

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held in the Board Room, 625 Plum Street, Vineland, New Jersey, Wednesday, May 16, 2012 at 7:10 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Ulrich presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Fanucci, Mr. Medio, Mr. Mercado and Dr. Mounier. Absent: Mrs. Phillips and Ms. Rios.

Also present: Dr. Gruccio, Interim Superintendent, Dr. Schneider, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Ludy, Board Secretary, Mrs. Barber, Interim Board Secretary, Mr. DeSanto, Solicitor, Mrs. Polof, Special Education Director, Dr. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, Ms. Diaz, Interim Personnel Director press and public. Absent: None.

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.

Flag Salute: Students from D'Ippolito Elementary School led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Special

Presentation (s): Dr. Gruccio welcomed Ms. Melanie Briggs, Advisor of the Cap 'n Dagger Club, along with the students from the Cap 'n Dagger Club who will perform a couple of numbers from their production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Ms. Briggs said the Cap 'n Dagger Club is one of the largest clubs at Vineland High School with over 70 students involved in the play. She said Cap 'n Dagger performed *Beauty and the Beast* in March and also performed at a competition in Newtown, Pennsylvania earlier this month. Ms. Briggs said the Cap 'n Dagger brought home four outstanding awards.

At this time the Cap 'n Dagger performed a couple of numbers from *Beauty and the Beast*.

Ms. Briggs said this is her first year at Vineland High School and first year directing Cap 'n Dagger. She said that it has been a privilege working with these students who have taught her a lot and she thanked them.

Dr. Schneider presented the HIB/Suspension Report for the month of April.

Resolution: Mrs. Barber read a resolution to recess into executive session on Wednesday, May 16, 2012, Wednesday, June 6, 2012 and Wednesday, June 13, 2012 regarding contract negotiations, possible litigation, property acquisition, personnel and student matters.

Motion: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. English, the resolution was passed. All Members voted “yes”.

The board recessed to executive session at 7:25 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:40 p.m.

Mr. Keith Nocco from Sodexo Food Management presented a food service update.

Mr. English said he attended a function at Winslow Elementary School at 1:00 p.m. and saw an abundance of trash cans with wasted food. He asked if there was anything that we could do. Mr. Nocco said we cannot control the food once the students receive it.

Approval of Minutes: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. English, the minutes were approved from April 18, 2012 special meeting/work session and April 25, 2012 regular meeting. All Members voted “yes” except for Mr. Medio who voted “yes” for all minutes except the April 18, 2012 minutes he “abstained.”

Report of the  
Secretary/Custodian  
Of School Monies: None.

Solicitor’s Report: None.

Public Comment on  
Agenda Items: None.

Mr. Ulrich apologized for the amount of time spent in executive session.

Recommendations:

B. Proposed for review or discussion or adoption by Board Members:

Motion: Approval of a Resolution authorizing the purchase of property known as 1350 S. W. Boulevard and authorizing the Board President and Board Secretary to execute an Agreement of Sale and other related documents on behalf of the Board.

All Members voted “yes” except for Mr. DiGiorgio who “abstained” and Dr. Mounier who voted “no.” (5-1-1)

Approval of Bills: Upon motion by Mr. Fanucci, seconded by Mr. English, the bills were approved and warrants issued for same. All Members voted “yes” (\$7,134,415.98).

Emergent Item(s)  
(with prior approval) None.

Public: Wendi Carlon-Wolfe, Parent  
Mrs. Wolfe said that earlier this afternoon she and her husband met with their attorney, Mr. Robinson, to discuss a decision made by Dr. Gruccio to recognize their son as the salutatorian, of the Vineland High School class of 2012 and to correctly modify his transcript to reflect his true class rank which is 2 of 607. She said they received a telephone call from their attorney at approximately 5:00 p.m. today informing them that he had a conversation with Mr. DiDomenico and the board is going to discuss this issue in executive session tonight and provide them with the outcome. Mrs. Wolfe is requesting for the board to share the outcome with her and her husband.

Mr. Ulrich said it was not discussed in executive session tonight and there is nothing to report.

Board Member  
Remarks: Dr. Mounier said he is disappointed that the administration has not seen fit to clarify the situation regarding the status of class ranks. He does not understand how we can declare someone to be a valedictorian and issue a class rank of three. Dr. Mounier said we are all aware of how this situation arose through a series of missteps. He said it is not fair and should be corrected.

Dr. Guccio said she spoke with Mr. DiDomenico tonight and she told him that she had no problem changing the transcript but wanted to speak to the board president after the meeting tonight. She said if Mr. Ulrich has no problem with it she would make a call tomorrow and have it added to the transcript. Dr. Mounier asked if this will happen or not. Mr. Ulrich said it is a legal matter and should be worked out by the attorneys. Dr. Mounier said the students involved deserve to have a resolution because this has been dragging on for a year. Dr. Guccio said that is what the plan is for tomorrow morning. Dr. Mounier said what is even more unsettling is if this is what goes on with respect to something that is behind the scenes until it becomes a crisis, what other crisis's await us in the future. Dr. Guccio said these things should have been handled at the high school level and ended up on her desk. She said they have done everything in their power to address each situation. Dr. Mounier said we should not resort to past practice in a manner that simply suits us when we are seeking cover from criticism. Dr. Guccio said those decisions were made several years ago by the high school administration and when we got a new superintendent she changed the way she felt about the situation. Dr. Mounier believes it is disingenuous to say this is a recent event or a matter that deals only with the high school. He said this comes right up the administrative line to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum as far as he is concerned. Dr. Mounier said if this issue is resolved he is happy. He said that he does not like to be criticized as a member of the board for actions that do not have anything to do with the board. Dr. Guccio said no one from her office criticized the board but tried to do what they thought was right. She said this decision has not been made in the past by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum nor did they have any input at all in the course selection book. Dr. Guccio said the rules change as each year occurs.

Mr. DiGiorgio agrees with Dr. Mounier regarding this matter. He hopes that we as a district and board can tighten up our policies so there is no opportunity for this situation to occur again. He said that he voted against some clubs tonight at Veterans Memorial School not because he is against any of the clubs but is interested in the process of how those who proctor the clubs are determined. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the professional appointments are advertised. Mrs. Barber said it is part of our responsibility once they are appointed.

Mr. Fanucci welcomed and wished the best to Dr. Rossi and Ms. Ludy. He thanked Mrs. Barber and Dr. Schneider for their time and services. He also thanked the Cap 'n Dagger club and students from D'Ippolito Elementary School.

Mr. English agreed with comments made by Dr. Mounier tonight. He said it is a shame because these students work hard and are the ones that suffer. Mr. English sends his thoughts and prayers to the Bleistine family because their daughter is fighting for her life.

Report/Remarks by  
Board President:

Mr. Ulrich congratulated the Cap 'n Dagger students and advisors on a great production. He welcomed Ms. Ludy and Dr. Rossi. Mr. Ulrich agreed with many of the comments made by Dr. Mounier. He said the GPA issue is an administrative issue not a board issue. Mr. Ulrich said they expected their management team to follow board policy to come up with a solution that will work for our district. He said it is a situation that he hopes he never sees again in his term on the board. Mr. Ulrich sent his prayers out to Nancee Bleistine's family.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Ms. Cherie Ludy the new business administrator and Dr. Joseph Rossi the new personnel director. She wished Mr. Medio a happy birthday. Dr. Gruccio thanked Mrs. Barber and Ms. Diaz for all their help.

Mrs. Barber said on the day that she retired from the Cumberland County Technical Education Center Dr. Gruccio came and asked her if she would be willing to come over and help out at Vineland. She said this has been a great group to work with and wished Ms. Ludy and Dr. Rossi good luck.

Dr. Gruccio said everybody is here for our students. She said we worked very hard to come up with a compromise that is fair and equitable putting the students first. Dr. Gruccio said nobody should be pointing blame at the board or any particular person. She said it is her hope that Option 2 will alleviate these situations. Dr. Gruccio said they will be discussing the lunch situation with a committee at the high school along with the situation that we are currently dealing with. She said when you are a mother and you have a child fighting for their life it puts these type of things in perspective in her mind. Dr. Gruccio asked everyone to keep the Bleistine family in their prayers.

Mr. English asked if an exit interview can be done for Mrs. Barber and Dr. Schneider. Mr. Ulrich said we cannot be involved in exit interviews. Mr. English asked if they will be giving one. Dr. Gruccio said she will be happy to do that. Mrs. Barber said she along with Dr. Schneider have discussed this. She said they could give praise and offer suggestions to make things better.

Adjournment: The Board adjourned the meeting by voice vote at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darlene Barber  
Interim Board Secretary

DB:df



