

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, November 13, 2013 at 7:01 p.m., pursuant to notice with Mr. Medio presiding and the following members present: Mr. DiGiorgio, Mr. English, Mr. Jennings, Ms. Morello, Ms. Rios and Mr. Ulrich. Absent: Mr. Bongiovanni and Dr. Mounier.

Also present: Dr. Gruccio, Superintendent, Mr. Frey and Mrs. Polof, Assistant Superintendents, Mr. Schectman, Board Secretary, Dr. Rossi, Executive Director of Personnel, Mr. DeSanto, Solicitor, press and public. Absent: None.

Mr. Medio asked for a moment of silence for Alexa Strittmatter, Christopher Possumato and Jermire Lowery who are members of the Vineland school community and have recently passed away.

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.

Resolution: None.

Flag Salute: Students from Johnstone Elementary School led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Special

Presentation (s): Dr. Gruccio introduced Mr. Joseph Camardo, Principal of Veterans Memorial School, to recognize Erin Rigo, a Special Education Teacher at his school.

Mr. Camardo said Erin Rigo works with the autistic population at Veterans Memorial School. He said last year she asked if she could incorporate her students in a research project as part of her master’s thesis. Mr. Camardo said Ms. Rigo was selected among thousands of applicants for her work that was titled “Using an Apple iPad for Self-Monitoring Students with Autism” that was presented to the council of Exceptional Children’s National Conference held in Philadelphia. Mr. Camardo said he is happy to see our teachers utilizing all of the technology available to them. He thanked the board for recognizing Ms. Rigo and congratulated her on doing a fantastic job.

Dr. Gruccio introduced Mr. Nathan Frey, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction to present the 2012-2013 NJ State Assessment Results.

Mr. Frey reviewed the 2012-2013 NJ State Assessment scores for each grade level for every school in Math, Language Arts and Science for the general and total population.

Mr. DiGiorgio said we are making progress or above our district factor group consistently.

Mr. Ulrich asked how the data will be received on the School Growth Objectives (SGO's). Mr. Frey said the data will be collected through Genesis and we will look at it through NJ Smart. Mr. Ulrich asked if we will look at the goals that were set to see if the percentage of students reached that goal. Mr. Frey said absolutely. Ms. Morello said SGO's are developed in concert with whomever the teacher reports to directly. She said you come up with something that is important and measureable, which her school is currently doing.

Solicitor's Report:

Mr. DeSanto said he along with Dr. Gruccio and Mrs. Polof are scheduled to meet this Monday to review all of the policies and regulations that relate to discipline to address the concerns raised last week. He said it appears to him that the guide is not complete because there are certain infractions not included. Mr. DeSanto said he reviewed the accountability regulations and had discussions with Dr. Stepura and NJ School Boards Association relating to the possibility of delegating to the Superintendent the approval of field trips. He said there is nothing definitive on it and he does not think there is a prohibition against it. Mr. DeSanto said we may have to make a determination as to which of these trips are annual so the board can preapprove them and give the Superintendent the authority to approve the date/time. He said he would need some time to develop a procedure so the Board and Superintendent can work out the practicalities of the issue. Mr. DeSanto said there should be a blanket approval. He said he will have a full report on this at the December work session.

Mr. Medio said the Board did not indicate any desire to change what we are currently doing. He said if there is a problem with timely submission of paperwork, then the Superintendent could report to the Board that they are approving the trip and the Board could approve the trip afterwards.

Approval of Minutes: Upon motion by Ms. Morello, seconded by Mr. English, the minutes were approved from October 2, 2013, October 9, 2013, and October 25, 2013. All Members voted “yes” except Ms. Rios and Ms. Morello who voted “yes” on all minutes but “abstained” on the October 25, 2013 minutes.

Report of the  
Secretary/Custodian  
Of School Monies: None.

Public Comment on  
Agenda Items: Joseph Camardo, Principal Veterans Memorial School  
Mr. Camardo thanked the members of the Korean War Veterans Association for the electronic sign for Veterans Memorial School. He said the sign will be a wonderful addition to the school.

Recommendations:

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

Approval of Bills: Upon motion by Mr. English, seconded by Ms. Morello, the bills were approved and warrants issued for same. All Members voted “yes” (\$5,333,333.69).

Mr. English asked what happens if the board has an issue with a particular check because they have all been paid. Mr. DeSanto said the payment of those checks would imply that the goods or services were acceptable. Mr. English expressed his concern that vendor #1616 is not a local vendor and how do we know we got the best price. He asked when there will be a meet-and-greet with the local vendors. Mr. Schectman said yesterday we were invited to join the Cumberland County Meet-and-Greet Fair with vendors throughout the county, which he will take part in. Ms. Morello asked Mr. Schectman to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to let them know that the school district will be participating in the county meet-and-greet.

Emergent Item(s)

(with prior approval)

- a. **Personnel Item – Resignation** – No discussion.
- b. **Finance Item – Approval of the Annual Maintenance Reserve Deposit Worksheet (M-1) indicating the required deposit in the 2014-2015 budget** – Ms. Morello asked why items b. and c. are emergent items. Mr. Schectman said the M-1 is filed annually and due by November 15<sup>th</sup>. He said because of the transition he was just made aware of this on Monday afternoon. Ms. Morello hopes to see a calendar by the next meeting. Mr. Ulrich asked who notified us that this was due by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Schectman said the county superintendent. Mr. English asked if there is a penalty for filing late. Mr. Schectman said there should not be a penalty. He said we are in the process of preparing a calendar and the board will have it for the next work session.
- c. **Finance Item – Approval of Comprehensive Maintenance Plan Report for the following period:**

2012-2013 Actual -----	\$ 806,268.00
2013-2014 Budgeted -----	\$1,201,700.00
2014-2015 Planned -----	\$1,345,000.00

d. **Personnel Item – Retirement** - No discussion.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. English, seconded by Mr. Jennings, to approve emergent items a. b. c. and d. All Members voted “yes.” Ms. Morello voted “yes” with serious reservations with b. and c.

**Public:** Mario Olsen, Principal of Vineland High School North  
Mr. Olsen said Vineland High School has had a difficult two weeks with the loss of two children. He said it is important on behalf of administration, staff and students to thank our Juvenile Unit, Vineland Police Department, Vineland Police Chaplain Program and Linda Santagata for all their support during this difficult time. Mr. Olsen expressed his concerns on the discipline guide and dress code policy at the high school. He requested to reinstate last year’s discipline guide until the new guide is constructed because the current guide does not work.

Julie Howerton, Parent  
Ms. Howerton requested for the board to change all bus stops so students do not have to cross streets.

**Board Member  
Remarks:**

Mr. English thanked Ms. Rigo for thinking outside of the box and using district technology. He also thanked the flag salute students. Mr. English congratulated the National Junior Honor Society students. He thanked all athletes and coaches who have completed the fall season sports. Mr. English wished the academic and football team the best of luck. He thanked the Vineland High School Marching Band and Polaris Players for their outstanding performances this fall. Mr. English thanked everyone for pulling together to help heal a community in mourning. He sends his thoughts and prayers to the family of Jermire Lowery, Alexis Strittmatter and Chris Possumato.

Mr. Ulrich sends his condolences to the families of the three individuals who passed away in our community. He said we have to critically look at all of our policies to make sure we are doing a best practice. Mr. Ulrich congratulated Ms. Rigo and her accomplishments. He said our test scores are encouraging and hopefully we will get to a point where we continually see percentage increases. Mr. Ulrich congratulated the district teachers for trying to improve student achievement every day. He also congratulated all the retirees and wished them happiness.

Mr. DiGiorgio thanked all the members of the public for their comments. He said when there are no board member comments or responses it does not mean that we do not hear you or share your concerns. As board members we must reserve comments for when it is appropriate and at work sessions we cannot comment or question certain things. Mr. DiGiorgio gave the Strittmatter and Lowery families his deepest sympathy and said no one could imagine your loss. He expressed his gratitude to administration and staff for their immediate attention and handling of the situations. Mr. DiGiorgio thanked the Vineland Police Department for their assistance. He sent his deepest condolences to the family of Chris Possumato. He said student and staff safety has always been a paramount concern and there is always opportunity to enhance any given area. Mr. DiGiorgio thanked Mr. Weaver for the comments he made in the newspaper in regards to the walkway. He said the capital improvement budget can only be utilized for capital improvement purposes. Mr. DiGiorgio said we must continue to collaborate with the city to explore additional efforts as it pertains to safe pathways to school for our children. He congratulated Brian DeWinne, Scott English, Tom Ulrich and Richard Baruffi on their board victories. Mr. DiGiorgio congratulated Sara Hullihen a Winslow School student for creating an activity for the National Football League. He also congratulated the National Junior Honor Society inductees.

Ms. Morello thanked Mr. DiGiorgio for his comments. She said our district has suffered some serious loss during the last ten days and we need to be thankful for everything that we have. Ms. Morello looks forward to very productive conversations with the city and county. She said our young people need to be careful and understand that terrible things can happen in a split second. Ms. Morello said that she looks forward to a calendar from Mr. Schectman so we can move forward in a more business like way. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Hanukkah.

Report/Remarks by  
Board President:

None.

Adjournment:           The Board adjourned the meeting by voice vote at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Herbert G. Schectman  
Board Secretary

HGS:df





