

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
(PUBLIC MEETING)
July 10, 2007

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public session on July 10, 2007, 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
Ms. Irene M. Boyle
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Dr. William H. Spitz
Mr. Ritchie Webb

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. Paul J. Kadri
Dr. Louis T. Muenker
Dr. Geeta Heble

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mr. Jason Bowman
Mr. Frank Koziol

SOLICITOR:

Thomas Profy, III, Esquire

SECRETARY:

Mrs. Anita E. Walls

OTHERS: Approximately 20 persons from the public, staff and press

Call to Order

Mr. Eccles called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

No announcements.

Public Comment

Mr. Michael Connolly, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Lower Southampton Township, stated that he wished to discuss the articles in the newspaper in regards to the consolidation of some of the buildings in the school district. Mr. Connolly expressed that the Township would be welcome to any dialogue both now and in the future if any of those buildings are in consideration for closure.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mills, Langhorne, PA, congratulated the Board in passing a budget which has pleased most residents and Mr. Rodos feels is in the realm of fiscal conservatism. Mr. Rodos was surprised regarding the quote about full time kindergarten in the Courier Times. Mr.

Rodos felt that he was getting through to the District and Governor Rendell the need for full time kindergarten and a beneficial program. Hopefully, the Board and Union will shortly begin to negotiate and complete a contract for the next few years. Mr. Rodos feels that the enormous percentage of health benefits (100%) should be reduced. Especially, the benefits paid to retirees until age 65 which can be as much as \$120,000-\$150,000 to an employee over a ten year span. Both the Board and Union can agree that the current status cannot be maintained. Mr. Rodos would like to see academics publicized in the newspapers to a much greater extent than currently. Mr. Rodos believes that a small starting step is to advertise the quality of the students by showing in the Courier Times photos of students receiving awards for their academic achievement, such as the math group, debate teams, and other facets of academic achievement. High School students taking exams should go into these exams with the intent to excel.

Mr. Solis Basen, Villages of Flowers Mills, Langhorne, PA stated that he was before the Board when the Courier Times published a comparison of school district performance, expenses, etc. Mr. Basen stated that in today's Courier there was another one. Mr. Basen stated that Neshaminy had one of the largest amounts paid per student at the secondary school and primary school level. The public is entitled to know why the district is in a position like this.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Kadri spoke about the article regarding the comparisons. Mr. Kadri stated that there are budgetary numbers and per pupil costs and the facts about milage. Mr. Kadri also has questions regarding the per pupil costs. Mr. Kadri believes the budgetary numbers from 2006-07 and 2007-08 are accurate and the increase is approximately \$4M from one year to the next. In comparison to other school districts it is one of the lowest increases that took place. Factoring in the population and size of the school district it is a fairly low number. The \$3.9M increase included approximately \$1.3M which represents the construction at the high school. The increase was very moderate. The district has two large goals: prepare students to be successful when they leave the district and the other is to have fiscal sustainability within the district and to the taxpayers. This past year there was significant effort given to maintain moderate increases.

Mr. Kadri noted that the summer is the time when the Administration can put in place things necessary for the opening of the new school year. Mr. Kadri anticipates speaking about the following during the September and October meetings: Graduation projects, web page, assessments and goals within the district, etc.

Items for Discussion

a) Bid

Mr. Kadri advised that Bid 08-13 Musical Instruments would be presented for Board approval this evening.

b) Facility Plan Update

Overview:

All options developed are provided as a starting point for discussion by the Board. Their inclusion does not indicate an endorsement by McKissick Associates of any option. The options review feasible alternatives, not limited by political concerns. Once discussed in

depth, McKissick planners will work with the Board to determine a ranking of the options and select options for further refinements.

