POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA
MARCH 5, 2009 - 7:30 P.M.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AWARDS

Edgewood Writing Awards/Board Report – Dr. Tuck

REPORTS

Eagles Eye Mobile – Marge Grim, Anne Frederick, Bridget McGuigan

A. MINUTES – Mrs. Adams

Regular Board Meeting – 2/19/09

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Personnel Committee – Mrs. Pargeon
2. Finance Committee – Mr. Edwards
3. Facilities Committee – Mr. Hartman
4. Montgomery County Legislative Committee – Mr. White
5. PSBA Representative – Mr. White
6. Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative – Mr. Hartman
7. Community Relations Committee – Mr. Huss/Mr. Armato
8. Co-Curricular Activities Committee – Mr. Hartman
9. Dress Code Policy/School Uniforms – Mrs. Francis
10. Technology/Curriculum Committee – Mrs. Wilson
11. Policy Committee – Mr. Wausnock
12. Liaison with Borough Council and Economic Oversight Committee – Mr. Edwards

C. LIST OF BILLS – Mrs. Adams

CONSENT

D. PERSONNEL – Dr. Sparagana

E. PROFESSIONAL LEAVES – Dr. Lindley

F. FIELD TRIPS – Dr. Lindley

G. BID AWARD – Mrs. Adams

1. Custodial Supplies

H. SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTRACTS – Mrs. Adams

1. Hill Top Preparatory School
2. Glen Mills Schools

I. POLICIES

1. Update (Status Report) – Mrs. Adams

NON-CONSENT

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

INFORMATION

1. Parent Conference Summary, February 2009 – Mr. Krem
2. Pottstown School District Committee Meetings, April 2009 – Mrs. Adams
3. PEAK Update – Mrs. Reick

FEDERATION REMARKS

ROUND TABLE

ADJOURNMENT

EXECUTIVE SESSION

POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2009

The Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, February 19, 2009 at 7:30 PM in the auditorium of the Pottstown Middle School with President Mrs. Judyth Zahora presiding. Upon roll call the following 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. Julia Wilson. Also present were; Superintendent of Schools, Mr. David Krem, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Dr. Reed Lindley, Director of Education and Human Resources, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana, Business Administrator, Mrs. Linda Adams, Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis, Mr. John Armato, Ms. Terri Lampe, Mr. Tom Marsden, Mr. Robert Decker, Mr. Aram Ecker, Mr. Robert Morgan Mrs. Gail Cooper, Ms. Pamela Bateson, Dr. Robert Stevens, Mrs. Lisa Snyder, a member of the press and interested citizens.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Edwards and seconded by Mrs. Pargeon that the minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on January 22, 2009 and the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 5, 2009 be approved as presented.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

LIST OF BILLS

It was moved by Mr. Huss and seconded by Mr. Hartman that the list of bills for the General Fund totaling $1,410,212.02; the Athletic Fund totaling $80,776.38; the Elementary Fund totaling $982.36 and Cafeteria Fund totaling $128,030.09 be approved and a copy be filed in the Secretary's Office as addendum #2008-2009-49.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

It was moved by Mr. Huss and seconded by Mr. Hartman that the Treasurer's Report for January 2009 be approved and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as Addendum #2008-2009-050.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. Krem reported the district has received two awards to the PEAK program. We received $33,000.00 from The Frances Chapin Foundation Philanthropic Fund of the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona along with over $200,000 from United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Zahora read a statement concerning notices circulated by parents which misrepresented the administration. The administration acts at the direction of the board.

AWARDS

None

HEARINGS FROM PATRON OF THE SCHOOLS

Ms. Denise Rubach, daughter attends Edgewood, thanked Mr. White, Mr. Huss. Mr. Hartman, Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Wausnock for putting the 5 schools back on the agenda. Ms. Rubach questioned what happens if the town is revitalized. Does anyone know what people are looking for when they relocate? She suggests that the renovations be put on hold for another 5 years and to consider how the changes affect the children. Ms. Rubach asked the board to reconsider making Edgewood an early learning center.

Kenny Patel, a student at Edgewood, spoke in support of his teachers and asked that Edgewood not change.

Ms. Sharon Farley questioned why some make promises to keep 5 schools then turn their backs on parents. She stated a good education does not need the nicest building; renovations can be done without all the bells and whistles and believes that Edgewood is structurally sound. Ms. Farley stated that the Edgewood class sizes range between 12 and 22, the ideal classroom size. Students in small schools fare better and graduate more.

Mr. Keith Lenhardt stated he would like to keep his children in the same school and not split them up.

Mr. Robert Honen, speaking for Annette Logan, stated he would like to see Rupert stay open. It is the most historical school and the building appears to be fine. They support the neighborhood schools.

Ms. Angela Alberto, a proud parent of an Edgewood student, feels the reading program is a great advantage for the children who do not have other siblings to read to them. She represents not one voice but the voices of her family. She supports the neighborhood schools and feels that safety is a concern. Herding our children like cattle into schools while construction is going on will be chaos.

Ms. Kizmect Washington stated her appreciation to those board members who listen to the parents and taxpayers and noted a special thanks to Mr. Hartman. She questioned the recent letter sent out concerning the Early Center opening in 2009, a proposed discussion of the district merging, the liability and cost of busing students and the amount of money already spent on the renovation project.

Ms. Lauren Hewitt stated she supports her daughter, teachers and faculty. As a high school student during the construction she found it to be stressful for both herself and teachers. She suggested the board members take into consideration the feelings of the parents, students and faculty before making life changing decisions; why change what is not a problem.

Ms. Lisa Schade stated, as an unhappy taxpayer and Pottstown resident, she is dismayed over the board members once again discussing the elementary renovations after the decision was already made. Ms. Schade reminded the board members of their responsibility to the taxpayers, students and community and not to be misled by certain members of the community. She supports the three school option. By not moving forward, the board demonstrates poor leadership.

Ms. Lisa Bennett stated closing the schools would be a great disservice to the community. She asked the board to be open to public opinion as did Pottsgrove and remember who put you here. Ms. Bennett asked the board to listen to the community.

Ms. Courtney Douglass stated the children build a rapport with their teachers and her children help each other with homework, splitting the family makes it difficult to help each other. She is not in support of closing Edgewood. She also voiced her concern over an incident involving her son.

Mr. David Wallace stated he bought his home based on Edgewood school being close to his home. He asks the board to not base their decisions on their egos but to think about the children and not themselves.

Ms. Penny Griffin stated she is not in agreement with closing any of our schools. She questioned the board as to why the letter was sent out prior to the official vote being taken. Ms. Griffin feels that uprooting children it not fair and is unacceptable.

Ms. Wendy David, a representative of United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, stated the recent grant was for $207,000 and the United Way is a major funder for the district. Over the past three years the United Way invested over $600,000 in the district's PEAK program. PEAK has gained state and national recognition. United Way looks for organizations with a clear sense of purpose and vision. Ms. David asked the board to stick with their decision and to resist pressure.

Ms. Christina Sibilly stated she is well known by all at Edgewood and does not support moving her children. If this goes through she will have to relocate her children.

Ms. Rochelle Gardner asked the board to listen to the parents concerns. She has several questions. What is the benefit of consolidation? Is it fiscal, at the sacrifice of the children and community? What was the litmus test? What is the accountability and structure of the impact of your decision on the community?

Mr. Newstell Marable, President of the Pottstown Branch of the NAACP, stated he supports the Early Learning Center and time will go on and change will come. America is behind the world in education because they did not change. The Administration looked forward and saw the need for the change.

Ms. Maia Bursey stated that the board's purpose is to better the community and invest in the education of the children. Ms. Bursey supports keeping Barth as a neighborhood school. Education is more important than how a building looks on the outside.

Ms. Amanda Long, an Edgewood parent, stated her child is crying because her school is closing and she is not the only child crying because their school is closing.

Ms. Maureen Allen stated that Barth Elementary is very important to their ward. She would like to see a collaborative effort to allow our schools to stay open.

Ms. Mia DeArman stated her concerns are for the education of our children. She moved here from a previous school district with overcrowding, fights, and many issues which she had to deal with as a parent. She was relieved to move here. As her sons have moved through Edgewood to the high school she has many good comments about the things the teachers have done for them. She asks the board to keep Edgewood open so we can raise good students to become good adults for our community.

Ms. Wendy Wilkinson stated her support in reducing schools as the best option for keeping the classroom sizes reasonable as well as keeping the taxes from rising. She believes in the power of early education and feels the children will adapt.

Mr. David Schwab stated that he supports the three schools and encourages the board to continue with their previous decision to improve the three schools. Time is of the essence. Mr. Schwab thanked the board and administration for all they do and encouraged the parents to support their children in this change.

Ms. Melissa Smith stated her disappointment in the decision to close Rupert. She moved here due to Rupert being within walking distance of her home. She is not sure the board sees the parents concerns. Is the board listening to the parent's point of view?

Ms. Deborah Hewitt stated she is disappointed. The school board was voted in to save our schools.

Mr. Eric Richter stated he applauded the board when they stopped the $54 million dollar mega campus and voted for the neighborhood schools.

Mr. Bob Decker stated his support in the Early Learning Center and two school renovations. The board demonstrated their ability to look forward and be proactive by voting for the three schools which included an Early Learning Center. The Early Learning Center will bring much needed recognition and funding to the district. The borough has failed in recognizing the needs of the community; it is up to the school district to move forward. Mr. Decker asked the board to move forward with the current three-school decision.

Ms. Polly Weand stated she would like an explanation of the article published in the newspaper asking the Department of Education for an exemption to the referendum. She believes this means the district will have total discretion to raise our taxes. What is going on with this referendum situation?

Ms. Kim Stilwell stated she supports keeping all five schools open. Eighty percent of the community voted in favor to have all schools open. Somewhere she heard it would cost $35 million to renovate all five schools. Why do we need more than $35 million to renovate the schools?

Ms. Lisa Snyder stated her passionate support for the Early Learning Center. Her children personally benefited from an Early Center in the Phoenixville area. An Early Learning Center will allow children to reach their potential.

Mr. Huss chastised the board regarding only allowing residents and taxpayers to speak. Mr. Stephen Kalis agreed with Mr. Huss but reminded him that the board in the past has allowed others to speak.

Mr. Tom Hylton stated the most common configuration for elementary schools is K-5. The longer children are together in the same school the better. Small neighborhood schools are the key to success. Pottstown needs to retain five K-5 schools. This would be the least expensive option for renovation, maintenance and is best for our community.

Mr. Philip Thees, a former school board member, stated he studied all the facts and believes the majority of voters who turned out wanted to keep five schools but many seem to be unaware of the cost. The estimated costs to renovate all five schools was $45 million eight years ago. Anyone who can think knows we are in a severe economic downturn. If we keep five schools how much is that going to cost? In 2028 my school taxes will be $12,000 and this is the reason the previous board looked at consolidation.

Ms. Valerie Harris, an Edgewood parent, hopes this is not an attempt by the board to get the mega-campus back on the agenda. She would like to keep five schools. If schools are closed, property values will go down. The board should focus on improving the education at the five elementary schools.

Mr. Harry Price stated he appreciates people who give their time at a thankless job like being a school board member. He reminded the board they must be dispassionate and keep the best interest of all students at the forefront. Apparently Mr. Hylton knows more about education and borough government than anyone. We hired a professional staff to operate our district. The administration is trying to bring Pottstown into the twenty first century and have dedicated their lives to education. I chaired the redistricting committee. When the committee started, the members could not believe you could go from five to three schools. After looking into it, the committee members agreed with the three school recommendation.

Ms. Melvenna Santiago stated she can connect with Edgewood parents. Her children went to Jefferson when it closed. Change does not come easily and change creates emotions, but kids can adjust. The priority should be if they are going to get a solid education. The school is just a building. Early education is a great foundation for a solid education.

