

VINELAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
July 10, 2019 - COMBINED MEETING

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The combined meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Vineland was held in the Landis Administration Building, 61 W. Landis Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey, Wednesday, July 10, 2019, at 6:05 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. English presiding and the following members present: Ms. Acosta, Mr. Fiocchi, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Medio, Mr. Sbrana, Mr. Silva, and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Ms. Spinelli.

Also present: Mr. Frey, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Mercoli, Board Secretary, Dr. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, Mr. DeSanto, Board Solicitor, press, and public. Absent: Dr. Gruccio and Mr. Frangipani.

Mr. English 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, SNJ Today, the Press of Atlantic City, Nuestra Comunidad, Visto Bueno, the Clerk - City of Vineland, and Administrative Office Public Bulletin Board.

Flag Salute:

Resolution: Mr. Mercoli read a resolution to convene into executive session for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12. Discussion is about UAW Collective Bargaining Agreement , a pending litigation matter and 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.

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 advised 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.

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Special

Presentation(s): Mr. Scott English, Board of Education President, unveils portraits of two preceding Board Presidents; Mr. Christopher Jennings and Mr. Jeff Bordley.

Dr. Joseph Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, recognizes staff with perfect attendance.

Mr. Elliott Deshields and Ms. Carmen Figueroa, VHS Senior Class Advisors, present the 2019-2020 Senior Class Trip proposal.

HIB: No comments.

At 6:26 p.m. the Board retired to executive session.
The meeting resumed at 6:48 p.m.

Approval of

Minutes: Upon motion by Mr. Fiocchi, seconded by Mr. Holmes, the minutes were approved from the May 1, 2019, Special and Combined Meeting, May 15, 2019, Board Retreat, June 5, 2019, Combined Meeting, June 5, 2019, Executive Session, and the June 25, 2019, Special Meeting. All members voted "yes" except for Mr. Ulrich who "abstained" from the June 25, 2019 meeting minutes.

Solicitor

Report: None.

Committee

Reports: None.

Mr. English stated that they would be adding two (2) Ad Hoc Committees; one for Broadcasting including Mr. Sbrana has the Chair, and Mr. Medio and Mr. Silva as the additional members. The second Ad Hoc committee would be for School Security/Safety including Mr. Ulrich as the chair and Mr. Fiocchi and Mr. Silva as additional members. Future dates for these committee meetings will be coming soon.

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Public Comments

Agenda Items: None.

Recommendations:

F	H	S	S	U	E
A	i	M	S	n	n
c	o	b	i	l	g
o	c	l	e	r	i
s	c	m	d	a	l
t	h	e	i	n	v
a	i	s	o	a	i
					h

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

PERSONNEL (1.1-1.4)

1.1 Approval of the following:

- a. Retirements, Resignations, Terminations, Leaves of Absence, Employment, Transfers
- b. Substitutes
- c. Extracurricular Activities
- d. Extracurricular Summer

- Mr. English thanked Dr. Rossi and his staff for all their hard work "burning the midnight oil" at this time of the year with all the updates and changes to be made with the 14 million dollar shortfall.

All Members voted
"yes."
(8-0-0)

1.2 Approval regarding the following contracts, Executive County Superintendent approval was obtained for contracts a, b and f:

For a term of one year commencing July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020:

- a. Mr. Nathan L. Frey, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
- b. Mr. Gene Mercoli, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- c. Mr. Scott A. Mustere, Asst. Business Administrator/Asst Board Secretary
- d. Dr. Joseph L. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel
- e. Mrs. Theresa A. Godlewski, Director of Special Education

For a term of July 1, 2019, to August 31, 2019:

- f. Mr. John W. Frangipani, Assistant Superintendent of Administration

All Members voted
"yes."
(8-0-0)

1.3 Approval regarding the 2019 – 2022 collective bargaining unit agreement with United Auto Workers 2327, which contains these salary increases:

2019-2020	2.7%
2020-2021	2.8%
2021-2022	2.9%

- Mr. English commented to Mr. Holmes and thanked him for stepping in and spearheading the negotiation process on behalf of the Board.

All Members voted "yes" except for Mr. Ulrich and Mr. English who "abstained" for the UAW Collective Bargaining in 1.3.
(6-0-2)

1.4 Approval regarding increases to substitute pay rates, effective July 11, 2019

- a. School Bus Driver from \$17 to \$18 per hour
- b. School Bus Aide from \$10 to \$12 per hour
- c. Teacher from \$80/\$90 to \$100 per day
- d. Paraprofessional from \$70 to \$80 per day
- e. Paraprofessional from \$40 to \$50 per half day

- Mr. Ulrich prompted a question to Mr. Mercoli and asked that if we find we are not meeting the needs of the substitutes is there consideration to reevaluate the rates again?

- Mr. Mercoli responded that we did have this checked and we are not below anyone, but we should be able to reevaluate if necessary.

All Members voted
"yes."
(8-0-0)

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Proposed Item(s)

for Review: None.

Approval of

Bills: Bills incurred during May 2019.

Motion made by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Ms. Acosta.

All members voted "yes."

(8-0-0)

Emergent

Item: Approval regarding the settlement agreement in the matter of D.P. o/b/o K.P. v. Vineland Board of Education in accordance with the terms set forth in the settlement agreement executed on July 3, 2019, and on file with the Board Secretary.

Motion made by Ms. Acosta, seconded by Mr. Holmes.

All members voted "yes."

(8-0-0)

Public

Comments: Tom Deitz

Mr. Dietz deferred to speak in private after the meeting upon the recommendation of Mr. Mercoli and Mr. DeSanto as to the confidential nature of what he wanted to discuss referred to his son, a student in the district, and a minor.

Kate Cronk

Teacher at Vineland High School (North)

Head Field Hockey Coach

Requesting to please reinstate the Middle School Field Hockey Program.

It has been six (6) years since inception. She understands the financial struggles the district is facing but is surprised that the \$5,800 for the three (3) middle schools is being cut out of all the athletics. Feels that the bond the athletes create and the program itself benefits the students early on and through high school. She understands the deficit but to please reconsider and reinstate the program.

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Chris Jennings (standing with Mrs. Cronk, former Board Member)
Added that he supports these programs and to please not let them down.

Alexis Pineda

2018 VHS Graduate and Field Hockey Alumni

She is an advocate and supporter of the feeder program. Shared that when she was in 8th grade, she felt it was the most challenging, mentally and physically. The Coach, staff, and other players were a family and instilled many values. Feels that the Middle School feeder program gave the girls an opportunity to be better athletes, better students, better role models and better leaders. Thank you.

Arjorie Ingram

She is a supporter of Kate (Homiak) Cronk, the Field Hockey Program and all girl sports. She was in High School in 1974 when field hockey was a club, but with the persistence of a coach in 1975 they became varsity. She is excited to see the progress women in sports have made. Coach Kate has the heart and with all the other sports having feeder programs, please don't take this away. Find the money...we need to beat Millville.

Lisa Arena

Parent of a daughter that went through the middle school program and played field hockey through high school with Mrs. Cronk. Her daughter built a comradery with friends and teammates that she still is friends with today. She has seen how this program was with her child as a parent and it is a good program.

Sonialys Badillo

Supporter of the Middle School Field Hockey Program. She started in 6th grade and fell in love with it. She met new girls from her own school, as well as, girls from other teams. After the middle school program she felt confident going into high school to play. This has formed her into the person she is today. She played varsity her senior year and is playing while she attends college. It provides many opportunities. Please save the program and let it continue.

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Vickie Miller

Was not planning on speaking about this tonight, but look at T.V. today and the world's women's soccer team, the women are coming up. Lets treat our girls like the boys, lets give them the money.

Local Resident (Name not legible)

Thank you for letting me speak tonight on behalf of my sister who could not be here today as she is practicing in North Carolina with her new field hockey team. She learned field hockey at a younger age and understands the game better because of it. The opportunity to play field hockey in middle school gave her the chance to earn an athletic scholarship to Belmont College, a D2 school with the sport she loves. Please keep the middle school program.

Tracey Lopez

Parent of two daughters who attend Vineland schools (Grade 9 & Grade 12) Her situation is unique, she played field hockey and she remembers her High School coach back then saying, "I wish you had started sooner." She suggested her girls try field hockey and they loved it. Her senior has played varsity every year. It enhances the girls academically and athletically. Please continue to keep the program - women are rising up. Thank you.

Tamira Lopez

Incoming senior at VHS this year . She shared that she took advantage of clinics that were offered and loved the sport. She played all through middle school, worked hard, and learned many things in preparation for high school. Has many memories during middle school field hockey and with the competitiveness in high school, middle school gets you ready. Please keep field hockey in middle school.

Henesis Vazquez

Supporter of the field hockey program. This program gave her the opportunity to meet amazing and loving people she calls her teammates. With the help of Coach Cronk she was able to stay focused in school and stay fit and healthy. And although she did not play for middle school she wished she did as it would have opened many doors and improved her skills. She is a more confident person and has met many people while playing field hockey. Please keep the middle school field hockey program.

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Old Business: Mr. Holmes asked Mr. Mercoli how much does the field hockey program cost to reinstate.

Mr. Mercoli answered that this was an athletic director cut and not the only middle school sports program that was cut and to keep in mind that if you restore one think about restoring all of them. Mr. Mercoli said that Mrs. Cronk mentioned a number that was \$4,800, but his number is about \$8,000. Also, they also just got an email about restoring tennis today.

Mr. Fiocchi inquired about the potential for volunteers as Coaches and Mr. Mercoli replied that he did not have that information but was sure they could ascertain it.

Mr. English asked when the next Finance committee meeting was being held and Mr. Fiocchi said that they did not have one currently set but could schedule one in the next couple of weeks. Mr. English stated that maybe they could invite Mr. Robbins and have an athletic discussion.

Ms. Acosta asked when field hockey practice started and then for consideration in having the finance committee meeting prior to that August 9th date that was shared as the first practice date. She said that maybe we could find the funds and explore different options.

Mr. English shared that he knows it is hard when you have to cut programs. The staff and the students come forward to advocate for what they believe in; but if we open up and reconsider one program, a domino effect takes place. There may be scenarios that we could possibly work with and rereview. We can discuss at the finance committee meeting and explore possibilities.

Mr. English also added that he wanted to take a moment and discuss the article in the newspaper about the Board President, myself, revisiting class rank, valedictorian and salutatorian discussion. He has been having a good conversation with Mr. Frey and he does believe in the committee structure. He used the word "revisit", he believes in consistency and the process. He apologizes to any of the Board Members if they were blindsided.

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New Business: None.

Board Member

Remarks: Mr. Medio
No comment at this time.

Mr. Sbrana
Shared that he hopes the employees and the students are enjoying their summer vacation and staying safe. Less than sixty days left before we are back in the classroom; enjoy your remaining time.

Mr. Silva
No comment at this time.

Mr. Fiocchi
No comment at this time.

Mr. Holmes
No comment at this time.

Ms. Acosta
Wished everyone a good summer and Best of Luck to all our retirees. Much success in your future endeavors.

Mr. Ulrich
Should say no comment at this time, but I never do that. To have everyone that comes up for the proposed cut program, there is always support of the staff and students that are affected. Thank you to all that came up and spoke. The Board members focus is to affirm the day to day decisions of Administration. We have to choose when we are going to micromanage and not to micromanage. All cuts were not suggested by the Board. His first focus and support is the classroom teacher, classroom aide - sports is secondary. He played sports his entire life and loves sports, but at some point in time sports may not even be on the table; they can be gone. There are a lot of things that were given out tonight, UAW, Administrative Staff, settled contracts with the Teachers, but something has got to give. Thank you again to the Coach and students for coming out tonight.

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Mr. Frey

It was my pleasure to be able to sit in and assist in Dr. Gruccio's absence, thank you.

Board President

Remarks:

Mr. English

I can always agree to disagree with Mr. Ulrich. We make a great team and I understand exactly what he is saying. I find the word "micromanage" an interesting word; when it is a great idea you do not hear it, but if it is not a good idea then there is the word. I believe and hope that each Board Member up here is classroom based first, extra curricular activities second. I understand why Mrs. Cronk came here tonight; she believes in her program. I thank her, the players, parents, and ex-players for coming tonight. Also addressed Mr. Dietz to advise that the Vineland Public School District is very professional and if, following his discussion in private after this meeting, he does not hear something that he likes, he can certainly follow the chain of command and address the Board at the next meeting. Thank you and good night.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mr. Fiocchi to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gene Mercoli
Board Secretary

GM:kji