POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
June 2, 2011 - 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, June 2, 2011 at 7:30 PM in the Auditorium of the Pottstown High School with President Richard C. Huss presiding. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Ms. Valerie Harris, Mr. Robert H. Hartman, Jr., Mr. Thomas J. Hylton, Mrs. Michele Pargeon, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Mrs. Polly M. Weand, and Mrs. Julia Wilson. Absent was Mr. Nat White. Also present were Superintendent, Dr. Reed Lindley; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana; Board Secretary, Mrs. Linda S. Adams; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis; Mr. John Armato, Ms. Terri Lampe, Ms. Pamela Bateson, Mrs. Rita Cohen, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Mrs. Gail Cooper, Dr. Angela Tuck, Mr. Robert Giering, Mrs. Mia DiPaolo. Mrs. Loretta Hoch. Mr. Matt Moyer, a member of the press, and interested citizens.

MR. WHITE ENTERED THE MEETING AT 7:40 PM.

AWARDS

Ms. Bateson introduced the Co-Teaching Teams of the Year honorees. Mr. Huss and Dr. Lindley presented each honoree with a framed award certificate.

Barth Elementary School:	Jaime Stringer and Kimberley Valentine
Edgewood Elementary School:	Marie Anders, Catherine Knapke and JoAnne Howe
Franklin Elementary School:	Leon Kanopka and Jennifer Swenk
Lincoln Elementary School:	Maria Carroll and Bonnie Trainer
Rupert Elementary School:	Allen Ferster, Debbie Wilson, Brenda DiDonato and Lisa Meyers
Pottstown Middle School:	Sandra Zuchero and Angela Wagner
Pottstown High School:	Janet Roncase and William Bertoti

Dr. Lindley announced the recipient of the 2010-2011 Co-Teaching Team Award.
Mr. Huss and Dr. Lindley presented each member of the winning team with a plaque.

Pottstown Middle School :	Sandra Zuchero and Angela Wagner

Dr. Sparagana introduced the honorees for the Teacher of the Year Award. Mr. Huss and Dr. Lindley presented each honoree with a framed award certificate.

Barth Elementary School:	Colleen Blute
Edgewood Elementary School:	Marie Anders
Franklin Elementary School:	Theresa Spitko
Lincoln Elementary School:	Sharon Holloway
Rupert Elementary School:	Sarah Noska
Pottstown Middle School:	Vanessa Barnaik
Pottstown High School:	Eva Yashinsky

Dr. Lindley announced the recipient of 2010-2011 Teacher of the Year Award. Mr. Huss and Dr. Lindley presented the winner with a plaque.

Lincoln Elementary School: Sharon Holloway

REPORTS

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes of the regular meeting held on May 19, 2011 to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Mr. Wausnock stated that the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 9, 2011 is moved to Wednesday, June 15, 2011. Mrs. Adams stated that the additional time would allow the administration to prepare a budget that would include any additional funds from the state.

Facilities Committee

Mr. Hartman stated that the next Facilities Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 20, 2011.

PSBA & Montgomery County Legislative Representative

Mrs. Pargeon disseminated her reports to all the Board Members.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative

Mr. Hartman reported that all employees of Montgomery County Intermediate Unit have agreed to a pay freeze resulting in a savings of approximately $1million.

Community Relations Committee

Mrs. Pargeon disseminated her May committee report to all the Board Members. She presented news clips of students and their successes.

Co-Curricular Committee

Mr. Hartman stated that the next Co-Curricular Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 20, 2011.

Technology/Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Wilson reported that the Keystone Exams are on hold for 2011-2012 due to budget constraints. The June 23rd Technology/Curriculum Committee meeting has been cancelled due to the scheduled Board Workshop to hear the President's Task Force recommendations.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reported that the June Policy Committee meeting is canceled due to the Pottstown Middle School award ceremony; the July committee meeting is also canceled.

