

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
September 9, 2014

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on September 9, 2014 in the Harry M. Dengler, Jr., Performing Arts Center at the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Scott E. Congdon, President
Ms. Irene Boyle, Vice President
Mr. John Allen
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Mr. Mike Morris
Mr. Stephen Pirritano
Mr. Ron Rudy
Mr. Mark Shubin
Mr. Anthony Sposato

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. Robert L. Copeland
Mrs. Barbara Markowitz
Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger
Mr. Anthony Devlin
Dr. Gloria Hancock
Mr. Don Harm

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS: Approximately 50 persons from the public, staff and press

SECRETARY: Mrs. Jennifer Burns

SOLICITOR: John Torrente, Esquire

1. Call to Order

Mr. Congdon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Congdon 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:

- Start of the 2014-2015 school year off to a good start.

5. Public Comment

Ed Kern, retired, resident of Levittown, commented that the full-day kindergarten is an overwhelming success with 100 students over the projected enrollment. Mr. Kern suggested that this indicates that projected enrollments can change and the move of fifth graders to middle schools should be reconsidered. Mr. Kern asked the Board to have a referendum on the consolidation project.

Tim Sauritch, Neshaminy fifth grade teacher, asked the Board to reconsider the decision to close three Neshaminy elementary schools, build a super school, and move fifth graders to middle school. Mr. Sauritch maintains that consolidation will result in larger class sizes and less time for teachers to devote to students. Mr. Sauritch implored the public to take a stand and demand a change in state funding for education.

Cecelia Ridge, Neshaminy bus driver, resident of Middletown Township, stated that the bus drivers are devoted to their jobs and to the district that they serve. She asked the Board not to subcontract the support staff jobs.

6. Items for Approval Tonight

a) Approval of request for Sunday Facility Usage at Neshaminy High School/Black Box Theater by Catalyst Prep for September 28, 2014

Mr. Copeland informed the Board on the request for Sunday Usage at Neshaminy High School/Black Box Theater by Catalyst Prep for September 28, 2014.

b) Approval of request for Sunday Field/Parking Lot Usage at Lower Southampton Elementary School by the Bucks County Soap Box Derby for September 21, 2014

Mr. Copeland informed the Board on the request for Sunday field/parking lot usage at Lower Southampton Elementary School by the Bucks County Soap Box Derby for September 21, 2014.

c) Overnight Trips

Mr. Harm submitted the following trips for approval:

1. Neshaminy High School to Pennsylvania Association of Student Council's Yearly State Conference in Altoona, PA - November 6, 7, 8, 2014.

Mr. Congdon made a motion to approve item 6, a, b, and c.

Mr. Allen seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved above by a vote of 9 ayes, and 0 nays.

7. Items for Approval at the September 23rd Public Board Meeting

Mr. Copland informed the Board on the following items:

a) Election of PSBA Officers

b) Alternative Programming

c) School Based Services from Outside Providers

d) Confidential Agreements

Mr. Congdon stated that items 7, a, b, c, and d will be agenda items at the September 23rd, Public Board Meeting.

8. Committee Reports

a) Board Polices

Ms. Boyle stated to the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for September 30th, at 6:30 p.m.

b) Educational Development

Ms. Boyle stated to the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for September 16th, at 6:30 p.m.

c) Finance/Facilities

Mr. Congdon advised the Board that there is no date set as of yet.

d) IU Board

Mrs. Cummings advised the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for September 16th.

e) Neshaminy Education Foundation

Mr. Shubin advised the Board that at the last meeting discussions included a Phillies 50/50 Program and also an Eagles 50/50 raffle basket.

f) **Technical School**

Mr. Morris stated to the Board that at the last meeting discussions included improving programs.

g) **Technology**

Mr. Shubin informed the Board that the next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

h) **Facilities Ad Hoc Committee**

Mr. Pirritano announced that the next meeting is scheduled for September 17th, at 7:00 p.m., and representatives from Reynolds Constructions Managers and Spieziele will attend. A presentation on current rate structures and the market conditions as they exist will be given.

i) **Legislative**

Mr. Shubin stated to the Board that no meeting has been scheduled.

9. Public Comment

Scott Brigham, Neshaminy bus driver, resident of Langhorne, declared that the rumor that there is a work slowdown by the Neshaminy bus drivers is absolutely false. He stated that the bus drivers do not want to lose their jobs and they would never consider a work slowdown as a means of protest.

Kathy McMurchy, Neshaminy bus driver, said the bus drivers love their jobs and they do their very best to perform efficiently and safely.

10. Future Topics

None.

11. Board Comment

Mr. Shubin said the tough decision must be made by the Board because it is the responsible thing to do. He agreed that if there was sufficient funding it would not be necessary to consolidate and close neighborhood schools, but, unfortunately, there is not ample educational funding. Mr. Shubin also clarified that he did not make any accusations about a work slowdown; he only stated that the allegation is being looked into.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Torrente read the following motion:

WHEREAS, student, J.K., has been the subject of disciplinary proceedings in the Neshaminy School District.

WHEREAS, a formal expulsion hearing occurred on August 27, 2014, before a disciplinary committee of the School Board.

WHEREAS, the Administration, student, J.K., the natural guardians of student, J.K., and council have reached an agreement for recommended discipline, subject to the approval of this Board of Directors, and have requested that this matter be remanded to the Administration for disposition and;

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the request for the joint remand of the matter to the Administration for further consideration and recommendation for disciplinary action.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy School Board of Directors approve the request of a joint remand of the matter to the Administration for further consideration and recommendation for disciplinary action.

Mr. Rudy seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved the above by a vote of 9 ayes, and 0 nays.

Mr. Sposato mentioned that any member of the public that has questions or concerns about consolidation or moving fifth graders to middle school should come to the committee meetings. He said the Educational Development Committee meetings would be an excellent example of the proper forum to voice concerns about these issues. He also remarked that a decision has not been made regarding moving fifth graders to middle school; however, the Board must consider all options in order to do their job properly.

Mrs. Cummings asked when the agenda will be posted for the Policy Committee meetings.

Ms. Boyle said it should be posted approximately one week prior to the meetings.

Mr. Morris said that he does not believe that there is an active work slowdown being carried out; however, should anything such as this occur it will be dealt with promptly.

Mr. Pirritano informed the public that there is a new parent volunteer policy for elementary schools and the information regarding the policy will be posted on the school's website.

Ms. Boyle thanked the Neshaminy bus drivers for their comments and pertinent information that was provided.

12. Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. Congdon moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Allen seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Congdon adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Jennifer Burns
Board Secretary