

BOARD BRIEF

Regular Meeting

October 13, 2008

AT THE October 13, 2008 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE BOARD TOOK ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS...

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Negotiations Committee – Mr. Meringolo reported that the committee had a met with the Teamsters on September 24th. He will be providing an update to the Board in Private Session this evening.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Nyquist reported that there are several policies on the agenda for a first reading this evening. The Policy Committee is also recommending revisions to the Business Administrator/Board Secretary Job Description. The changes to the job description are required by the new accountability regulations. School districts are now required to submit their requests for legal opinions in writing. The Board must limit the number of people who have authority to contact the Board Attorney directly. All inquiries of the Board Attorney will be logged by the Business Administrator and reconciled to bills received.

The equipment policy does not have any new language. What is being revised is the equipment use form that accompanies the policy.

Finance Committee – Mr. McCarthy reported that the Finance Committee met this evening prior to the Worksession meeting. They reviewed the Bills List and the figures contained in resolution 2 are correct. The Committee also reviewed the June 30th reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer.

Regional Presidents Council Meeting – Ms. Becker reported that the Regional Presidents Council met last week. It was an excellent meeting with a great deal of information shared. More importantly, relationships are being developed between the districts so that people are calling each other and requesting or sharing information, policies, programs, etc. A large number of topics were discussed at the meeting including homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, building projects, testing, transportation software, and preschool expansion. The next meeting of the group will be held in January.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Rovtar stated that today was a four hour day for the students to allow the district to have inservice time in the afternoon. The focus for today was to provide time and support for the teachers to enable them to work on their individual webpages on the Qscend site. It is expected that by the end of the week each teacher's page will be up and operational. Teachers are required to have very basic information at the present time. We hope to have them expand the information on their pages over time.

The administrators continue to work closely with the Long Hill Police Department on our emergency and crisis management plans. This month each of the schools will be conducting evacuation and lockdown drills.

Based on the budget analysis conducted at the end of September with Mr. Esposito, Dr. Rovtar put a freeze on spending in place effective October 2nd. She met with the faculty in each building last week to explain the district's current financial position. Over the first quarter of the fiscal year, the district experienced some large unanticipated expenses in the areas of special education and transportation. In order for us to manage the budget to ensure that the district does not overspend, the only purchase orders that will be approved going forward are for those items that are essential or critical in nature.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wetherell reported that the Dibels assessment has been administered to all of the 185 Kindergarten and first grade students. This is a tool used to measure early literacy skills. She indicated that the process was very meaningful and a tremendous amount of information was gathered in the 3 minutes that it takes to administer the assessment. The students will be assessed again in January/February and one last time in the spring. Assessment results will allow us to differentiate instruction and to measure growth in a student's reading skills.

The Futures testing is being conducted and the program will begin next week.

A SKIP/KIT parent meeting was held last week.

On Thursday there will be a Fire Safety program.

The first Curriculum Committee meetings of the year will be held on October 27th.

On October 22nd in the evening the first meeting of the Parents and Teachers of Exceptional Children group will meet. This group has been organized by Ms. Gans and Ms. Ragno.

Dr. Wetherell has organized a team to participate in the Walk for Autism that is being held in Cranford at 2:00 P.M. on October 26th. Over \$600.00 has been raised to date. Everyone is invited to participate or pledge your support. Details are available on the Gillette School webpage.

ADMINISTRATORS AND TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR'S UPDATES

Mr. Cimino reported that he has been working on getting all of the necessary telephone numbers in the system for the One Call emergency call system. He has also been working on gathering data for the October NJ SMART data submission.

This afternoon he made a presentation to the faculty in his building regarding aspects of the Qscend program.

He has been interviewing candidates to the leave replacement position for Mrs. Kordal. He hopes to have someone in place next week.

Ms. Salzer has agreed to serve as the Student Council advisor. Student Council elections will be held on October 22nd.

Mr. Gillespie has organized the social studies teachers to conduct a mock voter registration and election.

The Central School evacuation drill was conducted last week. The students were off the campus in four minutes. The police and faculty members have provided feedback to further improve the procedures in the future.

