic of the purchase of school supplies does not meet the criteria for discussion in Executive Session. There is nothing of a legal or confidential nature that would permit it to be discussed in Executive Session.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **Minutes**

- Approved the following minutes of the Long Hill Township Board of Education  
September 8, 2008 – Board of Education Regular Meeting – Public & Private Sessions

### **Financials**

- Approved the Payrolls for August 29, 2008 and September 15, 2008 and the List of Bills for  
September 10-11, 2008 and September 17-22, 2008 for payment as follows:

#### **Payroll for August 29, 2008**

Fund 10	\$ 70,921.35
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 73,759.49
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$144,680.84

#### **Payroll for September 15, 2008**

Fund 10	\$ 23,390.48
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$425,967.27
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$449,357.75

#### **Bill List for September 10-11, 2008**

Fund 10	\$ -0-
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 63,975.00
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -0-
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$ 63,975.00

#### **Bill List for September 17-22, 2008**

Fund 10	\$ 150.67
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$293,857.84
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -0-
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 37,604.70
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -0-
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$331,613.21

- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.
- Acknowledged, with sincere appreciation, the receipt of a donation from F.O.R.C.E. in the amount of \$1,175.00, representing the profit from the circus carnival held in June 2008. The amount to be used to purchase needed textbooks.
- Approved a contract with the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District for Reading Recovery Training and Technical support for the 2008-2009 school year at an annual cost of \$700.00.
- Authorized the submission of the Fiscal Year 2009 No Child Left Behind Grant Application to the New Jersey Department of Education.

	Long Hill	St. Vincent's	Total
Title IIA	\$18,681	\$ 4,439	\$23,120
Title III	\$ 3,756		\$ 3,756
Title IV	\$ 1,399	\$ 334	\$ 4,780
Totals	\$23,836	\$ 4,773	\$28,609

Also approved the participation of the district in a Title III Consortium for the expenditure of the Title III grant funds in accordance with state regulation. The Warren Township School District shall serve as the LEA for the consortium.

- Authorized the submission of the Fiscal Year 2009 I.D.E.A. Grant Application to the New Jersey Department of Education.

	Long Hill	St. Vincent's	Total
Basic	\$220,133	\$ 20,478	\$240,611
Preschool	\$ 11,619		\$ 11,619
Totals	\$231,752	\$ 20,478	\$252,230

- Approved the transportation contract with MUJC for the following Regular Education bus routes in 2008-09:

ROUTE	DESTINATION	ANNUAL COST
917	Kindergarten	\$17,865.00
918	Kindergarten	\$17,865.00
919	Kindergarten	\$23,670.00
933	CSV-1 & GM-9	\$27,495.00
957	GM-7	\$28,921.50
967	GM-5 & CSV-5	\$44,122.50
981	CSV-4 & GM-1	\$41,085.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$201,024.00</b>

- Approved the transportation contract with MUJC for the following Special Education bus routes in 2008-09:

ROUTE	DESTINATION	ANNUAL COST	AIDE per diem
902	PG Chambers	\$21,397.43	\$63.56
906	ECLC	\$26,428.88	\$63.56
913	Midland	\$46,999.94	\$77.69
941	SKIP	\$79,672.50	\$127.13
954	Bright Beginnings	\$33,960.98	\$70.62
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$208,459.73</b>	

- Approved the transportation contract with MUJC for the following Special Education Extended Year bus routes in 2008-09:

ROUTE	DESTINATION	ANNUAL COST
901S	PG Chambers	\$5,319.63
903S	ECLC-Chatham	\$3,236.05
913S	Midland School	\$5,974.74
928S	Bright Begin.	\$5,004.04
931S	Gillette	\$17,017.50
942S	Gillette	\$12,206.25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$48,758.21</b>

- Approved the transportation contract with Dealman Enterprises for the following Regular Education bus routes in 2008-09:

ROUTE	-----Contract Number-----			ALL ROUTES
	01-01	CP2	02-01	
CSV2		\$20,957.05		\$20,957.05
CSV3	\$21,155.45			\$21,155.45
CSV6		\$20,831.38		\$20,831.38
CSV7		\$20,893.20		\$20,893.20
G/M2		\$21,264.08		\$21,264.08
G/M3	\$20,429.46			\$20,429.46
G/M4		\$21,387.71		\$21,387.71
G/M6	\$22,873.97			\$22,873.97
G/M8	\$21,318.60			\$21,318.60
G/M10			\$37,251.94	\$37,251.94
G/M11			\$31,243.56	\$31,243.56
G/M12			\$31,243.56	\$31,243.56
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$85,777.48</b>	<b>\$105,333.42</b>	<b>\$99,739.07</b>	<b>\$290,849.97</b>

