

BOARD BRIEF

Worksession Meeting

January 11, 2010

AT THE January 11, 2010 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to report.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met earlier this evening. There are no bills or financial reports on the agenda this evening. This evening the committee had an overview of the very preliminary budget for 2010-2011. Last year the district budget was \$14,143, 506. The budget represented a tax levy increase of 2.94% over the prior year. At the moment the preliminary budget reflects all of the requests that were submitted from all three buildings. The current increase is 8.61%. The state limits the tax increase to 4%, so the budget will need to be reduced to conform to state regulations. The total budget will decrease as the budget is fine-tuned in terms of staffing, materials, supplies, equipment and other operational expenses. The budget reflects increases in special education tuition and transportation as well as a lease/purchase expenditure to replace computers. The Finance Committee has been discussing goals for the budget. The Committee will once again do its best to balance the needs of the district and the desire to minimize the tax impact on our local residents. The budget is very much a work in progress at the moment. The committee will continue to meet to work on the budget and will update the Board as they go along.

Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Dreyer shared follow-up information on the situation with the chiller at Central School. There had been a price quote from Trane for \$21,000 to do the required work. Additional quotes were sought and a price of \$18,685.00 was obtained from Carrier. Quotes for preventative maintenance on the HVAC equipment at all three schools were also received. The annual cost will be \$9,308 for all three buildings.

Policy Committee – Mr. Carbone reported that we received our Policy Manual back from New Jersey School Boards Association. The wellness check indicated that we are in pretty good shape. The Policy Committee will be following up on the recommendations made. Mr. Carbone stated that Policy 3326 has been revised, this was one of the items noted, and is being recommended for a first reading this evening.

Board President – Mrs. Scanlon stated that she attended the F.O.R.C.E. meeting last week. The group discussed a number of fundraising ideas including hosting a Battle of the Bands, presenting A Taste of Long Hill and scheduling a Wizards basketball game again in 2011. Two grants were approved: one will fund an art field trip for the 5th grade to visit the Newark Museum, the second will fund half the cost of the district's participation in the Morris Union Jointure Commission's regional honors musical performance groups.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar officially welcomed Mr. Villar to his first Board meeting as Central Middle School Principal.

Dr. Rovtar stated that on January 6th, the team from the Morris County Executive Superintendent's office conducted their site visit in connection with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum monitoring. The team reviewed all five of the District Performance Review Checklists that had been completed by the district's QSAC committee. While the district will not receive our official approval letter from the Commissioner for a couple of months, the county office team did indicate that our score on each of the checklists was above 80% and therefore the Long Hill Township School District would be rated as a high performing district. This was definitely a team effort. Dr. Rovtar thanked the staff, the administrators and the board for all of their efforts over the past couple of years preparing for this review.

On the agenda this evening there is a resolution to authorize the district to execute a Memorandum of Understanding relative to our participation in New Jersey's application for Race to the Top grant funding through the U.S. Department of Education. It is unlikely that Long Hill would qualify for substantial funding under this

grant, since 50% of the funds are being targeted to Title I funds. The New Jersey Department of Education has included in their application that some of the funding would be used to develop curriculum materials, assessment tools and professional development activities. If eligible, the Long Hill Township School District would like to benefit from this initiative and to be able to utilize materials and/or data systems that would be created. Dr. Rovtar indicated that she is recommending that the Board approve the submission of the Memorandum of Understanding. The success of the state's application is tied to the level of local district support that is demonstrated.

To provide an update on the status of the 2009-2010 district goals, Dr. Rovtar stated that Mrs. Sepe attended a two-day workshop last week on the End of Course Algebra I test that our 8th grade algebra students will be taking in May. Dr. Rovtar will be meeting with Mrs. Sepe and Mr. Villar later this week to review the information that Mrs. Sepe obtained at the workshop. In terms of our second goal, it appears that we have passed QSAC monitoring, so that goal has been attained. The Special Education Long Range Plan is being prepared and Mrs. Yavelberg will be attending the February 8th Board meeting to discuss it.

ADMINISTRATORS AND TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR'S UPDATES

Mrs. Dawson stated that before the break, all of the students in grades 3 through 5 took the first Learnia benchmark assessment in language arts and math. Mr. Golub and Mrs. Furlong have been serving as Learnia Leaders and guiding the staff through the process. On January 18th, the Millington School teachers will have a workshop on the use of Learnia's Item Bank. This will allow teachers to construct their own assessments to test specific concepts by using test items that have been specifically developed by the testing company. The second benchmark assessment will be administered in March.

The second marking period will be ending on January 28th. Report cards will be issued on February 9th. On January 29th, Millington School will have International Day.

Mrs. Dawson made a presentation on her recommendation to departmentalize the instruction in fifth grade beginning in September 2010. Currently the fifth grade teachers teach every subject and have up to 70 students that they are responsible for through their teaching assignments. The fifth grade team has taken a look at how the scheduling might be improved to provide the best education possible for our students. The team is also interested in a structure that will enhance student achievement in all subject areas. The proposal has the following components:

- The schedule was developed to mirror the Millington School master schedule for other grades.
- Each core subject will be taught by one teacher. This will allow the teacher to prep for only one subject and be the specialist for that subject. This will help the fifth grade team better align instructional practices.
- This proposal will cause a change in mathematics instructional time in mathematics. Currently, 55 minutes is allotted for mathematics. The departmentalized plan will provide for 40 minutes of regular instruction. In addition, the schedule will include a 15 minute Math Lab period each day. The Math Lab will include short lessons on problem solving and NJASK review. Each fifth grade student would have Math Lab with their homeroom teacher at the end of each day.

The tentative schedule would be:

5th grade Plan 2010/2011

<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Class</u>
HR	8:45-9:00	HR
1	9:00-9:40	ACAD. I (HR and Per. 1 are the same class)
2	9:41-10:21	ACAD. II
3	10:22-11:02	ACAD. III

4	11:03-12:18	Specials Block (Specials/Health/Comp. Lab/etc.)
5	12:19-12:49	RECESS
6	12:50-1:20	LUNCH
7	1:22-2:02	ACAD. IV
8	2:03-2:43	ACAD. V
9	2:45-3:05	Math Lab in HR and Dismissal

Academics I-V represent math, writing, reading, science and social studies.

Possible Lunch and Recess Times:

Lunch	Recess
11:00-11:30	11:00-11:30
11:35-12:05	11:35-12:05
12:10-12:40	12:19-12:49 (Gr. 5)
12:50-1:20 (Gr. 5)	12:50-1:20

The Board discussed the proposal and Mrs. Dawson answered questions in terms of how the schedule would be structured. Mrs. Dawson stated that this is something that the fifth grade team has been discussing for a while. The Board has been interested in improving test scores, which this proposal should address. It will also help our fifth grade students with their transition to middle school. The Board was supportive of the proposal.

Mr. Villar thanked the Board for the terrific opportunity to be principal of Central Middle School. A good portion of his first six days in the district has been devoted to meeting with staff. He had asked teachers to schedule a 15 to 20 minute meeting with him. Most of these meetings have expanded to 30 to 40 minutes. During the meetings, Mr. Villar is able to find out about each employee's background and experience and their vision. It has given him a rich sense of what is happening in the classroom. He has met with 33 staff members to date. He has also spent time before and after school, at lunch and in the hallways getting to know the students.

The Geography Bee was held at Central last Friday. The social studies classes each select one winner. A school wide competition is then held and the winner, this year a 7th grader, then advances to the state level. This was a great opportunity for students to cheer on their peers in an academic, rather than athletic, setting.

Mr. Villar has been familiarizing himself with the Genesis System. On February 2nd, the Cogats will be administered to the 6th and 7th grade students. On January 12th in the evening, Watchung Hills Regional High School will be having a parent and student orientation meeting for Long Hill students who will be entering 9th grade next year.

Mr. Blinder reported that the Business FIOS is being installed at Millington School this week. The Department of Education has released the guidelines for the Technology Three Year Plan that we will need to submit in April. Mr. Blinder is continuing to pursue grant funding to assist with the acquisition of technology.

Dr. Rovtar stated that she is enjoying serving as the temporary building principal at Gillette School. The students are delightful and the staff is outstanding. There will be an author visit at Gillette School this Wednesday. Friday is Purple Day. Kindergarten registration for 2010-2011 is being held on January 20 and 21 from 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.

BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE

In Mr. Esposito's absence, Dr. Rovtar noted that the Board members have received the required Financial Disclosure Forms to complete. Kindly complete the forms and return them to Mr. Esposito as soon as possible. Information from New Jersey School Boards will be forthcoming shortly for school board candidate election. As soon as the information is received it will be shared with the incumbent board members whose terms are ending and will be available in the Board Office for citizens who would like to file a petition to run for a seat on the Board of Education.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Gianakis provided additional information on F.O.R.C.E. activities. The Battle of the Bands will probably be a series of performances by professional musicians instead of high school bands. The event will be held on June 6th from 1 to 7 P.M. at the Stirling Hotel. Registration for the spring F.O.R.C.E. classes is currently open. The Millington School Play is being directed by Mr. Rideout. There are over 100 students participating.

Mr. Gianakis noted the resolution on the agenda to increase the subscription busing fee for 2010-2011. Mrs. Scanlon noted that the increase is only \$25.00 compared with \$50.00 last year. The family maximum remains at \$800.00. It was noted that this increase will not cover the cost of the increases in the bus contracts for next year. When subscription busing was initiated, the intention was to decrease the Board's subsidy of this expense over time.

Mr. Gianakis asked if the Board will be making the decision as to which teachers will teach which subjects in 5th grade next year. Mrs. Scanlon responded that the specific assignments for the teachers would be an administrative, not a board of education, decision.

RESOLUTIONS

Minutes

- Accepted as presented the minutes of the December 14, 2009 – Worksession and Regular Meeting – Public and Private Sessions to be made part of the public record.

Financials

- Established the following fees for subscription busing for the 2010-2011 school year:

Individual student fee	\$375.00
Maximum fee per family	\$800.00
- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.

Personnel

- Approved an extension of the medical leave for Diane Dellureficio, Library Media Specialist at Millington School, from January 16, 2010 through February 26, 2010.
- Approved the extension of the appointment of Christine Brown as a Library Media Specialist Leave Replacement teacher at Millington School for the period January 15, 2010 through February 26, 2010 (or until Mrs. Delleruficio's return, if earlier than February 26th) at the Step 1 BA salary of \$43,945.00 prorated.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2009-2010 school year:

Melissa Haines	Lauren Smith
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Curriculum

- Approved the field trip as listed below:

May 6, 2010	First Grade Trip	Clinton, NJ
\$20.00 approx. cost *	Red Mill Museum	9 teachers/18 parents
Parent paid		

Policy

- Approved the policy listed below on a first reading:

Policy 3326 Payment for Goods and Services

Other

- Approved the following resolution to authorize the district's participation in the State of New Jersey's Race to the Top Initiative, if funded by the U.S. Department of Education:

RESOLVED that the Long Hill Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and Business Administrator approve the submission of the Memorandum of Understanding to participate in the New Jersey Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative.

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between New Jersey ("State") and The Long Hill Township School District ("Participating LEA"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top grant project.

I. SCOPE OF WORK

Exhibit I, the Preliminary Scope of Work, indicates which portions of the State's proposed reform plans ("State Plan") the Participating LEA is agreeing to implement. (Note that, in order to participate, the LEA must agree to implement all or significant portions of the State Plan.)

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING LEA RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the State in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top application, the Participating LEA subgrantee will:

- 1) Implement the LEA plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Actively participate in all relevant convenings, communities of practice, or other practice-sharing events that are organized or sponsored by the State or by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED");
- 3) Post to any website specified by the State or ED, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned or developed using funds associated with the Race to the Top grant;
- 4) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State or ED;
- 5) Be responsive to State or ED requests for information including those regarding the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered;
- 6) Participate in meetings and telephone conferences with the State to discuss (a) progress of the project, (b) potential dissemination of resulting non-proprietary products and lessons learned, (c) plans for subsequent years of the Race to the Top grant period, and (d) other matters related to the Race to the Top grant and associated plans.

B. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting Participating LEAs in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top application, the State grantee will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with and support the Participating LEA in carrying out the LEA Plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Timely distribute the LEA's portion of Race to the Top grant funds during the course of the project period and in accordance with the LEA Plan identified in Exhibit II and all applicable laws or regulations;
- 3) Provide feedback on the LEA's status updates, annual reports, any interim reports, and project plans and products; and
- 4) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The State and the Participating LEA will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the State and the Participating LEA will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU.
- 3) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the whole grant period.
- 4) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will negotiate in good faith to continue to achieve the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top grant, even when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating LEA, or when the LEA Plan requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE FOR LEA NON-PERFORMANCE

If the State determines that the LEA is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the State grantee will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include a collaborative process between the State and the LEA or any of the enforcement measures that are detailed in 34 CFR section 80.43, including putting the LEA on reimbursement payment status, temporarily withholding funds, or disallowing costs.

III. ASSURANCES

The Participating LEA hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Has all requisite power and authority to execute this MOU;
- 2) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all or significant portions of the State Plan;
- 3) Agrees to be a Participating LEA as defined in the application and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in the State Plan, if the State application is funded,
- 4) Will provide a Final Scope of Work to be attached to this MOU as Exhibit II only if the State's application is funded; will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe in Exhibit II the LEA's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures ("LEA Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I) and with the State Plan; and
- 5) Will comply with all of the terms of the Grant, the State's subgrant, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

IV. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, and in consultation with ED.

V. DURATION/TERMINATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a grant is received, ending upon the expiration of the grant project period, or upon written mutual agreement of the parties, whichever occurs first.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Scanlon reported that the regional presidents and vice presidents would be meeting next week. She will report at the next meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT**FUTURE MEETING DATES**

January 25, 2010 – Regular Meeting – Town Hall – 7:30 p.m.
February 8, 2010 – Workshop Meeting – Town Hall – 7:30 p.m.
February 22, 2010 – Regular Meeting – Town Hall – 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.**