Last week Mr. Cimino attended a meeting of the regional middle school principals. A number of articulation issues were discussed at the meeting.

The administrators have participated in demonstrations of two student information system software products and have been discussing the pros and cons of both products. A new product must be selected as our current software (SASI) is being phased out.

Mrs. Dawson reported that she has presented the first lesson of the bullying busting curriculum to all of the classes. The teachers will be presenting the remaining five lessons in this curriculum.

There have been two PTO food days to date.

The annual fire safety presentations were held. The second and third grade students were taken outside for their presentation when the fire truck was on site. For the 4th and 5th grade students, fire company members came into the building to talk about fire safety in the home.

An evacuation drill will be held tomorrow at Millington School.

On October 23rd the Basic Skills teachers will be meeting with the other faculty members to review learning strategies and discuss the types of support that they can provide to the classroom teachers to address individual student needs.

One of the student teachers at Millington School has organized a mock election activity that the students will be participating in.

A focus of the professional development at Millington this year will be improving student writing. Teachers will be attending a series of workshops on NJASK and then sharing that information with the other faculty members.

Mr. Blinder was not able to attend the Board meeting this evening. In his absence, Dr. Rovtar indicated that there are seven remaining computers at Millington that need to be upgraded. Mr. Blinder hopes to have that work completed by the end of the week.

BOARD SECRETARY’S UPDATE

Mr. Esposito reported that tomorrow he will be attending the regional workshop on the changes to the Application for State School Aid that will be in place this year. On Friday he will be attending the training session for the Annual District Report of Transported Resident Students that will need to be submitted at the end of the month.

This morning we had a transportation problem in that one of the MUJC buses did not run its route. MUJC made a mistake and did not cover the route. Apparently there was some confusion as Long Hill was the only regional district in session today. We did remind them last week that we would be open today. MUJC apologized for their mistake.

Mr. Esposito reviewed the Insurance Consortium Summary Report. This joint effort to share services and save districts money on insurance premiums has been in existence since 1984. There are currently 19 member districts. The group is very active and runs programs and training sessions to increase safety, minimize risk and save money.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Barbara spoke on behalf of the Long Hill Education Association. She indicated that the association felt that some of the remarks about staff members, which were made by Board members at the last meeting, were inappropriate in that they were evaluative.

Dr. Rovtar indicated that the Board members were not conducting an evaluation of the staff members. They did express their opinions with regard to some decisions about programs that had been made.

Mrs. Barbara indicated that it was unfortunate that the discussions took place as the staff members were not present to defend themselves. She indicated that the LHEA just wanted to protect the rights of their members.

RESOLUTIONS

Minutes

- Approved the following minutes of the Long Hill Township Board of Education
September 22, 2008 – Board of Education Regular Meeting – Public Session

Financials

- Approved the List of Bills for September 24 through October 13, 2008 for payment as follows:

Fund 10	\$ 97.00
Current Expense-Fund 11	\$403,581.42
Capital Outlay-Fund 12	\$ 15,485.00
Special Revenue Fund-Fund 20	\$ 36,444.88
Capital Projects-Fund 30	\$ 45,261.29
Debt Services – Fund 40	\$ -0-
Total	\$500,869.59

- Certified that as of June 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 June 30, 2008.
- Approved the transfers for June 30, 2008.
- Approved the Travel/Conference registration for the staff indicated for professional improvement or development as per the attached listing.

Special Education

- Approved St. Clare's Hospital to provide tutorial services to any Long Hill Township student who is admitted to the hospital, once the Superintendent has granted approval. Services are authorized for one (1) hour per day at \$49.00 per hour for the 2008-2009 school year.
- Approved the provision of home instruction for student #3733120204. Home instruction will be provided by St. Clare's Hospital for one (1) hour per day at a rate of \$49.00 per hour at St. Clare's Hospital. Home instruction will begin September 24, 2008 and continue until the student has been discharged and returns to school.
- Approved the payment of \$420.00 to Stepping Stones to Communication, L.L.C. for speech therapy provided to student #2011827, as per student's IEP. Services were provided to the student in August, 2008: four (4) hours @ \$105.00 per hour at the Stepping Stones to Communication, L.L.C. office.
- Approved the payment of \$2,491.00 to the Morris Union Jointure Commission for the provision of ABA Home Program services which were provided to student #999903 as per the student's IEP. Services were provided during the month of August 2008 in lieu of an August out-of-district placement.
- Approved the payment of \$650.00 to Dr. Vanna Ampranath for a neuro-developmental evaluation for student #240. The evaluation of the student was completed on August 1, 2008 at the doctor's office.
- Approved the payment of \$5,728.44 to Somerset County Educational Services for transportation provided for student #999903 for the 2008 Extended School Year Program at the Phoenix Center.
- Approved the contract and payment to Occupational Therapy Consultants, Inc. for occupational and physical therapy services. Student #999906 is to receive occupational therapy one time per week for 30 minutes and physical therapy 2x per week for 30 minutes, at the cost of \$79.00 per session for 30 minutes or any part thereof and \$97.50 per session for more than 30 minutes and up to one hour of service. Services will be provided for the 2008/2009 school year as per the student's IEP. The cost for services is not to exceed \$7,060.00
- Approved the payment of \$784.99 to Phonak for the purchase of Micro MLxs hearing equipment for student #239 as per the student's IEP.
- Approved the payment of \$10,900.00 to CBVI (Commissioner for the Blind) for Level 3 services for student #2009795. Services will be provided for the 2008-2009 school year as per the student's IEP.

Personnel

- Approved the following appointments:

<u>Sport/activity</u>	<u>Advisor</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Newspaper advisor	Andrew Gillespie	\$1,751.23*
Student Council Advisor	Dan Salzer	\$1,751.23
Boys' Soccer Coach	Michael Lisbona	\$2,557.01*
Girls' Soccer Coach	Marco Freyre	\$2,557.01*

Yearbook Advisor	Guy Buffone	\$ 608.38*
	Kathryn Ralston	\$ 608.38*
Cross Country Coach	Maura Aimette	\$1,278.50*
	Charles Mott	\$1,278.50*
Booster Club	John Birkhead	\$ 875.61*
	Janet Shannon	\$ 875.61*
Orchestra/Band Advisor	Eileen Shanagher	\$1,700.35*
	John Birkhead	\$1,448.44*
Choral Director	John Birkhead	\$2,076.45*

*Stipends to be paid from existing activity account balances and/or pay to play/participate fees paid. Tiger Talk stipend funded by the Long Hill PTO.

- Approved the appointment of Kimberly Gordon as District Guidance Counselor for the period November 4, 2008 through June 30, 2009 at the Step 1 MA salary of \$45,395, prorated.
- Approved the appointment of the following people to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2008-2009 school year:

Lawrence Sullivan

Policy

- Approved the first reading of the revisions to the following policies:

3514	Equipment	
4116	Teacher Evaluation	
9126	Board Attorney	
9123/9124JD	Job Description - School Business	Administrator and Board Secretary

OTHER

- Adopted the following goals for the 2008-2009 school year:

Board Goals

- Create a Professional Development plan for the Board.
- Settle contract negotiations successfully.
- Improve community relations.
- Ensure successful implementation of subscription busing.

District Goals

- Continue to improve differentiated instruction for all students.
- Improve math program K-8.
- Provide more efficient and cost effective services for Special Education.
- Prepare for QSAC.

Discussion

Mrs. Nyquist stated that at the last meeting she had brought up the issue of the elimination of the visit from Santa and the Spring Bunny at Gillette School. She had been hearing from community residents that this had been a Board decision. She asked Dr. Wetherell to respond.

Dr. Wetherell indicated that it was not a Board decision, but rather an administrative decision that had been made. The decision was made because Santa and the Spring Bunny are not directly related to the curriculum. While school districts can teach about holidays, we are not able to celebrate them in

school. A visit from Santa where every child is expected to participate is not an appropriate activity for a public school. We need to be sensitive to those children who do not celebrate Christmas.

Mr. McCarthy stated that it was upsetting because this had been such a long standing tradition that seemed to work well.

Dr. Wetherell indicated that the students will still be able to enjoy a party in their classroom. Dr. Wetherell indicated that she had received support of this decision from both parents and teachers.

Dates to Remember:

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.**