

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, February 2, 2011 at 6:21 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Franceschini presiding and the following members present: Mr. DeWinne, Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Fanucci, Dr. Mounier, Mrs. Phillips, Ms. Rios, and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: none.

Also present: Dr. Banks, Superintendent, Dr. Guccio and Mrs. Elliott, Assistant Superintendents, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, Mrs. Polof, Director of Special Education, Ms. Greenfield, Executive Director of Personnel, press and public. Absent: Mr. Franchetta, Board Secretary.

Mr. Franceschini 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.

Flag salute:

Special

Presentations:

Dr. Banks said due to the illness of our Business Administrator, Mr. Franchetta, we will not be having the discussion of the budget as a whole this evening. She said the budget discussion will be held at 6:15 p.m. on February 9, 2011.

Dr. Banks introduced Dr. Guccio and Dr. McCann to present an update on the Small Learning Communities (SLC's).

Dr. Guccio said the board voted for the elimination of SLC's as of September [2011]. A Restructuring Committee was put together and the first meeting was held on January 18, 2011. Dr. Guccio said the overall goal was to come up with a way to provide a solid instructional model for our students beginning 2011 without the model we are currently using. She said they discussed the electives, number of students in each building, gaps with transitioning students that are presently in the high school and impact on 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Dr. Guccio said there will be a total of 32 electives that will be impacted in some way and 21 electives were solely created to support the themes for each SLC. The dual credit courses with Cumberland County College and the JROTC Program will remain intact. Dr. Guccio said if the SLC electives remain in place then they need to become available to every student. She said we have a total of 2,783 that we are currently working with at Vineland High School. The functional capacity at Vineland High School North is 1,124 and Vineland High School South is 1,127 with a total capacity of 2,251. Dr. Guccio said they discussed how to transition students within the high school and the impact on 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Dr. Gruccio said the committee made the following recommendations:

- Keep all electives in place and open to all students.
- Keep students in their present (2010-11) building.
- Keep staff in their present (2010-2011) buildings and classrooms.
- One unresolved issue is how to place the incoming freshmen class (2011-12) into the two buildings.

Dr. Gruccio said the following decisions were made by the committee:

- Science courses will be full year courses.
- Double periods of Math and Language Arts will remain in place for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- HSPA Prep Courses will remain in place.
- CAPA recommendations will be shared with the Board.
- The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 17, 2011.

Dr. Gruccio said at this point the committee needs direction from the board as to where we go from here.

Mr. DeWinne asked who was in the committee. She said the committee consisted of herself, Mrs. Elliott, Dr. Banks, Supervisors, Guidance Counselors and Dr. McCann. Mr. DeWinne asked what the meaning is of functional capacity. Dr. Gruccio said it means suggested amount of students that should be housed in that building. Mr. Weaver said the functional capacity was developed years ago based on the square footage of the building, actual floor layout and core spaces. He said this comes from the Department of Education and is how we base our capacity and needs for new schools. Mr. Weaver said we are well over our functional capacities, which is one of the reasons we justified a third high school in our Long Range Facility Plan. Mr. DeWinne asked what the student average per classroom is in this functional capacity definition. Mr. Weaver said the model likes to see 20 to 25 and we are over that. Mr. DeWinne asked if he was correct in saying that our middle schools are under their capacity. Mr. Weaver said we built capacity in with the new middle school. Mr. English asked if this has anything to do with a fire violation. Mr. Weaver said no.

Mr. English asked if he was correct in saying that the committee recommendations look like the SLC model without the word SLC. Dr. Gruccio said you could look at it that way however; the students would be housed in the same building but not necessarily with the same group of students. Mr. English asked if the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy has been discussed yet. Dr. Gruccio said there was a small discussion.

Mr. English asked if instruction, scheduling and discipline are the top three items we are looking at. Dr. Guccio said she does not recall discipline but travel was an item. Mr. English asked if the ninth graders are the biggest discipline problem. Dr. McCann said yes and it helps that they are housed between two buildings. Mr. English asked Dr. McCann what his feeling is on a Ninth Grade Academy. Dr. McCann said he does not know anything about a Ninth Grade Academy. Mr. Franceschini asked if we had a Ninth Grade Academy what building would we use. Dr. Guccio said that is why the discussion did not go any further because at this point in time it would not be feasible for September.

Mr. DeWinne asked if the committee has had any collaboration with the high school administrators or other school districts. Dr. Guccio said not to her knowledge.

Dr. Mounier asked when the CAPA evaluation will be complete. Dr. Guccio said the visit is next week and it depends on who is leading the CAPA team. Mr. Franceschini said as Board President he is being interviewed by CAPA on February 9<sup>th</sup> and if the results are in Friday he is assigning Mrs. Phillips to be a part of that meeting to hear the recommendations.

Mrs. Phillips congratulated the Restructuring Committee for doing a lot in a little time.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the elective courses all consist of classes with 20 or 25 students. Dr. Guccio responded no. Dr. Banks said if we decide to keep all these electives in place we would have to put a cap on the numbers, which could have an impact on staffing. She said the committee as whole felt it was important to keep the electives in place and open them up to all students but could potentially have the opposite effect. Dr. Banks said this involves capping and making a decision as to who gets first choice with the electives.

Mr. Ulrich asked how many staff members were added because of the SLCs. Dr. Guccio said it was pretty much a wash. Mr. Ulrich asked if it is the board's role to vote on every issue of what the directive was. Dr. Banks said we just want to present the board with all of the options that were discussed. She said what we would like to focus on is a strong instructional program for September and continue the committee meetings into next year to investigate a model that could be implemented in the future.

Dr. Banks said you will not have a model in September. She said what we are doing is following the board's directive and giving updates as to where we think we will be in September.

Ms. Rios asked if there were electives that were eliminated because of the SLC's. Dr. McCann responded yes because of the interest level. Ms. Rios asked if a survey can be done to see if there are any other electives the students are interested in having. Dr. McCann said the course selection book is finished and if we were to do this it would have to be done for next year. He said the students were already surveyed.

Dr. Mounier said from his point of view what we need is very strong instruction. He asked why we need to consider a model. Dr. Banks said she does not have a problem with running a good instructional program at the high school. She said there was a discussion to put a model in place for September, which she does not think is practical. Dr. Banks said part of the concern was whether or not we would go back to the 9/10 and 11/12 concept. She said what she is hearing from the high school administration is that is not the direction being recommended to go in. Dr. McCann said if we tried to go back to that concept this year it would be chaos. Mr. English said if you have strong instruction why would the 9/10 and 11/12 concept not work. Dr. McCann said it is such a drastic change because there are some students that have never experienced this and it would not be fair to them to make that move in one year. Dr. Mounier said when we throw in models it muddies the water. Dr. Banks said she just wants to be clear on what this board directed her to do. She said it is her understanding that we were directed to dismantle the SLCs and come up with a model for September. She said coming up with a model is not practical for September.

Mr. Franceschini asked when the next update will be. Dr. Gruccio said our next meeting with this committee is February 17. She said if you want the committee to continue they need to know that they have the board's support. Mr. Ulrich said Dr. Banks did not get the board's support so you do not know what is going to happen with this board. Dr. Gruccio said that is why the committee is concerned. Mr. Ulrich said he is concerned.

Mr. Fanucci asked if the rank and file teachers will be part of that committee at some time. Dr. Gruccio said once we have a plan to get through September she would like to see more teachers become part of that committee if we are in fact going to develop some type of a model.

Dr. McCann said at his last department head meeting he asked all the department heads to get ideas from their departments and give a statement as to what they think our school should look like next year. He said this week they are giving him their suggestions. Mrs. Phillips asked Dr. McCann if he will have the feedback from the teachers before the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Dr. McCann said yes. Mr. Ulrich asked how many department heads there are. Dr. Gruccio said eleven.

Mr. DeWinne asked for any information that is discussed at the board meeting to be given to the board in advance. Mr. Franceschini responded yes.

Comments by

Board Solicitor: None.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – Mr. Ulrich asked if the three individuals who are pending background checks will not be working until the background check is received. Ms. Greenfield said that is correct.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if a rate increase for a teacher is due to teaching experience in the district or experience they are bringing to the district. Ms. Greenfield said if a certificated staff member is hired and they cannot submit the verification of prior teaching experience we start them at Step 1. When the prior experience is submitted we amend their salary. Ms. Greenfield said do not give salary credit without the justification behind it.

Mr. DeWinne asked if there is a plan in place for key people who are out. Dr. Banks said yes. Mr. DeWinne commented on what wonderful work the maintenance personnel do on snow days. He asked if they are compensated any differently than the employees who are not working and is holiday or snow time off just additional time. Mr. Weaver said contractually in the UAW Contract maintenance works on snow days. Mr. DeWinne asked if there are twelve month employees or are not maintenance that are getting compensated. Ms. Greenfield said the only twelve month employees in UAW are technology and maintenance. Mr. DeWinne asked if there are any secretarial staff in UAW. Ms. Greenfield said they part of VEA. Mr. English asked if the supervisor of technology is in the UAW contract. Ms. Greenfield said he is in the VASA contract. Mr. DeWinne asked if it has always been custom that when schools are closed the twelve month employees do not have to work. Ms. Greenfield said yes contractually they do not.

Mr. English asked Ms. Greenfield how she is progressing with finding a math replacement. Ms. Greenfield said six qualified applicants are scheduled for an interview next week. Mr. English questioned the safety patrol advisor stipend. Ms. Greenfield said some stipends are paid twice a year and others three times a year depending on when the person resigns. Mr. English asked if Mr. Procopio declined the assistant wrestling position. Ms. Greenfield said he accepted then personal issues came up. Mr. English asked who determines if a sport has assistant head coaches. Ms. Greenfield said the athletic director does depending on the number of students involved. Mr. English asked if there are volunteer coaches approved. Ms. Greenfield responded yes. Mr. English feels fall sports should be approved at this time. Ms. Greenfield said it was done in the past and there were a lot of problems. Mr. DeWinne asked if there is a way we could get another assistant coach for baseball and softball. Ms. Greenfield said she will look into it.

Mr. DeSanto commented that when you are dealing with resignations and hiring names are public information and you are not invading any privacy rights or dealing with evaluations/discipline.

Dr. Mounier questioned the new position at Cunningham School. Ms. Greenfield said it is a special education aide and there was a need for the position at that school.

2. **Special Education Students** – No discussion.
3. **Budgetary Transfers/Certificates of Deposit** – No discussion.
4. **Travel** – Dr. Mounier requested for the total costs to be listed. He questioned if we really need to send someone to New Orleans because the cost is so excessive. Mr. Franceschini said he has questioned that in the past and it is his understanding that the athletic trainers need to have a certain amount of continued education. Dr. Guccio said the request explains that the athletic director needs to attend this conference based on continuing education credits for athletic trainers and to maintain the national athletic training certification. Dr. Mounier was wondering why we could not have professional development delivered by way of the internet. He feels we should review the possibilities of how we can do this.
5. **Bids** – Mr. Franceschini asked for an explanation on this. Dr. Guccio said it is a consultant hired for preschool math. Mr. English asked how long we have been using High Scope. Dr. Guccio said we have been using them for several years because they are one of the recommended programs by the state. Mr. English asked if we monitor this. Dr. Guccio said we have continual feedback between kindergarten and pre-school teachers. She said a lot of the funding comes through the ECPA budget. Dr. Mounier commented that we are slow to wean ourselves from consultants in this district. Dr. Guccio said it takes a couple of years to get our programs off the ground properly.

6. **Job Descriptions - #4417-Diesel Mechanic & #4418 Senior Diesel Mechanic** - Mr. English asked if we need these positions. Dr. Banks said they are already there. Mr. DeWinne asked what is changing. Ms. Greenfield said the update was the title was changed from mechanic to diesel. Mr. DeWinne asked if this means a salary change. Ms. Greenfield responded no.
7. **Establishment of 10-mth Asst. Principal Positions at Vineland High School South & North** – Mr. DeWinne asked if there is a way to hire these individuals sooner. Dr. Banks said she agrees that we need these positions now but there are certain preclusions. She said when we went to the Small Learning Communities model the third principalship was abolished in each building so we need to bring them back. Dr. Banks said before we can hire for these positions they need to be created again. Mr. English asked if we have to bring back the particular person who originally had the position. Dr. Banks said no.
8. **Professional/Clerical Staff Translators** – Mr. DiGiorgio asked if these are stipend positions. Dr. Banks said hourly rate positions. Mr. English asked if we have an hourly rate. Ms. Greenfield explained that they are already employees who will be doing the translating outside of their workday.

Dr. Mounier asked how we certify their competence. Ms. Greenfield said we know they are competent because they are classified already as bilingual through Civil Service.

Mr. Ulrich asked what the salary rate would be. Ms. Greenfield said for a teacher \$25 an hour and a secretary would get their hourly rate. Mr. Ulrich thinks an actual number should be applied to the resolution. Ms. Greenfield said we can prepare a spreadsheet. Mr. DeSanto said since all of these individuals are employees they will be paid at contract rate.

Mrs. Phillips said she does not see where this is necessary because each school has their own staff and there is always someone in the school who speaks bilingual. Dr. Gruccio said this is for after hours.

9. **South Jersey Hospital Contract** – No discussion.
10. **Cumberland County Technical Education Center Contract** – Mr. English asked if this is usually approved in the middle of the year. Dr. Banks said she did not know and that would be a question for Mr. Franchetta.
11. **School Psychologist in Training Agreement** – No discussion.
12. **Immaculata University Teacher in Training Contract** – No discussion.

13. **Cancellation of Account Receivables** – Mr. DeWinne asked why we are cancelling these. Dr. Banks said she will have Mr. Franchetta get back to him.

Mr. DeSanto said Mr. Hoffman is our collection attorney and these accounts are referred to him for various reasons.

14. **Second Reading of Policy #3219** – No discussion.

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: No discussion.

Public Comments: Pat Eshcert, Vineland Resident  
Mr. Eshcert said he is with the South Jersey Mastadons, which is a semi-pro football team. He said the team consists of all adults and have been in existence for nine years. Mr. Eshcert encouraged the board to attend a game. He said in past years they played at Gittone Stadium and prior ownership moved them to the Prep. Mr. Eshcert said they would love to play again at Gittone Stadium.

Dr. Banks thanked Mr. Eshcert for coming out this evening. She asked Ms. Rios, Chairman of the Buildings & Grounds Committee, to put the Mastadons on the agenda to discuss possible use of Gittone Stadium.

Mr. English asked if we could see what the Midget League did because they just used the facility. Ms. Rios said this was never brought to the Buildings & Grounds Committee in the past. Mr. DeSanto said you may not need to because of the Facilities Use Policy he would assume that our fields are included.

Committee Reports: Mr. Ulrich said discussed at the Personnel & Policy Committee meeting was eligibility and athletics. He said they also discussed drug testing for students and the administration has requested that we allow practioners to be part of the policy. He said the policy for developing advertising on school buses was also discussed briefly.

Mr. Weaver presented an update on the Solar Project. He said they collectively decided to enter into a joint venture with the Cumberland County Improvement Authority. Mr. Weaver said the city engineering staff will be looking at the fourteen sites. He said it is a large project and we are still hopeful to get the Request for Proposal (RFP) out by the spring.

Mr. DeWinne said we may want to consider doing something similar with the boiler system. Mr. Weaver said absolutely.

Mr. Franceschini asked what the cost would be for doing this. Mr. Weaver said it would be around five to seven million dollars depending upon the system we decide on. Mr. Ulrich asked if this would be feasible to put on as a referendum for the voters. Mr. Weaver said that is a possibility.

Unfinished  
Business:

Mr. DeWinne asked for a fiscal status update on Sodexo. Dr. Banks said the figures will be available next week along with Mr. Nocco's monthly report. He asked at what point the board will discuss possible ways to save money and potential cuts as far as the budget. Dr. Banks said part of the discussion that was planned for this evening was centered on these questions. She said we have been forewarned to plan on a 5% cut.

New Business:

No discussion.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA  
Board Secretary

KJF:df