

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, March 2, 2011 at 7:13 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 Dr. Elliott, Assistant Superintendents, Mr. Franchetta, Board Secretary, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, Mrs. Polof, Director of Special Education, Ms. Greenfield, Executive Director of Personnel, press and public. Absent: None.

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 introduced Angela D'Ottavio, Health Occupation Teacher to present the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) medal winners.

Ms. D'Ottavio thanked Dr. Banks, the board and administration for recognizing our wonderful HOSA students. She said HOSA is a national organization with 120 thousand members nationally and 3,200 chapters across the United States. Ms. D'Ottavio said HOSA provides students with the opportunity to explore options in healthcare careers. She said the students attended a competition on February 5 and after weeks of practice went to the Southern New Jersey Regional Leadership Conference in Salem, New Jersey. Ms. D'Ottavio said seven of our students competed and won medals in different health care topic events. She introduced each of the students and presented them with certificates.

Dr. Banks congratulated the students and thanked Ms. D'Ottavio for the work that she does with them.

Ms. Rios departed at 7:20 p.m.

Dr. Banks introduced Carey Savage, Supervisor of Title I & NCLB and Juanita Davis, Principal of Wallace Middle School, to discuss the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Program that will be piloted at Wallace Middle School in the 2011-2012 school year.

Mr. Savage said AVID is a college preparatory program that works directly with schools/districts and supports first generation college attendees.

Mr. Savage said there is not too much offered for the student who is in the middle that allows them to direct their attention to going to college. He said AVID is a proven program that does that having been around for 30 years. Mr. Savage said the mission of AVID is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college, readiness and success in a global society. Mr. Savage introduced Dr. Juanita Davis to explain the purpose of the AVID Program at Wallace Middle School.

Dr. Davis said AVID will be a pilot program at Wallace School. The methodologies that will be utilized in the classrooms will allow the teachers to incorporate the AVID methodologies in their curriculum and strategies on their day to day instructional duties. Dr. Davis said these strategies will help all students enhance their learning and help them go on to four year colleges. She said these strategies will also help students to do rigorous work in the classroom that will exceed high standards in each content area.

Mr. Savage said we wanted to have a program that was research proven and we thought the AVID Program met this criterion. He said the longer students stay in the AVID Program they improve on their GPA, grades and course selections.

Mr. Franceschini said there is a lot of passion in this program.

Mrs. Phillips asked why the middle schools no longer have the AVID Program. Mr. Savage said it was mandated as opposed to being a volunteer program. He said AVID is not an inexpensive program and he does not think at that time the district really saw the value of it. Mrs. Phillips asked what the cost of the program is for one year. Mr. Savage said around \$18,000.

Mr. English asked if there are programs for students who are not going to college. Mr. Savage said probably but a student who is sixteen or seventeen years old is not fully capable of understanding what is going to happen to them further down the road. He thinks that we should prepare all of our students the best we can.

Dr. Banks mentioned that Dr. Davis has been trained in the AVID process.

Dr. Banks introduced Dr. Mary Gruccio to present updates on the 8th grade transition to the high school and CAPA.

Dr. Gruccio said on February 17 the second restructuring committee meeting was held. She said the topic discussed was determining the best way to place the incoming 8th graders into the high school for September 2011. The following options were discussed: assignment of students by electives they select, sending 2 middle schools to the North building and 2 middle schools to the South building and random selection through the computer. After discussion a poll was taken resulting in a 50-50 split between placement by middle school and random selection. Dr. Gruccio said a meeting will be held tomorrow to review the numbers more closely and examine the most viable solution. She said that she will keep the board updated on their progress.

Mr. DeWinne asked if the concept of the 9-10/11-12 is not on the table. Dr. Gruccio said the committee did not feel that was a viable solution. She said the consensus of the entire committee was to keep the students split nine through twelve in both buildings.

Dr. Gruccio said we had a four day CAPA visit at Vineland High School from February 8, 2011 through February 11, 2011. The committee was headed by Dr. Dan Stelluto comprising of a group of curriculum specialists. Throughout the 4-day visit, the committee interviewed staff, students, parents, board members, supervisors and central administration. Several classrooms were also visited. On the final day, Dr. Stelluto addressed the group and spoke about the strengths and weaknesses that were arrived at through this extensive process. Dr. Gruccio said action plans for Vineland High School were developed that will be addressed by the newly establish School Improvement Team (SI Team). As a final part of the meeting we discussed the various areas of focus and determined what the primary concerns were. Dr. Gruccio said there were 26 points that were raised throughout the CAPA final report and the following points were determined to be the biggest areas of focus:

- Strong instructional leadership at the high school
- Development of a well thought out Master Schedule
- Extending the school day
- Increase instructional time within the school day
- Re-institute common planning time
- Focus on needs of the bilingual and special needs populations
- Make instruction and programs relevant to students
- Focus on data analysis and professional development

- Increased parental involvement
- Reconfiguration of the high school by the 2012-2013 school year.

Dr. Gruccio said the next step is that a final report will be sent to the Department of Education from the CAPA Team. It could take up to two months for final approval. There will be two CAP benchmark visits and at these visits the team will look to see where Vineland High School is with the unified plan and where we are with the implementation of the CAPA recommendations. Dr. Gruccio said the board will be updated as the CAPA process advances.

Mr. Franceschini asked where the Title I money comes from. Dr. Gruccio said from the state.

Comments by

Board Solicitor: None.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – Dr. Mounier asked if middle school writing benchmark assessments under extracurricular is part of the teachers' ordinary duties. Dr. Gruccio said this is for the language arts supervisor to work with a group of teachers to develop benchmarks that they feel are appropriate for the quarterly assessments. Dr. Mounier asked if these are special teams. Dr. Gruccio said it is teachers and the supervisor.
2. **Placement of Special Education Students** – Mr. DeWinne asked where the money goes if we appropriate an amount and have a savings at the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Franchetta explained that there are different line items and there is movement between the group of tuition accounts. He said at the end of the year the money will fall into surplus. Mr. DeWinne asked if the state reimburses us if additional money is needed. Mr. Franchetta said there is extraordinary special education aid that he spoke about during the budget presentation for students who have excess costs over \$40,000.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Submission of Grants** – No discussion.

5. **Bids** – Mr. DeWinne asked what is holding this job up from being completed. Mr. Weaver said there was one appliance backordered. When the appliance comes in we will be able to do the final electrical inspection and receive the certificate of occupancy.
6. **Travel** – Dr. Mounier noted that there are several travel pages that are incomplete. He asked if page #53 YMCA relates to preschool. Dr. Mounier said the field trips for the Success Program bring the number of field trips for Success to sixteen, which seems excessive. Mr. DeWinne asked if the Success field trips are coming out of the budget. Mr. Franchetta responded yes. Mr. English asked what the current enrollment is at Success. Dr. Elliott said around 28 students.
7. **State of NJ Tuition Contract** – Dr. Mounier noted an error in the wording of the recommendation. Dr. Banks said it is a typo and will be corrected.
8. **Fixed Facility Mass Prophylaxis Program** – No discussion.
9. **Netherlands Student Exchange Program** – Dr. Mounier thinks this is a great idea.
10. **G.R.E.A.T. Program** – Dr. Mounier said he understands that in other districts this is a very successful program. Mr. Ulrich said he agrees with Dr. Mounier. He said this program gets students to understand peer pressures and gang involvements. Mr. Ulrich said the students are really receptive to the officers who are in the program and the school district has been one hundred percent committed to the program. He commended Dr. Gruccio for this program. Mr. DeWinne said several years ago the juvenile unit came in to Johnstone School to speak with the parents. He asked Mr. Ulrich if they are still doing this. Mr. Ulrich said if they receive the request the officers will do this for any group.
11. **AVID Pilot Program** – Mrs. Phillips commented that the Veterans Memorial School teachers felt the strategies of the AVID Program were so important that they are still doing them. She asked why this will be only affecting 22 students at Wallace School. Dr. Davis said in our proposal in September an in-service is planned to train all subject area teachers in our school so the same instruction can be delivered to all students in all academic areas. Dr. Mounier said he thinks we should have by now prepared ourselves to use the techniques that we have learned without having to go back and pay another \$18,000. He expressed his concern that one of the problems in this district is that we use programs and consultants in a way that he thinks is inappropriate.
12. **Response to Intervention Proposal to Pilot SuccessMaker** – Mr. Ulrich commented that this program is going to be a success.

13. **Cooperative Pricing System with Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission** – Mr. DiGiorgio asked for an explanation on this. Mr. Franchetta said Middlesex Regional bids on items and if we join their consortium then we can partake in the bid prices they receive. He said there is no cost to become a member with them and we are looking to purchase buses utilizing their purchase structure. Mr. Franceschini asked how much money we will be saving. Mr. Franchetta said he does not know but we are looking to purchase quite a few buses next year.
14. **Transfer of 1998 GMC Blue Bird Bus** – Mr. Franchetta said after twelve years buses have to be retired from the transportation of students.
15. **Tenured Professional Employee Suspension** - No discussion.
16. **First Reading of Policies/ Regulations - #6360, #6362, #8420, #8420.2, #8420.7, #8420.10, #8740. #5530** – Dr. Mounier said in regards to Policy #8420-Emergency Evacuation he asked what the word “friendly” is doing in the second page of the first paragraph. Dr. Elliott said it is basically a courtesy and part of the Strauss Esmay wording.

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: No discussion.

Public Comments: Lee Burke, Vineland Resident
Mr. Burke thanked the board for using the committee as a whole in the budget process. He hopes that hubs will be considered in discussion of the district’s transportation costs along with the insurance HIP Program. Mr. Burke also hopes that lease arrangements and consultants are reviewed. Mr. Burke commended the Community Education Seminar held on the Bilingual Program. He also commended Dr. Elliott’s participation at a meeting with the NJ Healthy Kids Program at the YMCA, which deals with childhood obesity. Mr. Burke mentioned that he received recent information about Brian Myers the city engineer and Mr. Weaver working on sidewalks for the schools. He said this was an issue that came up in the master plan circulation element as to why there are no sidewalks in front of schools, which needs to be addressed. Mr. Burke said he attended an association meeting at Rutgers Graduate School and the three top issues discussed were teacher evaluation, special education and charter schools.

Committee Reports: Mrs. Phillips said at tonight's Curriculum & Technology meeting, Al Cores the district's Bilingual Supervisor, gave an excellent presentation on the Elementary Bilingual Program. She said Mr. Cores will give this presentation at next Wednesday's meeting.

Mr. Ulrich said discussed at tonight's Policy & Personnel Committee was policy revisions. He said Policy #3223 Evaluation of Administrators (Tenured/Non-Tenured) will be fast tracked by Dr. Banks and Dr. Elliott. The revisions have been made and are completed for board approval. Mr. Ulrich said an important issue that was discussed was the Concussion Policy that school districts will be required to have. It is law and the district has until the end of March to develop a draft policy, which we already have. Mr. Ulrich said it is a policy on how we treat concussions by our student athletes and we are hoping to have this in place by our May meeting. He said there was a personnel discussion involving adding an additional assistant coach to the boys baseball and girls softball teams to address both safety and logistical concerns. Mr. Ulrich said due to a retirement the locksmith position was discussed. He said a matter involving Keystone will be referred to the Finance Committee since there are upfront and maintenance costs. Mr. Ulrich said we are trying to integrate Keystone with home instruction. He said there is going to be a policy revision to the pre-school registration process. Mr. Ulrich said effective this school year 100% of enrollment for the pre-school providers will be assigned by the school district. Dr. Elliott is going to ensure that pre-school enrollment is in line with district enrollment policies.

Mr. DeWinne asked if we use the locksmith on a per diem basis. Mr. Ulrich said the locksmith is a full time position with about 50 work orders per week.

Mr. Fanucci requested for Mr. Franchetta to add the Keystone matter to the next Finance Agenda. He said with regards to the Concussion Policy as officials we had to take a webinar to receive a certification that former board member, Mr. Spinelli, organized. Mr. Ulrich said Dr. Elliot is far along with the policy and we received some recommended policies from Strauss Esmay on how they viewed the statutory requirements.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Mr. DeWinne said possibly Mr. Franchetta or Mr. Weaver could look into either finding or inventing Solar Power Buses or lights.

Mr. English asked for a follow up on the track. Mr. Franceschini said the track is open. Mr. English asked if it was open 24 hours. Dr. Banks said when school is in session the track is not open to the public.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if there is a provision at the state level to allow district to take a pro-active action against price increases. Mr. Franchetta said we are limited to what we can do. Mr. DeSanto said there was a change within the past year on the public contracts law that provided districts with authorization to adjust for asphalt and oil increases.

Adjournment: The Board adjourned to executive session at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA
Board Secretary

KJF:df