

An open work session of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, Wednesday, January 9, 2013 at 7:03 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Mercado, Ms. Morello, Dr. Mounier, Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: None.

Also present: Dr. Guccio, Superintendent, Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Polof, Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Ludy, Board Secretary, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, press and public. Absent: None.

Mr. Medio announced that in compliance with the New Jersey meeting law commonly referred to as "The Sunshine Law," the Vineland Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be sent to the following, announcing time and place thereof, agenda, etc.: The Daily Journal, the Atlantic City Press, Clerk - City of Vineland, and Administrative Office Public Bulletin Board.

Flag salute:

Special

Presentations:

Dr. Guccio read a letter from the American Diabetes Association congratulating the Vineland Public School District and Rossi Middle School. She said under the guidance of Tammy Monahan and Kelly Amato, Rossi Middle School raised over \$2,331 for the twenty six million Americans who suffer from diabetes through the School Walk for Diabetes. Dr. Guccio introduced and thanked Ms. Monahan and Ms. Amato for the successful event they held at Rossi School.

Dr. Guccio introduced Dr. McCann, Principal of Vineland High School and Ian Parr, the NJ Representative to the National 4-H Conference.

Dr. McCann said Ian Parr did an outstanding job as the representative for New Jersey at the National 4-H Conference held in Georgia. He said the 4-H Club is a very active organization that involves many students.

Mr. Parr thanked the board for having him here tonight. He said while in Georgia he received leadership experience and training.

Comments by

Board Solicitor:

None.

**HIB Report (Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying) September through January/Suspension Report/ Cunningham Alternative School Report/Cunningham Alternative ADA (Average Daily Attendance) Report – No discussion.**

Mr. Mercado said in the past when incidents occurred at the schools such as student/staff arrests, injuries, or fires the board members were notified. He said it does not seem that board members are being notified because he has been reading about these types of incidents in the newspaper. Dr. Guccio said she notified the board about the fire alarms and two incidents that happened at the high school but was not aware that each time a student is arrested the board would like to be notified. She said that she would be happy to send emails to the board as she receives them if that is what the board would like. Mr. Medio said it would be no problem to add the board members names to the emails. Mr. Ulrich said you have to be cautious not to violate the student's name.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – No discussion.
2. **Special Education Students Placement** – No discussion.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Travel** – No discussion.
5. **Bids** – Ms. Morello asked for an explanation on the ERATE Services. Mr. Frey explained that in the past this was done in-house. He said the ERATE application has become pretty sophisticated and there are multiple ways to submit your ERATE. Mr. Frey said there are many items that need to be well organized in advance, which is why he would like to maximize our returns on our investment with the ERATE. Ms. Morello asked if this Erate Exchange specializes in educational concerns. Mr. Frey said correct. Ms. Morello asked if this is a yearly contract. Mr. Frey responded yes. Ms. Morello asked if there were no hidden fees and it is a flat fee no matter what. Mr. Frey said correct.
6. **Submission of Grants** – Ms. Morello feels that the Hipp Foundation Grant is wonderful and applauds the staff member for pursuing this.
7. **Acceptance of Funds** – No discussion.
8. **NJSAC Statement of Assurance for 2012-2013** – Mr. Mercado asked if the board will begin voting on executive session meeting minutes. Dr. Guccio said yes. Mr. Mercado requested for the executive session minutes to be more accurate. Mr. Ulrich said the minutes can be recorded. Dr. Guccio said we have been advised by our solicitor that is not the way to go.

Mr. DeSanto said the Sunshine Law requires that minutes be reasonably comprehensible. He said the law requires that there be general discussion and notes taken. The specifics are not required or generally done. Mr. DeSanto said the problem with taking exact or detailed minutes is that if something is not included by inadvertence then it could be said that it was not stated. The taping of executive session is totally within the discretion of the board. Mr. DeSanto said he is not aware of any district that tapes their executive sessions. He said you must understand that if you are taping executive sessions that tape also becomes public record when the need for that discussion topic no longer needs to be protected. Mr. DeSanto said the idea of not taping executive session is for the free flow of candid discussion by board members. He said board members need to understand that whatever they say is going to be taped and could be released at some point. Mr. DeSanto said the taping of executive session is within the discretion of the board. Mr. Ulrich said if the minutes do not reflect key statements in what is involved that is problematic. Mr. DeSanto said this has been discussed and we are proposing for Ms. Ludy and Dr. Rossi to both take notes in executive session and the board approve the minutes. Mr. Mercado asked if the board ever approved executive session minutes. Dr. Gruccio said she does not think the executive session minutes were ever approved in the past. Mr. Mercado expressed his concern in regards to minutes being released to the media that were never approved. Mr. DeSanto said unfortunately those minutes reflected discussion of an agreement regarding the resignation/retirement of an employee. He said under a Supreme Court decision the agreement and minutes were a public record. Mr. English asked if one topic was released to the newspaper and not entire minutes. Mr. DeSanto said he redacted everything but the portion relating to the approval of that agreement. Ms. Morello asked if the concern is that minutes were released that some board members feel were not reflective of what happened. Mr. Mercado said he does not have a problem with the minutes being released. He said his concern is that the board never saw the minutes before they were released in case there was a problem. Mr. Ulrich said the minutes should be recorded then there will be no possible misquote. Mr. English expressed his concern that there was a lot more said in the minutes than what was released to the newspaper. Mr. DeSanto said what was released was correct but maybe not complete.

9. **Donation of surplus items to SHAPE** – No discussion.
10. **Bus Evacuations for December** – No discussion.
11. **First Reading of Policy 5511.2 School Uniforms** – Ms. Morello asked how this policy is different from the prior policy. Mr. DeSanto said the prior policy was the master policy that was adopted by the board to establish the protocol and procedures for individual schools to submit a request to have school uniforms. Dr. Gruccio said this policy is mandatory and in the past it was not. Mr. DeSanto said in response to the master policy all of the schools have submitted letters indicating that their principal, staff and parents are supportive and have selected their colors.

Mr. DeSanto said because all of the schools unanimously are requesting mandatory uniforms we are able to do this very simple in one policy. He provided the board with the results of the outside providers and there does not seem to be support for uniforms. Mr. DeSanto recommended to the board that the policy not be applicable to the outside providers and give them the option to use it.

Mr. English asked what the thought process is for the color of the uniforms. Mr. Medio said it was his understanding that all three shirt colors are what the principals wanted and khaki was discussed for the pants. He said an individual school will not have an individual color shirt.

Mr. Mercado said he is excited for this policy and thanked the principals for all their hard work on this. He is personally happy with the three colors that were chosen for the shirts and the style of khaki pants/skirts. Mr. Mercado thanked the parents who provided input for this policy and hopes the students use this policy to their advantage. He pledged to purchase some of these uniforms and looks forward to providing uniforms to students who are in need.

Ms. Rios thanked the Policy & Personnel Committee for their ideas and input. She also thanked the principals, staff, parents, students and board for coming on board with the mandatory uniform policy.

Ms. Morello said both districts that she has worked in have mandatory uniform policies and it is a beautiful thing.

Mr. Ulrich said from a safety prospective this is going to be a welcome measure for the law enforcement officers and security staff that work in our schools.

Mr. Mercado thanked the Policy & Personnel Committee.

**12. Uniform Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement Officials** – No discussion.

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: Ms. Morello asked what Singing Telegrams by Jeff is. Ms. Ludy said she was informed that it was a brain power assembly held at three schools.

Mr. DiGiorgio thanked Ms. Ludy for answering all his questions.

Public Comments: Rodney Mulligan  
Mr. Mulligan wished the board good luck and hopes for a great 2013. He said the pornography issue is nothing new in the school system. Mr. Mulligan said that in the past he knew of two night employees along with a supervisor who watched pornography two hours a night two or three days a week. He expressed his concern in regards to a blue van that passes his house four or five times a day and asked if there is a system in place that keeps track of all the Vineland Board of Education vehicles. Mr. Mulligan also expressed his concern in regards to the type of vehicles the districted purchases.

Committee Reports: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Mr. Mercado said he received an email in regards to a forum that will be held to discuss school safety and feels this is something that security and administrators should attend. Dr. Guccio said three meetings were held with police officials, security, principals and administration. She said some ideas were shared with us and Mr. Weaver is looking into pricing for some of them. Dr. Guccio said we will continue to meet and a report with recommendations will be given to the board. Mr. Medio said he spoke to the Police Chief and you need to consider secrecy because you do not want the public to know your safety precautions. He said if the public has a problem with using secrecy to protect the students he is willing to take the blame.

Mr. English said as soon as possible he would like to discuss the possibility of redistricting and addressing the overcrowding issues in our district. Mr. Medio said that is a good issue for Saturday's retreat.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the budget process has begun with the principals. Mr. Medio said that will be discussed at Saturday's retreat.

Mr. English said the Facilities Committee usually meets the last Tuesday of the month. He asked Mr. Medio if he wants him to continue with the meeting on Tuesday or wait until the end of February. Mr. Medio said he will let him know in a week.

Mr. Ulrich said the last two budget cycles were done as a committee of the whole and asked if this approach will be continued. Mr. Medio said it will unless the board has objections.

Mr. Medio asked if the executive Session resolution was already done. Mr. DeSanto said the bylaws were amended a couple months ago to allow us to approve the executive session resolution at the work session. He said if it is approved the month before many times things that need to be discussed are not known. Mr. DeSanto said this is done at every work session for the work session night.

Ms. Rios said she will not be able to attend Saturday's retreat due to a family emergency.

Mr. Ulrich said he has a teaching commitment at Wilmington University and will not be able to attend Saturday's retreat.

Mr. English asked if the board members who cannot attend Saturday's retreat can submit some of their ideas. Mr. Medio responded yes.

Resolution:

Ms. Ludy read a resolution to convene into executive session for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12. Any matter which, by express provision of Federal Law, State Statute or Rule of Court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from discussion in public (Provision relied upon: discussion of concern of a parent of a special needs student.) Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling with the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer (If pending litigation the matter is : various pending lawsuits handled by Board's insurance counsel; (If contract negotiation the nature of the contract and interested party is status of VEA contract negotiations.) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting. The nature of discussion is continued suspension of a teacher, fitness for duty examination of a teacher, termination of civil service classified employee, investigation of possible disciplinary charges against a teacher. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) may be made public at a time when the Board Attorney advised the Board of Education that the disclosure of the discussion will not detrimentally affect any right, interest or duty of the School District or any other entity or person with respect to said discussion.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. Mercado to approve the Resolution. All Members voted “yes.”

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cherie Ludy  
Board Secretary

CL:df

