POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
APRIL 8, 2010 - 7:30 P.M.

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, April 8, 2010 at 7:30 PM in the second floor LGI room of the Pottstown Middle School. The following board members were present: Mr. Richard C. Huss, President, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Vice-President, Ms. Valerie Harris, Mr. Robert H. Hartman, Jr., Mr. Thomas J. Hylton, Mrs. Michele Pargeon, Mrs. Polly M. Weand, Mr. Nat White and Mrs. Julia Wilson. Also present were Superintendent, Mr. David Krem; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Reed Lindley; Director of Education and Human Resources, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana; Business Administrator, Mrs. Linda S. Adams; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis, Mr. Robert Giering, Mrs. Lisa Snyder, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Mr. Matthew Moyer, Mrs. Gail Cooper, Mr. John Armato, Ms. Terri Lampe, a member of the press, and interested citizens.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Andy Pistoria presented a $500 donation from the Tri-County Federal Credit Union to the Pottstown Football Program. Coach Myers and four members of the football team (Nick Herbine, Jeff Endy, Cory Huber and Dawon Matthews) accepted the donation of behalf of the Football Program.

AWARDS

Dr. Tuck provided a video narrated by the students of Edgewood. The video included the many activities and accomplishments at Edgewood Elementary School.

Mrs. Marchek introduced the Edgewood Elementary Writing Award winners. Each student read their award winning writings and was presented a medal by the Board President.

K-5 - Felicidad Chimbinja
1st Grade - Brian Cowie
2nd Grade - Chloe Hebert
3rd Grade - Jariza Torres
4th Grade - Abigail Richter
5th Grade - Ashley Adams

Edgewood also presented flowers and their thanks to Mrs. Marchek for her pending retirement.

REPORTS

Mr. Doug O'Dell and Mr. David Leinbach presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding for Economic Development for Pottstown. Mr. O'Dell provided background information significant to the ULI's recommendation that Pottstown establish an economic development entity. This entity would work together with the stakeholders to prioritize, design and implement solutions. Mr. O'Dell reported that the Borough of Pottstown unanimously adopted the draft MOU at last night's meeting.

Mr. Leinbach provided background on PAID, the proposed economic development entity. He outlined the process of establishing a new PAID board of directors and a new president.

Mr. White asked Mr. Leinbach how the Pottstown schools would come into play with PAID. Mr. Leinbach responded that PAID would be responsible for the economic development for all of Pottstown. All projects would need to go through PAID to do the ground work and determine what is most benefical to the whole community as one common voice. PAID does not supersede any authority. He stressed that the entity is not to be a political function. All Federal, State and/or County funds that would be made available to the Borough and/or School District are required to be granted only when unanimity is demonstrated.

Mr. Hylton voiced his support for the MOU as an outstanding idea. He supports a separate entity.

Mrs. Weand asked Mr. Leinbach if the PAID group is already formed. Mr. Leinbach responded that a new board and a new director would be established for this new project.

Mr. Hartman expressed his support for this idea.

Any further questions from the board members will be directed to Mr. Kalis. Mr. Kalis will present the questions to Mr. O'Dell and Mr. Leinbach for a follow up.

MINUTES

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 18, 2010 to be place on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

Mr. Thees voiced his concern that the MOU would take away the authority of the school board. He recommended that the board approve the School Employee Pension Reform Resolution and pursue a class action suit against the legislatures. Mr. Thees stated his support for the direction of the Neighborhood Schools Committee reporting all data to the Facilities Committee.

Mr. Leflar collected unpaid property tax data through a Right-to Know request. He recommended that the board take the opportunity to collect the approximately $1.3million of unpaid property taxes from the past five years. His research shows approximately 17 properties owned by deadbeat landlords.

Mr. Morgan recommended that the board take a more active role in property re-assessment. He thanked Mr. Huss for the formation of the President's Task Force.

Mrs. Adams responded to Mr. Morgan's recommendation concerning property re-assessment. The school district has met with the borough to form a collective effort in actively pursuing property re-assessment.

Mrs. Zahora wanted to know if the board has started the search for a new superintendent.

Mr. Huss responded that tonight's executive session will address the search for a new superintendent.

The board members discussed some possible options that could be pursued with the borough and county to collect unpaid property taxes.

Mr. Huss stated that Mr. James Bush has consented to chair the President's Task Force Committee. Mr. Huss met with the executive team to discuss pursing a list of other candidates as members of the committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Mr. Wausnock reported the Finance Committee will meet on Thursday, April 15, 2010.

Facilities Committee

Mr. Hartman reported that the fencing is installed at the Shantz Field. He asked the board if they Would agree to change the April 12th Facilities Committee meeting to April 19th. All agreed.

Montgomery County Legislative Representative / PSBA Representative

Mrs. Pargeon reported some topics that were discussed at the Montgomery County Legislative meeting were Safety Health and Wellness in the schools, the new assessment test and requirements for graduation and the United States adoption of the Common Core Standards. Pennsylvania will join in this adoption defining the same graduating expectations for every student.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative

Mr. Hartman reported on several topics that were discussed at the last meeting: 1) the cost effects of the healthcare bill on the districts, 2) the authorization of the secondary education act, 3) revisit the expulsion policy and its relationship to gang activity in Norristown and Pottstown. Two lectures were presented: 1) Transfer Identity regarding special needs students and the consequences of pulling back from the IU and 2) A Safety presentation on some new programs.

Community Relations Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reported that the committee is working on several topics: 1) developing a coalition of community organizations and institutions to focus on common problems and challenges of older suburb communities, 2) a partnership with Vanguard to paint the exterior of the modulars at Edgewood, 3) joining with various Pottstown community groups to clean up a pocket park on Chestnut Street owned by the school district, 4) the Art On High Street project and 5) the Finance Committee is working with the school district to fund a flip cam to film future board meetings. A community bulletin board has now been added to the school district's website.

Co-Curricular Activities Committee

Mr. Hartman reported that the new Co-Curricular Activities director will be at the April 26th meeting.

Technology/Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Wilson thanked Mrs. Weand and Ms. Harris for the wonderful notes they took in her absence. The committee addressed Policies 100, 101, 102 and 105 and will be submitting their changes and additions to the Policy Committee for their review. A draft of the School District's Drive Safety program

will be investigated by the committee. Other topics discussed at the meeting included 1) the Keystone Exams, 2) funding for the Science adoption, 3) the study of Core Reading, 4) keyboarding in the elementary schools, 5) the implementation of the Virtual Academy Cyber Schools. The committee had the opportunity to view an informal commercial. Ms. Harris added that the committee had agreed for Dr. Lindley to contact the NFTE, an entrepreneurship program, to be considered incorporating at the high school.

Policy Committee

None.

Personnel Committee

Ms. Harris stated that the March 11th meeting was a joint meeting with the Finance Committee. Prior to going into executive session, the committee discussed the current recruiting practices of minorities. The district currently has 52% minority students and 2.2% minority teacher and professional staff. The committee discussed some creative ways to recruit minority teachers and professional staff that would better represent a correlation with the minority student ratio.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Zahora presented the list of bills to be placed on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

CONSENT ITEMS

Personnel

Dr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items as presented to be placed on the March 18, 2010 board agenda for approval.

Professional Leaves

Dr. Lindley reviewed the professional leave as presented to be placed on the March 18, 2010 board agenda for approval.

Contracts – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the contracts as presented to be place on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

Revised 2009-2010 Calendar
Mrs. Adams reviewed the revised 2009-2010 calendar as presented to be placed on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

2010-2011 School Calendar

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 2010-2011 School Calendar as presented to be placed on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

School Employee Pension Reform Resolution

Mrs. Adams reviewed the School Employee Pension Reform Resolution as presented to be placed on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

2008-2009 School District Audit

Mrs. Adams review the 2008-2009 School District Audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2099 as prepared by Maillie, Falconiero and Company as presented to be placed on the April 22m 2010 board agenda for approval.

21st Century Community Learning Center Grant Contract Amendment Agreement

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant Contract Amendment Agreement as presented to be placed on the April 22, 2010 board agenda for approval.

NON-CONSENT

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Policy 5900: Interscholastic Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities for Pottstown High School and Pottstown Middle School
2. Policy 5910: Co-Curricular Awards and Recognition for Co-Curricular Participation

NEW BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION

1. PHS Conference Summary: March 2010 - Mr. Krem
2. Conference Report - Dr. Lindley
3. Revised Monthly Meeting Schedule: April 2010 - Mrs. Adams
4. Rupert and Middle School Polling Sites - Mrs. Adams
5. PSBA Student Delegate Program - Mrs. Adams
6. Communication from Executive Director of Montgomery County Housing Authority
7. PCTV Spotlighting Pottstown School District Program – Mr. Armato

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mr. Decker, on behalf of the Federation, thanked Mr. Krem for all of his contributions to the district. He thanked Mr. Krem for his leadership in helping to move the district forward by leaps and bounds. Mr. Decker thanked the administration for allowing the Federation to have a significant role in developing the 2010-2011 calendar. He thanked the board for continuing the writing award presentations at the board meetings.

ROUND TABLE

Mrs. Pargeon regretfully accepted Mr. Krem's resignation. She expressed her confidence in his ability to to accomplish great things for the Wyomissing School District. She complimented the seniors in their abilities demonstrated by their graduation projects.

Mr. Hartman expressed his regrets at the resignation of Mr. Krem. He thanked the parents and students for their thoughtful presentation to Mrs. Marchek. He was pleased to see the participation in the Cluster's Walk that took place last Friday.

Mrs. Weand thanked Mr. Krem for all that he has accomplished for the Pottstown School District. She has learned a lot in the short time she has worked with him. Mrs. Weand thanked Mr. Huss for his choosing Mr. Bush to lead the task force.

Mr. Wausnock – no comment.

Mr. White – no comment.

Mr. Hylton – no comment.

Mrs. Wilson has thoroughly enjoyed working with Mr. Krem during the past two years. The student stories were great and is a reminder that the students are the primary reason why the school board serves the community. The middle school students who competed in a recent jazz band competition received an outstanding recognition award.

Ms. Harris congratulated Mr. Krem on his new position at the Wyomissing School District. She acknowledged the great job the students demonstrated in the stories and the Edgewood staff who worked hard preparing the students. Ms. Harris recognized a high school student, Olivia Coleman, who will be receiving a civil service award in May along with a Pottstown resident, Rita Paez. She thanked the patron for their comments.

Dr. Sparagana was pleased with the success of the fourth Parent Literacy night. He invited the board to participate in the two remaining programs and also the upcoming "Month of the Young Child" event taking place on Sunday at the YMCA. He was encouraged by the MOU presentation and the efforts of the school district and borough to establish a unified vision for economic development in Pottstown. Dr. Spargana looks forward to more collaboration in the future.

Dr. Lindley expressed his regrets at the loss of a life of a former Pottstown student as a result of an automobile accident. The Technology/Curriculum Committee is looking at doing their best to address safety in the curriculum. Business Education Curriculum program at the high school is looking forward to being involved in entrepreneurial activities as part of the MOU.

Mr. Krem thanked the Federation for taking the leading role in developing the 2010-2011 calendar. He announced that the Alumni Association is preparing for the 130th graduating class reunion. Mr. Krem had received a compliment from an alumnus on the beautiful condition of the Shantz Field. He commended Terri Lampe, Director of Development and her staff along with the members of the district for reaching $1.9 million in funds for the district.

Mr. Huss was pleased that Mr. Bush has accepted to head his task force.

Mr. Huss announced an Executive Session for the Purpose of Personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Hartman and seconded by Ms. Harris that the Board adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:42 P.M.

Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary