

BOARD BRIEF

Regular Meeting

January 25, 2010

AT THE January 25, 2010 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Scanlon reported that she had received some comments from people viewing the broadcasts of our Board meetings. They indicated that sometimes it is difficult to hear what is being said. Mrs. Scanlon encouraged Board members to speak up and to speak directly into the microphone. Members of the public should also speak directly into the microphone at the podium. Mrs. Scanlon said she had also received some inquiries regarding the district not meeting the adequate yearly progress benchmark in mathematics at Millington School. Dr. Rovtar had provided a good explanation of the situation in the Friday Flyers a week ago. Mrs. Scanlon indicated that some people had asked her questions about the upcoming budget. She had explained that the budget was being developed and the district was awaiting information from the state.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met this evening. There are seven figures included in resolution number 2. All the figures are in line and recommended for approval. Items number 4 and 7, dealing with the acceptance of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's reports for the months of November and December, are also recommended for approval. The Committee also discussed the development of the 2010-2011 district budget which is scheduled to be voted on by the public on April 20th. Last year the proposed budget had an increase of 2.94%. The budget currently has an increase of 8.12%, but Mr. Esposito noted that this reflects all of the budget requests that were submitted by all three schools. In order to get down to the allowable 4% increase, approximately \$600,000 in spending will need to be cut. At the present time what we might expect to receive in state aid is unknown. It is likely that it will be less than the current year's amount. There are new special education costs in the budget for two students that are expected to be placed out of district next year. These costs have already been factored into the tentative budget.

Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Dreyer gave an update on the HVAC repairs at Central Middle School. He received an email from Mr. Salvatoriello, our Temco site manager, stating that the materials have been ordered and are being delivered. The work is scheduled to be done next week and will take three or four days to complete.

SPORT – Mr. Dreyer stated that he had attended a meeting of the executive committee of this organization a week ago. This group conducts fundraising activities to help support the athletic program at Central School. Dr. Rovtar and Mr. Villar also attended this meeting along with Mrs. Montani and Mrs. Cicalese. Mr. Villar was given an overview of the history and the mission of the group. There was an update on the group's application for 501 (c)(3) status, the group's contribution to the newly formed fencing program, and the annual contribution to help offset the pay to play fees for all sports. The group will hold an open meeting on Wednesday, January 27th at 7:30 p.m. in the Central School Library.

Technology Committee – Mr. Blocker reported that the Technology Committee met this morning. Mr. Blinder presented a demonstration of the Discovery Education website that the district is investigating as a source of video and curriculum materials for incorporation into lessons to supplement the curriculum. Teachers are exploring the site to determine if a subscription to the site would be worthwhile. The annual site license would cost between \$2,000 and \$4,000. The Business FIOS should be operational at Millington School within the next couple of weeks. Mr. Blinder has submitted a mini-grant application to the Provident Bank foundation. Mr. Blinder and Dr. Rovtar have begun work on the district Technology Plan for 2010-2013. Mr. Meringolo added that there are a number of web-based applications the district is using that are putting an increased demand on our Internet bandwidth. This is something that we need to consider as we make plans for the future.

Policy Committee – Mr. Carbone reported that Policy 3326 – Payment for Goods and Services is recommended for adoption on a second reading this evening. This policy was revised as per the finding of the QSAC Review Team. Also Policy 4112.8 – Nepotism has been revised again due to changes in the accountability regulations. The regulations were amended to allow a Board of Education to hire a relative of a Board Member or the Chief School Administrator after obtaining permission from the Executive County Superintendent when it can

be documented that there are no other qualified candidates for the position. The policy is recommended for approval on a first reading this evening.

Board President – Mrs. Scanlon reported that she had attended the PTO meeting last Wednesday. The candy sale fundraiser will start on February 2nd. The group is also considering having the students participate in a walk-a-thon as a fundraiser. Last year \$2,000 was raised through the Boxtops for Education program. This funding was earmarked for Gillette School and will be used to purchase an awning. The PTO is still searching for a chair of the Medieval Day program for the 6th grade. This program is held in May. The PTO approved a grant in the amount of \$2,080 to fund the participation of Central School students in the 9 consortium events. They will also be funding a water cooler and an ice machine for the Central School nurse's office. The regional President's Council met last week, but there were only 3 members in attendance due to schedule conflicts. The group discussed how policy development is handled in each of the districts. They also discussed possible changes that might occur with the new Governor in office. Mrs. Scanlon said that some districts are seeing increased retirements this year as some teachers fear there may be changes in the pension/retirement provisions under the new Governor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar stated that last Monday the faculty participated in a full day of inservice. There were a number of different sessions that took place. The Millington School teachers in grades 3 through 5 participated in an "item bank" training that will allow them to use the test item bank that Learnia provides to construct assessments and target various core content standards in language arts and mathematics. In preparation for the issuance of the first report cards of the year at Gillette School, the teachers received training on how to input grades and comments in the Genesis student information system. Teachers of first and second grade also were presented with an overview of the NJ PASS standardized test that will replace the use of the Metropolitan Achievement Test at those grade levels. Mr. Villar met with the Central School faculty to review a number of building-specific issues. In the afternoon the curriculum committees met. Most of the committees have begun the process of reviewing our district curriculum against the recently revised New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards to see if there are revisions or modifications that we need to make to our curriculum documents. The revised standards must be incorporated in our curriculum by September 2011. The language arts committee began the process of identifying new textbooks or other curriculum materials to be purchased in 2010-2011.

Dr. Rovtar also commented on the End of Course Algebra I test that our 8th grade Algebra students will be taking in May. Mrs. Sepe attended a two-day technical assistance conference on this test earlier this month. The test will once again be a field test this year, meaning that the scores for individual districts will not be reported to the media. The test was also field tested last year with less than stellar results. Part of the reason for the poor results may be because some of the test content is not completely aligned with the typical Algebra I curriculum. Dr. Rovtar indicated that she will be reviewing the test specifications with the other regional superintendents to see if modifications to the curriculum will be necessary based on the specific concepts to be tested. Long Hill's Algebra I curriculum mirrors the high school's Algebra I curriculum.

The Hope for Haiti Penny Drive conducted last week was very successful. The total received through today is \$1,400.00. Dr. Rovtar extended her appreciation to the staff of the Millington Savings Bank branch in Millington, and in particular Alex Lopez, for their assistance in the counting of over \$1,100. in coins.

Today was the first official day for Mrs. Jones in her role as Gillette School Principal/Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Dr. Rovtar reported that there is still a great deal of uncertainty with regard to development of the district budget for 2010-2011. Mr. Esposito will share additional details.

BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE

Mr. Esposito stated that this budget season will be significantly different from those in the past. In prior years, the Board has typically prepared a tentative budget and approved its submission at the second Board meeting in February to comply with the deadlines for districts requesting waivers. This year, Governor Christie will not be delivering his budget message until March 16th. The Department of Education has 48 hours following the budget message to deliver state aid figures to the local school districts. At this point, we do not know what to expect in

terms of state aid, but fear there might be a reduction of 5 or 10% over the present year aid. We will have a very tight timeframe to finalize the budget and have it ready for Board approval at the Board meeting on March 22nd. We may need to schedule another Board meeting for March 29th to hold the public hearing on the budget. Mr. Esposito stated that a calendar of budget submission and election dates has not yet been developed or released to school districts, so some of these dates may change when the Department of Education has finalized the timelines for district submission of budgets and their review by the Executive County Superintendent and County School Business Administrator. Mrs. Scanlon asked if there would be any Board members that would be unable to attend a meeting on March 29th, given that school is closed that week. There appeared to be enough members for a quorum. Dr. Rae expressed concern that we would hold a public hearing at a time when many families may be out of town. Dr. Rovtar explained that the election calendar dictates the specific week in which the public hearing may be held. Districts are not allowed to deviate from those dates. Mr. Esposito indicated that we are continuing to work on the budget and get the increase down while we wait for more direction and information from Trenton.

Mr. McCarthy asked if the Spending Growth Limitation Adjustments to the budget would continue to be available. Mr. Esposito responded that we have not yet received any information about it. If they are going to continue to have SGLAs, the only one that Long Hill would likely qualify for would be increased expenditures in special education. Mr. Esposito stated that Brian Foley, the health benefits consultant had been exploring other companies to see if we might be able to get lower rates, but the other companies were not able to compete with the State Health Benefit Plan premiums.

Mr. Esposito reminded the Board Members to turn in their financial disclosure forms as soon as possible if they have not already done so.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

RESOLUTIONS

Minutes

- Accepted as presented the minutes of the January 11, 2010 – Worksession Meeting – Public Session to be made part of the public record.

Financials

- Approved the Payrolls for December 15 and 23, 2009 and the List of Bills for December 10, 2009 and January 7, 12, 15 and 15, 2010 for payment as follows:

Payroll for December 15, 2009	
Fund 10	\$ 22,353.55
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 379,658.65
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 402,012.20

Payroll for December 23, 2009	
Fund 10	\$ 22,015.69
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 355,423.24
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 377,438.93

Bill List for December 10, 2009	
Fund 10	\$ -
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ -
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 199.99
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 199.99

Bill List for January 7, 2010	
Fund 10	\$ -
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ -
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 499.98
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 499.98

Bill List for January 12, 2010	
Fund 10	\$ -
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 114,950.68
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 114,950.68

Bill List for January 15, 2010	
Fund 10	\$ -
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ -
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ -
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ 462,440.00
Total	\$ 462,440.00

Bill List for January 25, 2010	
Fund 10	\$ -
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$ 349,295.59
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ -
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 40,567.99
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ -
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -
Total	\$ 389,863.58

- Certified that as of November 30, 2009 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 N.J.A.C. 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 Treasurer of School Funds for the month ending November 30, 2009.
- Approved the transfers for November 2009.
- Certified that as of December 31, 2009 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 N.J.A.C. 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 Treasurer of School Funds for the month ending December 31, 2009.
- Approved the transfers for December 31, 2009.
- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.

Special Education

- Approved the payment of \$650.00 to Dr. Vanna Amorapanth for a neuro-developmental evaluation for student 35690934210.

Personnel

- Approved a clarification to a resolution approved at the October 26, 2009 meeting. Home instruction for student #1487925374 will be provided on an as needed basis due to chronic illness by Lynn Kaplan at the contractual hourly rate of \$33.95.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2009-2010 school year:

Melissa Markowich

Curriculum

- Approved the departmentalization of the fifth grade instructional schedule beginning in the 2010-2011 school year.

Policy

- Adopted the policy listed below on a second reading:

Policy 3326 Payment for Goods and Services

- Approved the policy listed below on a first reading:

Policy 4112.8 Nepotism

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Rae commented that Mr. Hockmeyer, the boys' basketball coach, requires the students to wear a shirt and tie when they travel to away games. Dr. Rae said that this allows the students to make a very good impression. He said that the district may want to consider adopting a school uniform policy, as he believes it would have a positive effect on the social and academic climate. In discussions he has had with other parents, this suggestion has been positively received. There was a brief discussion on the topic. Dr. Rovtar commented that a policy change of this nature deserves to have input from the parents. The topic should be fully discussed in a public forum. Mr. Carbone stated that he has been supportive of this idea. It was suggested that this topic be referred to the Community Relations Committee for further discussion. The committee may want to create a survey on this subject to gather input from parents.

Mrs. Scanlon noted that there are three seats on the Board that will be up for election on April 20th. The terms of Mrs. Scanlon, Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Dreyer are expiring. Mr. Esposito noted that candidate petitions must be submitted no later than 4:00 on March 1st.

Dr. Rae asked about the status of the Special Education Long Range Plan. Dr. Rovtar stated that, as promised, Mrs. Yavelberg will present the first two years of the plan at the February 8th Board meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

FUTURE MEETING DATES

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.**