

NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING
PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES
NESHAMINY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
October 14, 2008

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors met in public work session on October 14, 2008, in the Board Room of the Maple Point Middle School. The following persons were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Richard M. Eccles, President
Mr. Frank Koziol, Vice President
Mr. Joseph Blasch
Ms. Irene Boyle
Mrs. Susan Cummings
Mr. Kim Koutsouradis
Dr. William H. Spitz
Mr. Ritchie Webb

ADMINISTRATORS:

Mr. Paul J. Kadri
Dr. Louis T. Muenker
Dr. Sandra Costanzo
Dr. Geeta Heble
Mr. Joseph V. Paradise
Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan

BOARD MEMBER NOT PRESENT:

Mr. William D. O'Connor

OTHERS: Approximately 30 persons from the public, staff and press

SECRETARY: Mrs. Anita E. Walls

SOLICITOR:

Thomas J. Profy, III, Esquire

1. Call to Order

Mr. Eccles called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Mr. Eccles advised that the Board had a pressing personnel issue which caused a delay in the meeting this evening.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Announcements

None.

4. Public Comment

Mr. Ed Frydlewicz, Treiose, PA, stated that he has been a member of the Neshaminy School District security force for seven years. Mr. Frydlewicz is concerned that some of the part time positions may be eliminated because they do not work full time for the district. Mr. Frydlewicz also works for Lower Southampton Township and works for Neshaminy part time and so do several other people. The majority of the security forces are fire fighters since with that came with training and first aid, CPR and AED training. This was at no cost to the district and paid for by the County. As school security we attended in our issued clothing. The issue is that full time employees want the work and the part time positions will be eliminated. Why is this occurring? There is no extra cost to keep the part-timers on. Mr. Frydlewicz wanted to make the Board aware and keep his job. No one has any discipline problems and Mr. Frydlewicz just wanted to make the Board aware of the situation and attempt to keep his job.

Mr. Nick Owarzani, Treiose, PA, stated that he is in the same position as Ed and has worked for the District for 15 years. It took numerous phone calls to school board members, just to get a meeting which was held yesterday. We are highly respected and no discipline problems have occurred. No issues have occurred at any of the events. Six people do not work for the district full time and three individuals were singled out. The other three are still working as of last week. Mr. Owarzani is looking for some answers and direction as to why they were eliminated.

Dr. Spitz asked that information be provided to the Board by Mr. Kadri and Mr. Paradise regarding this issue.

Mr. Steve Rodos, Villages of Flowers Mill, Langhorne, PA, applauded Mr. Koziol in his efforts to reduce the tax burden on senior citizens. His ideas make a lot of sense as they apply to the seniors in the school district. Mr. Rodos attended the Education Committee meeting last week and Mr. Rodos urged the Board to approve the plans promulgated by the high school and middle schools to solve the few outstanding problems with the PSSA scores. Mr. Rodos is an advocate of full day kindergarten. At the last meeting of the Finance Committee Dr. Rattigan reported that the committee established to investigate full day kindergarten in Neshaminy has reached a conclusion that the school district should institute full day kindergarten over a two year period. Mr. Rodos finds this very rewarding. The work of the committee is completely unbiased since Dr. Rattigan never made me aware of any of the meetings. Mr. Rodos urged the residents of the District to support the decision of the committee by expressing their interest in full day kindergarten. It will go a long way to keep elementary schools as a vibrant part of local neighborhoods, rather than allowing them to be closed and abandoned eyesores. Elementary schools are important to the fabric of the neighborhoods they serve and lend a sense of place. Schools are considered as community centers and neighborhood anchors. Small neighborhood schools have been identified as an integral part of sustainable neighborhoods. Schools that are successful and well maintained help attract middle income families to and keep them in the neighborhoods. It is important to seek strategies to preserve neighborhood schools whenever possible. They allow many students to walk to school; small schools mean better student achievement and strong neighborhood schools bolster property values. The public must be convinced that closing a school is then about saving money. The connection to improve academics must be proven. Mr. Rodos read the following:

"I grew up in a very middle class family in the suburbs of Minneapolis and my parents taught me that paying taxes was certainly no fun. It was how we paid for the police and the army, our public universities and local schools, scientific research and Medicare for the elderly. No one said it better then Justice Oliver Wendel Holmes. I like paying taxes, with them I buy civilization."

5. Items for Discussion

a) **High School Construction Update**

Mr. Paradise advised that the project is on budget and on time with hopes of next September having completion in accordance with the original plan.

Mr. Ryan Brennan from Reynolds Construction provided a presentation in lieu of Mr. Damion Spahr and Mr. Paul Erickson.

- Phase Two A – Unit E is on schedule and will allow the students to move in the start of January, 2009
- Phase Two B – Science Building and Administration Building is still on schedule for a late spring, 2009 turnover for student and staff move in additional work required by Township and PennDot at Old Lincoln High began today – Handicap ramps – not to begin before 9:00 a.m. or after 2:00 p.m.
- Contingency funds remains status
- Working with contractors to reduce claims and lower exposure
- Request the district minimize spending
- Air conditioning has been completed
- Unit F and Unit G are operational as designed

Mrs. Cummings stated that for the 2009-2010 the High School will be complete for bringing the 9th graders to the high school. Rumors have surfaced in the community regarding same.

Dr. Spitz has also heard rumors; however, they are referring to building capacity and moving the 9th grade up. Dr. Spitz would like to add this to the agenda so that it could be discussed regarding space issues.

Mr. Paradise advised that initial enrollment projections are available and are approximately 2850 for the high school which is lower than anticipated before.

Dr. Spitz inquired regarding several contingency items and Mr. Paradise advised that Mr. Spahr anticipated that the unallocated contingencies remaining (\$112,000) could rise to as much as \$200,000.

Mr. Eccles asked if everyone would be in agreement to move the presentation of the School Improvements up on the agenda. Everyone was in agreement.

School Improvement Plans – Dr. Costanzo

Information was distributed to Board members. Dr. Costanzo advised that the Writing and Science scores have been received; however, they do not count toward AYP. Our district is a very high achieving school district. 91% of students in the fourth grade have achieved proficient or advanced in Science. Work needs to be done in grade 8 and 11; the scores are not quite as high.

Ferderbar Elementary had 97% of the students be proficient or advance in the Science assessment. In Writing 88% of students at the high school were proficient or advanced and IEP students 63% were proficient or advanced.

Dr. Costanzo presented the two School Improvement Plans. Carl Sandburg is in School Improvement I and Neshaminy High School was in Corrective Action Year 2. Both were required to complete a School Improvement Plan. Teams were formed in accordance with NFT. The plans were presented to the Educational Development Committee on October 7, 2008. Three Board members were in attendance. Board approval will be sought on October 28, 2008 and documents need to be with PDE on November 14, 2008.

Ms. Karen Hessel presented to the Board an overview of the Continuous School Improvement Plan for Neshaminy High School and Carl Sandburg Middle School. Board approval of these documents will be necessary on October 28, 2008. A true and correct copy of the power point presentation is attached hereto and made a part hereof. (Attachment A).

Ms. Dawn Kelly addressed the Board and introduced members of her team from Carl Sandburg Middle School. Ms. Kelly continued with the power point presentation.

Mr. Menio provided the Board with the High School's Plan and continued with the power point presentation. The plan is similar to the middle school plan.

Mr. Eccles had a clarification of the document, page 17, which was provided by Ms. Hessel and focused on the safe harbor numbers and targets set by Neshaminy.

Ms. Hessel stressed that Neshaminy is a high performing district. All the data needs to be examined through all of the lenses, Neshaminy may be five or six students short of achieving the status of AYP. Ms. Hessel noted that the overall scores of Neshaminy would encourage anyone to move into the neighborhood.

Mr. Eccles questioned what was the number of students that needed to be retested. Mr. Menio advised that in the senior class, 266 math tests have to be retaken, 205 Reading and 99 Writing and some of these will be taken by the same students. The senior class has approximately 700 and 25% of the class are not meeting the standard.

Mr. Kadri thanked all the teachers and Administrators who have worked on this project.

Dr. Spitz is concerned that there is enough staff and support to have these programs be successful in the future. Mr. Kadri announced that it was taken care of.

b) Recommended Process for Urgent Issues

Mr. Kadri presented to the Board Urgent Issues handout by end of Calendar Year 2008.

- Framework for Communicating
- Academic & Budget Goals

Mr. Kadri suggested that the Board meet as a Strategic Action Committee along with the Administration once or possibly twice a month to be held at various elementary schools locations.

Recommended Process:

- All 9 Board members and Cabinet
- We vs. Us/Them framework
- Rotate locations (Elementary schools)
- Meet in public, but not TV
- Final decisions at regular meeting
- Meet at least twice a month and monitor
- Rotating chair for each issue

Mr. Webb thought it would be a great idea. Mr. Blasch is concerned about the McKissick report and it needs to be reviewed. Mr. Paradise advised that the issues which are to be topics of these meetings are issues that need to be addressed by the Board as a whole and clearly are not just committee issues.

Board discussion needs to take place regarding the issues and Board consensus regarding same should be reached.

There was Board consensus to have said meetings take place. The first meeting will be scheduled for October 20th at 7:00 p.m., location to be determined.

c) Community Meeting Notes

Mr. Kadri submitted to the Board the notes from the Community Meeting which took place on September 19th. The first part of the meeting gave an overview of what was going on in the district. The second part of the meeting looked at areas of Student Safety. The groups were as follows:

- Personal Health
- Physical Education
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Opportunities

d) Setting of Tax Collectors Salaries

Mr. Paradise advised that it is time to set the tax collector's salaries for the upcoming four year term. This must be done by February 15, 2009. All taxing bodies must set the compensation for tax collectors who will be running for office for a new four year term 2010-2013.

6. Items for Approval

a) Overnight Trips

Dr. Heble presented the following trips:

- i) Neshaminy High School Wrestlers to the Governor Mifflin Wrestling Tournament, Shillington, PA - December 29-30, 2008

- ii) Neshaminy High School Cheerleading Competition – Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, SC – March 19-23, 2009
- iii) Neshaminy High School Junior Class Trip, Williamsburg, VA - April 18-20, 2009
- iv) Neshaminy High School, Maple Point, Sandburg and Poquessing Foreign Language Trip – Quebec – April 22-26, 2009
- v) Neshaminy High School Music Festival/Adjudication – Norfolk, VA and Bermuda Cruise – May 16-21, 2009

Dr. Heble advised that all these trips are of no cost to the district.

There was Board consensus for the trips.

c) Approval of Revised Policies

Dr. Rattigan presented the following policies with revisions for the Board's consideration:

- Policy 102 – Selection and Election of Administrative Personnel and Supplement to Policy 102 O Revised Option A
- Policy 521 – Health Examinations/Screenings

Dr. Rattigan provided the Board with the changes to said policies and these will be presented for Board approval on October 28th.

d) Rental of Neshaminy Middle School to St. Mary Medical Center

Mr. Paradise advised that St. Mary contacted the district and they are in desperate need of space for education and training. They received a grant from PA to renovate a section of the building which is primarily used for training and education. Now, they are looking for rental of Neshaminy Middle. They are interested in an 8,000 square foot section.

Mr. Paradise recommended to the Board that a motion be presented at the October 28th meeting.

The Finance Committee recommended that the Board go forth with this lease agreement.

Mr. Profy advised that the Board could authorize the Business Administrator to finalize the transaction with Board approval on October 28th.

Mr. Paradise was also contacted by a company that would potentially lease 60,000 square feet of the building. The property is very leas able and it is a very desirable building.

e) New Bank Account

Mr. Paradise advised that a new bank account is needed to maximize proceeds from temporary investment of funds. Citizens Bank has an account available which would provide a 2.6% rate through December 31, 2008.

Mr. Paradise advised that there is no need for the public to be concerned about the funds that the school district has invested with specific institutions. They are all insured and secure. Each of the banks are over collateralized to protect the taxpayers assets.

f) American Education Week November 16-22, 2008

Mr. Kadri advised that American Education week will take place on November 16-22, 2008. Parents with the last names A-M can visit elementary schools on Wednesday, November 19, 2008 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and N-Z can visit Thursday, November 20, 2008 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Parents of kindergarten A-M will be Wednesday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and N-Z Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

g) Neshaminy Middle School - Public Auction of Surplus Equipment/Furnishings

Mr. Paradise advised that a public auction will be held on November 8, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Neshaminy Middle School which still remains and has not been utilized by any other school. The auction will take place in the Gym.

Mr. Webb made a motion to accept the advertisement of the public auction to be held on November 8, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Neshaminy Middle School. Mr. Blasch seconded the motion.

The Board unanimously approved said motion. Mr. O'Connor was not present.

Dr. Spitz had questions regarding the use of Neshaminy Middle on Election Day. Mr. Paradise replied to Dr. Spitz's inquiries.

h) Bids/Budget Transfers

Mr. Paradise advised that there are no bids. Mr. Paradise noted that Budget Transfer (Working Copy 09-1) will be presented for approval on October 28th.

7. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Kadri advised that the Board received two (2) PlanCon I letters related to the Neshaminy High School Construction Project. A true and correct copy of said letters are attached hereto and made a part hereof. (Attachment B).

Mr. Kadri advised of the following events:

- Joseph Ferderbar Elementary/ Poquessing Middle School Home & School Association Fall Fair – October 18th
- Neshaminy School District and the St. Mary's Hospital Parenting Center Hold Parent Enrichment Program - Mr. Kadri read the press release.
- Carl Sandburg Middle School Student School Bus Safety Poster Winner – Mustafa Karagoza, 8th grade student – 3rd Place Winner
- Maple Point Veteran's Day Celebration – Mr. Kadri read the letter prepared by the eighth grade staff of Maple Point Middle School

8. Committee Reports

a) Board Policies

Ms. Boyle advised that a meeting will take place on October 15th at 6:00 p.m. Discussions will include personnel selection policy, participation of Board members, review policy #512 – high school diploma and the possibility of drug testing students.

b) Educational Development

Dr. Spitz advised that a meeting took place regarding the school improvement plan discussed earlier. A meeting is scheduled for October 29th or November 5th.

c) Finance/Facilities

Mr. Webb advised that a meeting will take place on October 30th in the Board Room at 7:00 p.m. with further discussions on tax assistance for seniors. Mr. Paradise will be providing financial information.

d) IU Board

Ms. Boyle advised that the next meeting is scheduled for October 21st at 7:00 p.m. The I.U. will enter into an agreement with Blue Cross in a special effort to have cost savings.

e) Educational Foundation

Dr. Costanzo advised that the foundation continues to meet monthly. The raffle during Homecoming raised approximately \$2,700.

f) Technical School

Mr. Koutsouradis advised that on September 22nd the Tech School met to review the AYP results. Discussion continued regarding the funding formula. The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 27th.

g) Technology

Mr. Blasch advised that the next meeting will be published.

9. Public Comment

Mr. Chris Graham, Langhorne, PA, stated that the nation's economy is not good. Mr. Graham read the press release from Mr. Paulson: "In recent weeks the American people have felt the effects of a frozen financial system. They have seen reduced values in their retirement and investment accounts. They have worried about meeting payrolls and they are worried about losing their jobs. Families across our nation have gone through long days and long nights of concern about their financial situations today and their financial situations tomorrow. Without confidence that their most basic financial needs will be met American's loose confidence in the economy and this is unacceptable."

Mr. Graham thinks going forward at this point with regards to the district's finances that we need to look to maintain costs at every corner. Tax Collectors pay, Administrator's pay, Support staff pay, etc. At this point, as a unit, everyone needs to worry about going forward. The district needs to maintain the costs and reduce costs.

10. Future Topics

11. Agenda Development for the October 28, 2008 Public Meeting

12. Other Board Business

Mr. Profy stated that Board members have received a notice from Mr. Kadri as to his resignation and termination of his contract. Mr. Profy advised the Board to make a motion acknowledging receipt of the notice dated October 9, 2008 from Paul J. Kadri of his resignation as Superintendent of the School District and his unilateral termination of the Superintendent's contract of employment dated June 28, 2006. Said resignation and contract termination to be effective January 6, 2009 and the Board accept and approve the resignation and the termination of the contract effective January 6, 2009.

Mr. Webb moved said motion. Mr. Koziol seconded the motion.

Mr. Profy requested a roll call vote. The roll call tally indicated the motion was accepted with eight ayes (Mr. Blasch, Ms. Boyle, Mrs. Cummings, Mr. Eccles, Mr. Koutsouradis, Mr. Koziol, Dr. Spitz and Mr. Webb) and zero nays. Mr. O'Connor was not present.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Blasch moved that the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Webb seconded same. Mr. Eccles adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Anita E. Walls
Board Secretary