

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

**BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS' VOTING MEETING
Patterson Primary School Cafeteria
March 15, 2012**

MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Mr. Richard Oswald, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:39PM. Roll call was answered by eight members. Those in attendance were:

Mr. Clendennen	Mr. Fleischman	Mr. Heckathorn	Mr. Inman
Mr. May	Mr. Oswald	Mrs. Pander	Dr. Rose

Absent was: Mr. Calabria

Also attending were:

Dr. Miller- Superintendent Mr. Salopek- Solicitor Mr. Wessel- Board Secretary

The invocation was given by Scott Graham from the Chippewa Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Oswald announced that an executive session for Personnel matters was held prior to the meeting.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Fleischman extended commendations on behalf of the Board to Brian Bain and Leslie Kunkel for being selected by the students as Middle School Teachers of the Month for February.

Mr. Fleischman announced that tickets for the 2012 School Picnic at Kennywood will be sold at all schools on May 11, 2012 and that that information will be announced prior to the sale at all schools.

Mr. Fleischman extended commendations to the students qualifying for Academic Games as follows: Ava Haddox, Jared Krut, Matt Warnaka, RaeAnn Ensworth, Nick Sosnowski, Louis D'Amico, Megan Pettner, Jaclyn Andrascik, Jacob Belcastro, Jordan Belcastro, Victoria Blythe, Ethan Frederick, Hannah Huston, Elena Iannuzzi, Max Levine, Aleena Milinski, Dan Warnaka, Victoria Wegman, Matt Young, Joseph Fucci, Matt Pulleo, Kaitlyn Rakestraw, Sean Steinle, Marcy Saldivar, Vicente Saldivar, Victoria Bovalino, and Cory Steinle.

Mr. Fleischman introduced Mrs. JaneAnn Fucci, the Patterson Primary School Principal who presented a program by Patterson students and staff. Included were leading of the Pledge of Allegiance by kindergarten students; discussion of the Blackhawk Foundation grant received

which allowed purchase of a kiln and a study of artists, one of whom the students copied and then created pictures in the same style which they presented to School Board members; and a presentation about the Science Olympiad and demonstration of skills acquired by selected students. Mrs. Fucci thanked the parents for bringing their children to participate in the program and the children themselves. Mr. Fleischman thanked Mrs. Fucci, the staff, and parents/grandparents who attended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Oswald asked if there were any public comments on agenda items or other matters. Dr. Miller began with an opening statement concerning the proposed program and staff reductions on the agenda and stressed the need to reduce spending in order for the budget for the upcoming year to balance.

Mr. Oswald asked that the topics be covered in order and that people limit their comments to three minutes.

On the proposed elimination of the Vocational Agriculture program, Selena Bonomo spoke about her concern that the same classes may not be available at the Vocational Technical School and the loss of a group to which the VoAg students can belong.

Eight people spoke concerning elimination or modification of the Drivers Education course. Main points made were that drivers education teaches skills that are used throughout a person's lifetime and is a safety issues for both students and anyone else on the road.

Approximately seventeen people spoke about the proposal to reduce the band director position to 5/8 time although it was not on the agenda for a vote for this meeting. Main points were that a change may result in some students going to Lincoln Park; band gives some kids a group to belong to; and, band has helped several students win scholarships. Several speakers threw in comments about driver's education, vocational agriculture and other programs, and many spoke much longer than three minutes. Dr. Rose asked that the proposal for reducing the band director position to 5/8 be made a motion and Mr. Fleischman seconded that proposal. Mr. Oswald stated that a motion could be made during the Education Committee portion of the agenda and if seconded could be further discussed and voted on.

Mr. Ron Stedman objected to the three minute rule and said that the District web site did not have the agenda posted to it in advance and that he sees some kind of deliberate conspiracy in the agenda not being posted; said he believes the District is spending too much on improvements; doesn't understand why some programs are proposed to be cut when other are proposed to be added; believes Pre-K is not required because Headstart is available for at-risk kids; and, that the Board should focus on education.

Autumn Geocondi stated that she believes all day kindergarten is not needed and if it is instituted class sizes will go up and that it is not worth the expense.

Robin Moye from Noah's Ark said she believes her program can educate pre-school children better than the District can.

Dr. Rose requested that a rental fee be established for any rooms used by an Extended Day program and said he feels the administration is going into the proposed Extended child care arrangement blind and should have a minimum revenue established before agreeing with a provider for the service.

Phillip Plevel, a Blackhawk student and member of JROTC at Ambridge, stated that students get nothing from the Olweus anti-bullying program and that it is not worth the cost. Dr. Miller informed him that the program does not cost the District anything. Mr. Plevel said he

thought JROTC would not be supported by the students. He also supported the vocational agriculture program.

