

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

SPECIAL PUBLIC BOARD MEETING  
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
(PUBLIC MEETING)  
June 28, 2006

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on June 28, 2006, in the Board Room of the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Richard M. Eccles, President  
Mrs. Sue C. Barrett, Vice President  
Mr. Joseph R. Blasch  
Mr. Jason Bowman  
Mr. Frank J. Koziol  
Dr. William H. Spitz  
Mr. Ritchie Webb

**ADMINISTRATORS:**

Dr. Sandra Costanzo  
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise

**BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Ms. Irene M. Boyle  
Mrs. Susan Cummings

**SOLICITOR:**

Thomas Profy, IV, Esquire

**SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

**OTHERS:** Approximately 17 persons from the public, staff and press

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**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Eccles called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. Mr. Eccles stated that the meeting this evening was a continuation from last week's public meeting.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**3. Announcements**

No announcements.

**4. Public Comment**

Mrs. Marianne O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, welcomed the new superintendent to Neshaminy School District. Mrs. O'Connor had concerns from the last school board meeting. Two issues were going on that night: 1. The board having information with regards to administrative hires. Mr. Koziol questioned why he did not see applications of those applying for administrative positions. Mrs. O'Connor thinks it is a great idea for the board to have that information as long as the names are removed which would allow any board member to feel well versed before voting on the people to be hired by Neshaminy. Information should be available upon request for any school board member for any position in the district. Whether or not this board decides to form a personnel committee, that information is an asset to them. It is always best to find out as much information as possible before a decision needs to be made. If there are any concerns, the time for that is during Executive Session. Mrs. O'Connor has sat on many boards and does so currently. When there is something of concern or question it is spoken about behind closed doors and settles the issue before facing the public. Not in front of the public. Anyone could have questioned Dr. Muenker or anyone involved in the hiring process for background information on the candidate. Mr. Bowman asked people that were involved with regards to one position in particular. Mr. Bowman seemed to be aware of the number of candidates as well as how many questions were involved, etc. 2. The personnel report. Mrs. O'Connor wondered why Mr. Eccles abstained twice from the vote on the personnel report and then

finally voted on same. Mr. Webb seemed very upset about one specific position, referred to as Item #4. Mr. Webb made comments to Mr. Bowman and Mrs. O'Connor would like to know why Mr. Webb did not have that same information. It was not a secret and if Mr. Bowman could find out surely any board member could receive the same information. Mrs. O'Connor finds it disrespectful to Dr. Muenker and anyone involved in the process of hiring when statements are made as "the hiring for that position is questionable, making sure the interviews were not stacked or tainted." At no time did Mrs. O'Connor ever hear any board member express concerns about Dr. Muenker's ability as a Human Resources Director. Why make comments that question Dr. Muenker's integrity now. Why only regarding the Item #4 position? It seems that Dr. Muenker was competent with all the other recommendations. Mrs. O'Connor noted that this did not play well over the television. Mrs. O'Connor's observations have been that Dr. Muenker has done an outstanding job of hiring the best candidates for any position within this district. Mrs. O'Connor is concerned that when terms like "questionable, stacked and tainted" are used and they are directly or indirectly targeted at an individual group it reminds Mrs. O'Connor of something her mother stated when she was growing up about someone who acts that way. It speaks more to the character of the way that person thinks than the one it is directed towards. Mr. Bowman stated that some of the board members were turning the meeting into a circus. It was quite a show and it was an embarrassment to Neshaminy School District. Mrs. O'Connor asked that in the future the matters are settled before coming before the public.

Mr. William O'Connor, Langhorne, PA, was surprised and disappointed to learn that last week the Neshaminy Federation of Teachers had filed a grievance against the District. Mr. O'Connor encouraged anyone who had not read the Bucks County Courier Times editorial regarding the issue to do so. Mr. O'Connor wanted to address the issue that Neshaminy violated the contract in some way and that the NFT is encouraging the teachers not to participate on any disciplinary committees moving forward. Mr. O'Connor reviewed a copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and it contains nothing that would suggest that the Board acted inappropriately in redefining the policies. Everything was done in the open and Mr. O'Connor attended many of the Board Policy meetings. Comments were made available to all. Mr. O'Connor spoke with a teacher concerning this issue and it was stated that it was not what was in writing, but more because of past accepted practices. What is not in writing? Even though there may be past misunderstandings because of ambiguity or vagueness in a contract, it does not preclude the authority, in this case the Board, from defining and clarifying those policies from moving forward. Mr. O'Connor is also concerned about the teachers being urged not to participate on disciplinary committees and as a parent, Mr. O'Connor stated that he wants the teachers there participating and he hopes that they will. Not just for their own benefit representing their interests, but for the benefit of the students. The teacher's value to this process is very important. Mr. O'Connor would like to encourage the NFT to drop the grievances, and embrace the changes to the policy. However, if that does not occur, Mr. O'Connor asks that this Board sticks to its guns. Our students are the ones at risk. Their health, well being and their education and very lives. A good process has been started by redefining the board policies. Mr. O'Connor asks that it is seen through.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Langhorne, PA, stated that he is not here this evening to hassle the Board about past events, but he feels that six weeks is plenty of time to regroup, have a vacation and start again on budget items and programs that would be beneficial to the students in August. Mr. Rodos personally thanked Mr. Paradise for patiently going over the budget and reviewing his concerns about revenue issues. Mr. Rodos welcomed Mr. Kadri to Neshaminy School District as the new superintendent and Mr. Rodos looks forward to working with him.

## **5. Items for Approval**

### **Motion: Election of New Superintendent of Schools**

Mr. Bowman presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS, Howard Wilson is retiring as Superintendent of the Neshaminy School District; and**

**WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors will now appoint a replacement for the position of Superintendent.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Neshaminy Board of School Directors elects Paul J. Kadri to be the next Superintendent for a term of four (4) years in accordance with Pennsylvania public school code.**

Mr. Blasch seconded the motion.

Mr. Eccles requested a roll call vote. The roll call tally indicated the motion passed with seven ayes (Mrs. Barrett, Mr. Blasch, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Eccles, Mr. Koziol, Dr. Spitz, and Mr. Webb.) Ms. Boyle and Mrs. Cummings were not present.

**Motion: Approval of Superintendent of School Employment Contract**

Dr. Spitz presented the following motion:

**WHEREAS, the Neshaminy School District is desirous of employing Paul J. Kadri as District Superintendent pursuant to the terms of the contract as prepared by the School District's Solicitor; and**

**WHEREAS, Paul J. Kadri is agreeable to serve as District Superintendent in accordance with the terms of the contract as prepared.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School District approve the contract as prepared by the District Solicitor and authorize the Board President to execute the contract.**

Mr. Bowman seconded the motion.

Mr. Eccles requested a roll call vote. The roll call tally indicated the motion passed with seven ayes (Mrs. Barrett, Mr. Blasch, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Eccles, Dr. Spitz, Mr. Koziol and Mr. Webb). Ms. Boyle and Mrs. Cummings were not present.

Mr. Kadri thanked the Board members, selection committee and members of community. Mr. Kadri stated that his enthusiasm is beyond description. Mr. Kadri recognized his wife, Susan and daughter, Corrine. Mr. Kadri stated that they know how passionate and important his career is to him. Their patience allows him to be the best superintendent he can be. Mr. Kadri is looking forward to meeting all the participants within the school district, from the staff and their leadership, the board members, members of the community and most importantly the students. The superintendent search process is like a college application process and a little bit like a marriage. In the process while the Board is looking for someone they feel comfortable with, Mr. Kadri is looking for a district that he feels comfortable with. Two things stood out as outstanding qualities for Neshaminy. The first being passion from within the district and the community. When they talk about the school district there is a deep level of passion. People are very concerned about the district. Anytime adults are deeply committed to the students of the community you have a nucleus for success. Secondly, the work ethic within Neshaminy. Mr. Kadri deeply had the sense that if a superintendent gives 110% of themselves, is child focused, staff focused and community focused and is a straight communicator and up front they will get the nod in this community. Mr. Kadri wants to promote the work ethic that is overwhelmingly visible to the outsider looking at Neshaminy. Mr. Kadri mentioned that in the private sector change is very common, however, in school districts it is a more stressful process. The idea of a new superintendent by its nature will present anxiety. Mr. Kadri's first mission is to meet as many people as he can so that he will begin to have a relationship with the public. Mr. Kadri noted that a mentor of his gave him the best advice and that for the first few months at a new position you must be the best

listener that you can. Neshaminy has an outstanding history and it is Mr. Kadri's job to fully understand that so that he can contribute to the success and future of Neshaminy.

Mr. Webb addressed Mrs. O'Connor and stated that Mr. Bowman is a product of Neshaminy School District and he knows everyone and grew up within the system. Mr. Webb means that in a positive way and to an extent he has an advantage in knowing who to call and what to call. Mr. Bowman is self employed and makes his own schedule. Executive sessions are held in Neshaminy. Neshaminy is far more open than any place he has ever been. Neshaminy does not have executive sessions on a whim and meet in the back. Rarely, anything other than personnel is discussed. Mr. Webb noted that the board thinks the world of Dr. Muenker. Mr. Webb questioned why a young man was passed over. Mr. Webb apologized to anyone who was offended by the comments at the prior meeting. Mr. Webb just needed clarification on his part and in no way was it meant to chastise Dr. Muenker.

Mr. Bowman welcomed Mr. Kadri to the district and speaks for the entire Board on how excited they are to have him as part of the Neshaminy community.

Mr. Eccles welcomed Mr. Kadri aboard through the long process and you are the light that will take this district into the future. Mr. Eccles thanked the Board for its efforts. Mr. Eccles wished Mr. Kadri the best of luck. The tradition will be kept alive of having excellent Superintendents within Neshaminy. Mr. Eccles feels that Mr. Kadri will be a trend setter, someone that will make things happen in this district. Mr. Eccles looks forward to the next four years. Mr. Eccles asked that everyone give Mr. Kadri 100% cooperation. Hold on to your seats, the district will be flying!

**6. Adjournment of Meeting**

Mr. Webb moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Bowman seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion with seven ayes. Ms. Boyle and Mrs. Cummings were not present. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls  
Board Secretary