

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, April 1, 2009 at 7:13 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Giordano presiding and the following members present: Mr. Bernardini, Mr. DeWinne, Mr. Evans, Mr. Fanucci, Ms. Rios, Mr. Spinelli and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. Franceschini.

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

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** – Ms. Greenfield said she would like to withdraw the name on page 15 under A.1 (h) School to Career Program from the agenda to further research.

Mr. Giordano asked for an explanation on the short term contract under employment. Ms. Greenfield said the individual has been in the position all year has interviewed for the position and is waiting for a certificate. She said this is a vacancy and not a new position.

Mr. DeWinne asked what happens when a principal takes a leave of absence and is out for a long time. Ms. Greenfield said it depends on the school and what the superintendent decides to do. Mr. Ottinger said there will be a substitute or if someone is available in the district we may put them there. Mr. DeWinne said there is one school that has 59 names listed for summer hours. He asked what this is for and if it will happen with all the schools. Ms. Greenfield said this particular school will be working on professional development and developing curriculum for the middle school level. She said money was approved in the budget for this. Mr. DeWinne feels it would make it easier if all the schools are listed.

Mr. Spinelli asked if this is in the new budget. Ms. Greenfield responded yes.

Mr. Giordano asked if the all the hours are utilized that are listed for the summer employment. Ms. Greenfield said it depends sometimes the maximum hours are listed but not worked. Mr. Giordano asked if time sheets are completed. Ms. Greenfield said yes and the supervisor signs off on the time sheets. Mr. Giordano asked if there will be any additions for next week. Ms. Greenfield said there may be one.

2. **Placement of Special Education Students** – No discussion.
3. **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
4. **Submission of Grants** – Mr. Ulrich asked if there were matching funds for any of these grants. Mr. Ottinger responded no.
5. **Acceptance of Funds** – No discussion.
6. **Bids** – Mr. Ulrich asked if the school bus bid is part of our regular maintenance program. Mr. Ottinger said yes.

Mr. Spinelli mentioned that administration along with several board members had a meeting in regards to K12 Systems, Inc. He said the general consensus was to choose K12 Systems.

7. **Travel** – Mr. DeWinne commented that it would be nice to send only one person to a seminar to come back and brief others.

Dr. Gruccio explained that sometimes it is not possible to send only one person to a seminar. She said the supervisor training is in regards to the new vision on curriculum and how we are going to be writing curriculum in the future. Dr. Gruccio said this will be broken up into curriculum areas so there can not be only one or two people attending.

Mr. Giordano said we do where ever we can try to conserve on the number of people attending seminars. Mr. Ottinger said we hardly have any funds for professional development and most of the time we do things in-house.

Mr. Ulrich said he thinks professional development is an area that we should not skimp on. He said professional development is a key piece of the puzzle that helps teachers to use new techniques and different ideas to benefit the children.

Mr. Spinelli said it should be noted that all of the professional development is in New Jersey.

Mr. Ottinger said we currently do not have any money in the school based budgets for professional development. He said we do have it in our supplemental budget request and Dr. Gruccio has some limited funds in her budget.

Mr. Evans asked if it were mandatory for the second person listed under overnight trips to go on this trip. Mr. Ottinger responded no. Mr. Evans said he does not want to approve this and feels the \$2,000 can be better spent. He thanked the Vineland Police Department for their donation to the safety patrol trip.

Mr. Ottinger asked if the board would like to take the allocation for the seminar off of the travel. Mr. Spinelli said he would like an explanation on exactly what the seminar is about. Mr. Ottinger said it is for the communications director to attend the National Convention in California. Mr. Giordano said it will stay on the agenda for a vote.

8. **Joint Transportation Agreement** – No discussion.
9. **Participation Agreement with Cumberland County Educational Cooperative** - Mr. Giordano asked for an overview on this item.

Mr. Franchetta said Cumberland County has a cooperative that provides transportation services to various special education schools and is sponsored by the Vo-Tech.

10. **Spotlight on Reading Textbooks for ESL Student K-5** – No discussion.
11. **Numbers Plus (High Scope) Preschool Mathematics Curriculum** – Mr. Giordano asked what initiated this. Mr. Ottinger said a review of the curriculum to meet new state mandates.
12. **Naming of Athletic Fields** – Mr. Giordano said if this is approved by the board next week we will follow the procedure that is in place to name the complex on East Chestnut Avenue.

Mr. Spinelli asked if we advertised about doing this. Mr. Giordano said no the board has to first decide that they want the complex named then it will be advertised and the procedure will be followed.

Mr. DeWinne said as a former Vineland High School athlete where Mr. DiTomo was the athletic director he feels this is long overdue.

13. **Donations to Cunningham Alternative School** – No discussion.
14. **Employee Suspension** – No discussion.

15. **Transfer of 2000 Dodge Ram 2500 to the State of NJ Dept of Labor** – No discussion.

16. **VHS Science Lab Renovations Educational Specifications/Schematic Design** – No discussion.

Mr. Giordano announced that Mr. Franceschini arrived at the meeting at approximately 7:28 p.m.

17. **Approval of First Reading of**

**a. Policy #8319 Selection of Professional Staff** - No discussion.

**b. Policy #8635 Pupil Transportation Vehicles and School buses** - TABLED

B. Board

1. None.

Review of Bills: No discussion.

1. Discussion of the investment of excess funds in a Money Market Account at Susquehanna Bank for the period March 23, 2009 to June 22, 2009.

Mr. Franchetta explained that during the reorganization meeting the board approves Mr. Rochetti and himself to invest excess funds of the district with area banks. He said we are a member of New Jersey Cash Management and generally the money just stayed in this fund because the interest they paid was greater than what we could get for Certificates of Deposits. Mr. Franchetta said recently the Cash Management rate was down to 1% so we searched the market to see if something better could be found. He said Mr. Rochetti found that Money Market Accounts had a better rate than Certificates of Deposits. So we invested the funds we had in a Money Market Account for a three month period.

Ms. Rios asked if we deal with all local banks. Mr. Franchetta said every bank that has a presence in the City of Vineland is contacted and the bank with the best rate is awarded the money.

Public Comments: Frank Nardi, School Bus Driver

Mr. Nardi said he is glad that the board tabled Policy #8635. He said there are many concerns that have not been answered and feels it should be discussed further with the union.

Louis Russo, Vineland Resident

Mr. Russo thanked the board for their on going concerns about the Ad Hoc Committee and Small Learning Community Initiative at Vineland High School. He expressed his concern in regards to a report that was given to the board from an administrator in response to questions they had. Mr. Russo said administration was supposed to meet with staff to discuss these concerns, which never happened. Mr. Russo said the staff was shocked and surprised when they saw the contents of the report. He hopes that the board understands that not everything in that report was factual.

Lori Cummines, Vineland Resident

Ms. Cummines said she is a very proud select choir director at Vineland High School. She said the select choir returned just recently from Williamsburg where they did very well. Ms. Cummines said what concerns her is after having many of these students for at least three years there were seven that she could take with her because they belong to another select choir. She said it is important to give all of our children the same opportunities and we should consider going back to one select choir. Ms. Cummines thanked the board for their on going support and hopefully will support and change this.

Committee Reports: Mr. Spinelli announced that the Finance Committee will meet next Monday at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Ulrich reported on behalf of Mr. Franceschini who could not attend the Curriculum & Technology Committee meeting. He said two items were discussed at tonight's meeting. Mr. Ulrich said Don Robbins, Athletic Director, gave a presentation on the Physical Education block schedule at the high school level. There were some concerns that a student could theoretically not take physical education in a year. Mr. Ulrich said when Mr. Robbins reviewed the block schedule he saw an opportunity that would give students a lot more on task time to incorporate into the high school schedule. Mr. Franceschini said children need a fitness activity everyday and for many students it is the only activity they get during the school year. He feels it is critical for the physical well being of these students to have daily activity. Mr. Franceschini said he would not personally recommend block scheduling for physical education.

Mr. Fanucci asked if the middle and elementary schools are affected by this also.

Mr. Franceschini said we need to work on this for the elementary schools also. He said physical education is once every sixth day, which is not enough. Mr. Franceschini said we have a better handle on the middle schools.

Mr. Spinelli said he hopes that we get our scheduling in place and ready to go so we do not have the same situation as last year.

Mr. Ulrich said at the curriculum meeting Dr. Gruccio gave a preliminary report on the proposed schedule for next year, which would include a ten minute home room and eliminate the Advocacy Program.

Mr. Ottinger said a meeting was held yesterday and it was decided not to have the Advocacy Program next year because it was problematic. He is confident that the teachers will be surprised that their concerns were listened to and addressed. Mr. Ottinger said that he would be glad to meet with anyone to give an update on the information that he has to date.

Mr. Ulrich said in the 2011-2012 school year there has been discussion about reducing class periods by five minutes and instituting a period that could contain some type of advocacy. He said there are some people that feel it is a travesty to eliminate the Advocacy Program.

Mr. Evans asked if it were possible to bring the Advocacy Program on as an elective. Mr. Ottinger responded no. He emphasized that it is a wonderful concept but is very difficult to put on the schedule.

Mr. Giordano said we did say that a questionnaire survey would be done by the end of the year. He would like to have that survey ready by the May meeting. Mr. Ottinger said that will be a struggle because the principals do not want to do a survey. Mr. Franceschini said if we had the time surveys should also go out to the parents.

Mr. Franceschini said the Personnel & Policy Committee will be meeting next week.

Mr. Bernardini said discussed at the Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting was the transfer of Fels School to the City of Vineland. He said that Ms. Rios requested for there to be language in the transfer agreement that if the building was no longer needed by the City of Vineland it would transfer back to the school district. This would prevent the City of Vineland from selling the building.

Continued

Mr. Bernardini said he provided an update to the committee in regards to the girl's softball field. He said the field is in excellent condition and netting needs to be installed for the batting cages. Mr. Bernardini said they discussed the relocation of the Success Program to the Veterans Memorial School temporary classroom trailers. He said that he along with other board members have concerns about this program fitting in these trailers. Mr. Franceschini asked if East Vineland School could be used for this program. Mr. Franchetta said it is half the size needed. Mr. Ottinger advised the board that \$350,000 was not allocated in the budget to rent the Success building. Mr. Ulrich asked if facilities could be split for this program. Mr. Ottinger said Ms. Polof is going to give a presentation on what we can and can not do. Mr. Bernardini said Mr. Weaver, Director of Physical Facilities, discussed the progress of Middle School #2 with the committee. He said Mr. Weaver also discussed the progress of the new science labs at Vineland High School North. All the pre-development paperwork has been submitted to the Department of Education for approval. Mr. Bernardini said Ms. Rios suggested using web service to sell district surplus. He said that Mr. Ottinger has asked Mr. Cox, Purchasing Director, to set up an auction. Mr. Bernardini said we have also been selling surplus on the Govdeals.com site. Mr. Bernardini said that Mr. Weaver met with the City of Vineland EMT's along with the principals to number the doors for identification for emergency calls to help speed up the medical attention process. This project will take place this summer.

Mr. Giordano asked what the status is of the high school track. Mr. Bernardini said the work has been postponed because of the inclement weather.

Mr. Spinelli asked Mr. Franchetta to provide organizational flow charts so the chain of command could be reviewed. Mr. Ottinger apologized and said he received that request but neglected to send it out.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Mr. Giordano said it is time for the Chief School Administrator's annual review. He said the results have been returned and he would like to discuss this in executive session next week.

Mr. Ottinger said anything that interferes with the Select Choir he is against. He asked the teaching staff along with Ms. Cummines to speak with the administration to see what can be done.

Mr. Giordano reminded everyone that next week's board meeting will be held in the Vineland High School South auditorium. He said the cast of the Cap 'N Dagger will be honored.

Adjournment: The Board adjourned to executive session 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA  
Board Secretary

KJF:df