Mr. Aram Ecker has seven children that have attended Edgewood. It is the best school. He believes in early intervention and it is clear what the board must do. For the greater good of all, the early learning center, hands down, is the way to go. The stimulus funding will go to schools that have a plan. He has complete faith in the administration.

Mr. Robert Morgan stated that two schools and an early learning center will cost $15 million less than a five school renovation plan. In addition, the Early Learning Center can be done without any taxpayer dollars. There will be limited inconvenience, but when it is complete students will be better off. This also has the advantage of providing for great teacher collaboration. An early learning center is absolutely the best way to get kids off to a good start educationally.

SPECIAL REPORTS

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

It was moved by Mrs. Pargeon and seconded by Mr. Edwards that the following consent items be approved, in accordance with Policy 1120, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools:

PERSONNEL

NEW POSITIONS

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the new positions of Middle School Track Head Coach and Middle School Track Assistant Coach

RESIGNATIONS

Professional Resignation

Laura Lee Kunka, Teacher, Barth Elementary School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective September 2009, end date to be determined, employed since September 6, 1977.

Adam P. Neil, Spanish/ESL Teacher, Pottstown High School, resignation effective February 17, 2009, employed since August 24, 2005.

Substitute Teacher Resignations

Todd Thorne, Per Diem Substitute Teacher, termination effective February 4, 2009, employed since January 9, 2002.

Co-curricular Resignations

Danielle McCoy, resignation as Class of 2011 Advisor, Student Government Advisor, and Mentor to Justin Detweiler, effective January 22, 2009.

Anthony Rivera, Co-curricular Coach, termination effective February 4, 2009, employed since November 15, 2002.

Scott A. Braunsberg, resignation as Head Golf Coach, Pottstown High School, effective February 17, 2009.

Classified Resignations

Sandra L. Wright, Van Driver, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective March 2, 2009, employed since August 18, 1995.

CHANGES IN POSITION AND/OR SALARY

Tanisha Wilcox, from Title I Classroom Assistant to Extended Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective January 15, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920, coverage for Stephanie Blanchard.

Susan Hallman, from Per Diem Substitute Teacher to Title I Classroom Assistant, initial assignment to be Franklin Elementary School, effective February 2, 2009, $13.19, replacing Geoff Thomas.

Ray Golden, from Part-time Housekeeper, Edgewood Elementary School (5 hours per day) to Part-Time Housekeeper, Rupert Elementary School (4hours per day), effective February 9, 2009, no change in hourly compensation, replacing Joyce Wilson.

Catherine Retzner, from Title I Classroom Assistant, Barth Elementary School to Special Education Floating Co-teacher, initial assignment to be Barth/Rupert Elementary Schools, effective February 2, 2009, $42,440, Bachelors, step A, this includes $400 Special Education stipend, new position.

Katrina Keene, from Special Substitute Teacher to Title I Classroom Assistant, initial assignment to be Pottstown Middle School, effective February 9, 2009, $13.19/hour, replacing Tanisha Wilcox.

Kimberly A. Kennedy, from Special Substitute Teacher to Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective February 4, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920.

Diane Fox, from Special Substitute Teacher to Long-Term Substitute Teacher, Pottstown High School, Effective January 23, 2009, $190/day, coverage for Edward Ott.

Alex Medlar, Human Resources Intern, from a maximum of 10 hours per week to a maximum of 20 hours per week (reflects intern hours already in budget), effective February 13, 2009, no change in compensation or position.

LEAVES

Classified

Denise Elliott, Classroom Assistant, Pottstown Middle School, request for leave of absence covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act, effective January 26, 2009, end date to be determined.

Lois O'Dell, Classroom Assistant, Pottstown High School, request for leave of absence covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act, effective January 26, 2009, end date to be determined.

ELECTIONS

Classified Elections

Heather A. Raugh, Substitute Secretary, effective January 26, 2009, $14.56/hour.

Michael Anthony, Special Education Classroom Assistant, initial assignment to be Pottstown Middle School, effective February 2, 2009, $13.19/hour, replacing Dawn Choiniere.

Stephen Hoffman, Second Shift Custodian, initial assignment to be Pottstown High School, effective February 2, 2009, $14.56/hour, replacing Gus Romahn.

Lauren Polinski, Title I Classroom Assistant, initial assignment to be Barth Elementary School, effective February 9, 2009, $13.19/hour, replacing Catherine Retzner.

Thomas C. Keen, Substitute Custodian/Housekeeper, effective January 29, 2009, $11.52/hour.

Susan Mickletz, Substitute Playground Aide, effective January 14, 2009, compensation at the rate of person for whom subbing.

Melissa D. McIlwain, Special Education Classroom Assistant, initial assignment to be Franklin Elementary School, effective February 12, 2009, $13.19/hour, replacing Kelly Skokowski.

Kelly Nester, Substitute Playground Aide, effective February 9, 2009, compensation at the rate for whom subbing.

Kelly Nester, Substitute Secretary, effective February 9, 2009, $14.56/hour.

Kelly Nester, Substitute Breakfast Aide, effective February 9, 2009, $12.20/hour.

Substitute Teacher Elections

Rachael Dragon, Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective January 26, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920.

Patricia Carfagno, Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective January 22, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920.

Karen Winning, Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective February 6, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920.

Sharon L. Rosander, Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective February 6, 2009, in accordance with Board Policy 3920.

Carly Herrlinger, Special Substitute Teacher, effective February 3, 2009, $100/day.

Homebound Instruction

Andrea Barlow, Pottstown Middle School, effective January 20, 2009 through February 27, 2009, not to exceed five (5) hours per week, $29/hour.

James Martinez, Pottstown High School, effective February 9, 2009 through March 20, 2009, not to exceed five (5) hours per week, $29/hour.

Professional Election

Elizabeth J. Kuhne, Long-Term Substitute Librarian, Lincoln/Rupert Elementary Schools, effective February 2, 2009, $190/day, coverage for Theodore Freese.

Additions to the 21st Century Elementary After School Tutoring Program

Michael Novia	Tutor	$29/hour

Additions to the 21st Century Middle School After School Tutoring Program

Matthew Blute	Tutor	$29/hour

Additions to the Co-curricular List for 08-09

MS	Head Wrestling Coach	Frank Stehman	Level 2	$3,519.00
MS	Assistant Wrestling Coach	Kyle Musso	Level 1	$1,854.00
HS	Sophomore Class Advisor (1/2)	Scott Braunsberg	No level	$386.00
HS	Student Government Advisor (1/2)	Mark Agnew	Level 1	$ 424.50
HS	History Day Advisor (1/2)	Greg Troutman	Level 1	$ 424.50

Additions to the Mentor List for 08-09

Jeffrey Delaney, mentor for Justin Detweiler, effective January 23, 2009, $510.50 (1/2 stipend).

Horizontal Salary Movements
* denotes salaries including the $400 Special Education stipend

fname	lname	bldg	from	step	old salary	to	step	new salary
Jacinda	Bartolucci	Rupert Elementary School	M	18.27	81,042	M+15	18.27	83,629
Mindy	Bodolus	Barth Elementary School	B	4.87	43,460	B+15	4.87	44,194
Jeffrey	Delaney	Pottstown High School	M+15	10	52,471	M+30	10	60,407
Theodore	Freese	Lincoln/Rupert Elementary Schools	M	18	81,042	M+15	18	83,629
Leon	Kanopka	Franklin Elementary Schools	B+15	B	43,062*	M	B	44,565*
Kristen	Lafferty	Lincoln Elementary School	B	4	43,044	B+15	4	43,729
Kelly	Leibold	Pottstown Middle School	M+15	9.82	52,174	M+30	9.82	60,067
Thomas	Marsden	Pottstown Middle School	B+15	9	47,332	M	9	49,296
Teresa	Niemann	Rupert Elementary School	B+15	7.24	45,981*	M	7.24	47,724*
Aileen	Rohe	Edgewood Elementary School	B	B	42,440*	B+15	B	43,062*
Kelly	Smale	Pottstown High School	M	7	47,500*	M+15	7	49,305*

Approval of Tenure

Mark	Agnew	Pottstown High School	1/30/2009

PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

Building	First Name	Last Name	Conference Title	Conference Location	Dates to Attend	Cost
Sr. High Middle	Jeff Ginger	White Angelo	PA State Athletic Directors Conference	Hershey, PA	3/25/09 – 3/27/09	Approx. $1990.00 expenses paid by the district.
Admin.	Jeff Jessica	Sparagana Heffner	PASPA 2009 Conference	Harrisburg, PA	2/25/09 – 2/27/09	Approx. $1250.00 expenses paid by the district.
Middle	Robert Vanessa	Stevens Saylor	2009 Promising Practices- Proven Strategies: After-school Programs Working Together for PA Youth	Harrisburg, PA	3/4/09 – 3/6/09	Approx. $866.00 expenses paid by the district. (21st Century Grant)
Sr. High	Tom Replacing -Cal	Medvetz Benfield	Making the Move: Ninth Grade Transition	Colonial Heights, VA	2/26/09 – 2/27/09	Approx. $475.00 expenses paid by the district.
Lincoln	Lorraine	Donnelly	PSCA Convention (PA School Counseling Association)	Hershey, PA	4/16/09 – 4/18/09	Approx. $772.00 expenses paid by the district.
Admin	Reed Jeff	Lindley Sparagana	Hope Foundation Presentation	Bloomington, IN	3/5/09 – 3/7/09	Expenses paid by the Hope Foundation

FIELD TRIPS

# of students and/or group	Name of conference or activity	Destination	Date of trip	Cost to student	Cost to district-substitutes	Chaperone(s)
16 Sr. High	Cheerleading Nationals Competition	Myrtle Beach, SC	3/20/09 – 3/22/08	**Expenses:** Trip $7,200.00 Van $1,500.00 Total $8,700.00 **Deductions:** Deposit $1,000.00 cheer fund 3,622.00 Dinner fund raiser 500.00 Total: ($5,122.00) **Total due:** $3,578.00	$270.00	Amie Ward, Patti Mauger, Christine Hydier, Dave Woodley
7 Sr. High	PA FCCLA State Leadership Conference	Lancaster, PA	3/18/09 – 3/20/09		$540.00 Subs 2,502.74 Hotel/Meals 520.00 Registration 0 HS Van $3562.74 **TOTAL**	Larry Fortunato & Jackie Wilder

CONTRACTS

The Superintendent recommends the board approve the contracts as shown on exhibits one through three and copies be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum 2008-2009-051.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

NON-CONSENT

It was moved by Mr. Hartman and seconded by Mr. Huss that the board rescind the November 13, 2008 motion that the board proceed in taking the steps necessary to convert Edgewood Elementary School to an Early Childhood Learning Center and the Lincoln and Franklin Elementary Schools be renovated to accommodate the remaining grades one through five.

Mrs. Pargeon questioned on what basis this decision should be made. Does the board want to spend more money, or do they not want to improve education? Mr. Hartman stated the school district is not cutting back on early childhood education. Mr. Edwards stated we are doing a disservice to the taxpayers. If we are not choosing the three school option it will be most cost effective to remain status quo. Mrs. Pargeon stated we are talking about equity. How will we improve the delivery and quality of education? Mr. White stated we have gone over and over the information and five PreK-5 schools is the best option.

Mr. Huss called the question to end board discussion.

Upon roll call the vote to call the question was recorded as follows: Mr. Edwards: aye; Mrs. Francis: aye; Mr. Hartman: aye, Mr. Huss: aye; Mrs. Pargeon: nay; Mr. Wausnock: aye; Mr. White: aye; Mrs. Wilson: aye; Mrs. Zahora: nay. Ayes: seven. Nays: two. Motion carried.

The public was invited to address the board concerning only the above action.

Ms. Lisa Schade asked the public to not be fooled by this display.

Ms. Valerie Harris is pleased with the board's decision to rescind the three school vote.

Mr. Philip Thees stated this is madness beyond measure and the town will be bankrupt.

Ms. Deborah Hewitt applauds the decision and is happy we are keeping five schools.

Ms. Wendy Wilkinson is saddened by the discord on the board. Indecision will cost everyone.

Ms. Melvenna Santiago is disappointed with this decision and ashamed of the board.

Mr. Robert Douglas stated many questions have not been answered. He asked if the administration has done their homework.

Ms. Penny Griffin feels we should stay with five schools.

Ms. Jean Howard is proud the board rescinded the vote.

Ms. Courtney Douglas thanked the board for rescinding.

Ms. Marie Oberholtzer feels the board should shop around and economize. What will happen to the community when schools are closed?

Ms. Lauren Hewitt is very supportive of the PEAK program her son attended.

Ms. Angela Alberto thanked the board for rescinding. Stability should be the number one factor for children.

A member of the public stated that moving did not hurt her children. Pottstown has to make a change.

Ms. Melissa Smith stated early education is important for everyone's future. It makes no sense to combine schools.

Mr. Aram Ecker is embarrassed for the administration. At the November board meeting the vote was six to two for the three school option. At the January meeting it was unanimous that the district should move forward. What happened in the last two weeks?

Mr. Robert Morgan indicated the board made the right decision in November for the children's education, the taxpayers and the town's growth. It was a triple win decision. Do not rescind your decision.

Ms. Amanda Long stated she believes the PEAK program is great.

Ms. Kia Bennett thanked the board for rethinking their decision.

Ms. Kizmect Washington is not against early learning at an early age but feels the board should know their numbers. We are dealing with today and not the future.

Ms. Maia Bursey is against closing Barth. She is not against an early learning center but would like to keep all five buildings.

A member of the public requested the board keep all five elementary schools.

Mr. Newstell Marable indicated he heard many parents say their children cannot cope with change. Yes they can. It is the parents that cannot change. The school board has surprised him. The administration has done a wonderful job and tried to make a change and better our education.

Mrs. Robert Hartman indicated she had three kids, they all turned out ok, and they all walked to school.

Upon roll call, the vote to rescind the November decision was recorded as follows: Mr. Edwards: nay; Mrs. Francis: nay; Mr. Hartman: aye; Mr. Huss: aye; Mrs. Pargeon: nay; Mr. Wausnock: aye; Mr. White: aye; Mrs. Wilson: aye; Mrs. Zahora: nay. Ayes: five Nays: four. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Huss and seconded by Mr. Hartman that the board approve the following resolution as prepared and signed by Mr. Hartman, Mr. Huss, Mr. Wausnock, Mr. White, and Mrs. Wilson:

1. Resolved that the Pottstown school board directs that the grade figuration of all five Pottstown elementary schools will remain K-5 or preK-5 throughout the 2009-2010 school year.

2. Resolved, that the Pottstown School Board direct the school district architects, Crabtree Rohrbaugh and Associates, to discontinue all work in relation to expanding the Lincoln and Franklin elementary schools and to discontinue any further submissions related to these projects to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, until such time as it receives further direction from the school board by formal board resolution.

Board discussions ensued over the need for part 2. of the above resolution as it becomes a mute point when part 1. of the resolution is approved. Further discussion ensued to insure the understanding of the resolution was to eliminate the early learning center, stop all work on Lincoln and Franklin and retain the existing 5 elementary schools with their current configuration of PreK-5 indefinitely or until future board action.

It was moved by Mr. Hartman and seconded by Mr. Huss that the board approve the following resolution as amended:

RESOLVED, that the Pottstown School Board directs that the grade figuration of all five Pottstown elementary schools will remain PreK-5 until directed otherwise.

Mrs. Zahora indicated the board was doing a disservice to the taxpayers and students. Our buildings need work. We are back to where we were twelve years ago.

Mr. Hartman indicated we would still have early learning in the PreK through 5th grade setting.

Mr. Edwards agreed that this was a disservice to the taxpayers. The most cost effective option is to remain status quo, but the maintenance costs to maintain these schools are costly. They will only take so much and that will be it.

The public was invited to address the board concerning only the above action.

Mr. Robert Douglas wanted to know how long we will keep five schools.

Mrs. Douglas thanked the school board.

Ms. Polly Weand is all for five schools, the only question is can we afford it?

Mr. Philip Thees indicated we cannot afford to keep five schools. He agrees with Mr. Ecker that the sunshine law was violated.

A member of the public indicated she is on a fixed income and cannot say if she is for or against. She would not build an early learning center. She would keep the current five schools, which have early intervention.

Ms. Wendy Wilkinson encouraged people to write to their legislators and push for more money for education rather than prisons. She asked if the public can send their ideas to the board.

Mr. Herman Sims stated information is not conveyed to the people affected clearly. The district has PEAK programs now, do we need more or are our programs sufficient? The state government is not always right.

Ms. Penny Griffin does not understand. She bought a home and keeps fixing it up. We should stay with the five schools we have and fix them up.

A member of the public indicated a vote should be taken on the number of schools and they be kept for the next 20 years. The board should put it in stone.

Mr. Robert Morgan stated we cannot afford five schools. We do not have the money. We can get an early learning center with other people's money. He encouraged the board to make the best decision for the entire town. He asked that board not to pass the motion before them now.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Hartman and seconded by Mr. Huss to rescind the original motion of November 13, 2008 that the board combine the administration staff, the annex staff and the alternative education classes in one building utilizing Rupert or Barth Elementary Schools.

The public was invited to address the board concerning only the above action. No one present wished to speak.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. Second Marking Period Honor Roll Comparison – Mr. Krem
2. Monthly Schedule of Board Committee Meetings – Mrs. Adams
3. Conferences for Administrators, Supervisors, and Teachers – Dr. Lindley
4. Pennsylvania Department of Education 2009-2010 Executive Budget Facts on School District Consolidation
5. PSBA Talking Points on School Consolidation
6. PEAK Update – Mrs. Reick
7. Website Report – Mr. Armato
8. Technology Update: December 2008/January 2009 – Mrs. Wolfe
9. PSBA Seminar: Making Meetings More Effective – Mrs. Adams

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mr. Decker stated he had prepared a statement thanking the Board for their decision to move forward with the three school option. It is disheartening to be at status quo of 12 years ago.

REMARKS BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Mrs. Francis is troubled by the appearance that certain members have met ahead of time and not giving everyone's thoughts an equal opportunity. She feels the board is not putting the children first. She thanked everyone for attending.

Mrs. Wilson thanked everyone for coming out this evening. She was torn over this decision but does not regret it.

Mr. Wausnock stated he continues to vote the way he feels at all times.

Mr. Hartman thanked everyone for attending. He stated your voices are heard and he is not concerned about re-election.

Mr. Huss stated the straw vote of January 22nd never showed up in the minutes. There are a few violations of the sunshine law happening but not on the part of these five board members.

Mr. Edwards thanked the public for coming out tonight. He stated we cannot afford four or five elementary schools. He apologized for his vote going along with the status quo but felt it was best for the taxpayer.

Mrs. Pargeon thanked everyone for attending and expressing their concerns and opinions. She has visited many classrooms in the past two weeks and is really discouraged this evening. She does not understand how other board members do not see that we can have three buildings for the price of two. The administration has worked at our direction and we have done our children a great disservice. The only person smiling in the audience is Mr. Hylton.

Mrs. Zahora is very disappointed. She is concerned about the children and the taxpayers. There is no glory in being a board member. We simply do the best that we can. This is a poor decision for taxpayers and a disservice to our children. The challenge now is to work together to move forward.

Mr. Krem stated the administration marches to the tune of the board. We all care about the children. He hopes differences can be put aside.

Dr. Lindley stated Pennsylvania has the highest achievement gap in the country. He believes this community can become a high achieving community but the board will have to come together with the community and the borough to make it happen. It starts with a common vision, mission and goals.

Dr. Sparagana stated the goal is 100% to put every child in the same place educationally. He appreciates everyone coming out tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Zahora announced an executive session to discuss personnel issues.

It was moved by Mr. Huss and seconded by Mrs. Francis that the Board adjourn. All members present voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 pm.

Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary