POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
JULY 10, 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, July 10, 2008, at 7:34 PM in the second floor LGI room of the Pottstown Middle School. The following board members were present: Mr. Edwin Edwards, Mr. Robert Hartman, Mr. Richard Huss, Mrs. Michele Pargeon, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Mrs. Julia Wilson, and Mr. Nat White. Absent were Mrs. Amy Francis and Mrs. Judith Zahora. Also present were Superintendent of Schools, David Krem; Director of Education and Human Resources, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana; Business Administrator, Mrs. Linda Adams; Solictor, Mr. Stephen Kalis; Mrs. Pamela Bateson, Mrs. Rita Cohen, Robert Decker, Mrs. Mia DiPalio, Mr. Robert Giering, Mr. Matthew Moyer, Ms. Lisa Snyder, Mr. Jerry Ummarino, a member of the press and an interested citizen.

AWARDS
No awards.

MINUTES
Mrs. Adams presented the minutes to be approved at the Regular July 24, 2008 Board Meeting. The minutes have been revised since the packets were disbursed in late June.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel Committee
No report.

Finance Committee
In Mrs. Zahora's absence, Mrs. Adams stated that the Governor's budget passed in early July. The preliminary numbers for our school district net an increase of $43,000.00 which includes regular education, special education and the PA Accountability Block Grant.

Facilities Committee
No report.

Montgomery County Legislative Committee
Mr. White reported that Pottstown School District is not getting what we need from the state. When compared to other school districts in the county, the district receives only 33% in state contributions which, according to the state median, we should be receiving 41.5% in contributions. Senate Bill 1444 passed unanimously to turn down the state's proposal for high school graduation requirements.

PSBA Representative
No report.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative
Mr. Hartman reported that a meeting was held on June 25, 2008. He commented on the first graduation held at the newly remodeled Anderson School where the Montgomery County Community College provided a scholarship to a graduating senior. He announced the IRS increase of the mileage rate to $.585 per mile. The IU will give an update to county schools on the Safety and Security audit being conducted. A check list is to be made available to the districts. Director's salaries were reviewed and the need to update the MCIU's facilities is being considered. It was found that it may not be worthwhile to remodel due to the costs.

Community Relations Committee
In Mr. Armato's absence, Mrs. Wilson shared that this coming Saturday, July 12, 2008, the Howard Brown Classic will be held with money raised from the event funding a scholarship for a graduating senior. She proudly announced that her son, Randy Wilson, represented the Pottstown School District at an American Legion baseball game and played the National Anthem on his trumpet.

Neighborhood Elementary Schools Project
Mrs. Pargeon stated that a meeting was not held in July, but hopes to meet each Wednesday prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting. She asked to discuss the impasse the board is currently facing regarding moving forward on a decision for the elementary schools.

The board had various discussions regarding the different elementary school options. There was a consensus that at the Regular Board meeting on July 24, 2008, the Board would narrow down to two, the options being considered for the elementary school configuration.

Co-Curricular Activities Committee
No report.

Dress Code Policy/School Uniforms
Mr. Edwards turned over the report to Mr. Krem who stated that the executive team and building administrators worked hard to develop a draft regarding the discipline piece of the Uniform Policy. Mr. Giering announced that a readable proposal would be available by Monday, July 14, 2008. At that time, Mr. Edwards, Mrs. Francis and Mrs. Wilson will review the draft and bring it to the Regular Board meeting for approval. The Uniform Policy will be put into print and placed on the district website. Mr. Krem believes the people deserve an answer. He also states the need for approval before August and the start of the new school year.

Technology/Curriculum Committee
No report.

Liaison with Borough Council and Economic Oversight Committee
Mr. Edwards has recently agreed to be the Liaison for this committee and at this time has no report.

LIST OF BILLS
Mrs. Adams announced that the next list of bills at the Regular Board meeting will be larger due to year end and the amount of time since the last board packet was distributed.

PERSONNEL
Dr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items to be placed on the Regular July 24, 2008 Board meeting agenda for approval.

POLICY 3920 – PART-TIME NON-CONTRACTUAL SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
Dr. Sparagana explained that this policy will update the current substitute rates for the 2008-2009 school year.

WAIVER OF POLICY 6000: RESIDENT CHILDREN-ADMISSION TO SCHOOL
Dr. Sparagana is asking the board to approve the early admission of an elementary student.

HOURS OF OPERATION
Dr. Sparagana stated that this item will be provided in the next board packet.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE
Dr. Sparagana reviewed the professional leave items to be placed on the Regular July 24, 2008 Board meeting agenda for approval.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTRACTS
Mrs. Adams presented contracts for special education services with the Children's Home of Reading for students attending the CHOR Day Academy and the Child Guidance Resource Centers for the 2008-2009 year to be approved at the Regular July 24, 2008 Board Meeting.

DESIGNATION OF DEPOSITORIES
Mrs. Adams presented the banking institutions the district uses each year for its depositories and investments to be approved at the Regular July 24, 2008 Board Meeting.

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH NOTICE 2008-2009
Mrs. Adams presented the USDA's requirement for public schools to announce the eligibility for free and reduced prices for breakfast, lunch and free milk for the 2008-2009 year to be approved at the Regular July 24, 2009 Board Meeting.

NON-CONSENT
No non-consent items.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
No unfinished business.

REPORTS
Mrs. Rita Cohen reported on the district's Least Restrictive Environment Improvement Plan. She provided hand-outs which outlined the corrective action plan, action steps, outcomes and results and the benefits from the implementation of the Improvement Plan.

INFORMATION

1. Honor Roll Comparison
2. National School Lunch Program Administrative Review
3. Conferences for Administrators, Supervisors, and Teachers
4. Technology Update
5. School Board Committee Assignment Meeting Schedule – Mrs. Adams asked the board to review the schedule based on the information that was provided to us. She asked for the Board to respond by the end of next week if changes are necessary. She plans to advertise the committee meeting dates before the next board meeting.
6. PCTV Spotlighting Pottstown School District Program

FEDERATION REMARKS
Mr. Robert Decker stated firstly it was good to hear the board talking about reducing for the elementary schools. This will allow the board to move forward. Secondly, small schools do not equate to small class sizes. He asked the board when making a decision on the correct choice for our schools to keep in mind class size.

ROUND TABLE
Mr. White stated that he appreciated the discussions regarding the elementary schools. He shared that while No Child Left Behind was designed to bring low functioning students and gifted students closer together, the statistics show a deficit in the points gained for gifted students. He stated we can't forget the gifted student's needs.

Mr. Wausnock reiterated the need to move forward and make a decision for our elementary schools. The new board members have been in office for eight months and are no closer to making a decision. He stated the need to get going.

Dr. Sparagana was encouraged that the board is looking to narrow the scope of options for the elementary schools. He was encouraged to hear the Board considering educational needs to the configuration needs of the elementary schools. He reminded the board that one size does not fit all and to keep this in mind before making a decision. He also suggested the board consider the thoughts of the community, and he is sure the board will make a good decision for all involved.

Mr. Krem stated as he starts his 14th year with the district, the elementary schools seem to be a dragging anchor. He agrees with Mr. Edwards and is pleased that the board is willing to compromise as they strive towards what is best for our children and the cost that will be necessary. He stated it takes courage to be in their chairs.

Mr. Huss thanked the board for working together and acknowledged that the next couple of months will be difficult. He asked each member to look into their heart, mind and pocket books and stated we must work together. He thanked all in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Wausnock and seconded by Mrs. Wilson that the meeting adjourn. All members present voted aye. The Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

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Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary