

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
April 6, 2010

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on April 6, 2010 in the Harry M. Dengler, Jr. Performing Arts Center at the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis, Vice President
Ms. Irene Boyle
Mr. Scott E. Congdon
Mr. Richard M. Eccles
Mr. Mike Morris
Mr. William D. O'Connor
Mr. William Oettinger

ADMINISTRATORS:

Dr. Louis T. Muenker
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise
Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan
Dr. Geeta Heble
Mrs. Patricia Boylan

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mrs. Susan Cummings

OTHERS: Approximately 75 persons from the public, staff and press

SECRETARY: Mrs. Jennifer Burns

SOLICITOR: Thomas J. Profy, IV, Esquire

Mr. Webb announced that prior to the meeting an Executive Session was held regarding personnel and legal issues.

1. **Call to Order**

Mr. Webb called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

3. **Announcements**

None

4. **Public Comment**

Rich Miller, CPA in Industry, Langhorne, PA, requested a meeting with Dr. Muenker or Mr. Paradise to discuss in length the budget.

Mr. Webb replied that Dr. Muenker and Mr. Paradise will contact Mr. Miller in setting up a meeting regarding that issue. He also stated that there is a finance meeting, April 27th, which the public is welcome to attend.

Mark Shubin, Langhorne, PA, commended the Board members for the outstanding job that they do for the community. Mr. Shubin inquired about the Expired Contract Group Insurance Calculator under the Regular Education portion of the Budget. Mr. Shubin stated that he is concerned that this refers to a raise in the group insurance from \$10.7 million dollars to well over \$14 million dollars. Mr. Shubin further requested clarification on the contribution increase to the retirement fund. Additionally, he questioned the state property deduction in relationship to gaming. Mr. Shubin recommended to the Board that the use of graphics would be helpful to the public to understand the trends and where the costs are occurring.

Solis Basen, Langhorne, PA, commended that he was disappointed in the attendance of only four Board Members out of nine at a previous meeting. Mr. Basen made a recommendation to the Board to reconsider the suggestion of "Pay to Play" as a money saving step to the budget.

Larry Pastor, Business Executive and Chair of Taxpayers for a Fair Neshaminy Budget, Langhorne, PA, asked the Board where they stand on his former request to make a resolution to band teacher strikes. Mr. Pastor remarked about the last Board Meeting and how compelling some of the public comments were. He further went on to state that he is in agreement with the comments made to keep the programs in the schools. Mr. Pastor said that rather than cut the important programs necessary to the education for the students, that the Board has the power and ability to cut labor costs.

Steve Rodos, Villages of Flower Mills, Langhorne, PA, opened his comments by stating that he had a meeting with Mr. Paradise and his former questions were answered. Mr. Rodos urged the School Board to abandon any plans to discontinue kindergarten in the district. He also said that the School Board should eliminate the 28 items under consideration to reduce the budget. Mr. Rodos said that the primary consideration should not be a zero budget, but rather the education of the students. Mr. Rodos reminded the Board of his previous suggestions for increasing revenue; windmills, cell towers, solar panels, and teacher star programs at the holidays. Mr. Rodos suggested that the Board consider eliminating the fully paid healthcare for retirees and set up a program that extends salary increases for teachers at the top of their pay scale.

5. Items for Approval Tonight

- a) Overnight Trips – Dr. Rattigan
 - 1) April 11 – 14, 2010 – Neshaminy High School – FBLA State Competition – Hershey Lodge, Hershey, PA
 - 2) April 16 and 17, 2010 – Maple Point, Poquessing and Neshaminy High School – Future Problem Solving Program State Competition – Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center, Camp Hill, PA

Dr. Rattigan advised the Board that both trips are in April, therefore, would need approval tonight on said trips.

Mr. Webb stated that there was Board consensus for the approval of said trips.

6. Items for Approval at the April 20, 2010 Public Board Meeting

Dr. Muenker advised the Board that the following two items will be presented for approval at the April 20th, Public Board Meeting.

- a) BCIU #22 Special Education Contracted Services for 2010 - 11
- b) 2010 – 11 Bucks County Technical High School Budget

Mr. Webb inquired how last year's budget compares to the present budget.

Mr. Paradise replied that at this time last year the Board approved a total IU Neshaminy cost of \$7,876,000.00. He also stated that this year's budget is approximately \$24,000.00 more.

Mr. Eccles asked how many students are affected.

Dr. Muenker stated there are approximately 170 students.

Mr. Webb requested that a per student cost comparison be made available before the April 20th Public Board Meeting.

Mr. Webb stated that the BCIU #22 Special Education Contracted Services for 2010 – 11 and the 2010 – 2011 Bucks County Technical High School Budget will be an agenda item for the April 20th Public Board meeting.

c) Bids/Budget Transfers

Mr. Paradise informed the Board on the Budget Transfer Report, Working Copy 10-5, with two transactions. Mr. Paradise stated that Working Copy 10-5 will be an agenda item at the April 20th Public Board Meeting.

Mr. Webb stated that the Summer School Program for 2010 will be an agenda item at the April 20th Public Board Meeting.

Mr. Paradise informed the Board that there will be a motion on the agenda at the May Work Session asking for the approval of the proposed final budget according to Act 1 guidelines.

7. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Muenker advised the Board on the following:

- The Pennsylvania Music Education Association District 11 Bandfest was hosted by the Abington School District on March 26th.
- The Middle School's held their 2010 World Language International Dinner Night.
- Carl Sandburg will celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd by viewing the movie "Oceans" and taking part in a clean-up of their school's grounds.
- On Friday, April 23rd, Pearl S. Buck students will celebrate Earth Day with a trip to the United Artist Theater for a private screening of the Disney nature movie "Oceans."
- Pearl S. Buck students created 450 breakfasts for Aid for Friends.

Dr. Muenker awarded Paul Minotti with a certificate of recognition for professional commitment to keep management and technical skills updated.

8. Committee Reports

a) Board Policies

Ms. Boyle advised the Board that the next Board Policy Meeting will be held on April 28th at 6:30 p.m. They will be discussing infectious diseases and new policies about gangs.

b) Educational Development

Mr. O'Connor informed the Board that the next meeting will be held on April 19th at 6:30 p.m. at Maple Point Middle School.

c) Finance/Facilities

Mr. Webb informed the Board that the next meeting will be held on April 27th in the Board room. The Public is encouraged to attend.

d) IU Board

Mrs. Cummings was not present.

e) Education Foundation

Dr. Muenker advised the Board that the next meeting will be held on April 12th at 8:00 a.m. Congratulations went out to Sharon Dunn who was the winner of the Spring Raffle Basket.

f) Technical School

Mr. Koutsouradis informed the Board that the Technical School received an award from the State on scoring proficient or above on a recent exam. The committee also voted and passed the Tech School budget which will be brought back to Neshaminy at the end of the month. The Tech School graduation will be held on June 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sun National Bank Center, 81 Hamilton Avenue, New Jersey.

g) Technology

Mr. Congdon advised the Board that the next meeting will be held on April 27th at 6:00 p.m. prior to the finance meeting which is at 7:00 p.m.

9. Public Comment

None

10. Future Topics

None

11. Agenda Development for the April 20, 2010 Public Board Meeting

None

12. Other Board Business

Mr. O'Connor mentioned that anyone interested in attending the Educational Development Committee meeting it will be held on April 19th. In Response to an earlier public comment, Mr. O'Connor explained that the Board has discussed the program for computer education in the elementary classrooms. He explained that it is indeed a worthwhile program; however, it will take time and money. Mr. O'Connor inquired if there has been any feedback from the insurance broker regarding healthcare increase.

Dr. Muenker replied that a letter has been received advising the Board that the Broker is aware of the time table and a response is forthcoming.

Mr. O'Connor asked if there has been any movement on the 28 budget cut items.

Dr. Muenker responded that the items in question are in the packet handout and the Board has been asked to give feedback with regard to those items.

Mr. O'Connor asked for verification on several expenditures mentioned in the budget, which are textbook costs, new hardware and software, and two golf carts at the high school. Mr. O'Connor requested that Mr. Paradise speak to a recent rumor regarding possible \$2.5 million dollar revenue in the budget.

Mr. Paradise explained that there is \$200,000 additional money for basic education for the current year. He further explained that the \$2.2 million dollars that has been referred to as stimulus money that came with requirements that it be used over the next two years for special education. Mr. Paradise addressed the question on expired contract group insurance calculation stating that the Board offered a 15 % per co-pay of a less expensive insurance package for the staff. Given the fact that they do not have a contract with either group the Board is required to maintain the existing contract; therefore, it was required that \$6.1 million dollars was added back into the budget. He also stated that the Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System dictates the percentages to the school district that they must budget for each year. That percentage went up by 72% for this coming year. Half of the cost is reimbursed by the state of Pennsylvania and the other half is paid for by the local taxpayer. Mr. Paradise stated that gaming revenue is revenue neutral to the school district. For each dollar that comes into the school district goes out to the taxpayer as a form of a credit on their real estate tax bill.

13. Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. O'Connor moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Mr. Morris seconded same. Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Jennifer Burns
Board Secretary