In general, the options include four major groupings of options:

- Modest building closures and construction of high performance replacement buildings
- Repurposing of existing building as well as changes in grade level structure to obtain efficiencies
- Maximum middle school closure
- Maintain multiple school sites, but gain staffing/instruction cost efficiencies through grade level structure changes and increasing the number of classes per grade level in each building

Mr. McKissick advised that there are 13 major categories of options. A single sheet was handed out which would provide Board members with an option rating summary.

Mr. McKissick reviewed the following options:

1. Deferred Maintenance of All District Facilities
2. Consensus Basis (taking off line one middle school and one elementary school)
3. New Central Elementary
4. New Central Elementary/Everitt Expansion
- 5A. Two Middle Schools
- 5C. Two Middle Schools (variation 1)
- 5E. Two Middle Schools (variation 2)
6. Convert Neshaminy MS to Elementary & Close Hoover
7. Maple Point as Elementary
8. K-2 Primary Centers
9. Convert Middle Schools to Grade 5-8
10. Convert Middle Schools to Grades 3-8
11. Maximum Consolidation, Four Elementary/Middle School Centers
12. K-6 Grade Alignment with One Middle School
13. K-6 Elementary Alignment with Two Middle Schools

Board discussion took place regarding the specific options and the impact that each option would have regarding the community, geographic balance, and district wide prospective. Dialogue took place between the Board and McKissick Associates regarding percentages of students in various buildings, building utilization, location of buildings within certain communities, physical layout of current buildings, reconfiguration of grade levels, class size balancing, efficiencies in staffing, avoidance of new construction, and transportation of students to facilities.

Board members selected Option 2 and Option 9 to be considered and developed further.

c) Sanctuary Room Update

Mr. Kadri advised that the Sanctuary Room was created at the high school to allow students to deal with concerns that they may have regarding suicides and provides students with an

emotional time out and to speak with someone regarding their concerns. Mr. Kadri announced that the total number of students that visited the Sanctuary Room were 216 students. There were 1248 visits which took place. 11.6 students visited the Sanctuary Room per day. The district feels that the room provided a valuable service and improvements will be ongoing. Mr. Kadri noted that the Guidance department does spend a significant amount of time with emotional counseling. Mr. Kadri advised that the configuration of the new high school will make the accessibility of the Sanctuary Room very convenient to students.

Items for Approval

BID: 08-13 Musical Instruments

Bid Amount: \$18,999.32

The bid is for musical instruments and accessories for K-12 instruction throughout the district.

Mr. Webb made a motion to approve Bid No. 08-13. Mr. Blasch seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved Bid No. 08-13. Mr. Bowman and Mr. Koziol were not present.

Certified and Support Personnel Reports

Dr. Muenker presented the following for approval:

- Elections of Certified Personnel
- Addendum of Elections of Certified Personnel
- Elections of Support Personnel
- Resignations/Leaves of Support Personnel
- Sabbatical Leaves of Certified Personnel

Dr. Spitz made a motion to approve the Certified and Support Personnel Reports. Ms. Boyle seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the Certified and Support Personnel Reports as presented. Mr. Bowman and Mr. Koziol were not present.

Other Board Business

Mr. Eccles advised that a Fact Finding Committee is being formed regarding the contracts which will be expiring over the next few years.

Mr. Profy advised that if a Board member has an immediate family member, which is a member of the bargaining unit, they cannot be a member of the negotiating team or bargaining committee. The Act defines any immediate family member as parent, spouse, child, brother or sister. Mr. Profy further noted that if a Board member has a member of the immediate family in the bargaining unit the Board member cannot participate. The Board member receives the information in the same manner as a member of the public. The Board member cannot participate in Executive meetings of the Board of School Directors and cannot participate in the negotiation formulation and does not interact or participate in the process. Mr. Profy provided the Board with the resource material that spells out the specificity and relevant case law and statutory citations. The Board member who has an immediate family member in the bargaining unit can vote on the contract.

Public Comment

None.

Board Comment

None.

Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. Webb moved the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Blasch seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls
Board Secretary