

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, June 4, 2014 at 7:03 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. Baruffi, Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Ms. Morello and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. DeWinne and Ms. Rios.

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 which, by express provision of Federal Law, State Statute or Rule of Court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from discussion in public provision relied upon is Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying appeals. Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may be a party. If pending/anticipated litigation the matter is John Sammons. If contract negotiation the nature of the contract and interested party is Central Administration's contracts. **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. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his duties as a lawyer. 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 tenure charges against four teachers and transfers of building administrators.

Motion: Upon motion by Mr. DiGiorgio, seconded by Ms. Morello, the resolution was passed. All Members voted “yes”.

Special

Presentations: Dr. Gruccio introduced Mr. Ross Stanger, Supervisor, to honor the Administrator of the Year.

Mr. Stanger introduced and congratulated Dr. JoAnne Negrin, Supervisor for World Language, as Administrator of the Year.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mrs. Angela D’Ottavio, RN and Health Occupation Students of America Advisor to recognize two students who were awarded the Gerald Bush Jr. Memorial Scholarship.

Mrs. D’Ottavio said she is happy to acknowledge two wonderful young ladies Tolu Ayeni and Kavita Shah for being awarded the Gerald Bush Jr. Memorial Scholarships.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mrs. Terry Kuhnreich, VHS Search for Conscience Teacher, to honor two students who were awarded first place in the Sister Rose Thering Essay Contest.

Mrs. Kuhnreich introduced and honored Sarah Bennett and Valerie Walters who received the Sister Rose Thering Essay Contest Award sponsored by the NJ Council of Holocaust Educators.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Joseph Galan and Jasmine Gonzalez, Vineland High School students, to discuss their thoughts on the Class of 2014 senior class trip to Orlando, Florida.

Mr. Galan and Miss Gonzalez discussed their experiences and the great time they had on the 2014 senior class trip to Florida.

Dr. Gruccio thanked the class advisors who arranged the trip and the students for making the trip very successful.

Ms. Christine Lewis, 2014 Class Advisor, thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Dr. Guccio introduced Mrs. Maryann Banko and Mrs. Stacey DeRose, VHS 2015 Class Advisors, to present a proposal for the 2015 Senior Class trip to Orlando, Florida.

Mrs. DeRose and Mrs. Banko presented the 2015 Senior Class trip to Orlando Florida.

Mr. English asked if we will have the same deadlines as last year's trip. Mrs. DeRose explained that we are restricted by the deadline of October 3rd for the first payment. Mr. English asked if Channel 9 will be utilized for this. Mrs. DeRose said absolutely.

Mr. Ulrich asked what hotel they would be staying at. Mrs. DeRose said the Rosen Inn.

Mr. DeWinne said it is nice for the students to have a choice. He thanked the advisors, as a parent, for putting this option together.

Mr. Ulrich asked why the district does not pay the salary for the school nurse instead of the students, since it is a requirement. Dr. Guccio said it can be discussed.

Ms. Morello feels that \$7.00 per student is a bargain for the school nurse. She thanked the advisors for all their hard work and wished them the best of luck.

Mr. Baruffi asked Mr. Galan if the class trip represented all types of students. Mr. Galan said a diverse group of students attended.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked how the per student cost for this year's trip compares to last year's cost. Mrs. Banko said there was a \$35.00 difference.

Mr. English asked for the guidelines for the nurse that attends the trip.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB Report), Suspension Report, Cunningham Alternative School Report/Average Daily Attendance – Mrs. Polof presented the report.

Comments by

Board Solicitor: Mr. DeSanto said at the reorganization meeting the Board adopted the policies and bylaws for a three month period. He said in March the approval was extended for another three months. Mr. DeSanto said the policies and bylaws will expire on June 30th. He said his recommendation for next week is to entertain a motion to adopt the policies for the remainder of this year so we are covered with policies in place. Mr. DeSanto said in connection with the Superintendent's evaluation we attempted to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity because five Board Members are conflicted in terms of dealing with employment issues involving Dr. Gruccio. He said we requested and received an opinion from the School Ethics Commission confirming that the four non-conflicted Board Members are to do the evaluation. Mr. DeSanto said the upcoming issue is that the Board must make a decision by December 31st whether you will give a notice of non-renewal. He suggested for as many Board members as possible to participate in decisions involving the Superintendent. Mr. DeSanto recommended for the Board to consider for next week a request to the School Ethics Commission to allow all nine Board members to pass upon the decision of renewal or non-renewal of the Superintendent. He said since it is June we would probably receive a reply within 60 days. Mr. DeSanto asked for Board approval to permit him to file a request for an ethics opinion from the School Ethics Commission for next week's meeting agenda.

The Board recessed to executive session at 7:40 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:48 p.m.

Public Comments: None.

Items for Review:

A. Superintendent

1. **PERSONNEL**

- 1.1 **Personnel Items** – Ms. Morello expressed her concern that there are not many transfers. She asked when people will be notified as to where they will be teaching in September. Dr. Rossi said due to the budget situation hopefully within ten days. Ms. Morello asked if the transfers were involuntary and are the individuals who are being transferred ok with the transfer. Dr. Rossi said some were administration transfers, some voluntary, and others were necessary for student IEP's. Ms. Morello said she was surprised because she thought there was a plan in place for those positions under replacement hires.

Mr. Medio asked if the individuals on the transfer list were given Rice Notices. Mr. Schectman said yes. Mr. Medio asked if anyone requested to be discussed in public. Mr. Schectman said yes Mr. Olsen.

Mr. English expressed his concern in regards to one principal at Vineland High School. He asked who is in charge when the principal is not there. Dr. Guccio said there will be an additional vice principal and when the principal is absent we could put a substitute in the building.

Mr. DeWinne said this is the Superintendent's recommendation and asked for an explanation as to why she is recommending this. Dr. Guccio said she brought this before the Finance Committee and was told it was a good idea. She said it was brought to Finance because we are trying to find ways to reduce the budget. Dr. Guccio said we had one principal who is retiring so we felt if we took a principal that we already had to fill that position it would save the principal's salary. She said we transferred an assistant principal to the high school for extra support. Dr. Guccio believes with one principal and six people under that principal our students are better served with continuity of leadership. She believes the high school is one school on one campus. She has had ongoing conversations with the principals involved. Dr. Guccio said the South building principal has been meeting on a regular basis with administration and is excited about the proposal sharing several ideas they would like to put into place. She said that she has spoken with the other people involved in the move and they have been supportive.

Mr. English expressed his concern in regards to the Cunningham Alternative School having a principal with 32 students. Dr. Guccio said we have 92 students on the books and attendance is an issue.

Ms. Morello said her concern is that there is no overlap with Dr. Karwowski leaving Johnstone School and Mr. Olsen's transfer. Dr. Guccio said she would be more than happy to change Mr. Olsen's transfer date to July so they have the summer to work together. Ms. Morello thinks that would be a very prudent move.

Mr. English asked why Mr. Olsen was chosen to transfer to Johnstone School. Dr. Guccio said she went by seniority.

Mr. Medio said Mr. Olsen did a good job at Veterans Memorial School and Vineland High School North. He thinks it would be a good idea to change the transfer date to July 1st to have two months to acclimate himself.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he will consider supporting this transfer because it is the Superintendent's recommendation but does not think this will be the final outcome down the road.

Ms. Morello said the individual who is being transferred from Rossi Middle School back to Vineland High School North is a lovely choice. She said that individual was a guidance counselor at the high school level for many years and has a wealth of knowledge stepping into that position. Mr. Ulrich said that individual wanted to transfer out of that position. Mr. Medio said we cannot discuss this.

Mr. DeSanto said the prohibition against discussion of employees involves matters concerning terms and conditions of their employment, performance, disciplinary action and so on. He said when you have employee names on the agenda it is now public discussion and you could mention names. Mr. DeSanto said agenda items are a public record. Dr. Gruccio asked why we had to Rice all of those people. Mr. DeSanto said he did not suggest that. He said if you are going to discuss someone in the back room then you would Rice them but you do not Rice public discussion.

Mr. English asked if we are still paying an assistant principal per diem at Petway School. Dr. Gruccio said that has to be posted.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked Dr. Gruccio if she does not foresee a need for future additions to the principal level at the high school. Dr. Gruccio said if we find that this does not work then she will admit her mistake and come to Board to request another person.

Mr. Baruffi said Mr. Sullivan was a great scheduler at the high school and when he left Vineland High School suffered with their scheduling.

Mr. English asked about the guidance counselor working the last day in June per diem to review progress reports. Dr. Gruccio said according to their contract the guidance counselors can work until the end of June.

Dr. Gruccio asked Mr. Medio if she can add the senior class trip to Wednesday's Board meeting. Mr. Medio said yes.

Mr. English asked if the sixth to eighth grade Intramural Coach stipend is in the contract. Dr. Rossi said it is Schedule B in the contract.

1.2 Home Instruction Tutors – No discussion.

1.3 Reasonable Assurance of Continued Employment – Ms. Morello asked if these are substitutes who we desire to have working for us. Dr. Rossi said this is an unemployment issue.

- 1.4 **Contracts for the Following: a. Nathan Frey, b. Ruth Polof, c. Joseph Rossi, d. Herbert Schectman** – Mr. Medio asked if everyone was Riced on this. Mr. Schectman responded yes. Mr. Medio asked if anyone would like to be heard in public. Mr. Schectman said yes everyone asked to be heard in public.

The executive session resumed in public at 10:40 p.m. to discuss the contracts of Nathan Frey, Ruth Polof, Joseph Rossi and Herbert Schectman.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he does not see in the County Superintendent's letter that he approves any increases. Dr. Gruccio said the County Superintendent has to approve any increase because it has to be within the cap. She said that increase is the cap and can be changed. Mr. Schectman said we are required to submit the contracts to the County Superintendent for his review to ensure that it is comparable to everyone else in the county as well as the state. He said the County Superintendent makes sure that the Board is not given any bad information in terms of things that are not happening throughout the County. Mr. Schectman said if there is a particular issue in the contract that would lessen the contract then the Board can make those changes. Mr. Schectman said after the last Board meeting there were some Board members who expressed surprise at the 2% rate. He said we offered to resubmit the contracts with a lesser rate and were directed not to do that. Ms. Morello asked by whom. Mr. Schectman said by Mr. Medio. Mr. Ulrich said he thought this was discussed at the last Board meeting with some Board members suggesting a cost of living increase in the contract and others a flat zero. Mr. Medio said he went to a County School Boards Association meeting and Dr. Stepura said during his speech that the Board was supposed to look at the contracts and then send them to him. He said that did not happen and the contracts were sent over with a 2% increase. Mr. Medio said we had discussion in which Mr. Ulrich and Mr. DiGiorgio were good with giving a 1.6% increase and Mr. DeWinne said zero. He said the next day Mr. Schectman called him and asked if he should send the contracts with a different number. Mr. Medio said his answer was no because there was no consensus on the Board to change the number. He said when the contracts come back the Board would discuss it.

Mr. Ulrich said the last group to settle was the secretarial staff and the Board gave them a 1.6% raise. He said we just took a stance because the secretaries wanted 2% and were given 1.6%. Mr. Ulrich said for the sake of fairness how do we go to those secretaries and say you are only good for 1.6% but your bosses are good for 2%.

Mr. DeWinne said these contracts are assuming that the Board as a whole wants to renew them. Mr. Medio said yes and the Board can discuss that right now. Mr. DeWinne asked if there is tenure in these positions. Dr. Gruccio said there is tenure with assistant superintendents. Mr. DeWinne asked what the tenure status of each is. Dr. Gruccio said Mr. Schectman, Mrs. Polof and Mr. Frey are not tenured.

Mr. DeWinne asked what happens when they become tenured. Dr. Gruccio said they are secure in their position and if they do not get renewed they bounce back to their previous position. Mr. DiGiorgio asked how many years is tenure. Dr. Gruccio said two years if you were already in the district and out of district three years. She said there must be a reason for non-renewal and you have to prove an individual did not do their job. Ms. Morello asked how that is different from a non-tenured teacher. Dr. Gruccio said if we have to eliminate teachers because of cuts in the budget the non-tenured teachers can be eliminated without a reason. Mr. DeWinne asked Mr. DeSanto what the process is for non-renewal. Mr. DeSanto said under the Open Public Meetings Act we can invoke lawyer client privilege and can have that discussion in executive session. He does not want to give advice in open session. Mr. DeWinne said he thinks the administrators contracts should be a zero increase and encouraged his colleagues to agree with him.

Mr. Medio asked if anyone else agrees with giving the administrators a zero increase.

Mr. Jennings said he agrees with zero percent.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the Board would consider increases depending on who it is. Mr. English said that was done in the past.

Mr. Jennings said we are cutting positions and he does not think this is the time for any increase at this moment.

Ms. Morello said she would like to see consistency in these contracts like we did with VASA with the organizations that provide legal services.

Mr. English also agrees with a zero percent increase.

Mr. Medio said he is the fifth Board member that agrees with a zero percent increase so that is what will be in the contracts.

Mr. Ulrich said in the case of fairness and consistency a cost of living adjustment would be fair regardless of who the employee is.

Mr. Jennings said his decision does not have anything to do with anyone's performance.

Mr. DeSanto said this is executive session although it is being held in public. He said this is a consensus and an actual formal vote will need to be made next week with respect to the zero percent.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if that means the contracts have to be amended. Mr. DeSanto said if you vote next week to renew the contracts with a zero percent increase then it would be up to Mr. Schectman to resubmit the contracts with that change.

Mr. Ulrich said he cannot vote for a contract that is going to include an organization that represents the employee in some type of collective actions.

Ms. Morello asked what we do for continuing education and tuition reimbursement for VASA.

Mr. DiGiorgio said he agrees on the union dues matter.

Mr. Medio said the collective action organizations can also be voted on next week.

Mr. Medio announced that Mr. DeWinne arrived at the Board meeting at 7:13 p.m.

The work session resumed at 10:50 p.m.

PROCEDURES & OPERATIONS

- 2.1 **Travel – a. Field Trips, b. District Travel, c. Fall Athletics** – Mr. English questioned why the fall athletic schedule was not complete. Dr. Rossi said he did not know.
- 2.2 **Summer 2014 Programs** – No discussion.
- 2.3 **Bus Evacuations** – No discussion.
- 2.4 **Bilingual/ESL Three-Year Program Plan** – No discussion.
- 2.5 **Mandatory Direct Deposit of Net Pay** – Ms. Morello asked what the plans are for employees who do not have checking accounts. Mr. Schectman said we made arrangements with Newfield Bank to provide accounts to our employees free of charge.
- 2.6 **Project Graduation Vendor** – No discussion.
- 2.7 **Colleges/Univ. for Student Teaching, Practicum, Field Internships and Observations**
Ms. Morello asked how many student teachers we have on average per year. Mr. Frey said he would get that information. Ms. Morello asked if this is just a list of educational institutions where we have had students in the past. Mr. Frey said correct.

3 BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

- 3.1 **Dual Use of Education Space for 2014-2015** – No discussion.
- 3.2 **Temporary Facilities for 2014-2015** – No discussion.
- 3.3 **Toilet Room Facilities for 2014-2015** – No discussion.
- 3.4 **City of Vineland Fireworks** – Mr. Ulrich asked if an additional letter was received for National Night Out in August. Dr. Gruccio said not yet.

4 FINANCE

- 4.1 **Budgetary Transfers** – No discussion.
- 4.2 **Placement of Special Education Students** – Mr. DeWinne asked who pays for the increase in the amount. Mr. Schectman said we pay it through budgetary transfers.
- 4.3 **Submission of the following Grants: a. NJ Child Assault Prevention Program, b. NJ Special Needs Child Assault Prevention Program** – No discussion.
- 4.4 **Substitute Personnel Hourly Rates for 2014-2015** – No discussion.
- 4.5 **Change Order #1 VHS Athletic Wing Addition/Fabbri Builders Inc.** – No discussion.
- 4.6 **Change Order #2 VHS Athletic Wing Addition/Fabbri Builders Inc.** – Mr. DeWinne asked why the Board is approving these change orders now when they were signed off on in 2013. Mr. Schectman said the paperwork was a little late and it his fault for not submitting it earlier.
- 4.7 **Book Donation to Barse Elementary School** – No discussion.
- 4.8 **City of Vineland Tax Requisition** – No discussion.
- 4.9 **Project Graduation 2014 Donation** - No discussion.
- 4.10 **Acceptance of Funding NJ Youth Corps Program** – No discussion.
- 4.11 **Architect of Record Bid** – No discussion.
- 4.12 **Preferred Home Health Care & Nursing Services Agreement** – No discussion.

4.13 **Submission of NJ Agricultural Society Gardening Grant** – Ms. Morello asked who will construct the raised beds. Dr. Guccio said Durand School students and staff. Ms. Morello asked if this is a club. Dr. Guccio said she does not think it is a club.

4.14 **Newborn Nurses Letter of Agreement** – No discussion.

4.15 **Appointment of Qualified Purchasing Agent/Establishment of Bid Threshold** – Ms. Morello said she thought the district had a purchasing agent. Mr. Schectman said by law there has to be a purchasing agent named and it is generally the school business administrator. Ms. Morello said we have two purchasing agents. Mr. Schectman said you need a QPA to certify everything and a purchasing agent to actually do the work.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked Mr. Schectman if he has his QPA. Mr. Schectman said no he is not required to have it as long as he has his school business administrator's certificate.

4.16 **Tentative Tuition Charges for 2014-2015** – No discussion.

4.17 **Catapult Learning Agreement for Nursing Services 2014-2015** - No discussion.

4.18 **Budget Transfers to Capital and Maintenance Reserve** – No discussion.

4.19 **Appointment of Frank DiDomenico as Associate Solicitor** – No discussion.

4.20 **Appointments for 2014-2015** – a. Board Secretary, b. Custodian of School District Records, c. Custodian of School Monies, d. Legal Depositories, e. Helen Haley Positions in absence of Herb Schectman, f. CEPA, g. Section 504 Employee Compliance Officer, h. Appointing Authority/Civil Service Hearing Officer, i. Section 504 Student Compliance Officer, j. Working papers Issuing Officer, k. Title IX Coordinator, l. Affirmative Action Officers, m. Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, n. Right to Know Officer, o. Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, p. Indoor Air Quality Designee, q. PEOSHA Officer, r. Asbestos Management Officer, s. Chemical Hygiene Officer, t. Attorney of Record, u. Insurance Broker, v. Official Newspapers, w. Tuition Agreement for Homeless Students, x. Bargaining Units, y. Annual Travel Stipends, z. Contracting Agents, aa. Bank Depositories, bb. Anti-Bullying Coordinator, cc. Architect of Record – No discussion.

2. ITEMS PROPOSED FOR REGULAR AGENDA:

- a. **Report by the Secretary of the Board of Education** – Mr. DeWinne asked what the current surplus is. Mr. Schectman said 1.9 million dollars.
- b. **Monthly Bills Incurred** – None.

B. Proposed for review or discussion or adoption by Board Members:

Public Comments: None.

Committee Reports: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert G. Schectman
Board Secretary

HGS:df

