

**BLACKHAWK SCHOOL DISTRICT
500 BLACKHAWK ROAD
BEAVER FALLS, PA 15010**

**BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS' SPECIAL MEETING
Blackhawk High School Library
August 23, 2012**

MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Mr. Oswald, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was answered by six members, a quorum. Those in attendance were:

Mr. Calabria	Mr. Clendennen	Mr. Fitzgerald
Mr. Heckathorn	Mr. May	Mr. Oswald

Absent were:

Mr. Fleischman	Mr. Inman	Dr. Rose
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Also attending were:

Dr. Miller- Superintendent	Ms. Jessica Briggs- Solicitor's Office
Mr. Jerry Wessel- Board Secretary	

ATHLETICS COMMITTEE

Mr. Calabria introduced Head Football Coach Joe Hamilton who briefed the Board about his proposal to eliminate the 9th grade football program and include those athletes in the Junior Varsity/ Varsity football program. The coach discussed the reasons behind the last minute request to change the program and discussed the numbers of athletes in each grade playing football. He informed the Board that many schools have instituted similar program changes due to the number of athletes at Freshman and Sophomore levels.

Mr. Fleischman arrived at 7:12 P.M.

Coach Hamilton continued to explain that he plans to re-evaluate the program next year and to include the 9th grade coaches in the JV/Varsity program with the 9th grade athletes. He assured the Board, parents and players that the 9th graders will not just hold blocking dummies for the Varsity and will be scheduled for games in order to get playing time. The 9th graders will travel to Varsity games and play JV games and Freshmen (JV (B)) games

Dr. Miller asked how the safety of the players would be insured if some Freshmen played at the Varsity level and Coach Hamilton insured her that he and the other coaches

would not endanger any player that was not able to compete safely at any particular level. She asked about playing time and the coach assured her that the 9th graders would get as much playing time, but would also be better prepared to compete at the Varsity level. Dr. Miller also asked if there were non-safety and competition benefits to be realized by the change and the coach told her that the 9th graders will probably mature a bit faster, and gain more self discipline and self confidence sooner. He expects that they will also get more attention from coaches in regards to keeping good grades and can benefit from mentoring by Junior and Senior players.

Other issues discussed by Board members and the public included meeting with the parents insuring harassment does not occur (the coaches will monitor and talk with players); getting the Freshman cheerleaders opportunities to cheer (they will cheer with Junior Varsity cheerleaders or if JV (B) games are arranged at those); and, if the WPIAL will have any issues with the arrangement (no).

Mr. Calabria moved and Mr. Fitzgerald seconded a motion to eliminate the 9th grade football program and include the 9th grade athletes in the Junior Varsity/Varsity football program.

Roll Call Vote: 6 Yes; 1 No (Mr. May) - Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 P.M.

Submitted by Jerry Wessel
Board Secretary