

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, February 13, 2013 at 7:03 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Mercado, Ms. Morello, Dr. Mounier, Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: None.

Also present: Dr. Guccio, Superintendent, Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Polof, Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Ludy, Board Secretary, Mr. DeSanto, 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.

Barry Turner, David Davis, Abigail Gordillo, Vincent Bello, Brianna Gordillo and Daniel Santos students from Barse Elementary School led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Mercado, seconded by Mr. English, to approve a resolution for executive session. All Members voted "yes".

Special Presentation (s): Dr. Guccio introduced Noelle Panichella and Christine Lewis to discuss the Poetry Out Loud contest and introduce the winner.

Ms. Panichella said during the past four years Vineland High School has been participating in Poetry Out Loud, which is a national contest of poetry recitation. She said the student memorizes and performs the poetry. Ms. Panichella introduced Spiro Mullin the winner of the contest

Mr. Mullin discussed his experience and recited a poem for the board.

Ms. Lewis discussed the Poetry Slam Club. She introduced Rondell Durham, Giovanni Dreyer, Isis Allen and Mylasia Brown to recite poems that they wrote.

Approval of Minutes: Upon motion by Mr. Mercado, seconded by Mr. English, the minutes were approved from January 2, 2013, January 9, 2013, January 12, 2013 and January 16, 2013. All Members voted "yes" except for Dr. Mounier and Mr. Ulrich who "abstained" on the January 12, 2013 retreat minutes and Ms. Rios who was not present for the vote.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Public Comment on
Agenda Items:

Luz Vasquez Guzman, parent
Ms. Guzman spoke in support of Ted Sisco as the lacrosse coach.

Joseph Galan, student
Mr. Galan said he is the current president for the class of 2014 and spoke in support of the class of 2014 senior trip.

Mallory Caignon, student
Ms. Caignon said she is the current treasurer for the class of 2014 and spoke in support of the class of 2014 senior trip.

Peg Houston, parent
Ms. Houston expressed her concern in regards to a 21 year old attempting to coach players. She feels placing a young inexperienced person in to a head coach varsity position is a recipe for disaster. Ms. Houston spoke in support of Ted Sisco to remain as head coach for the varsity lacrosse team.

Ted Sisco, teacher
Mr. Sisco said he has been the lacrosse coach since it began in 2003. He was made aware that a harassment, intimidation and bullying complaint was substantiated against him and because of this he was denied the opportunity to coach this season. Mr. Sisco said he rejects the substantiation of this claim and contends that he is the one who is a victim of harassment, intimidation and bullying. He said he is present tonight to defend himself, his reputation and team.

Public Comments

on School Uniforms: Pastor Luis Rafael Cucaro
Pastor Cucaro spoke in support of school uniforms.

Mr. English said a friend of his children asked if he could relay the following question in regards to school uniforms:

1. Is it acceptable for the athletes to wear their uniforms such as the swim team jacket and football jerseys?
2. In the winter time are knit v-neck sweaters or cardigans allowed in red, black or white?

Questions continued:

3. Will there be long sleeve shirts?
4. Is there a shoe policy?
5. Will there be an enforcing of any type of gym uniform currently or in the future?
6. Do shirts need tucked in and will there be a belt?

Mr. Medio said we will not be able to answer these questions tonight. He said the point now is if we are going to approve school uniforms. Mr. Medio said if school uniforms are approved all of these questions will go to the principals. He said administration will have the principals come up with a uniform policy. Mr. Medio said step one is approving the uniforms.

Ms. Morello said we should tighten this up from the beginning so there is not a problem from one building to the next and no room for anyone to misunderstand. She said the uniform policy in the school district where she is employed is clearly spelled out. Mr. Medio asked Ms. Morello if she can obtain a copy of that policy.

Ms. Rios said the athletes were discussed at the Personnel & Policy Committee meeting and we did allow for them to wear their uniform if they had an event. She said as far as the shoes and belt we did not go into specifics because we have to think about the type of population that we have. Ms. Rios said the shirts are available in long sleeves with cardigans.

Mr. Mercado said he is okay with the policy and feels it has been well prepared by our staff. He has done his research and is ready to vote on this and his vote will be “yes.”

Dr. Mounier said we need to be careful to distinguish between a policy that concerns uniforms and a policy that concerns dress code.

Mr. Ulrich said we need to be on the same page and he does not care what shoes the students wear. He said consistency between the North and South building must be the same.

Mr. DeSanto said the policy is the general framework for a particular subject. He said the nuts, bolts and implementation of the policy is found in the administrative regulations. Mr. DeSanto said because this was a first time situation central office, administrators and principals will develop more detail concerning the broad policy.

Dr. Gruccio said we will be meeting with administration to review all of these questions. She said by September we will be very specific as to what is or is not acceptable. Mr. Mercado said he would like to have something formal before September. Mr. Medio said by May 1st we will have something.

Ms. Rios thanked the Personnel & Policy Committee along with Dr. Mounier, Mr. Ulrich, Mrs. Phillips, principals, administration, parents, teachers and students along with the board for all their input.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Mercado, seconded by Mr. English, to approve the Second Reading of the School Uniform Policy 5511.2. All Members voted “yes.”

Recommendations:

Report of the
Secretary/Custodian
Of School Monies:

Upon motion by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the reports of the Secretary and Custodian of School Monies for the month December of 2012, which are in agreement were approved as submitted and on file in the Minute Book, and the Board approved its monthly certification of budgetary major account fund status and the Board Secretary's monthly certification as on file with the Secretary. All Members voted "yes."

Approval of Bills:

Upon motion by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. Mercado, the bills were approved and warrants issued for same. All Members voted "yes" (\$13,380,548.88).

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

Emergent Item(s)
(with prior approval)

None.

Dr. Gruccio congratulated Teri Godlewski on her promotion as Director of Special Education.

Public:

Carol Deola, Director of All Kids First

Ms. Deola thanked the board for listening, caring and doing in regards to parental choice for preschoolers.

Ruth Piatt, Director of Little Lamb Preschool

Ms. Piatt thanked Ms. Rios for all her help as the preschool liaison and welcomed Ms. Morello. She also thanked the board for bringing back parental choice.

Mario Olsen, Principal of VHN

Mr. Olsen thanked the board for approving the uniform policy. He believes that we need to continue to meet in regards to the uniforms to tighten things up. Mr. Olsen congratulated Teri Godlewski on her promotion.

Board Member

Remarks:

Mr. Ulrich congratulated the students who came forward. He said there is a new program in the schools called “Lunch with a Cop.” Mr. Ulrich said members of the police department are going into the elementary schools and having lunch with the fourth and fifth grade students. He said the goal is to have interaction with the students. Mr. Ulrich the police will also be at the big time night events to create a partnership with the parents to answer any questions they may have. He hopes we continue to get positive feedback from this.

Dr. Mounier thanked the students who led the flag salute. He said that he was impressed with the poetry presentation, which was very heartfelt. Dr. Mounier hopes everyone who attends the class trip has a good time.

Ms. Rios congratulated Teri Godlewski on her new position. She also congratulated the Poetry Out Loud winners. Ms. Rios thanked the Barse students for a wonderful flag salute along with everyone who spoke tonight. Ms. Rios said it was a pleasure working with the preschool providers and looks forward to continuing to work with them.

Mr. DiGiorgio echoed Dr. Mounier’s sentiments. He thanked the staff and students for organizing a senior class trip. Mr. DiGiorgio acknowledged the following: The staff at Vineland High School North for organizing the eighth grade transition seminar, Denise Procopio for her work on the new handbook, the staff at Vineland High School South for the financial aid seminar, Ross Stanger for representing the district at the 46th annual Brotherhood Sisterhood Service. He said in the Atlantic City Press he read an article about some of our local teachers who were recognized by the National Board for Professional teaching standards. Mr. DiGiorgio congratulated the teachers for that achievement.

Mr. Jennings said we need to recognize each other because everyone has been patient and treating each other with respect. He believes if we continue it will go a long way and results will be seen.

Mr. English said he attended the Poetry Out Loud Program and the passion that Ms. Panichella has for her students is a positive thing to see as a parent and board member.

Mr. English said he has sat through many athletic events where horrible language is being used by parents. He said parents and coaches are the role models for children. Mr. English said when you have a harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) situation it is not something you take lightly. He said as a board member he supports the athletic director's recommendation because the athletic director is getting paid to make the recommendation and will be held accountable if something does not work out. Mr. English thanked Adrienne Ruberti along with his son and daughter for the school uniform questions. Mr. English also thanked Ms. Rios and Mr. Mercado because school uniforms was their passion.

Mr. Mercado thanked the Barse School students for the flag salute along with the Poetry Out Loud students. He congratulated Teri Godlewski on her promotion. Mr. Mercado said the students are going to have a great time on the senior class trip. He said everyone worked hard to make the school uniforms happen and he is really excited.

Ms. Morello thanked the schools for the Read Across America invitation. She also thanked Ms. Morano, Principal of Barse School, along with her students for the flag salute. Ms. Morello said it takes a big commitment and responsibility to be recognized by the National Board for Professional teaching standards and we are very fortunate to have very qualified and dedicated professionals. She hopes we can make parental choice work because it will allow parents to select the preschool center that is best suited for their needs. Ms. Morello said it has been a pleasure working with everyone so far.

Mr. Ulrich said if anyone is interested Big Brothers & Big Sisters is looking for retired teachers to be case managers and work in a mentoring program 15 to 20 hours a week.

Report/Remarks by
Board President:

None.

Resolution: Ms. Ludy read a resolution to convene into executive session for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10-4-12. Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer. If contract negotiation the nature of the contract and interested party is status of Vineland Administrators Supervisors Association contract negotiations. 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 personnel actions involving three teachers. **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. Mercado, seconded by Mr. English, the resolution was passed. All Members voted “yes”.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by voice vote to executive session at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cherie Ludy
Board Secretary

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