

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
May 22, 2012

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on May 22, 2012, in the Harry M. Dengler, Jr., Performing Arts Center at Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Ritchie Webb, President  
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis, Vice President  
Mr. Scott Congdon  
Mrs. Susan Cummings  
Mr. Mike Morris  
Mr. William Oettinger  
Mr. Anthony Sposato

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Dr. Louis T. Muenker  
Mrs. Barbara Markowitz  
Mrs. Therese Hinterberger  
Mr. Anthony Devlin  
Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan  
Dr. Geeta Heble

**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:**

Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mr. Mark Shubin  
\*Mrs. Cummings left at 8:10 p.m.

**OTHERS:** Approximately 125 persons from the public, staff and press

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Jennifer Burns

**SOLICITOR:** Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire  
Charles N. Sweet, Esquire

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Mr. Webb announced that prior to the meeting an Executive Session was held where legal issues were discussed.

**Call to Order**

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

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Announcements**

Birthday wishes went out to Mr. Koutsouradis.

**Superintendent's Report**

- Dr. Muenker continued his presentation of the Possible Cost Savings Measures for the 2012- 2013 Budget.
- Middle school activities finishing up this week.
- Graduation date is scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Last day of school for students is June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Possible strike before the end of school year.
- Thanked the administration and teachers who made the Senior Prom a very successful evening.

**Public Comment**

Angie Manning, New Jersey school teacher, Langhorne, remarked that other area teachers unions are giving back in order to help their struggling school districts and she wonders why the NFT cannot follow this example. She asked the NFT to contribute 8% towards their benefits for a period of one year or until their contract is settled, stating that this will save the district \$1 million. Ms. Manning said this savings could possibly save a program such as TLC. She said another alternative would be for the NFT to agree to a pay cut equaling the 8% benefit contribution. Ms. Manning challenged the NFT to live up to the examples of other teachers unions and

make one concession that could save the jobs of some of their members as well as save educational programs for the sake of the children.

Debbie Vossah, educator, Bensalem stated that it is unclear to her why the Board has chosen the program for the most needy and vulnerable students to cut. She also said she does not know why the Board would not first choose to outsource non academic programs before cutting any programs. Ms. Vossah said that TLC should never be considered for cutting because it is too important. She said the parents have been fighting for their children for a long time and they are uniting and standing together in this battle to save TLC. Ms. Vossah said the Board has prevented Joanne Holland, principal at TLC, from sharing her budget ideas.

Marianne Fein, property manager, Hulmeville, said she has a 16 year old son who attends TLC. Ms. Fein said that she thinks it would be wiser to cut other programs that are less important than cutting TLC.

Kathy Roosa, mother of Neshaminy students, Langhorne, said she is against the proposal to cut the team approach and IOP at the middle schools. She said that Neshaminy's platform that is scheduled to be eliminated is the very platform that has been found by researchers to be the best approach for educating middle school age children.

Charles Alfonso, semi-retired business executive, Middletown, commented that the model for a school superintendent is a high degree and an education background. He stated that our country, our state and our school district has been descending in educational ranking over the past 40 years. Mr. Alfonso said that Neshaminy needs a creative and out-of-the-box visionary as school superintendent to turn this self-destructive direction that we are headed around.

Sharon Bremser, Feasterville, homemaker, read a note from her son, William Hadley, who attends TLC. Mr. Hadley expressed his feelings about TLC and asked the Board to keep it open. Ms. Bremser implored the Board to keep TLC open for the children and all those who will benefit from it in the future.

Deb Daughterman, homemaker, Langhorne asked the Board to explain how the elimination of IOP from the middle schools would save money. She added that changing the model of the middle schools does not seem logical because so many students will be affected on so many levels.

Stephen Pirritano, Feasterville, self-employed, remarked that he would rather support the "Pay to Play" proposal than to see educational programs cut. Mr. Pirritano stated that if parents are asked to provide funds in order for their children to participate in extra-curricular activities, then there must be a reduction in the co-curricular salaries as well. Mr. Pirritano also said the district must look into consolidating buildings in an effort to save money.

Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, retired, commented that closing TLC would be a huge mistake. He invited the Board members to visit TLC and see for themselves the remarkable achievements of the program. Mr. Rodos reminded the Board that he is still waiting for an update on the search for a new superintendent. Mr. Rodos also stated that the arbitrator's report is a good starting point to negotiate at the next meeting and both sides need to make concessions.

Larry Pastor, business executive, Middletown, declared that the NFT leadership is the voices and faces of all that has gone wrong in Neshaminy due to greed. He said they are already in the top 5% of wage earners and yet they want more and more, while educational programs are cut. Mr. Pastor suggested that those who oppose closing TLC or oppose any program cut should not plead to the School Board; they should go to Louise Boyd and the NFT leadership because they are the ones who are responsible for the cuts. Mr. Pastor said he would like to see who is being considered for the school superintendent position and he would not like to see a current member of the NFT or current employee of the district as a candidate. He said he would also support a business person rather than a pure academic candidate.

Amy Heilig, Neshaminy middle school teacher, Central Bucks County, voiced her concern for the proposed change in the middle school model. She said children will lose 50 minutes of instruction per day if this program ends. She implored the Board to rethink this matter.

Deanna Zigman, sophomore at TLC, Langhorne, said that the education of the students at TLC is as important as other students' education. Ms. Zigman said the staff is so caring and helpful and are good role models for the students. She said the students and parents of TLC will continue to fight to keep the program. She also implored the Board to keep the Sanctuary Room open.

Andrea Bernek, business manager, Langhorne, said her daughter has benefited greatly by attending TLC. She said that while her daughter was struggling in the mainstream school none of her teachers reached out or offered any encouragement or assistance. In contrast, the teachers at TLC have been caring, kind and supportive. Ms. Bernek concluded by saying TLC is a source of pride for the Neshaminy School District and this should not be lost.

Abby Sylvester, senior at TLC, Feasterville, said TLC has saved her life. She said all the students are fighting for the program. She asked the Board to listen to all the voices in support of TLC and not to close the program.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Burns presented the minutes of April 25, 2012 and May 8, 2012. Upon motion of Mrs. Cummings and seconded by Mr. Koutsouradis the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the April 25, 2012 and May 8, 2012 Board Meeting Minutes. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

#### **Approval of Treasurer's Report, Check Register, and Exonerations of Personal and Per Capita Tax**

Mrs. Markowitz presented the following for approval:

- April, 2012 Treasurer's Report, subject to audit
- Check Register - April, 2012
- Personal and per capita tax exonerations for April, 2012

#### **Bids**

Mrs. Markowitz presented the following bid. Information was presented prior to the meeting.

#### **Bid No. 13-14 Bituminous Concrete Paving Resurfacing & Repair @ Neshaminy High School**

**Amount:** \$97,067.00

**Bid Description:** Repaving of student parking area which includes 11,366 SY on High School Campus. This project was budgeted at \$120, 00.00.

Mr. Koutsouradis moved the April, 2012 Treasurer's Report be approved, subject to audit, Check Register for April, 2012, and the Personal and Per Capita Tax Exonerations for April, 2012 and Bid No. 13-14 be approved. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Morris asked if the \$1.3 million Blue Cross Blue Shield was for the entire district.

Mrs. Markowitz responded yes.

Mr. Morris stated that for the certified staff PC15 \$884,682.62, certified staff retired \$251,558.45.

Mrs. Markowitz responded that is correct.

Mr. Morris stated Keystone certified staff active and retired \$94,000; United Concordia certified staff \$2,300; vision certified staff \$1,200; and the opt out \$118,000.

Mrs. Markowitz stated that is correct.

The Board unanimously approved said reports. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Certified and Support Personnel Actions**

Dr. Muenker presented the following for approval:

- Resignations and Leaves of Absence – Certified Personnel
- Elections – Support Personnel
- Sabbatical Leaves – Certified Personnel

Dr. Muenker recommended the approval of the personnel report for certified and support personnel.

Mr. Oettinger moved that the Certified and Support Personnel Reports be approved. Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said reports. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: Appointment of Treasurer**

Mr. Koutsouradis presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, each year during the month of May the Board must elect a Treasurer to serve for the year beginning July 1, 2012.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Barbara Markowitz, Acting Business Administrator, be appointed Treasurer of the Neshaminy Board of School Directors for the above term, beginning July 1, 2012.

Mr. Congdon seconded the motion.

Mr. Webb stated that Mrs. Markowitz will receive no compensation for Appointment of Treasurer.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: Real Estate Tax Universal Installment Payment Plan**

Mr. Congdon presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Taxpayer Relief Act, 53 P.S. § 6926.1502 requires that the Board of School Directors adopt an Installment Payment Plan of real estate taxes for Small Business owners; and

WHEREAS, the Facilities and Finance Committee has discussed and reviewed the attached installment program which conforms with the requirements of Act 53 P.S. § 6926.1502.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approve the program as provided on the attached document, effective July 1, 2012.

Mr. Oettinger seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: Approval of Special Education Contracted Services for 2012 - 2013**

Mrs. Cummings presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy School District is required by law to provide special education and related services to children from pre-school through age twenty-one; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of our students have severe mental and physical disabilities for which we do not operate programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the contract for special education services with Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 for the 2012 - 13 school year.

Mr. Koutsouradis seconded the motion.

Mr. Webb stated that Dr. Muenker and staff brought the cost down about \$900,000; but the cost remains high at \$10,775,862.

Mr. Webb requested a roll call. The roll call tally indicated that the motion passed by a vote of seven ayes, (Mr. Webb, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Morris, Mr. Oettinger, and Mr. Sposato) and zero nays. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: 2012 - 2013 Bucks County Technical High School Budget**

Mr. Koutsouradis presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, in order to provide technical high school education for our students, six Lower Bucks County School Districts cooperatively established the Bucks County Technical High School; and

WHEREAS, each participating school district must annually approve the Technical High School's annual budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors approves the 2012-13 Bucks County Technical High School budget in the total amount of \$22,294,157 with the Neshaminy School District 2012-13 net fiscal payment to be \$3,626,097.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

Mr. Webb requested a roll call. The roll call tally indicated that the motion passed by a vote of seven ayes, (Mr. Webb, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Congdon, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Morris, Mr. Oettinger, and Mr. Sposato) and zero nays. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: Approval To Use Pennsylvania School District Liquid Asset Fund (PSDLAF) As Main Depository**

Mr. Webb presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the School District has requested RFP's (Requests for Proposals) from all area banking institutions since Citizens Bank notified the District that they are eliminating the government banking division; and

WHEREAS, the district received a total of four proposals, which were subsequently submitted to and reviewed by the Business Office and the Board Finance and Facilities Committee; and

WHEREAS, it was the final recommendation of all involved that the most advantageous proposal was received from PSDLAF.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of School Directors approve the move of our main depository accounts to PSDLAF, and that the Officers of the Board and the Acting Business Administrator be authorized to sign all documents to execute the transfer at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

Mr. Congdon asked if this fund is part of another bank.

Mrs. Markowitz stated that it is in accordance with PNC but handled through PSDLAF.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

**Motion: Dell Leasing Service Agreement**

Mr. Oettinger presented the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Neshaminy Board of School Directors has approved a "Technology Advance Purchase Plan"; and

WHEREAS, a portion of the equipment purchases are products manufactured by Dell Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the District has reviewed and discussed the second phase of the Technology District Refresh Plan at Board Technology Committee meetings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors authorizes the Solicitor and the Acting Business Administrator to finalize the terms and conditions of the Dell Financial Services Master Lease Agreement for upgrading the computer refresh plan; and for the School District to enter into an agreement with Dell Financial Services.

Mrs. Cummings seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. (Ms. Boyle and Mr. Shubin were not present.)

To: Board Technology Committee  
From: Kathy Christie, Director of Technology  
Date: May 10, 2012  
Subject: Computer Refresh Technology Plan

In 2006/2007 school year the district entered into a lease with Cisco and Dell for the upgrading of hardware to increase the availability of the network and expand the growing demand of storage and access. Staff/Students computers were also replaced.

At this time we will enter into a lease with the preferred choice of Dell Lease services. Although other leasing companies were considered, we have come to the conclusion that Dell offers more substantial value added services than the other lease companies. Dell's lease rates were lower than the other companies, and we will be taking advantage of Dell's value added features during implementation and imaging.

Funds have been in place for the anticipated computer refresh. No additional funding will be required.

Timelines are extremely important to adhere to in order to make a successful transition for end-users in the 2012/2013 school year. Therefore, I am requesting Board approval of the Dell Leasing Services motion, which will be presented to the Board on May 22nd.

**Scope of the Project**

The Technology Department will replace all staff computers and some labs will be replaced as well. We will be upgrading the operating system to the Windows 7 platform and Microsoft Office 2010.

To help with replacement with older labs, we will be using all of the outdated computers with the implementation of desktop virtualization. We will be taking approximately 1400 computers out of service and instead of fully decommissioning them, they will be re-utilized for this technology until every computer is no longer capable of being used.

We are not currently replacing any CFF grant laptops. The replacement cost is beyond the budget capabilities at this time. We will also be taking virtualization capabilities to these aging devices as well.

### Project Rationale

Currently we are using Microsoft Windows XP that is no longer supported by Microsoft. Since Microsoft they will no longer provide specific updates to the platform this will present support issues. We are currently using Microsoft Office 2003, which becomes a compatibility issue for staff and students, since most staff and students already have it on their home computers.

As a transition for staff, every staff member was given the opportunity to purchase a full working copy of Microsoft Office 2010 through our Microsoft Volume Licensing plan. Windows 7 computers will be available in libraries for staff to familiarize themselves with this new operating system. Atomic Learning is also available to everyone for additional training.

Not replacing outdated computers with new in certain lab areas, such as the elementary schools, we feel this is underutilizing equipment. Using virtualization in different manners, we can reuse computers until they are no long capable of service.

Virtualization will allow us to reuse computers in lab, and libraries as an initial pilot. This will allow us to engage in a possible reduction of computers that will need to be purchased as we will be able to reuse and extend the life of PC's way beyond their warranty period.