## Special Education

- Approved a revised tuition rate for out-of-district student #2016245 to attend Cedar Hill School, Bernards Township School District. The extended year tuition rate is now \$10,997.62 and the regular year rate is \$69,885.00, for a total due of \$80,882.62. The increase is the result of a one-to-one aide that is required by the student's I.E.P.
- Approved Occupational Therapy services for student #999909. P.G. Chambers School will provide one 30-minute session per month, at the student's school, beginning September 2008 and ending December 2008. The cost is \$64.00 per session, and the total cost will not exceed \$256.00
- Approved the payment of \$2,100.00 to Learning Tree Multicultural/Multilingual Evaluation and Consulting, Inc. to conduct a bilingual psychological, learning and speech/language evaluation for Student #2130 to determine eligibility for special education classification.
- Approved the payment to the Morris Union Jointure Commission for Home Programmer-Teacher services. Student #999903 is to receive 6 sessions per week, 1 hour each session, at the cost of \$129.00 per session. Services will be provided for the 2008-2009 school year as set forth in the student's IEP. The cost for services for the 2008-2009 school year is not to exceed \$31,000.00.
- Approved Occupational and Physical Therapy sessions for student #2011827. Bright Beginnings will provide one 30-minute session of O.T. and one 60-minute session of P.T. per week at the student's school for the 2008-2009 school year. Total costs will not exceed \$4,733.00 (O.T. is \$1,591 and P.T, is \$3,182).
- Approved the provision of home instruction for student #4569003988. Home instruction to be provided by Mrs. T. Heide, Mrs. M. Aimette and Mrs. K. Flint, to total 10 hours per week, beginning September 15, 2008 until the student is able to return to school.
- Approved the field trips as listed below:

October 17, 2008	Wightman's Farm	SKIP – AM (7 or 8 students)
\$6.00 per person	Morristown, NJ	Ms. Wycko (+ 5 chaperones)
Parent paid		
October 17, 2008	Wightman's Farm	SKIP – PM (12 students)
\$6.00 per person	Morristown, NJ	Ms. Wycko (+4 chaperones)
Parent Paid		

## Personnel

- Approved the assignment of Isis Gonzales as a student teacher at Central Middle School from September through December, 2008. Ms. Gonzales will be assigned to Mr. Hockmeyer, Ms. McCoy and Mr. Salzer and will be teaching social studies at the sixth and eighth grade levels.
- Approved the appointment of Sarah Peterman as a Second Grade Teacher Leave Replacement for Kimberly Horincewich from October 6, 2008 through February 27, 2009 at the Step 1 BA Salary of \$42,595.00 prorated. Up to three additional days for transition purposes are also approved prior to the commencement of Mrs. Horincewich's leave.
- Approved a medical leave of absence for Terri Kordal, special education teacher at Central School, beginning October 1, 2008 through December 10, 2008 (leave may be shorter in length depending on doctor's clearance to return to work).
- Approved the appointment of Susan Stone as a teacher aide at Millington School for the period September 23 through June 30, 2009 at the Step 1 salary of \$27,343.00 prorated.

- Approved an increase in the hours for Donna Strock, teacher assistant at Millington School, from 3.35 hours daily to 4 hours daily effective September 4, 2008 through June 30, 2009.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2008-2009 school year:  
Nicole Toto

### **Policy**

- Approved the second reading of the following policy:  
3514 Equipment
- Approved the deletion of the following policies from the District Policy Manual:  
4116.1 Teacher Evaluation – dated February 22, 1988  
4116.1 AG Teacher Evaluation - dated October 22, 1979  
4116.2 Tenured Teacher Evaluation – dated October 22, 1979

### **Discussion**

Mrs. Nyquist questioned whether the Board had eliminated the traditional visit by Santa and the Spring Bunny as well as the Harvest Festival at Gillette School. Dr. Rovtar explained that these were administrative decisions made by the principal in consultation with the PTO representatives. The Harvest Festival will become a spring performance at the request of the teacher. A discussion as to whether these holiday celebrations should be discontinued took place. Dr. Rovtar indicated that she will discuss the issues with the administration. The position of the principal was not to eliminate classroom celebrations, just the special visits.

### **Dates to Remember:**

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.**