

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, August 4, 2010 at 7:55 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Franceschini presiding and the following members present: Mr. DeWinne, Mr. English, Mr. Fanucci, Dr. Mounier, Mrs. Phillips, Ms. Rios, and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. DiGiorgio.

Also present: Dr. Banks, Superintendent, Dr. Guccio and Mrs. 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 Dr. Mary Guccio, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction along with Mr. Ross Stanger, Supervisor of Social Studies & Library and Ms. Andrea Evans, Supervisor of Language Arts to give a presentation on the Learners with Exceptional Abilities Program (LEAP).

Dr. Guccio said LEAP is the Learners with Exceptional Abilities Program. She said in the past we had LEAP teachers in our schools that worked with students in the areas of language arts and mathematics and provided the grade for those students. With our recent budget cuts we have not only lost our LEAP teachers but also lost everything that was instituted when we became an Abbott district. Dr. Guccio said the past two or three years our classroom teachers have been the people who have to take the time to address and challenge the gifted students within their own classroom. She said parent meetings were held and there were two major concerns. Parents felt that things were not being addressed in a consistent manner both by teachers and schools. The second concern was there was a sense that we were not providing opportunities for the gifted students since we could not pull them out on a regular basis. Dr. Guccio said we took the two concerns and met with the principals to try to come up with a variety of ways to help provide more for our students. She wanted to publicly thank Ms. Evans and Mr. Stanger for the many hours they put in to the power point presentation. Ms. Evans presented the LEAP Program goals, identification, components along with teacher professional development and parental involvement.

Continued

Mrs. Phillips asked what will grades 3-5 miss in the classroom when they are pulled out once every 6 days. Ms. Evans said the goal was for the students to be pulled out the same time as the students who are receiving RTI services. Mrs. Phillips said it will rotate every six days and they will not miss the same thing. Ms. Evans responded yes. Mrs. Phillips asked who teaches the students when they are pulled out. Ms. Evans said she is not certain because not everyone has their scheduling completely done.

Dr. Mounier asked for an explanation on rotation. Ms. Evans said in the elementary schools the students have a special area every day such as art and music. The schedule is set up day one through six not Monday through Friday. Dr. Mounier asked what is RTI. Ms. Evans said Response To Intervention.

Mr. DeWinne wanted to thank everyone who put this plan together on behalf of Mr. DiGiorgio and himself.

Ms. Evans said everyone from the school administrators to teachers helped put together this plan.

Mr. Stanger mentioned that the documents that were given out tonight on the LEAP Program will be shared regularly at teacher trainings and grade level meetings. He said we will continue to add to it as we go along as the program is developed more fully. Mr. Stanger said we hope to continue to get feedback and work with the feedback to improve the program as we move forward.

Comments by

Board Solicitor: None.

Dr. Banks thanked Dr. Gruccio, Ms. Evans and Mr. Stanger for the hard work that they did on enhancing the LEAP Program.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – Dr. Mounier questioned the dramatic increase in salary for the new math supervisor and payroll supervisor. Ms. Greenfield said it is contractual. Dr. Mounier asked why we need nine guidance counselors for the summer. Ms. Greenfield explained that they are for different days and hours.

Dr. Mounier said the spreadsheets need to be changed to accurately explain the contents so he can understand what is being done with the least amount of trouble and time. Ms. Greenfield said that she will discuss this with accounting. Dr. Mounier questioned why the assistants at Sabater, Durand and Landis Schools all have different rates. Ms. Greenfield said that is their daily rate and it was agreed that these assistant principals would have ten days during the summer to work.

Mr. Ulrich wanted to clear up that whenever a district employee who is on a step in the guide gets promoted they move from a subordinate employee to a supervisor on the first step of the VASA guide. He said this is not anything that can be controlled.

Dr. Mounier said we should all be looking forward to getting a 74% increase in our pay. Mr. Franceschini said it is a different story if you get a promotion.