Tori Queeno said she likes the anti-bullying program, doesn't want the band program changed and believes half day kindergarten is enough for kids.

Jodi Weister asked about the Marcellus Shale money the District received and was told the District received a one time payment of \$317,500. She stated that a District run Pre-K would take jobs from District residents and the Board should focus on other things to spend money on.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

As Finance Committee chairperson, Mr. Inman reported that the present environment makes finance in all school districts difficult and in Blackhawk, it is complicated by the need to increase the fund balance and move the 8th grade out of the High School building. He read a portion of an article highlighting cuts made and proposed in other districts and the reduction in State funding.

Mr. Inman moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to accept the Financial Report for the month of February as submitted.

Verbal Vote: 7 Yes; 0 No- Motion Carried

Note: Mr. May had left the room prior to the motion.

Mr. Inman moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to approve bills for February from the various Funds as submitted.

Verbal Vote: 7 Yes; 0 No- Motion Carried

The Board was directed by Mr. Inman to the exhibits within their packets for the January Monthly Insurance Reports.

Note: Mr. May returned to the room at this time.

Mr. Inman moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to approve the acceptance of bids provided by the Lawrence County Tax Claim Bureau for five properties previously exposed to upset sales and judicial sales, but not sold. Taxes through fiscal year 2010-2011 will be exonerated and it was clarified that taxes for 2011-2012 will be collected as the properties are returned to the active tax rolls.

Verbal Vote: 8 Yes; 0 No- Motion Carried

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

No report.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mr. May moved and Mr. Inman seconded a motion to accept the 2012-2013 academic school calendar as submitted.

Verbal Vote: 8 Yes; 0 No- Motion Carried

Mr. May moved and Mr. Inman seconded a motion to discontinue the Driver's Education program at the Blackhawk High School effective for the 2012- 2013 school year. Dr. Rose asked that a roll call vote be taken. Mr. Inman made a motion to amend the original motion to discontinue the program as it currently exists but offer the classroom portion at the District's cost. Mr. Clendennen seconded. Mr. Fleischman began an exchange with Mr. Clendennen and was ruled out of order by Mr. Oswald. Dr. Rose called the question and Mr. Inman repeated his motion.

Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes; 4 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mr. Heckathorn, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose)- Motion Failed

The original motion was then considered.

Roll Call Vote: 3 Yes; 5 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mr. Heckathorn, Mr. May, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose)- Motion Failed

Mr. May moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to discontinue offering the Vocational- Agriculture program to Blackhawk High School effective during the 2012- 2013 school year. Mr. Fleischman commented that he felt the program had value. Mr. May said he was a product of the program but that it was as much the teacher's personality and caring that made the course as was the value of the classes offered. Dr. Rose commented that the District should then find as good a teacher as the one retiring.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes; 3 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose)- Motion Passed

Mr. May moved and Mr. Inman seconded a motion to execute the contract presented by Extended Day Care to provide child care services before and after school for children K-7 at no cost to the District for one year beginning September 4, 2012 and ending June 13, 2013.

Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes ; 3 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose); 1 Abstention (Mr. Heckathorn)- Motion Failed

Mr. May moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to create a District Pre-K program to be held at the Intermediate School beginning the 2012- 2013 school year to provide a pre-kindergarten experience for up to 40 at-risk Pre-K children,

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes; 3 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose)- Motion Passed

Dr. Rose asked that the proposal to change the band instructor position from full time to 5/8 time be voted upon. Mr. Fleischman seconded. Mr. Clendennen said that the 5/8 position should be awarded and then evaluated and increased time added if it was found to be appropriate. Dr. Rose called the question. Mr. Oswald said that while he is a major supporter of the Arts, he would like more time to consider the proposal to reduce the time for the position. Mr. Inman moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to table any action on the position. Dr. Rose made a comment about more courage being required. Mr. Fleischman asked if the previous vote on the Vocational Agriculture Program could be tabled also and the solicitor replied that it could not unless one of those that voted in the majority asked that the topic be reopened. None desired to do so.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes; 3 No (Mr. Fleischman, Mrs. Pander, Dr. Rose)- Motion Tabled

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS/ REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE

No report.

ATHLETICS COMMITTEE

Dr. Rose offered the following congratulations:

Congratulations to Andrea Pence, independent gymnast, who placed first in the floor routine and second on the bars in the silver division of the PA Classic state championship gymnastic meet.

Congratulations to Alexis Lopez who placed first in the 100 yard breast stroke in the MAC championship meet.

Congratulations to Dewey Fry who placed first in diving at the MAC championship meet.

Congratulations to Troy Braddock who placed second at the WPIAL Wrestling.

Championships. Troy advanced to the State semi-finals that took place on March 2.

Congratulations to the girl's basketball team who were AAA, section II champions.

Congratulations to the girl's swim team who were AA, section II champions.

Congratulations to the boys and girls bowling team who finished first in the silver division at the MAC bowling championship.

Congratulations to Alexis Graham, Nick Martin, Chassidy Omogrosso, Cory Ostach who were named Bronze Athletes of the Week by the Beaver County Times for the week of February 6, 2012.

Congratulations to Nick Martin, Chassidy Omogrosso, Alexis Lopez and Dewey Fry who were named Bronze Athletes of the Week by the Beaver County Times for the week of February 13, 2012.

Congratulations to Nick Martin, Courtney Vannoy and Andrea Pence who were named Bronze Athletes of the Week by the Beaver County Times for the week of February 20, 2012.

Congratulations to Alexis Graham and Cory Ostach who were named Bronze Athletes of the Week by the Beaver County Times for the week of February 27, 2012.

ADMINISTRATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE

No report.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Mr. May reported that a continuation of the existing contract for bussing will be negotiated.

FOOD SERVICE COMMITTEE

No report.

NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

No report.

POLICY COMMITTEE

No report.

BOARD/ STAFF ENRICHMENT

No report.

INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Dr. Rose moved and Mr. Clendennen seconded a motion to accept the 2012- 2013 Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit's General Operating Budget as presented. Dr. Rose reported that the budget was reduced by furloughing a staff member. Mr. May asked which member and Dr. Rose said it was a position in the Design Department.

Verbal Vote: 8 For; 0 Against- Motion Passed

VOCATIONAL- TECHNICAL SCHOOL

No report.

PSBA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Clendennen stated that the root of the District's financial issues is the State not supporting education. Districts everywhere are cutting programs because of funding and the solution is for residents to call their representatives. He reminded the Board members that a study was made of District facilities and that is why changes are being made despite the funding issues caused by the State. A resolution concerning the impacts of the State's lack of funding was requested from all school boards by PSBA, but in Beaver County that request was raised to the Intermediate Unit to draft a response in order to add weight to the response.

BEAVER COUNTY REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

No report.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

School Directors: Dr. Rose asked if the Marcellus Shale leases were negotiated and by whom because he had been told that other people received more money than the District. Mr. Wessel

replied that he did the negotiating and that when the leases were signed by the District no other land owner in Beaver County had received more per acre than the District received.

Administration: No comments.

Visitors: Barb Brown asked for the balances in the Health and Dental Funds. Mr. Wessel gave them to her.

Phillip Plevel asked if any study was made before replacing black top at the various schools last year. Mr. Clendennen replied that the architects did do a study and recommended what should be replaced. Another resident who is a bus driver said that some areas were good enough and did not warrant replacement. Mr. Clendennen pointed out that some of the changes made were to support ADA access. Phillip Plevel said that the student areas at the High School are not filled each day and Mr. Clendennen replied that parking is needed for events and that there are guidelines for how much parking schools should have based on the number of teachers, administrators, employees and students.

Jodi Weisner commented that the District should be responsible for supporting the schools, not the State. Mr. Inman replied that like it or not, the District had to have a balanced budget and the Board has to make choices because there are no easy answers.

Mr. Fleischman's brother commented that he has not had a raise in five years and the teachers should hold the line on salaries. Several teachers replied that they did take a freeze for this year.

Dr. Rose questioned Mr. Inman about being on the Finance Committee. Jodi Weister raised the issue of the extra half gym at the Middle School and said change orders were too high. Mr.

Clendennen replied that the change order rate on District projects has been considerably below average and are why a contingency fund is built into project budgets.

Dr. Rose asked how much the District was paying for its bonds although he was given that information when the last bond issue was approved at his first meeting in December. Mr. Wessel said he believed it was about \$57M on the just under \$40M borrowed. Dr. Rose then asked again if any of the Board members that voted in favor of doing away with the Vocational Agriculture was willing to reopen that issue. None were.

Mike Alberico talked about writing State leaders, the importance of growth in the community and the need for leadership.

Finally, one of the band members invited the Board to the next combined band concert to see for themselves how effective the program is.

Next Meeting: Mr. Oswald announced that the next scheduled meeting is April 12, 2012 in the Blackhawk High School Library

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 PM.

Submitted by Jerry Wessel
Board Secretary