During our pilot testing of virtualization we will also extend this to laptops to see if this is a possibility to use outdated equipment in this manner. We started the virtualization pilot in March of 2012, and have had great success. We see this as a real possibility for future deployment of computers for staff and students.

### Project Budget

LEASE PROGRAM:				Fair Market Value			
Dell Quote #	Equipment	Unit Price	Qty.	Total Amount Financed	Payment Frequency	Lease Term (Months)	Lease Rate Factor
619431597	OptiPlex 790	\$607.65	1231	\$748,017.15	Annual	48	0.23889
619392024	Latitude E5520	\$765.07	120	\$91,808.40	Annual	48	0.23889
619430045	5230dn Laser Printer	\$12.49	90	\$64,124.10	Annual	48	0.23889

Total Lease \$903,949.65

- Letter of Project for Board review
- BOM from Vendor
- Letter of Essential use statement for Dell
- Annual Financial Reports (Audit- 3 years)

### **Federal Programs**

Dr. Muenker advised the Board that there are no updates to report. The total to date is \$1,408,980.00.

### **Other Board Business**

None

### **Public Comment**

Larry Pastor, business executive, Middletown, remarked that he has noticed that there are more teachers that do not live within the Neshaminy School District than those that do live in the district. Mr. Pastor said it seems as though more NFT members live in the Council Rock and Central Bucks School Districts and he asked Dr. Muenker to provide the percentage of teachers who reside within Neshaminy as opposed to those who reside in the other two districts. Mr. Pastor also stated that the NFT has refused to agree to teach an eight hour day and it is insulting for NFT members to speak about their dedication to teaching when their union does not put in the same number of hours as other districts in this area.

Charles Alfonso, semi-retired business executive, Middletown, continued his comments regarding the search for a new school superintendent. Mr. Alfonso said a candidate for the position should be considered for their leadership skills, management finesse, motivational ability, creativity, organizational skills, and a comprehensive vision for Neshaminy School District. He said a PHD in education does not necessarily qualify someone in leadership, management and leadership skills.

Debbie Vossah, teacher, Bensalem, again made a plea to the Board to keep TLC open. She expressed the benefits that her daughter has received by attending TLC. Ms. Vossah explained that they had tried other alternative schools, but none of them succeeded in helping her daughter as TLC has.

Stephen Pirritano, self-employed, Feasterville, asked if any Board member can provide an update of the school consolidation plans for the district. He also asked the Board to address the issue of program cuts that may still be considered in order to close the \$5.5 million gap that still remains. Mr. Pirritano said he agrees with another commenter and he does not think asking the teachers to put in an 8 hour day is asking too much. Mr. Pirritano said the NFT is quick to voice their opinions on what is wrong, but they never offer a solution. They are not willing to give anything back or to take less. He said the district is broke because the teachers have a salary matrix that gives percentage increases when there are already built in raises within the matrix.

### **Board Comment**

Mr. Oettinger stated that the Ad Hoc Committee asked the administration to submit 3 plans for the school consolidation issue. The committee has received and is currently reviewing and considering each plan. He invited any interested persons to come to the meetings and participate.

Mr. Webb said that the Board used the services of the Bucks Count IU under the direction of Dr. Barry Galasso to assist in the search for a school superintendent. The committee screened twenty-six applicants and chose seven to be interviewed. Of the seven interviewed, three have been chosen for second interviews, which will be held in front of the entire Board on Thursday, May 24, 2012. An open forum will be held, at a later date, to allow the community to meet the candidates. Mr. Webb commended the Souderton School District and their teachers union who recently agreed to concessions in their contract in an effort to insure the financial stability of their district. Mr. Webb said this is an admirable example of a union and a school district working together for a common cause. Mr. Webb said that the teachers should not just take the word of their leadership regarding the budget numbers. They should actually do the math and they will see that the figures presented by the Board are true and accurate. He said the numbers are there for anyone to review and they should do so. Mr. Webb said Mrs. Holland, principal of TLC, is welcome to present her budget ideas and she has never been prevented from doing so. Mr. Webb clarified that although the arbitrator's report said the stimulus retirement bonus would end in June 2015, if status quo takes effect it would continue just the same as it is occurring now. Mr. Webb said approximately 66% of Neshaminy's teachers choose to live outside the district.

Dr. Muenker explained that by eliminating the IOP, those teachers would be used in other capacities, which would lessen the need for additional teachers. He also said that the change in the middle school model would not be as drastic as has been suggested and the needs of the children will still be of the utmost importance. Dr. Muenker stated that the district is adequately staffed with nine school counselors and two social workers who will continue to provide support academically and emotionally to children even in the absence of a Sanctuary Room.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Webb moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Koutsouradis seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Burns  
Board Secretary