2. **Substitute Personnel Hourly Rates** – Mr. Ulrich mentioned that the rate could be increased if there are problems.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Submission of Grants** – No discussion.
5. **Acceptance of Funds** – No discussion.
6. **Bids** – Dr. Mounier said the Children’s Literacy Initiative document appears to be incomplete. He said it contains grammatical errors and he would think that people concerned with literacy would know the difference between using the words that and which. Also at the bottom of the page it says that it is not possible to solicit bids from other organizations because this is a continuation from a previous year. Dr. Mounier said whoever writes these things should spend a bit more time proofing them. He asked what is the teacher’s evaluation of the program. Ms. Evans explained that there are two questions on the evaluation. The first piece is what did you find beneficial and the second is what could be more helpful in the future. Dr. Mounier said that Vineland has the reputation for delivering excellent instruction in this regard. Dr. Mounier asked for an explanation on model classrooms. Ms. Evans said because the cost of Children’s Literacy training is substantial one of the things that was developed as a way to continue sustaining all of the things that the teachers learned was to develop in each school in Kindergarten through third grade a model teacher. What that means is that teacher received additional professional development, attended additional meetings and is learning more of the reading and writing teaching process to become a literacy leader at their grade level. Dr. Mounier asked if we are looking at 35 model classrooms coming up this year. Ms. Evans said yes.

Mr. Ulrich said his wife is a first grade teacher who has participated in the Children's Literacy Initiative training and has found it extremely helpful. The resources are the greatest thing that she has gained from it. Mr. Ulrich said he thinks that we have a lot of resources available and the central depository can be our intranet.

Dr. Mounier questioned why there are blank lines on the consultant tracking form. Ms. Evans said currently there is no requisition in the system because this needs to be approved first. Dr. Mounier said this consultant tracking form contains a grammatical error which is a split infinitive so that is a no no for readers. Dr. Mounier asked for an explanation on the Verbal Behavior Network Training agreement. Mrs. Polof explained that Verbal Behavior Network is a company that trains teachers and works with staff for children of autism. Dr. Mounier asked if the services are performed on six dates for three hours. Mrs. Polof said the six dates are individual parent training nights throughout the year. Dr. Mounier said this program is costing us \$114,000 and asked if he is the only one that feels this is excessive. Mr. Franceschini asked Mrs. Polof if she feels these consultations are necessary. Mrs. Polof said yes if we are going to maintain these children in our district with the severity of their needs this is a necessary service. Dr. Mounier said the Commission of the Blind Contract does not specify total costs. Mrs. Polof explained that it is based on the service that is given and there are four levels of service that each child may receive. Dr. Mounier asked how do we determine what the total cost to the district is if we do not know in advance. Mr. Franchetta said usually these students are identified through their IEP and generally they receive the same level of service year after year. Dr. Mounier said it concerns him whenever someone is presented with an open ended situation because our resources are not open ended. He said if we do not know what we are getting in to how can we decide what we want to do. Mrs. Polof said that she believes it is a service that the students are legally entitled to and we are responsible to provide them with the service. Mr. DeWinne asked where the money would come from if we had an influx of these students. Mr. Franchetta said through budget transfers and the IDEA Grant. Dr. Mounier said he does not want to give the impression of being an entirely hard hearted person but this district is facing some very serious financial problems and we need to consider the directions. Mr. Fanucci told Dr. Mounier that he may agree with him on certain things but we are talking about special circumstances for special children that have special disabilities. He does not know how you can even come up with a cap for a child that cannot see, hear or has a special need. Dr. Mounier said his only question was that there is no total cost specified and what can we expect in terms of total cost. Mrs. Polof said she can give a total cost of what it is today for next week. Dr. Mounier also questioned the total cost of the Bancroft Neurohealth Cares consultations.

Mrs. Polof explained that Bancroft Cares is a company that services and trains the staff on how to follow through on the practices for a severely autistic child. She said they come about four or five times a year to do the training depending whether or not new staff are in the program. Dr. Mounier asked why the services are provided after hours. Mrs. Polof said because that has been a decided factor for some children with autism. Dr. Mounier asked if this service is in the home. Mrs. Polof responded yes. Dr. Mounier mentioned that last year based upon the information that was presented Dr. Buss Mingin billed the district \$175,512.00. He said it looks like Dr. Mingin is receiving \$1,050 per day. Dr. Mounier asked what are other staff psychologists and social workers doing during this time that justifies paying Dr. Mingin this kind of money. Mrs. Polof explained that Dr. Mingin is in our district four and a half days a week and services all our BD classes. Dr. Mounier asked why we do not hire Dr. Mingin for \$90,000 to work full time and we will save a bundle. Mrs. Polof said if that is something that you would like to pursue then that is something she would try to do. Dr. Mounier said it seems to him that we are using a consultant to basically perform routine service and that is the most expensive foolish way to use consultants. Mrs. Polof said he is not doing routine service he is doing services over and beyond what our social workers do. Mr. Franceschini asked if we receive any reimbursement for Dr. Mingin's evaluations such as grants. Mrs. Polof said the money for Cunningham came out of the ARRA funding. She said the remainder of the funding comes from the IDEA Grant or from the categorical special education budget, which is separate from the school budget. Mr. DeWinne said because Dr. Mingin is in the district so much do we still have to pay him for travel. Mrs. Polof said she does not think he has ever billed for travel but will look into it. Mr. Ulrich asked if it would be more practical to look at possibly hiring an individual with his qualifications rather than pay the per diem rate. Dr. Banks said it is worth investigating. Mr. Franceschini mentioned that some of this is generated by grants and if the funds are not there one year you will have a full time staff member that would have to be laid off. Dr. Banks said the unknown piece is how many students we end up having to service or what our needs are and that can change during the course of the year. Mrs. Polof said our goal is not to keep a person on staff forever. She said our goal is to have the behaviorist train the staff and develop the program so it functions without the need for a full time behavioral therapist. Mr. DeWinne asked what our back up plan is if Dr. Mingin is away. Mrs. Polof said we have another person who is familiar with the program to come in along with some teachers. Dr. Mounier asked if the total cost for the Clarke School is \$136,400.00. Mrs. Polof said that is correct. Dr. Mounier asked if this was just a bad copy. Dr. Banks said it is probably the way it scanned. Dr. Mounier said the nature of the service for Clark Schools is not specified. Mrs. Polof said they provide aural instruction to young children who have cochlea implants. Dr. Mounier asked if the award for the Life Skills Suite was determined by competitive bid. Mr. Franchetta responded yes.

7. **Travel** – No discussion.
8. **2010-2011 Bell Schedule** – Dr. Mounier asked if this reverts to the previous schedule. Dr. Banks said at the high school for one year. She said the reason for this schedule is on single session and delayed opening days some of the buildings were out of compliance with the required four hours of instruction.
9. **South Jersey Healthcare Agreement** - No discussion.
10. **Joint Transportation Agreement** – Dr. Mounier asked what is the meaning of BOVE. Mr. Franchetta said it is the vocational school. Dr. Mounier asked if this has to do with a homeless person in Millville. Mr. Franchetta responded yes.
11. **Bayada Nurse Contract** – No discussion.
12. **Little Smiles New Jersey Agreement** – Dr. Mounier asked if this is something that is funded out of Washington. Mr. Franchetta said yes this is at no cost to us. Dr. Mounier asked if these dental appointments are untaken on weekends. Mr. Franchetta said they are done during school time. Dr. Mounier asked if this service is basically a welfare program that would be covered under some other program. Mr. Franchetta said he is not sure we have been doing this for years. Dr. Mounier asked who qualifies. Mrs. Elliott said other districts do participate in this and it is under a variety of different agencies depending on what part of the county you are in. Dr. Mounier asked what the jeopardy is to a child's education if they are being hauled off to this appointment. Mrs. Elliott said the jeopardy is the same if the parent were to take them out for a dental or doctor's appointment.
13. **Community Health Care, Inc. Agreement** – No discussion.
14. **Gloucester County Vocational Technical School District Contract** – Dr. Mounier asked if these students are learning performing arts. Dr. Banks said this is an intensive program. Dr. Mounier asked if these students are at this school the entire week. Mr. Ulrich said that is where they attend school.
15. **Payment of Legal Fees** – Dr. Mounier asked what the basis of this claim is. Mr. Franchetta said if any employee is charged of a crime and found innocent we are responsible for their legal fees. He said this is an employee who had an accident. Mr. Ulrich asked if it were a motor vehicle accident and did they receive a citation. Mr. Franchetta said yes.

16. **Approval of new and/or revised curricula** – Dr. Mounier said he likes the look and direction of these items. He expressed his concern that we have advanced College English for ninth graders and they are not college students. Dr. Mounier feels the name should be changed to reflect what is actually going on in advanced English or whatever. Mr. Franceschini said he does not follow Dr. Mounier at all on this. Dr. Mounier asked if a ninth grade student is a college student. Dr. Banks said the course is to prepare them. Dr. Mounier said it should be College Prep English or something like that. Dr. Mounier said it is an improper title in terms of the semantics of it. He said the descriptions include grammatical errors that should be eliminated there is improper hyphenation and lack of hyphenation where it belongs. Mr. Franceschini asked Dr. Mounier if he is correcting the superintendent. Dr. Banks she does not see what the point is or what Dr. Mounier is questioning. Dr. Mounier said the point is that if we are talking about literacy and College English we should use the language correctly. He said for example the words due to and because of are not interchangeable. Dr. Mounier said they are different constructions and they have different meanings. Dr. Mounier said under Social Studies Grade 4 there is reference to Lenni Lenape and that term is obsolete now. He said Lenni is a Delaware word that means the real, the true or the only. Dr. Mounier said it is like saying real men don't eat quiche. He said that is a carryover from a previous time is technically inaccurate and should be stricken or amended. Mr. Franceschini asked Dr. Mounier if he just saw this or did he see it a couple of days ago. Dr. Mounier said he is making reference to it now and reads these things when he gets them. He said if we are going to present documents that are available to the public they should be technically correct. Dr. Mounier said a series of disciplines are listed for Grade 4 Social Studies and he suggested introducing the concept of archeology. He said archeology is critical to the maintenance of our dwindling archeological heritage. Dr. Mounier said we need to educate people at an early age about archeology and its place. He said there are several typographical errors, omissions and grammatical mistakes that need to be revised. Dr. Gruccio said these are things that are in the high school course selection book and have been in place for a long time. She said that she does not have time to proof read the entire book and that is where they were taken from. Dr. Mounier said we must not perpetuate the errors. He said as a courtesy he can proof it and send the revised copy. Dr. Mounier said if we are talking about education and we want to present to the world that we know something about education we should use the language correctly. He said we ought to have documents with proper headings on the spread sheets, and calculations should be correct and clean. Dr. Mounier said the concept is really very basic. He said there is no reason to dwell on it any longer but there are lots of little mistakes and any person that reads and edits things with a blue or red pencil would scribble on it. Dr. Mounier said these sorts of errors should be cleaned up and not perpetuated.

Mr. English asked if a student started with College English would the next step be Advanced College English. Dr. Guccio said all of our students now have to begin at a college level. She said this year we added advanced college courses for those students who move at a quicker pace.

Ms. Rios asked if College Algebra and College English were approved prior to this. Dr. Guccio said yes. Ms. Rios asked if they will be taught at a slower pace. Dr. Guccio said they will move at the same pace that we have been doing and the advanced courses will move at a quicker pace.

Mr. Franceschini asked what happens to the child who cannot keep up with the regular college course. Dr. Guccio said that is what we are obligated to do based on the state guidelines.

Mr. English said we are still not addressing the children who will not be attending college. He asked if general courses exist anymore. Dr. Banks said no they do not exist anymore. Mr. English asked if a student in eighth grade has already taken algebra do they have to take it again. Dr. Guccio said they do not have to take it again.

17. **First Reading of Policies #8420, #5111, #6360, #6422 and Regulation #8420.1 –**
No discussion.

18. **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) & No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Review and Corrective Action Plan –** No discussion.

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: Mr. DeWinne asked what the \$109,000 payment to Keystone is for. Mr. Franchetta said it is probably for the annual renewal.

Public Comments: None.

Committee Reports: Mr. Ulrich said at tonight's Personnel & Policy Committee meeting Dr. Banks presented the Math Supervisor candidate. He said this individual is a nine year veteran of the district and has been a math coach for the past three years. Mr. Ulrich said he seems very enthusiastic, definitely qualified and the committee would recommend his appointment next week. He said they also reviewed different policies.

Mr. Ulrich said the committee also reviewed the facility rental agreement and decided to recommend to Dr. Banks the increase of the rental fee per hour by \$3.00. He said Mrs. Elliott is going to propose a policy regarding the student exchange program. Mr. Ulrich said the approved Operating Procedures Manual is a state approved cookie cutter policy. He said the district is able to modify that policy to specific nuances within our district.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: None.

Mr. Franceschini congratulated Mr. Ulrich on his promotion to Captain in the Vineland Police Department last week.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA
Board Secretary

KJF:df