

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
June 4, 2013

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on June 4, 2013 in the District Offices Board Room at the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President
Mr. Scott E. Congdon, Vice President
Ms. Irene Boyle
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis
Mr. William Oettinger
Mr. Mr. Mark Shubin
Mr. Anthony Sposato

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. Robert L. Copeland
Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan
Mrs. Barbara Markowitz
Dr. Geeta Heble
Mr. Anthony Devlin
Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Mike Morris

OTHERS: Approximately 45 persons from the public, staff and press

SECRETARY: Mrs. Jennifer Burns

SOLICITOR: Thomas J. Profy, IV, Esquire
Charles N. Sweet, Esquire

Mr. Webb announced that an Executive Session was held regarding contract and personnel issues.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Webb called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Webb requested those in attendance join in the salute to the flag.

3. Announcements

None

4. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Copeland advised the Board on the Following:

- Maple Point's House G Writing Portfolio Party.
- Neshaminy Students Participate in S.T.E.M. Events.

5. Public Comment

Virginia Hartsfield, Neshaminy teacher, resident of Radnor Township, voiced her support for the Family and Consumer Science program. She stated that she thinks the Board and Administration are not really informed about the importance of this program and she urged them to get better informed about how significant this program is to the students.

Barbara Johnson, retired Home Economics teacher, resident of Bensalem, expressed support for the teachers and students who do not want the FCS program eliminated. She said that Family and Consumer Science students need to develop hands-on skills and the program covers a large array of these important life skills, which help them to be productive and healthy members of society. Ms. Johnson stated that a decision to keep the FCS program is not only wise but also imperative.

Gabby Fonsten, student of Carl Sandburg Middle School, resident of Levittown, stated that she does not think it is fair to cancel the FCS program because it is fun for the students and they learn important skills in the class. She urged the Board to reconsider the decision.

Michael Gay, student of Carl Sandburg Middle School, resident of Levittown, said he supports the FCS program and does not want to see it cancelled. He said the students learn skills that they cannot learn in any other program.

Mark Fiore, realtor, resident of Levittown, said that in his opinion it is more prudent to fix or renovate the existing schools that Neshaminy has instead of building a new super school.

Angie Manning, New Jersey public school teacher, resident of Langhorne, thanked the Board members who attended the meetings with the PTO's on the subject of school consolidation. Ms. Manning said the parents and tax payers would like a referendum on the school consolidation subject.

L. Waskie, resident of Langhorne, said that she supports a referendum on the school consolidation subject.

Jim Jenca, retired, resident of Levittown, commented that he appreciates the hard work of the Board regarding the contract. He also urged the Board to put the school consolidation question to a referendum.

Stephen Pirritano, self-employed, Feasterville, applauded the Board and the community for the achievement of resolving the contract dispute. Mr. Pirritano said the new contract with the NFT will lead to a new way of administering the education for the benefit of the students going forward.

6. Items for Approval tonight

a) Motion: Approval of suspension (furlough) and demotion of staff

Mr. Webb read the following motion:

WHEREAS, The Board of School Directors directed the Superintendent, the Business Administrator and such other members of the School District's Administration team who the Superintendent deemed necessary to undertake various studies related to program requirements, staffing capacities and needs; and

WHEREAS, the School District Officials did conduct such studies and prepared for consideration by the Board, a plan detailing such findings and recommendations to these matters; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby concurs with the Superintendent's recommendations and authorizes the Superintendent to undertake such measures as are necessary and prudent in order to notify the Department of Public Instruction of the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the recommended courses of action and to undertake such other actions as are necessary to advance the purposes of this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of School Directors concurs with the recommendation of the Superintendent to curtail or alter the educational programs in the School District, which will affect a change in the School District's organization.

The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent of the School District to notify the Pennsylvania Department of Education of the reduction of professional staff to meet the circumstances outlined above.

Mr. Congdon seconded the motion.

Mr. Shubin asked for an explanation.

Mr. Copeland stated that this motion is a regular passage of the Board of Education.

The Board unanimously approved said motion by a vote of 8 ayes and zero nays. (Mr. Morris was not present.)

7. Items for Approval at the June 18th Public Board Meeting

a) Revised Board Policy

Dr. Rattigan advised the Board on the following Revised Board Policies.

- **Revised Policy #104 - Contracts and Bids**
- **Revised Policy #105 - Debate and Speaker's Time Limit**
- **Revised Policy #553 - Bullying/Cyberbullying**
- **Revised Policy #1000 - School Visitors**

Mr. Congdon asked if there was any change in times regarding Policy #105.

Dr. Rattigan stated that both public comment time allowance is 3 minutes.

Mrs. Cummings stated that public speakers will be called first according to resident or non-resident first.

Mr. Webb stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting the above revised policies will be agenda items.

b) Approval of State Mandate Food Price Increase

Mrs. Markowitz stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting there will be a motion made to approve the State Mandate Food Price increase.

c) Approval of New Bank Account for the Margaret Perry Still Scholarship

Mrs. Markowitz stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting there will be a motion presented for the approval for the New Bank Account for the Margaret Perry Still Scholarship.

d) Approval of Budgetary Increase for Federal & Other Programs (2012 - 2013)

Mrs. Markowitz stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting there will be a motion made for the approval of Budgetary Increase for Federal & Other Programs (2012 - 2013).

e) Facilities Professional Services/ Consultants for 2013 - 2014

Mrs. Markowitz stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting a motion will be made to approve the Facilities Professional Services/Consultants for 2013 - 2014.

f) Approval of Year End Budget Transfers

Mrs. Markowitz stated that the Year End Budget Transfers is a Board resolution that is approved every year under the current instructions of the Auditor General's Office.

g) 2013 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion Resolution

Mrs. Markowitz stated that at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting the 2013 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion Resolution will be voted on.

h) Local, State and National Contract Participation Authorization for 2013 - 2014

Mrs. Markowitz stated that the Local, State and National Contract Authorization of 2013 - 2014 will be an agenda item at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting.

i) Approval of Fund Balance Commitment for PSERS

Mrs. Markowitz stated that the Board must approve a motion before year end if any Fund Balance will be committed.

j) **Approval of the School Improvement Plan for Neshaminy High School**

Mr. Copeland stated that the approval of the School Improvement Plan for Neshaminy High School will be an agenda item.

k) **Bids/budgets transfers**

Mrs. Markowitz stated that there were no bids or budget transfers.

l) **Adoption of the 2013 - 2014 Final Operating Budget**

Mr. Copeland stated that Adoption of the 2013 - 2014 Final Operating Budget will be an agenda item at the June 18, 2013 Public Board Meeting.

8. Committee Reports

a) **Board Policies**

Ms. Boyle advised the Board that the Revised Board Policies will be voted on at the June 18th meeting. No further meetings are scheduled for this year.

b) **Educational Development**

Mr. Shubin informed the Board that at their last meeting, Act #82 was discussed, teacher effectiveness details on how teachers will be evaluated. Next meeting is on June 17th, at 7p.m.

c) **Finance/Facilities**

Mr. Webb advised the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for June 11th, and topics will consist of raising school lunches.

d) **IU Board**

Mrs. Cummings informed the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for June 18th.

e) **Education Foundation**

Mr. Copeland informed the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for next week.

f) **Technical School**

Mr. Morris was not present.

g) **Technology**

Mr. Shubin advised the Board that no further meetings are scheduled for the year.

h) **Ad Hoc Facility Use Update**

Mr. Oettinger stated that no further meetings are scheduled.

9. Public Comment

Stephen Pirritano, self-employed, resident of Feasterville, thanked Mr. Shubin, Dr. Rattigan and Dr. Heble, for a very informative Educational Development Committee meeting. Mr. Pirritano asked Mr. Copeland and Mr. Sweet if the new contract will address the areas of mandatory home access and a dress code for the certified staff.

Mark Fiore, realtor, resident of Levittown, continued his plea to the Board to have a referendum regarding the school consolidation issue. He said he thinks the parents and taxpayers should decide whether their children will attend a neighborhood school or be bused to another school out of their area.

10. Future Topics

Mr. Webb stated that the Tech School requested that each Board have three members on a committee instead of just one and he would like to add that as an agenda item to the June 18th, meeting.

11. Agenda Development for the June 18th, Public Board Meeting

None

12. Other Board Business

Mrs. Cummings asked Mr. Profy to comment on the specific details if a referendum was to occur regarding school consolidation, because the public often misunderstands what the referendum is about.

Mr. Profy said the procedure for a referendum would be concerning the financial details and not about what schools to close.

13. Board Comment

Mr. Oettinger asked if the June 11th meeting will include budget discussion.

Mr. Webb stated that it will depend on the information that Mr. Copeland has ready at the time, but it is a possibility.

Mr. Oettinger asked what the budget number is at this time.

Mrs. Markowitz stated that it was \$166 million in May, but the figures are not complete since changes have recently been made and the figures have decreased.

Mr. Webb stated that as in past practice, they have the fund balance to help balance the budget.

Mr. Copeland remarked that the Pennsylvania Department of Education so far has not changed the criteria of teacher evaluation and he thinks that home access should be universal. He agrees that a dress code for the certified staff is a necessity.

Mr. Sweet confirmed that a dress code is a Board Policy matter and not a contractual issue.

Mr. Webb said that a meeting is scheduled for June 13th at 7 p.m. regarding the new contract.

Mr. Copeland mentioned that graduation is Wednesday, June 12th with a rain date of June 13th. If graduation is moved to June 13th due to rain, the meeting will be held on June 14th.

14. Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. Webb moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Shubin seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Jennifer Burns
Board Secretary