

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, September 3, 2008 at 7:03 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Giordano presiding and the following members present: Mr. Bernardini, Mr. DeWinne, Mr. Evans, Mr. Fanucci, Mr. Franceschini, Ms. Rios and Mr. Spinelli. Absent: Mr. Ulrich.

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

Mr. Giordano 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: None.

Comments by

Board Solicitor: None.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **Personnel Items** – Mr. Giordano asked if this is all the personnel items. Ms. Greenfield said there will be additions next week. Mr. Giordano asked where we stand with personnel for the opening of school. Ms. Greenfield said we have all of our vacancies filled either by a regular employee or substitute. Mr. Giordano asked if there are many substitutes. Ms. Greenfield said there are some math, science, Spanish, bilingual and special education vacancies. Mr. Giordano asked if interviews will be forthcoming or are these positions still being advertised. Ms. Greenfield said math and science are very hard to fill and she will be recruiting at a couple colleges in October.

Mr. Spinelli asked if the substitutes in these vacant positions are permanent substitutes. Ms. Greenfield said they are long term substitutes who are getting a daily rate.

Mr. Franceschini asked if the math and science substitutes have any background in these subjects. Ms. Greenfield said a couple of them do and are preparing to take the Praxis. Mr. Franceschini asked if the substitutes are required to do lesson plans. Ms. Greenfield responded yes.

Mr. Giordano asked what recruiting at the colleges entails. Ms. Greenfield said she informs the college or university what subject area she would like to interview for and receives the resumes beforehand.

2. **Placement of Special Education Students** – No discussion.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Submission of Grants** – Mr. Spinelli asked if these are all grants that do not cost the district anything. Mr. Ottinger said every grant is being checked.
5. **Acceptance of funds** – No discussion.
6. **Travel** – No discussion.
7. **Early Childhood Program 2007-2008 Review Results** - Mr. Franchetta explained that annually the state audits this program to make sure we are serving the number of students reported. The state also reviews the costs and expenditures that we incur. Mr. Franchetta said there were no findings.
8. **Vacation Day Law Suit Payment** – Mr. Spinelli asked if these individuals are added in to this picture. Mr. Franchetta explained that these individuals are outside of the class action lawsuit. He said they come forward with their individual claim and after it is validated we pay them directly.

Mr. Giordano asked if these individuals are retired. Mr. Franchetta said they probably retired or left a couple of years ago and are within the seven year window of time.

Mr. Bernardini said he was approached by two individuals who said they applied for this payment. He asked why he has not seen their names listed. Mr. Franchetta said if they are part of the class action then they would fall under the lawyer that represents them.
9. **Tentative Tuition Charges 2008-2009** – No discussion.
10. **CCEC Joint Transportation Agreement** – Mr. Spinelli asked who gets this busing. Mr. Franchetta said Project Strive students.
11. **Salem County Special Services Agreement** – No discussion.
12. **GED Testing Program Contract Addendum** – Mr. Giordano asked if this has to be approved every year. Mr. Franchetta explained that there has been a change in the program and this is an addendum to change the method of payment.

13. **Catapult Learning Agreement** – Mr. Giordano asked for an overview on this item. Mr. Franchetta explained that items #11 and #13 are related. He said we are required to provide specific non-public services to any school district within the boundaries of the city limits. Mr. Franchetta said the state gives us the money and we are required to contract with whom ever the private school wants. Mr. Giordano asked if this is the same principal as the busing. Mr. Franchetta responded yes.

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: Mr. DeWinne questioned a couple invoices and asked if we are allowed to enter into maintenance service agreements. Mr. Weaver said we have entered into a preventative maintenance (pm) service agreement with Sass-Moore. Mr. DeWinne asked what we are transferring money from the reserve account for. Mr. Franchetta explained that the reserve account is to refund the postage meters.

Public Comments: None

Committee Reports: Mr. Spinelli said discussed at the Finance Committee meeting was the photographer issue. Mr. Giordano said he remembers the last time this was discussed we were going to leave everything in place the way it was for this academic year. He said effective next school year the recommendation would be to turn this over to the PTO's. Mr. Spinelli said the problem is that in two weeks we have photographers wanting to come in to take pictures and the vendors are confused. He said the photographers were told by the principals to put the picture taking on hold. Mr. Spinelli asked if we want to go forward and notify the photographers that we are getting out of the business. Mr. Ottinger said it does not matter to him but the liability factor seems to be a reason for us not to be involved in it. Mr. Spinelli agrees but feels the time factor comes into play. Mr. Giordano said a memo should be issued to the principals to clarify this issue. Mr. Franceschini feels if this is left up to the PTO there will be a lot of students who do not get their picture taken. Mr. Spinelli said this is an administrative decision on how they want to deal with vendors. He thinks the advice from the solicitor was to get out of the business. Mr. Ottinger said based on the liability and safety issues it is better for us not to be involved in this.

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Mr. Giordano asked if the PTO handled the pictures, would we be free of liability. Mr. DeSanto said the PTO's are separate non-profit organizations. He does not believe that once we notify the principals to notify the vendors that we have any further involvement. Mr. DeSanto said if we wanted to try to protect ourselves as much as possible then we should not refer or recommend the vendor to the PTO. He said this will no longer be a school arranged function. Mr. Spinelli said that he presumed that we are going to do it this year. Mr. Ottinger said yes if we are liable next year then we are liable this year. He said when this was not an issue and no one was questioning whether or not there was a potential liability here we never had a problem. Mr. Spinelli asked when the memo would go out. Mr. Ottinger said tomorrow. Mr. DeSanto said the principals have no authority to contract so these arrangements are not contracts that the board is obligated to. He said we have had this long standing arrangement with local vendors and they should be treated fairly. Mr. DeSanto said this is truly an administrative issue under the jurisdiction of the superintendent. Mr. Spinelli said the second issue discussed at the Finance Committee meeting was the vendors that were appointed after the reorganization. He said they discussed surveying district employees to see if they had any ideas on how to help the district save money.

Mr. Bernardini said discussed at the Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting was the track re-surfacing, the cracked concrete pad around the high jump and curbing around the pole vault that Don Robbins said needed done. He said the refurbishing of the Clarence Koch Memorial done by Frank Romano is complete. Mr. Bernardini said the new score board is complete for the softball field. The Vineland High School North pool work has begun and the contractor was scheduled to start around August 20. Mr. Bernardini said a meeting was held on Tuesday, August 26 with the School Development Authority, City of Vineland and school district to discuss the proposed water pumping station on site. All the building moves have taken place by the custodian staff and everything is ready to go according to Mr. Weaver. Mr. Bernardini said the track work has been delayed because the surface we are using has been back ordered from the manufacturer. He said they also discussed having security at the track all night. Mr. Bernardini said they will have a sign installed prohibiting skate boarding and bikes. Mr. Bernardini said that according to Mr. Weaver the HVAC at Mennies School is in working capacity. He said Johnstone School has a new entrance and exit and new markings will be put in because the parking on Brewster Road is absolutely crazy.

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Mr. Bernardini said that we are going to resubmit the HVAC and all the other Health and Safety items that were denied at Vineland High School South. Mr. Ottinger mentioned that the fire alarm systems in a few of the schools are old and need to be corrected.

Mr. Franceschini asked if the security cameras are working in all the schools. Mr. Dantine said he has Mr. Provenzano check them every once in a while. Mr. Ottinger asked if all the cameras are working. Mr. Dantine said he does not think they all are working but Mr. Provenzano has not indicated cameras that were not. Mr. Ottinger said it seems like every time we have a problem that is the camera not working. He said that he shares Mr. Franceschini's concern because there were histories of incidents where we needed the cameras and they were not working. Mr. Dantine said he will contact Mr. Provenzano tomorrow about this. Mr. Bernardini requested for Mr. Dantine to contact Mr. Ottinger after speaking to Mr. Provenzano about the cameras.

Mr. Spinelli announced that a Finance Committee meeting has been scheduled for Monday, September 15.

Mr. Franceschini said a special Personnel Policy & Committee meeting was held yesterday concerning early childhood and the district hiring process. He said discussed was the hiring of the supervisor and assistant principal for the early childhood program. Mr. Franceschini said he is recommending the posting of the supervisor position and putting the assistant principal on hold. He said we need to be consistent with the district hiring process so the employees know when there is a posting. Mr. Franceschini said discussed at the Curriculum & Technology meeting was how the high school was doing. He said it is a challenge but thinks things are rolling along. Mr. Franceschini said they also discussed academic rigor and how it will be maintained for students who can not keep up with the college level.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Mr. Fanucci he spoke to Mr. Dantine prior to the meeting regarding the on-line system we have for the teachers. He said that he has been assured that everyone is on top of the technology and it will be ready by Monday. Mr. Fanucci thanked Mr. Ottinger and Mr. Dantine for the updates and looks forward to everything working.

Mr. DeWinne said he has great memories of the first day of school and it is a day where many lifelong friendships being. He wished everyone well and hopes the start of school goes as smoothly as possible.

Ms. Rios asked if open house has always been held during the day. Mr. Ottinger said yes. She asked if it could possibly be held at night for people who are unable to take off work. Mr. Ottinger said that is an excellent point and we can definitely offer a night for them to do that.

Mr. Spinelli wished everyone good luck and a good school year.

Mr. Franceschini mentioned that tomorrow his son will be starting kindergarten. He said as we start the new year we should remember that students, parents, teachers and the board are all in this together and if we keep that in mind we will be very successful. Mr. Franceschini said if there is anyway he could help someone to please call him.

Mr. Bernardini wished everyone luck tomorrow and hopes everyone gives the small learning communities a chance to progress and grow.

Mr. Ottinger thanked all of the employees in the district. He said he appreciates Dr. Figgs efforts in deciding who goes to what school. Mr. Ottinger commented that he has never met a more fair and conscientious person as Dr. Figgs. Mr. Ottinger said there as been an enormous undertaking at the high school and the staff has done a marvelous job. He is confident that everything is going to turn out ok. Mr. Ottinger wants everyone to know that in his heart he believes that the nine through twelve situation in both buildings was the best thing that we could have done for our children. Mr. Ottinger said on behalf of the board and himself he wants all of the employees to know that every thing they do is appreciated. He thanked the board for their support along with all of the employees and public for sticking by us.

Mr. Spinelli mentioned that it was a great turn out at the high school orientation.

Mr. Giordano wished everyone a great, productive, safe year. He said what ever the staff in this district does will yield nothing less then positive results.

Adjournment: The Board adjourned to executive session at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA
Board Secretary

KJF:df