

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, April 18, 2012 at 7:10 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Ulrich presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Mercado, Dr. Mounier and Mrs. Phillips. Absent: Mr. Fanucci, Mr. Medio and Ms. Rios.

Also present: Dr. Guccio, Interim Superintendent, Ms. Barber, Interim Board Secretary, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, press and public. Absent: Dr. Schneider, Interim Assistant Superintendent and Mrs. Polof, Director of Special Education.

Mr. Ulrich 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.

#### Special

##### Presentations:

Dr. Guccio introduced Mrs. Elaine Greenberg for the first presentation.

Mrs. Greenberg presented a wall hanging of photographs from June 1948 of World War II Reber alumni.

Mr. Ulrich presented Ms. Greenberg with a plaque for her efforts in preserving Vineland's history.

Dr. Guccio introduced teacher, Noelle Panichella, to recognize Allison Beres who was the winner of the VHS Regional Poetry Out Loud Contest.

Ms. Panichella said Poetry Out Loud encourages the nation's youth to learn about great poetry through memorization and recitation. She said this program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn about their literary heritage. Ms. Panichella introduced Allison Beres the regional winner of the contest who recited her poem *War Widow* by Chris Abani.

Mr. Ulrich presented Ms. Beres with a Certificate of Appreciation honoring the moment that she made the state finals.

#### Comments by

##### Board Solicitor:

Mr. DeSanto said today he received a response from the School Ethics Commission regarding our request for an ethics opinion. He said we requested for the School Ethics Commission to advise us whether or not it was appropriate for board members to participate in the interview process.

Mr. DeSanto said the Ethics Commission issued Advisory Opinion A04-12 which advised that the board could participate on a limited basis in the interview process with the following conditions :

1. No more than two board members could participate in any interview committee for administrative and supervisory positions.
2. The committee is coordinated by a member of the administrative staff which is the superintendent or designee.
3. Participation is strictly limited to offering his/her observations and assessments with full knowledge that final recommendations are completely within the purview of the superintendent.

Mr. Ulrich mentioned that during the last high administrative level position interviews Dr. Banks and Dr. Guccio followed this process.

Dr. Guccio said Dr. Schneider is not present tonight to give the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Report, which was sent to the board in their packets.

Dr. Mounier asked if the units listed on the HIB report are days. Dr. Guccio said she is certain that it means days. Dr. Mounier asked if the HIB Report is for the month of March. Dr. Guccio responded yes. Dr. Mounier asked if the total number of suspensions is 1,280.5. Dr. Guccio said that is the number of days. Dr. Mounier asked what IEP means. Dr. Guccio said it means that the student is classified and has an IEP. Dr. Mounier asked for an explanation on all the abbreviated classifications listed on the report. Mr. Ulrich said it may be helpful to put these explanations at the bottom of the report. Dr. Guccio said we can do that. Dr. Mounier asked what bearing these classifications have on the suspension. Dr. Guccio said if the classification of the child has an impact on what the child did, it would have an impact as to whether or not they are suspended and how many days they are suspended. Dr. Mounier asked under what circumstances the high school would rescind a recommendation. Dr. Guccio said the high school would send the recommendation to Dr. Schneider's office and if she felt there was reason not to send the child to the alternative school she would deny it. Dr. Mounier asked what negative testing means. Dr. Guccio said drug testing.

Mr. English asked if there are currently 51 students at Cunningham School. Dr. Guccio said that is probably correct. Mr. English requested an update on the daily attendance at Cunningham School.

Mr. Ulrich stated that Mr. Medio has left the building and is not present at the meeting.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – Mr. DiGiorgio asked what has changed with the School Business Administrator position because it has already been approved. Ms. Diaz said the effective date is now May 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. DiGiorgio asked what the previous date was. Mrs. Barber said May 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. DiGiorgio said listed for item #12 is VEA MA step #1 moved to Step #9 for years of experience and wanted to know what this means. Ms. Diaz explained that when we verify previous experience the salary is amended. She said this was a position that this employee was in two years and was never filled. Mr. DiGiorgio asked how we negotiated the salary for the executive director of personnel. Dr. Gruccio said it went to the finance committee. Mr. DiGiorgio said he does not recall this being the final number. He asked if it is higher amount than the previous executive director of personnel received. Dr. Gruccio said yes about two thousand dollars higher. Mr. DiGiorgio said he never saw a resume on this individual. Dr. Gruccio said the resume was supposed to be included in the board packets and if it was not she will send it to the board. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if we are in agreement with transfer #17. Mr. DeSanto said it is being referred tomorrow to Mr. Pepper for a ruling with respect to the VASA salary. He said tonight it is for discussion subject to that opinion. Mr. DiGiorgio asked what contract settlement means. Mr. Ulrich said he thought Mr. Pepper briefed the board on this in executive session. Mr. DeSanto said the figure represents a negotiated resolution of a grievance with the employee and the bargaining unit. He said it is substantially less than what the exposure was under the argument in the grievance. Mr. DeSanto said he will brief the board on this prior to next week's meeting. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if at some point we will be hiring a supervisor for K-5. Dr. Gruccio said the K-5 supervisors were cut in the budget.

Mr. English asked if Sodexo is supposed to be hiring 3.5 hour employees. Ms. Diaz said that is correct. Mr. English asked if we are short handed because Sodexo has not hired these employees yet. Mrs. Barber said it is an issue and she has met with Mr. Nocco about three weeks ago to discuss the upcoming school year and daily substitutes. She said Mr. Nocco said it is very hard to get substitutes because they are particular about when to come in and what school they go to. Mr. DeSanto said Sodexo should be able to access our substitute list. Mr. English said being short staffed in the cafeterias effect the productivity of what is going on. Dr. Gruccio said she will invite Mr. Nocco to the May meeting to address some of the concerns. Mrs. Barber said she met with Mr. Nocco and the Sodexo supervisor and asked them to prepare a report for the finance committee. She also told them to be prepared to attend the board meeting to discuss some concerns that the board has and their plan for next year.

Mr. DeSanto explained that the way the Sodexo contract was set up and approved by the Department of Agriculture was that the VBOE maintained all of its current employees to start the contract. He said any full time positions that became available were filled by our part time people. Eventually by attrition all of the part time employees were supposed to move into full time positions with no one losing their job. Mr. DeSanto said there should not be a need for substitutes except for an absent worker. He said if someone is missing then Sodexo is supposed to do the hiring. Mr. English asked if the substitute list is the district's substitute list. Mr. DeSanto said they should be able to access our substitute list if one of their employee's is absent. Mr. English mentioned that 18 of the 36 people on the substitute list do not even answer the phone. Ms. Diaz said all substitutes need to work at least 20 days a year in order to remain on the substitute list.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked how we got to the point of having so many desk audits taking place. Ms. Diaz said if an employee submits a desk audit, civil service will determine if they are not classified correctly. She said unfortunately since the promotions are so minimal employees go through the desk audit. Mr. DiGiorgio expressed his concern that if we get enough of these desk audits it starts building up and that will be significant money. Mr. Ulrich asked if we ever questioned the Civil Service Board. Ms. Diaz said we have done that and the person did not get promoted. She said if the supervisor and appointing authority agree with the desk audit then we cannot appeal it. Mr. Ulrich said the board can vote no on these civil service desk audit increases and force them to be challenged.

2. **Special Education Students** – Mr. Mercado asked if the student is placed by the state does it mean the state is paying the tuition. Ms. Godlewski said because the parents reside in Vineland we are required to pay that child's tuition.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Travel** – Dr. Mounier said all the professional development dates fall during the week. He asked if the personnel involved are traveling to these professional development venues during the school day. Dr. Gruccio said that is correct. Dr. Mounier asked if there are any weekend seminars. Dr. Gruccio said generally the professional development seminars are during the school day. Dr. Mounier said when we assess the costs we also have to consider the cost for substitutes. Dr. Gruccio said that is correct. Dr. Mounier noted that under field trips on page #43 no school name is listed. He said pages #41 and #42 state that there are no costs for busing because the parents are providing the transportation and asked if there are any liability issues for doing this. Mr. DeSanto said there is no problem with a parent taking his/her child but if the parent takes other children it is a problem.

5. **Submission of Grants** – Mrs. Phillips thanked all the schools for their hard work in applying for these grants.

Mr. Ulrich said Dr. Gruccio spoke to him about a technical process called a consent decree in which items are consented upon prior to voting. He said this is being done by other school districts along with city council and can help streamline our public meetings.

6. **Acceptance of Funds** – No discussion.
7. **Bids** – Mr. English expressed his concern that a local electrician lost the bid for thirty eight cents to someone out of town. He asked if the electrician will be receiving travel time to come from Williamstown. Mr. DeSanto said no that is the rate the vendor will get. Mr. Weaver said we have the certified payroll records that we verify and check against the actual time sheet. He said the vendor's time is checked and verified through his department. Mr. English asked what happens if the vendor violates the response time. Mr. Weaver said they put them on notice if they do not meet the performance criteria. Mr. English asked if a licensed mechanic is provided every time on these contracts. Mrs. Barber said when you have a local union involved and they feel there is a violation their business agent will be here. Mr. Weaver said the time sheets and certified payroll records will list the discipline and whether an apprentice, licensed plumber or helper is working. Mr. English asked Mr. Weaver if he monitors the time that it takes to complete a job. Mr. Weaver said we know what is involved with the job and have already assessed the situation. He does not always monitor the jobs but one of his supervisors does. Mr. English asked if the vendor is aware of how much they missed the bid by. Mr. Weaver said it is public information and they can request the previous bids.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he noticed that the change orders are increasing and asked if the Landis Computer Lab/Locker Replacements Project is almost complete. Mr. Weaver said he reviews all the change orders and some of them were conditions of unknown factors. He said the project is coming together and the lockers will be replaced this summer. Mr. English asked Mr. Weaver if he always signs off on the change orders. Mr. Weaver responded yes.

8. **Authorization for School Board Secretary to advertise and receive Competitive Bids for the 2012-2013 school year** - No discussion.
9. **Approval of Contracts that are on file with the Board Secretary that are Bid by the State of NJ and/or Cumberland County and/or the Educational Services Commission of Morris and/or the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission for use by Local Entities for materials and supplies** – No discussion.

10. **Approval to move High School Summer School Program from Vineland High School to Rossi Intermediate School** - Mr. English asked why we are doing this. Dr. Guccio said they thought that it would be better if we moved summer school to a different location so we can get the high school moved and cleaned in time for the new school year. Mr. English asked about the cleaning of Rossi School. Dr. Guccio said they felt it was better to have the high school cleaned first then the other buildings. Mr. English asked if summer school is just for the Vineland students. Dr. Guccio said we have accepted other students into the program. Mr. English asked if the other students who are accepted pay us. Dr. Guccio said yes but it is minimal. Mr. English expressed his concern over the cost to run summer school. Dr. Guccio said the Millville district does an online program where the students pay and take the courses online. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if this is something we could look into. Dr. Guccio said we could look into that option. Mr. English asked how many out of district students we have in the summer school program. Dr. Guccio said she does not know but would find out.
11. **Approval of Summer 2012 Programs Preschool through Grade 12** – No discussion.
12. **High School Final Exam Schedule for 2011-2012** – No discussion.
13. **Bus Evacuation Drills for March** – No discussion.
14. **Approval of Legal Fees** – Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the documents and fees are reviewed by our counsel. Mr. DeSanto said he will review these documents before Friday.
15. **Salem County Vocational Technical School Drama Contract** – Mr. English asked what Salem County has that Vineland does not. Dr. Guccio said they have a school of the arts which becomes their full time high school program. Mrs. Barber mentioned that the Cumberland County Vocational Technical School does not provide drama as a course therefore; the student can go where ever they want to go.
16. **Inter-Local Services Agreement to provide Free Influenza Vaccines to Eligible Preschool Students** – No discussion.
17. **South Jersey Hospital, Inc. Agreement for Impact Healthcare Services** – No discussion.

B. Board

1. No discussion.

Review of Bills: No discussion.

- Public Comments: Debbie Eisinger, Petway Elementary School Librarian  
Ms. Eisinger spoke in support of the school library assistants.
- Cindy Scharnagl, Retired Teacher  
Ms. Scharnagl spoke in support of the school library assistants.
- Lori DeMatte, Winslow Elementary School Librarian  
Ms. DeMatte spoke in support of the school library assistants.
- Jackie Huster, Wallace Middle School Librarian  
Ms. Huster spoke in support of the school library assistants.
- Peter Coccaro, City Council President  
Mr. Coccaro said for moral and school spirit he requested for the school board to approve the painting of Vineland Home of the Fighting Clan on one of the city water tanks.
- Mr. Ulrich asked Mr. Coccaro to put his request in writing to Dr. Gruccio.
- Committee Reports: Mr. English said discussed at the March facilities committee meeting was the two-year facility plan, tennis courts, status of South Vineland School, D’Ippolito School demolition and construction of new garage, D’Ippolito partial roof replacement and the new HVAC system for Vineland High School South. He said a special facilities committee meeting was held on April 3, 2012 and they discussed the Almond Road Center lease, possible new building purchase update and St. Francis building lease.
- Mrs. Phillips said at the curriculum committee meeting a new computer program called Genesis was discussed to replace Fusion. She said this web-based program has been in operation for about ten years and used by two hundred New Jersey districts. Mrs. Phillips said this program would be used for everything except lesson plans.
- Mr. Ulrich said the Personnel & Policy Committee will meet in May.
- Unfinished Business: No discussion.
- New Business: Mr. Mercado asked if it would be possible to have a brief presentation next week on the online summer school program. Dr. Gruccio said she will try her best.

Adjournment:           The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Barber  
Interim Board Secretary

DB:df

