

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, November 3, 2010 at 7:01 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Franceschini presiding and the following members present: Mr. DeWinne, Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mrs. Phillips, Ms. Rios, and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. Fanucci and Dr. Mounier.

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

Mr. Franceschini 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** – Mr. DeWinne asked for an explanation as to why there are so many maintenance and cook transfers. Ms. Greenfield said we are promoting a number of assistant cooks to senior cooks and through attrition will be eliminating the assistant cook classification. She said some of the maintenance transfers may also be promotions along with shift movement.

Mr. Ulrich questioned why the assistant cooks work 7 hours and the senior cooks work 8 hours. Ms. Greenfield explained that we have different pay scales in the UAW guide and they have a different package. Mr. Ulrich asked what the salary difference would be. Ms. Greenfield said that she would get back to him with that information but they are promotions. Mr. Ulrich asked if this is something that Sodexo is recommending that we do. Ms. Greenfield responded yes they are in agreement. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if the title would be eliminated. Ms. Greenfield said yes eventually. She said this was a plan that was discussed a couple of years ago.

Mrs. Phillips asked if we are going to cook in the schools again and not the central kitchen. Ms. Greenfield said she does not think we will be doing any actual cooking at the schools just serving the meals. She said the senior cooks will be in charge of all the operations at the school such as supervising and the registers.

Mr. English asked what the procedure is for hiring a certified substitute when a teacher goes on a long term leave such as maternity. Ms. Greenfield said in the contract they are supposed to give us 90 days notice for maternity leave however we do not usually get a 90 day notice. She said it depends on the timeframe but we do post for some contracted positions. The replacement would be someone who is certificated and given a short term contract with the salary and benefits.

Mr. DeWinne asked if the personnel department is not notified of a leave does that put the department in a hardship to replace. Ms. Greenfield said she has a lot of problems with leaves and it is an ongoing concern.

Mrs. Phillips recognized and thanked retirees Mark Melamed and Rosemarie Spada for their years of service.

Mr. Ulrich said the Policy & Personnel Committee agreed that the substitute nurse rate should be increased and put on next week's agenda.

2. **Placement of Special Education Students** – Mr. DeWinne asked if new students mean they are new to this system and being sent out for education. Mrs. Polof said it is a student who is going out of district. Mr. DeWinne asked if the discharged students will be coming back to the district. Mrs. Polof said the students left, dropped or transferred.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked how do we determine what location or school is chosen for a specific student. Mrs. Polof said the placement decision is made at an IEP meeting held with the parent, teacher, administration and child study team. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if there could be two competitive locations with one being less costly. Mrs. Polof said legally the decision has to be made based on the needs of the child with costs, placement and programming considered. She said the ultimate decision is based on the needs of the child and the school closest to the child's home school.

Mr. Ulrich asked what checks and balances are in place to ensure that there is not a push towards a certain provider because of a contact or some other reason. Mrs. Polof said she reviews the placements monthly with the out of district team. She said every time a student goes out she has a discussion with the Cumberland County Office of Education. Mrs. Polof said the tuition rates are set by the State not by the schools.

3. **Budgetary Transfers** - No discussion.
4. **Teacher in Training Agreement** – No discussion.
5. **New Curricula Computer Aided Drafting and Design** - No discussion.

6. **Federal Program Staff Salaries and Funding** – Mr. English asked why they are not 100% funded. Mr. Franchetta said the other part of the salary could be funded to a state grant or the general fund. Mr. English asked if we pay the difference. Mr. Franchetta said yes.
7. **Appointment of Kevin J. Franchetta as Public Agency Compliance Officer** – No discussion.
8. **Travel** – No discussion.
9. **Bids – a. Change Order #1 VHS Life Skills Renovations Project b. Change Order #2 VHS Life Skills Renovations c. Alternatives Unlimited, Inc.** - Mr. Franceschini asked why we have change orders on the bid. Mr. Franchetta said there was a contingency of approximately \$20,000 that was built in to the bid for changes that could occur during the project. He said one change order is taking away from the \$20,000 and the other change order is returning money to the \$20,000. Mr. English asked if the change orders affected the process as far as when the project will be completed. Mr. Franchetta said he does not believe they did.

Mr. DiGiorgio asked if Alternatives Unlimited was for homebound instruction. Mr. Franchetta said it is for home instruction services. Mr. DeWinne asked who monitors the reports or progress of the students who are homebound. Dr. Gruccio said Rosolyn Williams. Mr. DeWinne asked approximately how many students are currently homebound. Mrs. Elliott said we currently have 150 homebound students. Mr. DeWinne asked if Ms. Williams oversees this weekly. Mrs. Elliott said it is almost a daily process depending on the student. Mr. DeWinne asked who this group coordinates the education with. Mrs. Elliott explained that Alternatives Unlimited can offer everything that we offer in the district and is based on our curriculum as well as New Jersey Core Content Standards. She said for long term we offer the computer program through Alternative Unlimited. Mr. DeWinne asked if the service still bills us the same if the student refuses to participate. Mrs. Elliott said after a certain amount of inactivity the computer is taken from the home and Alternatives Unlimited only bills for the time the student used the computer. Dr. Gruccio mentioned that due to state regulations when a student is suspended for more than five days we are obligated to provide home instruction. Mr. Franceschini asked if we have more or less students on home instruction compared to last year. Mrs. Elliott said a little less than last year at this time. Mr. Ulrich asked how many students are being serviced by Alternatives Unlimited. Mrs. Elliott said she would get that information to him. She said that sometimes the parents refuse the computer program and want a live tutor, which is their right to request.

Mr. Franceschini asked what the cost difference is between the tutor and laptop. Mrs. Elliott said the contracted time for all of our tutors is \$25 per hour and the computer breakdown depends on the amount of hours that the student utilizes it. She said currently it is cheaper for a computer to be utilized than a tutor.

10. **Salem County Vocational Technical School Contract** – No discussion.
11. **Gloucester County Vocational Technical School Contract** – Mr. DeWinne asked if there are programs that we do not offer that a majority of these students are going to and have we looked into offering these programs in our district. Mr. Franchetta said there are about 15 students attending these schools and it would not be cost effective. Mr. DiGiorgio asked if we are obligated to provide these types of programs. Mr. Franchetta said if we do not provide these programs in our school district the students have the right to attend the schools that do and it is our responsibility to pay and transport them. Mr. Ulrich mentioned that the technical schools are in a consortium with 21 other school districts and offer a variety of programs.
12. **Submission of Grants** – No discussion.
13. **Acceptance of Funds** – No discussion.
14. **St. Vincent DePaul Donation** – Mr. Franceschini asked what this program is. Mrs. Elliott said this program is through Sacred Heart Church in Vineland and is geared towards elementary students. The program provides students, identified by the crisis teams in elementary schools, a back pack on the weekends or extended breaks with non perishable breakfast and snack items. Mr. English asked how the students are made aware of this. Mrs. Elliott said they are identified through each individual crisis team, which is a very confidential process.
15. **Weight Machine Donation** – Mr. Franceschini asked if the students or faculty will be using this weight machine. Mrs. Phillips said the students.
16. **October Bus Evacuations Drills** - Mr. Franceschini asked for an explanation on this. Mrs. Elliott explained that bus evacuations have been held in compliance with School Bus Safety Awareness month, which was in October. She said elementary drills are done through our transportation department and middle/high school drills are done at the building level conducted by the principal. Mr. Franceschini asked if this was a new regulation. Mrs. Elliott said the drills use to be done twice a year and now it is enhanced.
17. **Revised Hourly Substitute Rates** – No discussion.

18. **Approval of Legal Attendance Days for VHS North & South Pupils** – Mr. Franceschini asked what we plan on doing. Dr. Gruccio said professional development.
19. **Payment of Legal Fees** – No discussion.
20. **SES Contract Agreements** – No discussion.
21. **Approval of First Reading of Policy #4159 and Policy #6112** – No discussion.
22. **Appointment of Stanley H. Allen, Inc. t/a Allen Associates** – Mr. Ulrich said he noticed a clause in the agreement that in the event we opt out of the State Health Benefits Program the compensation will be reconsidered based on commissions. He asked if there is a possibility we will be moving out of State Health Benefits. Mr. Franchetta said at this moment there is no intention to move out of State Health Benefits. He said this is just an escape hatch in the contract in case the need does arise. Mr. DeWinne mentioned that Allen Associates came in and helped our personnel department and also handled a lot of our employee calls. He said in his opinion Allen Associates does a great job. Mr. DeWinne explained that we moved to State Health Benefits because Aetna wanted to increase our insurance by 31%.

Mr. Richard Allen of Allen Associates said we are constantly looking at alternatives and changes are not something that we like to do. He said there are a lot of issues with State Health Benefits and it was a very good opportunity at the time. Mr. Allen said he is working on alternatives as we speak. He said because the district has only been with State Health Benefits a little over a year there are credibility factors and we do not want to do something that is going to be short term. Mr. Allen said he is looking at alternatives and options for consortium work in health insurance funds. He said we are doing joint insurance research and have seven groups including the City of Vineland. Mr. Allen said in the future we will be looking at that option and it will be brought to the board and evaluated very thoroughly to make sure it is the right thing to do.

23. **Submission of QSAC Performance Reviews and Statement of Assurance** – No discussion.

- B. Board
 1. None.

Review of Bills: Mr. DeWinne asked if Icon was copiers. Mr. Franchetta responded yes. Mr. DeWinne requested a summary on all the copiers.

Mr. Ulrich said he thinks there are instances that we are doing things electronically and also printing out to file. He said if the point is to reduce paper and strain on natural resources we really need to do things one way without duplicating. Dr. Gruccio said in central office there is a tremendous amount of copying that we are mandated by the State to do.

Public: None

Committee Reports: Mr. Ulrich said discussed at tonight's Policy & Personnel Committee was a series of policies that will be presented to the board for first readings in December. He said they also discussed Bylaw 0169, which is board member use of electronic mail/internet. Mr. Ulrich said there was a request from the Finance Committee for the Policy & Personnel Committee to discuss the possibility of filling the Purchasing Director position. He said Mr. Cox left the district and the position was not filled. Mr. Ulrich said some concerns of the committee had were who is doing it now and how are we doing it. He said one of his concerns is that Dr. Banks has informed the board that she wants the budget process to start much earlier and be formulated out in January. Mr. Ulrich said with those additional demands put on Mr. Franchetta he thinks it is prudent to look into giving Dr. Banks the authority to post for a purchasing agent because the district may be too large for one person to handle this additional work. He said the committee decided to give Dr. Banks permission to add this to the December agenda for a full board discussion. Mr. Ulrich said also discussed at the meeting was a field trip form that Mr. DeSanto approved.

Mr. DeWinne said sometimes we have a number of bids and someone is needed to keep a close eye on our bid process. He said we need to be very thorough in our bid process along with our purchase orders. Mr. DeWinne said the salary range for the Purchasing Director position is also in question. Mr. Ulrich said the concerns discussed were what kind of person can we get and where will we start the salary. He said the board needs to be firm as to the salary and if we do not get what we need we would have to re-advertise and expand the range. Mr. Ulrich said there is a financial concern and we are trying to get the biggest bang for the buck but it may not be realistic.

Mrs. Phillips said she is confused because we just eliminated that position less than a year ago. Mr. Ulrich said it is a budgeted position that we did not fill. Mrs. Phillips asked why we feel now that it is necessary to fill. Mr. Ulrich said that position was not filled but Dr. Banks said down the road if it needed to be re-addressed that she would re-address it.

Unfinished Business: Mr. DeWinne said he would like the status on the Solar Request for Proposal (RFP) process. He also mentioned that a fire drill was held yesterday at a school that was a polling place and it created chaos. Mrs. Elliott said that was not a scheduled fire drill but an accident at the school. Mr. DeWinne said he would like a discussion on the budget to be put on the agenda for next month. He thanked Dr. Gruccio for the speech that she gave at the National Junior Honor Society Induction. Mr. DeWinne requested for someone to translate in writing the speech a young man gave at the National Junior Honor Society Induction and send it to the board and staff. He said the speech was absolutely powerful for the students.

New Business: None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by voice vote at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Franchetta, CPA
Board Secretary

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