Personnel Committee

Mrs. Weand clarified that the May Joint meeting of the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee was announced at the May Committee of the Whole meeting. Due to the specific personnel issues at the meeting, the Board had to declare the meeting as an executive session. The next Personnel Committee meeting is scheduled for June 14th.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Adams presented the list of bills to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

CONSENT ITEMS

Personnel

Dr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Professional Leaves

Dr.Sparagana reviewed the professional leaves as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Contracts

Mrs. Adams reviewed the contracts as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Bid Awards

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Bid Awards to be place on June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

2011 HOMSTEAD AND FARMSTEAD EXCLUSION RESOLUTION

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 2011 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion Resolution as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

BUDGET TRANSFERS

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Budget Transfer Resolution authorizing transfers within the 2010-2011 budget as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

2011-2012 BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PRICES

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 2011-2012 Breakfast and Lunch Prices as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

INVESTMENT OF FUNDS RESOLUTION

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Investment of Funds Resolution authorizing the Secretary and Treasurer to invest funds for the various school district accounts during the next fiscal year as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

APPROVAL OF 2011-2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 2011-2012 School Calendar to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for Board approval.

TENNIS COURTS AND NORTH FIELDS RECONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT

Stephen Parks & Associates: Tennis Court Reconstruction and North Fields Reconstruction:

Mr. Hartman explained the proposal for the Tennis Court Reconstruction and North Fields Construction. He stated that funds for this project have been budgeted for several years in the Capital Reserve Fund. The school district received matching grant funds and is looking at a private partner for additional revenue. The proposal is for specifications needed to begin the project. Mrs. Pargeon asked if the district would need a permit to begin the project. Mrs. Adams stated that it is a possibility but is not anticipated. Mr. Huss asked for a straw vote on the agreement to meet the time constraints on the project.
Five members acknowledged yes.

2009-2010 SCHOOL DISTRICT AUDIT

Mrs. Adams reviewed the 2009-2010 School District Audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010 as prepared by Maillie, Falconiero and Company as presented to be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for the board to acknowledge receipt of the audit.

REVISED TEXTBOOK ADOPTION

Dr. Sparagana reviewed the Revised Textbook Adoption for the Pottstown High School to be place on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for Board approval.

NON-CONSENT

ADOPTION OF BUDGET 2011-2012: FINAL – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams explained that the Finance Committee has been moved to June 15th to allow time to incorporate any additional funds from the state into the school district's 2011-2012 final budget.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Policy 100: Strategic Plan – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)
2. Policy 101: Mission Statement – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)
3. Policy 102: Academic Standards – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)
4. Policy 103: Nondiscrimination in School and Classroom Practices – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)
5. Policy 104: Nondiscrimination in Employment and Contract Practices – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)
6. Policy 105: Curriculum Development – 2nd Reading (no action to be taken)

Dr. Lindley stated that the administration has not received any additions or changes to the Policies presented above and the policies will be placed on the June 16, 2011 Board Agenda for Board approval. Ms. Harris asked that Policies 103 and 104 include language regarding the action to be taken if the principal is the recipient of the complaint. Dr. Lindley suggested this information be added to the policies. Mrs. Pargeon agreed that the polices be pulled for revisions and copies be forwarded to her for review.

Mr. Huss announced an Executive Session for the purpose of negotiations. The Board adjourned at 8:29 pm.

The Board reconvened at 8:47 pm.

2010/2011 AND 2011/2012 TEACHERS CONTRACT

It was moved by Mr. Hartman and seconded by Mr. Wausnock that the Board approve a 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 Teachers Contract and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as Addendum #2010-2011-088.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: Nine. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Kalis explained the material terms of the Teachers Contract for 2010/2011 as follows:

- No Step Advancement; freeze at all levels except Level A and Level B
- No Horizontal Movement; no increase, no movement
- Complete Salary Freeze
- Health Insurance: Core Plan PC 10/20/70; Per Pay Contribution $50; Prescription coverage remains the same $10/$20/$35

Material Terms of Teachers Contract for 2011/2012:

- No Step Advancement; except Level A and Level B
- Horizontal Movement to be in affect at beginning of school year mirroring previous contract
- Salary Increase: 1% as included in the Fact Finder Recommendation
- Health Insurance: Core Plan Personal Choice C2F2O2 with a $90 per pay contributions, additional plan PC 10/20/70 can be bought up to with the per pay contribution being the $90 per pay plus the difference in this plan to the core plan and the C1F1O1 plan can be available with a per pay contribution of $60; Prescription Drug Plan 10/35/50 Plan annual contribution at 5% as in past contract.
- No assurances or understandings have been reached regarding the restoration/maintenance of any programs or future demotions.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mr. Friedman, Staff Representative for the AFTPA thanked the Board and Mr.Kalis for their cooperation and professionalism during the negotiation process. He asked the Board to consider the proposed budget cuts. He stated that the students' education will suffer as a result of the proposed program cuts. Mrs. Yoder thanked the administration and Mr. Kalis for their time and sacrifices made during the negotiation process. She expressed the Federations appreciation to the Board for approving the contract.

ROUND TABLE

Mr. White – no comment.

Mr. Hylton – no comment.

Mrs. Wilson congratulated the teachers of the year and all the teachers who are deserving of the recognition. She expressed her thanks for the settlement of the teachers' contract.

Ms. Harris echoed Mrs. Wilson comments and extended her well wishes to Dr. Tuck and Mr. Giering for the new endeavors. She asked Mrs. Weand to look at a different date for the Personnel Committee June meeting.

Mr. Wausnock – no comment.

Mrs. Weand voiced her concerns regarding derogatory comments targeting the Executive Team and Dr. Lindley. The Board encourages the administration to do complete research on any topic which would have an impact on the students in the school district. Mrs. Weand stated her support of the entire executive team for meeting with state leaders and charter school owners to understand the impact the charter school legislation would have on this community. Dr. Lindley's many communications regarding charter schools has allowed the district to know exactly how charter schools could help and hurt the district and to move forward with the best choices for our students. Mrs. Weand stated that school configuration has been the topic for discussion for the last 10 years. Due to budgetary situations, the district has looked for a solution to the rising costs of running our schools. Mrs. Weand encouraged the community to review all possible solutions presented and not be influenced by paid advertisements. It is time to move ahead and end the ridiculous folly.

Mr. Hartman was pleased that an agreement has been reached with the teachers' contract. He thanked Mrs. Weand for her comments. Mr. Hartman stated that the Board's responsibility is to set policy, not to micro-manage. Micro-managing causes distress among employees, board members and community. He expressed his full confidence in the administration. Mr. Hartman voiced his disappointment in newspaper articles that are not factual and recent comments that were a disservice to the Task Force members. He encouraged the Board to work together with the administration and community to move forward and not pass by the short window of opportunity to improve our schools.

Mrs. Pargeon agreed with Mrs. Weand's and Mr. Hartman's comments. She was pleased with the agreement on the Federation contract.

Dr. Sparagana congratulated the Co-Teachers and Teachers of the Year. The teachers are a reflection of the high quality teaching staff at Pottstown School District. He reminded the Board Members that the PEAK Annual Meeting will be held on June 9th at the Montgomery County Community Room featuring David Lawrence as the keynote speaker.

Dr. Lindley thanked Mr. Kalis and the administration negotiating team and the Federation negotiating team for a successful conclusion. He looks forward to continuing the informal "meet and discuss" process. He invited the Board to an Athletic Outreach Team meeting on June 27th at the high school to discuss a mentoring program. Dr. Lindley expressed his appreciation for the Board Members comments and the need to have the public hear directly from him his comments on charter schools and other topics. Dr. Lindley's statement is attached to the minutes.

Mr. Huss thanked Dr. Lindley and the Board Members for their encouraging words. He thanked the Federation for working together. He congratulated all the teachers in the district. "They are the backbone of the district." Mr. Huss thanked Dr. Sparagana, Mrs. Adams and Mr. Kalis for their time working with the Federation on negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Wausncock and seconded by Ms. Harris that the Board adjourns. None opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm.

Linda S. Adams

Linda S. Adams, Board Secretary

June 2, 2011
Board Meeting
Round Table Comments of Reed Lindley:

I appreciate the comments this evening by Board members, but these are serious matters that do require a personal response from me. It is my hope that my comments will help unite and not further divide our community.

1. You may recall that upon my appointment as Superintendent I stated:

> "We must reach out in a significant way to create and develop business-education partnerships, and develop these connections in ways that support the economic growth of the borough."

2. Then on Jan 20, in a memo to the Board, I openly stated my vision and action plan:

> But moving forward, we are beyond the "business as usual" mentality. Arguing to protect various programs will not result in a more streamlined and functional system.
>
> I plan to work collaboratively with our legislative representatives, with the Department of Education, and with the Governor's Office to reach out for ideas to create public-private partnerships that can propel this and other communities forward.

Clearly, I was open with my intent, and then pursued conversations with legislators in an attempt to provide this Board with options as they struggle and will continue to struggle with funding and quality issues in the future.

I also began to investigate the claims that charter schools would be a benefit in Pottstown.

There is a time and place for public conversation, and a time and place for administrative investigation, advocacy, and brainstorming.

> For example, I have spoken with companies that offer various forms of financing for public projects; have spoken with various providers of alternative education services; spoken with individuals that may have interest in purchasing or leasing District property; and there are legitimate reasons that these conversations remain private until a public or executive session is required.

I have an obligation to the Board and through the Board to the students, parents, and taxpayers of this community to provide quality education at an affordable cost. And I clearly understand the difference between an administrative and a Board initiative.

I have vigorously tried to determine if converting a program, a department, a grade level, a school, or schools to a public charter would be a realistic option for this community to consider IF and WHEN we get to the point of being unable to fund a quality educational program for all students.

- I think that most would agree that students benefit more from maintaining a well-rounded, quality program regardless of the source of funding.

From my investigation, I have reached three conclusions:

1. I do not have evidence that the Chester Charter School or any other charter school meets the requirements that I have outlined. If I would have such evidence in the future, I would most certainly share it with the Board and the public.

2. Current law regarding charter schools can only HURT the PSD by draining funds from the District's continually improving system to a yet unknown provider.

3. The realities of school funding and economic growth will not improve just because we HOPE they will; improvement requires collaboration and effort from people interested in the common goal of quality education that is affordable to the taxpayers.

I stated on numerous occasions that it would be a messy process as we continue to explore budget options and determine the best course of action regarding the renovation of the elementary schools.

What we are experiencing is part of that process.

I call on each Board member to accurately portray administrative positions.

I read in a local advertisement that the administration is withholding relevant information from the Task Force, when in fact the conclusions in the ad were reached by comparing a fixed cost analysis to one that included per student costs.

As an example, since Rupert has the lowest enrollment, it has the lower variable cost but not necessarily the lowest fixed costs. When comparisons are made on a per student cost, the analysis fluctuates with the enrollment.

I am simply making the point that a more accurate analysis could be presented to the public had a prior discussion taken place with administration and Board committees.

I also read of the administration's support of a three elementary school option, yet I know that THIS administration has not recommended any of the options that are being discussed with the Task Force; this administration has provided the Task Force with all options that have come to us (In reality, a number of ideas presented and discussed came directly from the Board member that continues to allege that the Task Force has access only to information from the administration).

In public and in private discussions, I have made it clear that this administration will support any option that the Board puts forward provided that it supports quality education, is affordable to the taxpayers, and is sustainable over time.

Each Board member here has a unique perspective that brings value to the decision-making process; however, the public wants and deserves real solutions to real problems.

Clearly, a strong economy is the best friend of public education. Other communities that lost a strong manufacturing sector have been able to focus on the delivery of new goods or services and have rebounded from the lingering effects of the "rust belt." I am confident that Pottstown can and will do the same.

I know that each of you has a personal interest in the quality of the schools and life in Pottstown. But when we are facing a lack of economic growth and declining revenues, why would we continue the same course of action and expect more positive results?

Current and future students and taxpayers deserve a better solution than the status quo is offering.

I believe that this Board, administration, and community is up to the challenge. Let's also encourage legislators to live up to their Constitutional obligation to "provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth."