POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
March 6, 2008 – 7:30 PM

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, March 8, 2008, at 7:30 PM in the LGI room of the Middle School. The following board members were present: Mr. Edwin Edwards, Mrs. Amy Francis, Mr. Robert Hartman, Mr. Richard Huss, Mrs. Michele Pargeon, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Mr. Nat White and Mrs. Judyth Zahora. Absent: Mrs. Julia Wilson. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, David Krem; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Reed Lindley: Director of Education and Human Resources, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana: Business Administrator, Mrs. Linda Adams; Solictor: Mr. Stephen Kalis; Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Ms. Pam Bateson, Mr. Robert Decker, Miss Colleen Blute, Dr. Angela Tuck, Mrs. Mia DiPaolo, Mrs. Loretta Hoch, Mr. Matthew Moyer, Mr. Robert Giering, a member of the press and interested citizens.

AWARDS

Mr. Krem presented the AYP awards to each elementary principal. This is the fourth consecutive year Pottstown has made AYP.

Mr. Giering presented the Barth writing awards to students from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Mrs. Andrea Hunsberger presented the Math Mind Bender awards for Barth.

Mr. Huss thanked all the students and parents for attending tonight's award presentation.

MINUTES

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes to be approved at the Regular March board meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel Committee
No report.

Finance Committee
No report.

Facilities Committee
Mr. Hartman asked Mrs. Adams to provide an update. Mrs. Adams stated there was a meeting with both inspectors on the three major projects pending. They reviewed the modular classrooms code requirements. We are moving forward with drawings for the storage facility. She reviewed the high school basement facility concerns with permits and ADA access. Mr. Hartman shared an email from Greg Barry setting a meeting with the codes department.

Montgomery County Legislative Committee
No report.

PSBA Representative
Mr. White shared that PSBA will hold a web cast with details on Governor Rendell's changes to the Right to Know law.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative
Mr. Hartman stated the intermediate unit discussed the costing out study, which will be phased in over a six-year period. The intermediate unit is beginning a branding initiative. He advised of the Voices of Inspiration Award. He feels it would be useful to have the intermediate unit do a technology study of the district. The intermediate unit has a new website; He stated the District Attorney met the intermediate unit Executive Director to discuss the unit's involvement with law enforcement.

Community Relations Committee
No report.

Neighborhood Elementary Schools Project
Mrs. Pargeon stated the committee is working on an outline of the agenda for the upcoming board workshop.

Co-Curricular Activities Committee
Mr. Hartman advised Mr. Jeff White is gathering information for the meeting scheduled for March 13, 2008 at 7:30p.m.

Dress Code Policy/School Uniforms
Mrs. Francis shared the results of the survey. 829 responses were received; a 26% response rate. 575 were for uniforms and 254 were against. Meaning 69.4% are for a school uniform and 30.6% are against a school uniform. The main concern is with flexibility with where to purchase uniforms. Mr. Edwards was pleased that many people took the time to write responses. He feels the main concern is cost. The committee would like to hold another meeting to discuss how to communicate to parents what is expected. Mr. Edwards stated the surveys are available if any board member wishes to review them. Mr. White stated in his experience with uniforms that they may initially cost more but are cheaper in the long run. The committee recommends moving forward on a board policy and would like to have the board vote on this issue at the Regular March board meeting. Mrs. Zahora asked how we plan to communicate with parents. Mrs. Francis stated we hope to communicate via newspaper and mailings. Mrs. Zahora asked if the district still does home mailings. Mr. Edwards stated kid mail works well with elementary students, not as well with middle and high school students. Mr. Hartman suggested using the automated phone system. Mrs. Francis suggested placing a notice on the report cards. Mr. Hartman would like to see the policy before voting. His concern is with the consequences and how to enforce. Mrs. Francis is in favor of positive reinforcement over negative. Mr. Krem feels our biggest challenge will be with our very mobile population.

Technology/Curriculum Committee
Dr. Lindley provided a presentation on the PVAA data. What the district is doing is working but not at the level necessary. He presented three proposals to the board. For PreK to first grade we would like to contract with Step-by-Step Learning. The cost would be $70,000 this year; $140,000 next year and $140,000 the year after next. Step by Step guarantees results with school district involvement. The district would like to continue with the balanced literacy initiative. We would like to place an instructional coach at each elementary building to provide consistency in instructional leadership at an estimated cost of $131,800. At the secondary level the district wishes to maintain the math coach position. Mr. Krem stated this is not an additional item. Dr. Lindley stated many things are coming together to make us more efficient. Staff will be advised that Step by Step is what we will be using; other things will come off teachers' plates. Mrs. Adams stated the administration feels this is the best course of action and will do whatever is necessary financially to find the means to fund. There is the possibility of utilizing grant funds. The administration is committed to making this happen and there will be hard decisions to be made. Dr. Lindley asked for an indication from the board that they support moving in this direction. Mrs. Zahora stated it is the recommendation of the technology/curriculum to go forward. 56% success rate is not awesome and indicates we are not serving all students. This is not a one-year fix we must be committed to going forward for

the life of the program. Mr. White is excited by this proposal and is relieved that we will be lessening the teachers' load. Mrs. Zahora reminded everyone that as the years pass the NCLB percentage requirements increase. Mr. Hartman asked if we have looked at internal collaboration or collaboration with surrounding districts. Dr. Lindley stated the district has always had internal collaboration.

A straw vote was taken concerning moving forward. All members present voted aye. Ayes: eight. Nays: none. Absent: one.

Liaison with Borough Council and Economic Oversight Committee
Mr. Wausnock advised no action has been taken. We are awaiting council recommendation on the redevelopment plan.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Adams reviewed the list of bills and the amendment to the general fund list of bill from February 7, 2008 to be approved at the Regular March board meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Krem provided a letter from Mr. Doug Slick concerning school uniforms. At Mr. Slick's request, he will read this letter at the Regular March board meeting.

MR. HUSS ANNOUNCED AN EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS.

THE BOARD ENTERED EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:20 P.M.

THE BOARD RECONVENED AT 9:30 P.M.

Mr. Kalis stated the board will add an employee settlement agreement for action to the Regular March board meeting agenda.

PERSONNEL

Dr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items to be placed on the Regular March board meeting agenda for approval.

GRADUATION COMPENTENCY ASSESSMENTS RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the requirements of the proposed graduation competency assessments. These regulations would require a student to pass at least six exams to graduate high school. This mandate could devastate the career and technology program at the high school. Mr. Krem advised area superintendents are in the process of composing a letter indicating they do not support graduation competency assessments. Mr. Krem feels the board should respond with their conclusion of support or non-support. Mr. Hartman asked this item be placed on the Regular March board meeting agenda as a non-consent item.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

Dr. Lindley reviewed the following professional leaves to be placed on the March 20, 2008 board agenda for approval.

Building	First Name	Last Name	Conference Title	Conference Location	Dates to Attend	Cost
Admin.	Jessica	Heffner	PASPA Conference	Harrisburg, PA	2/27/08 – 2/29/08	Approx. $592.00 paid by district
High School	Kurt	Adams	Chapter 339 Review Team	Carlisle, PA	3/11/08 – 3/13/08	All costs paid by PDE
Admin.	Denise Jeanne	Coleman Wentzel	52nd Educational Office Professionals Conference	State College, PA	4/16/08 – 4/18/08	Approx. $1062.00 paid by district
Edgewood	Angela	Tuck	PASA Women's Caucus "Leading Through Change"	Hershey, PA	4/30/08 – 5/2/08	Approx. $787.00 paid by district
Annex	Pamela	Bateson	Pa. Assoc. of Pupil Services Admin.	Lancaster	4/16/08 – 4/18/08	Approx. $861.00 paid by district

FIELD TRIPS

Dr. Lindley reviewed the following field trips to be placed on the March 20, 2008 board agenda for approval.

# of students and/or group	Name of conference or activity	Destination	Date of trip	Cost to student	Cost to district-substitutes	Chaperone(s)
10 High School students	HOSA State Leadership Conference	Lancaster, PA	4/9/08 – 4/12/08	$250.00 (fundraising)	$270.00	Denice DeAntonio & Major Joseph Fitz-Patrick

RESOLUTION SENATE BILL 777 –MUNICIPAL CLAIMS AN TAX LEINS LAW

Mrs. Adams reviewed the resolution allowing the district to continue to utilize Portnoff as our delinquent tax collector. Senate Bill 777 will allow the district to choose their delinquent tax collector. This item will be placed on the Regular March board meeting agenda for approval.

MCIU BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATION

Mrs. Adams advised the district needs to nominate a candidate to serve for three years beginning July 1, 2008. This item will be placed on the Regular March board meeting agenda as a non-consent item.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

REPORTS

1. Strategic Plan Update – Dr. Lindley

Dr. Lindley shared a PowerPoint presentation on the district's strategic plan. Mrs. Zahora asked when our plan must be completed. Dr. Lindley stated it must be completed by September but plans are to be finished by the end of the school year.

INFORMATION

1. Second Marking Period Honor Roll Comparison – Mr. Krem
2. Barth Banner, March 2008
3. Edgewood Chronicles, March 2008
4. Franklin Focus, March 2008
5. Lincoln Log, March 2008
6. Rupert Review, March 2008
7. New Board Member Training (Course 3) – Mrs. Adams
8. WPAZ Education Forum – Mr. Armato
9. Technology Update (January and February 2008) – Mrs. Wolfe
10. Pennsylvania Economy League – Mrs. Adams
11. The Common Good Symposium – Mrs. Adams
12. 3 Year Comparison of Discipline Reports as Requested by Mrs. Zahora (Contact Mr. Krem with any questions)

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mr. Robert Decker shared that two DECA students attended the competition in Hershey and qualified for the national competition. A teacher from the high school won the Voices of Inspiration award last year. The cut off for nominations is March 10, 2008. There is information available on this award on the MCIU website.

ROUND TABLE

Mr. Edwards enjoyed the student awards presentation this evening.

Mr. Hartman congratulated all teachers, students and parents for their work in helping the district meet AYP and for the writing and math awards. He also congratulated the student athletes and the DECA winners. He reminded everyone the boys' basketball banquet will be held soon. He also advised the next meeting is to be held during Holy Week and asked the board to consider changing the date.

Mr. Huss was pleased to hear the student readings tonight and see all the parents and families. He took the opportunity to read at Lincoln during the Dr. Seuss celebration. He thanked Dr. Lindley for the information he provided.

Mrs. Pargeon was moved to tears by the young man who read his story this evening. She attended the Reading Olympics and it was fantastic to watch the children participate. The all city band is in Harrisburg playing at the Capitol Building.

Mr. White thanked everyone for coming out tonight. He had a pleasant experience reading at Rupert.

Mrs. Zahora has concerns regarding the website. The high school play is this weekend and there is no information on our website. She feels we do not utilize the website to its full potential. Mr. Decker stated there is information on the homepage concerning the school play. It was suggested that this information also be placed on the school calendar on the website. Mrs. Zahora feels if we have sport banquets, the DECA students also deserve board recognition for there accomplishments. She asked a question regarding the cars from the auto shop being in the far parking lot. Dr. Sparagana advised these cars have been moved.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Wausnock and seconded by Mr. Hartman that the meeting adjourn. All members present voted aye. The Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

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Linda S. Adams
School Board Secretary