

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, December 4, 2013 at 7:00 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Ms. Morello, Dr. Mounier and Ms. Rios. Absent: Mr. Bongiovanni and Mr. Ulrich.

Also present: Dr. Gruccio, Superintendent, Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Polof, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Schectman, Board Secretary, Dr. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, press and public. Absent: None.

Mr. Medio 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:

Resolution:

Mr. Schectman read a resolution to convene into executive session for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10-4-12. Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees, whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting. The nature of discussion is the withholding of increments on three employees. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) may be made public at a time when the Board Attorney advises the Board of Education that the disclosure of the discussion will not detrimentally affect any right, interest or duty of the School District or any other entity or person with respect to said discussion.

Motion:

Upon motion by Mr. English, seconded by Ms. Morello, the resolution was passed. All Members voted "yes."

Special

Presentations:

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mr. Wayne Weaver, Executive Director of Physical Facilities, to honor Mr. Wayne Mesiano.

Mr. Weaver said Mr. Wayne Mesiano has donated twelve mirror panels to the new weight room, which will be a great addition to our new facility. He thanked Mr. Mesiano for the donation.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mrs. Debbie Bechtel, Principal of Winslow Elementary School, to recognize one of her students.

Mrs. Bechtel said Sarah Hullihen a 3rd grade student at Winslow Elementary School won first place in a NFL Play 60 Contest that she entered this summer online. She said Sarah had to create a game that would require children to play outside for 60 minutes a day. Mrs. Bechtel said the game Sarah created was called Make it to the Top, which is all about exercising, playing and having a good time. She said that Winslow School will be having an evening of NFL Play 60 thanks to Sarah's creative mind.

Dr. Gruccio congratulated Sarah.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Dr. Davis, Principal of Wallace Middle School, to discuss the Wallace Rain Garden Team.

Dr. Davis said it gives her great pleasure to recognize and honor a few important people at Wallace School for helping with the design and installation of the Wallace School Rain Garden. She explained that a rain garden is a shallow depression that allows rain and snow melt to be collected and seep naturally into the ground. Dr. Wallace presented a certificate of appreciation to Mrs. Shonda Johnston who was the major think tank in this school initiative. She also recognized and introduced all participants of the Rain Garden Team

Dr. Gruccio said the project turned out beautiful and thanked everyone for their hard work.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mr. Mike Garcia and Mr. Glen Ortman from Ford Scott & Associates, LLC to present the 2012-2013 Audit. Mr. Garcia said this audit is for the period that ended June 30, 2013. He said we are all aware that there is a new Business Administrator in place and these findings/ recommendations being discussed tonight are relative to the prior Business Administrator. Mr. Garcia said a large part of the audit is determining whether or not the district is following the rules and regulations that the State and Federal Government impose on school districts. He said when exceptions are found they are required to write a finding and recommendation.

Mr. Garcia said in the prior year there were nine findings and recommendations, this year there are five. He said after the board accepts the report there will be a corrective action plan that the Business Administrator will produce and the board will approve.

Mr. Garcia reviewed the following findings in the Auditor's Management Report (AMR):

Finding No. 1: On numerous purchase orders selected for testing, the required Business Administrator approval signature was completed by someone other than the Business Administrator. The individuals would sign the Business Administrator's name, not their own. In some cases the individuals would add their initials below the signature to indicate signing on behalf of the Business Administrator.

Finding No. 2: The District was unable to provide an analysis of which payroll withholdings were unpaid as of June 30, 2013, or at any other time during the year.

Finding No. 3: The District issued a retro pay to certain employees on June 20, 2013; however, no health benefit contributions were withheld from employees as required by the statute.

Finding No. 4: Material adjusting journal entries were required to be made to the general ledger to properly reflect financial statements free from material misstatement. The majority of the required adjustments were related to Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable.

Finding No. 5: On some occasions student activity funds receipts were not deposited in a timely manner and support was missing for some of the disbursements selected for testing.

Mr. Garcia said the most important schedule in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is the Budgetary Comparison Schedule for the general fund, which begins on page 55. He said the first page lists the revenues and subsequent pages give the same information for the expenditures. Mr. Garcia said the total amount of surplus the district has on hand as of June 30, 2013 is \$24,798,057.46. He said some of that money is already spoken for and he reviewed each of the components of the surplus. Mr. Garcia said he is happy to answer any questions the board may have.

Mr. Jennings questioned Finding #1 in regards to purchase orders not being signed by the Business Administrator. Mr. Garcia said the Business Administrator is authorized to sign and approve purchase orders. He said there may be times when the Business Administrator is out of the district. Mr. Garcia said if the Board chooses to allow the Assistant Business Administrator to sign and approve purchase orders in the Business Administrator's absence that is allowable. He said they should sign their name so there is no confusion as to which individual is responsible for the approval of a specific item. Mr. Jennings asked if there is a legal document that supports the signature of the person who can sign. Mr. DeSanto said that would be done by board action and a formal resolution at a public meeting. Mr. Garcia said in reviewing these purchase orders it was determined that the payments were proper it is just a control issue.

Mr. Jennings said he thought the 2% cap was a tax that could be levied on the tax payers. Mr. Garcia said there are two 2% items. He said one is the amount you can increase your tax levy to from one year to the next and the other is the fund balance cap.

Mr. Garcia said it has been a pleasure working with the district and if the board has any comments or concerns please feel free to contact them.

Mr. English asked Mr. Garcia if he underestimated anything on the bid when he went through the audit process. Mr. Garcia said the general ledger issue was a finding in the previous year and they were informed by the previous Business Administrator that it had been resolved. He said that was the only thing that surprised them. Mr. English asked Mr. Garcia about the length of time it took to do the audit. Mr. Garcia said we were pretty close and the time difference was not significant.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB Report), Suspension Report, Cunningham Alternative School Report/Average Daily Attendance – Mr. English asked if the suspensions have gone up at Vineland High School North because there is an additional principal. Mr. Medio said Ms. Polof will give that information to the Board at next week's meeting. Mr. English also requested to know how many of the suspensions have to do with the dress code.

Comments by
Board Solicitor: None.

Public Comments
on Agenda Items: None.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **PERSONNEL**

1.1 **Personnel Items** – No discussion.

2. **PROCEDURES & OPERATIONS**

2.1 **Travel** – a. Field Trips, b. District - Mr. Jennings asked for an explanation on the travel for Petway School. Ms. Morello explained that it is a special education program for life skills where the students go out in the world to practice social interactions so they can function independently in a real world setting. Mr. Jennings asked about the Wallace School travel. Ms. Godlewski explained that it structured learning experience done through the state for teachers. Mr. Jennings asked what is non-structured learning. Dr. Gruccio said she will have an answer tomorrow.

2.2 **Resolution approving dates, times and place of Open Work Sessions and Regular Meetings** – No discussion.

2.3 **Bus Evacuation Drills November** – Mr. Jennings asked if we are doing what we need to do because the forms are all filled out differently. Dr. Gruccio said she believes we are doing everything correctly but will find out why there are variations with the forms.

Ms. Morello asked if the bus safety concerns are being reviewed with students during these drills. Dr. Gruccio said absolutely.

3. **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS**

3.1 **Approval of Vineland High School Bus Canopy Phase 2 Bid** – Mr. DiGiorgio said the vendor's name is not listed on the agenda.

4. **FINANCE**

4.1 **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.

4.2 **Placement of Special Education Students** – No discussion

- 4.3 **Early Childhood Program Five Year-Preschool Plan** – Ms. Morello said there is a typo on page 9.
- 4.4 **ECPA Budget for 2014-2015** – Mr. English asked if the district will be informed if we are not going to receive ECPA money. Dr. Gruccio said will be informed and will plan accordingly. Ms. Morello said we are encouraged to bring more children into the preschools but may not always receive the funding. Dr. Gruccio said this is the first time we are hearing that the funding may be cut to a degree.
- 4.5 **Sabater Elementary School Family Friendly Center Summer Program for 2014** – No discussion.
- 4.6 **Preferred Home Health Care and Nursing Services Inc. Agreement** – Ms. Morello asked if Mr. DeSanto reviewed this agreement. Mr. DeSanto said yes and all the requested changes were made.

2. ITEMS PROPOSED FOR REGULAR AGENDA:

- a. **Report by the Secretary of the Board of Education** – None.
- b. **Monthly Bills Incurred** – No discussion.

Public Comments: None.

B. Proposed for review or discussion or adoption by Board Members: None.

Committee Reports: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Ms. Morello asked for tentative dates for goal setting and evaluation. Mr. Medio said we will have this for next week's meeting.

Ms. Rios requested a chart prior to the board meeting on how the uniform policy is going throughout the district. Mr. DeSanto said the policy requires an annual report on the uniforms.

Ms. Morello thanked Mr. Schectman for the lovely monthly duties/responsibilities calendar. She said it took fifteen years to get one.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if it were possible to receive input from all the principals as to whether the students are adhering to the dress code policy and if there are any issues.

Dr. Gruccio said next week there will be a presentation on the Cunningham Alternative Program and Policy 2.0 and how it has impacted our athletes.

Mrs. Morello requested feedback on assistance that has been given to families in regards to uniforms.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if we are required to pay for transportation for students who have chosen to attend another school through School Choice. Mr. Schectman responded yes.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert G. Schectman
Board Secretary

HGS:df

