

<u>June 5, 2006</u> Date	<u>Special/Work Session</u> Type of Meeting	<u>M.E.S.M.S. Cafeteria</u> Where Held	<u>J. McCoy</u> Presiding Officer
Members Present:	<u>P. Bisaccia</u> <u>K. Corrado</u> <u>A. D'Alessandro</u> <u>P. Harris</u> <u>J. Miller</u>	Members Absent:	<u>P. Faigle</u>

Also present: Dr. Bruno, G. Heller, D. Verboys E. Cariello, J. Carbone; M. Drexel; staff, community and press.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Mrs. McCoy.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to move into Executive Session.

There was no action taken.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller that the Board return to open session at 7:22 p.m.

6 aye 0 nay Motion Carried

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. McCoy led the Board and the community in the pledge to the flag.

Public Comment:

Aaron Boch, President, Temple Beth Am, Yorktown Heights. Mr. Boch spoke against the Board accepting the donation of a crèche for each school offered by the Grasso family stating that “religious articles have no place on display in the public schools.”

Tony Grasso, resident, read a statement regarding his donation to the District and that his interpretation of the Board policies would allow the crèches to be displayed as long as an educational explanation of the meaning of the crèche was placed nearby. His statement included the use of “censorship” in public schools against Christian symbols which are considered religious versus non-Christian religious items which are viewed as part of their culture.

Robert Weiner, member of the Congregation at Beth Am, spoke of his children feeling left out when the Christian holidays have such huge displays. School should not be a place where children are uncomfortable.

Ed Ciffone, President, United Taxpayers of Yorktown, said his group supported the budget and voted for the incumbent Board trustees. He complimented those who lost the election and summarized their contributions.

Ken Allen, parent, said he believed religion was not something that should be imposed on children in the schools.

Jackie Martins, Yorktown teacher for 34 years, stated that she did not believe religion should be in the public schools.

Margaret Frankfurt, resident, stated that “it is never appropriate for schools to proselytize.” Asked that the Board vote against accepting the religious gift.

Reverend Joseph Bisignano, pastor at St. Patrick’s Church, Yorktown Heights, stated that he believed that what the District had been doing for all holidays seemed appropriate and the discussion this evening should not do away with all symbols that represent the diversity of the town.

Susan Ehrenberg, parent, stated that the District’s display for the holidays has been as secular as possible and that seems to be appropriate for all children.

Jenny Menton Grasso, resident, stated that the District’s policy was interpreted by two attorneys and that the District could accept and display the crèche in the schools. She asked why the school calendar broadly displays “Rosh Hashanah” but does not say “Christmas” or “Easter.” “Where is the equity in that?”

Rabbi Stanley Urbas, Yorktown Jewish Center, stated that the nature of public schools is not to teach religion, and putting a crèche in the schools goes over the line. It would be appropriate to use a crèche as part of a classroom discussion, but not as a statement of religion in a holiday display.

Greg Ball, republican candidate for NYS introduced himself and said he was running on the basis of school tax reform and was working on a comprehensive plan to bring down the costs while maintaining the quality of education.

Miriam Curtin, parent, congratulated the new Board members and was against accepting the donation of the crèche based on “separation of church and state.”

Susan Katz, parent, stated that the District’s policy states that “any student shall be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme.”

Mrs. Katz, also a member of the Gifted/Talented Work Group asked for time to present a minority report to the Board because some issues were not addressed. Dr. Bruno asked that she present her report at the next Board meeting on June 12th.

Dan Lefkowitz, parent, brought up the new legislation in NYS regarding “green cleaning” products. He stated that certain paints should not be used in a school/classroom.

Nick Ditomasso, resident, stated that religion should be taught at home. If the crèches were displayed, it should be while educating the children about what it represents to Christians. If it is displayed, all other religious objects from different faiths should be displayed also. Religion itself should be taught in the home.

Manger Closure – Creche Gift

Dr. Bruno stated that he wanted to acknowledge the many people that care about this issue and gave a special thank you to the members of the clergy who came to the meeting. He said the Board is concerned about our youth, what they stand for, what their values are and how they behave. Dr. Bruno's advice to the Board was to thank Mr. & Mrs. Grasso for their generous intent, but to decline the gift of the crèches to follow the District's policy to respect the separation of church and state.

Mr. Miller asked the District's attorney, Ms. Margo May, to interpret the District's policy in relation to this gift offer.

Ms. May stated that the policy is very clear on when to use religious objects and that would only be in the classroom to teach about diversity of religions. The policy also covers class plays and music/musicals. The display of symbols should be secular and seasonal in nature, and must be balanced in how it is approached.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to accept the donation of six crèches to be displayed in each of the schools from Mr. & Mrs. Grasso.

0 Aye, 6 Nay, Motion Denied

There was a two minute recess at 8:35 p.m.

Superintendent Reports

Math Curriculum – Mr. Heller explained that the State Education Department revised its Statewide Mathematic curriculum. Linda Grimm, Ken Levy, Joel Feldman, Anna Fazio, Scott Wynne presented information on those changes as they pertain to what the effects are on 4th, 5th and middle school math students. Teachers were trained to score and implement the new NYS assessments. Emphasis will be placed on data analysis – how our average students and higher level students are supported within the curriculum. The committee's recommendation is to retain the present placement protocols with ongoing review of student results to assure alignment between assessments and instruction.

G/T Education Work Group – Linda Grimm, Joel Feldman, John Wells, Sheryl Goldberg, Anna Fazio, Valerie Stern and Janet Beechert (parent) presented information from the G/T Work Group. They stated that there was a need for additional people on the committee, including parents, teachers pupil services personnel and guidance counselors. Mr. Wells stated that there is "clustering" in the elementary schools. It helps to ensure high achieving children are put together in a class utilizing flexible clustering. There is a need for more staff development in order to improve upon best practices in the schools. The reasons for clustering include learning styles, emotional needs, giftedness in areas like art, music and technology. We try to find ways to challenge the children and look at them in an holistic way.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to extend the meeting beyond 11:00 p.m.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

It was requested that the G/T Work Group work with the Differentiation Committee to evaluate the programs, and to develop a matrix to include pupil services and clustering.

Wellness Policy – the committee included: Tom Cole; Trish Harris; Fio Nardone; Ronnie Dwyer (co-chair); Elaine Goodwin (co-chair); Caitlin Brennan; Debi Ramos; Andrea Aboulafia (co-chair); Peter Plotkin and Gabrielle Gonin. There is a Federal mandate that school districts must have a policy in place for the school lunch program by July 2006. Debi Ramos, Aramark Food Service Director (assigned to the Yorktown CSD), will be designated as the registered dietitian (as mandated). Nutritional guidelines must be followed and the committee requested to have a nutritional person available to help formulate age appropriate nutritional guidelines.

It was recommended that intramural sports be implemented to get the non-athletic kids involved in lifelong sports. However, it is a budget issue, space to hold the program, advisors, etc. There is also the matter of beverages and snack machines that must carry items that meet the guidelines. The vending company is aware of what must happen by September 2006 and it may mean a declination in profits.

The committee also requested an additional health teacher to help change the curriculum – we must teach kids how to change their behavior (self-management and goal setting). Aramark will make sure that one person on each site would be certified in safe food handling.

Dr. Bruno noted that the policy must be altered to include an implementation schedule. The Federal mandate states that each school district receiving Federal funds for their school lunch program must have a program in place by July 1, 2006 that would include a policy, and a monitoring technique to assess what we are doing.

Administrative Office Space

There was a discussion regarding the move from the Triangle Center space. The high school office space has been completed “under budget and on schedule” and the administration will move out of that space before the lease expires.

Ms. McCoy stated that a steering committee is being set-up, chaired by Jackie Carbone, to oversee the bond projects. Ms. Carbone stated that the committee will present something to the Board with the aim of getting it to SED this fall and do the bid process in the winter.

Ms Harris thanked Ms. McCoy and Mr. D’Alessandro for their hard work with the facilities committee. Mr. D’Alessandro stated that he would remain on the steering committee to help Jackie every step of the way.

RESOLUTIONS

PERSONNEL

INSTRUCTIONAL

Resignation

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to accept the resignation of Joan Truxler, speech/language pathologist at Mohansic and Strang Middle Schools, effective May 19, 2006.

5 Aye, 1 Nay, Motion Carried

Increase in Assignment

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to increase the appointment of Fred Campisano, AIS/TA at Yorktown High School, from 6 hours/day to 7 hours/day, in order to conform to the length of the high school day.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Creation of Positions (withdrawn by Superintendent)

Parental Leave

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve a parental leave of absence for Jeanny Ortega-Figueroa, Spanish teacher at Yorktown High School, for the 2006-2007 school year.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Appointments

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the probationary appointment of Ernie Della Vecchia, as a physical education teacher, Step 2 of the Masters salary schedule plus 12 credits, effective September 1, 2006. Mr. Della Vecchia has Initial certification in Physical Education. His tenure area is Special Subject Tenure Area-Physical Education, and his probationary period will expire September 1, 2008. Mr. Della Vecchia is replacing William Jensen who is retiring. His initial placement will be at Mohansic School.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the appointment of Mary Peters, as a 0.6 FTE general music teacher at Strang Middle School, Step 2 of the Masters salary schedule plus 6 credits, prorated, effective September 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. Ms. Peters has Permanent certification in Music.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to approve the appointment of Ricky Myint, as a leave replacement music teacher, Step 3 of the Bachelors salary schedule, effective September 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. Mr. Myint has Initial certification in Music. He is replacing Jennifer Flynn at Strang Middle School, who has been granted a parental leave of absence.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Summer Programs

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the appointment of the following teachers and AIS teaching assistants in the special education summer extended year program, at a daily rate of 1/200th of their regular salary, July 5 through August 15, 2006:

Dina Cahill – Teacher
Maria Ciccone – Teacher
Dennis Daria – Lifeguard
Maura Haggerty – Teacher
Rachel Millen – Speech/Language Pathologist
Susan Zuckerman – Speech/Language Pathologist (prorated per hour)
Jennifer Berkman – Substitute Teacher
Jessica LiCalzi – Substitute Teacher
Anthony Marucci – Substitute Teacher
Andrea Mooney – Substitute Teacher

Motion to approve the appointment of the following teachers for the summer reading program, at a daily rate of 1/200th of their regular salary:

Lynn Joyce (7/17 – 7/28)
Doreen Saccomano (7/17 – 7/28)
Linda Hatfield (7/17 – 7/28)
Lynn Joyce (7/31 – 8/11)
Moir Schnecker (7/31 – 8/11)
Deirdre Farrell (7/31 – 8/11)
Anthony Marucci (8/14 – 8/25)
Rosemary Brannigan (8/14 – 8/25)
Alice Ryan (8/14 – 8/25)

Motion to approve the appointment of the following teachers for the summer ELL program at a daily rate of 1/200th of their regular salary:

Camille Luongo (32 hours)
Laurie Foley (40 hours)
Georganne Serico (32 hours)
Joan Colsey (32 hours)
Rosemary Brannigan (12 hours)
Jim Flannigan (20 hours)
Linda Guidotti (12 hours)
Kea Carota (16 hours)
Jessica LiCalzi (16 hours)
Colleen Miraglia (12 hours)

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

SUPPORT STAFF

Resignations

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to accept the resignation of James Minio, TA/IA at Crompond School, effective June 30, 2006.

Motion to accept the resignation of Elizabeth Pezzulo, TA/IA at Strang Middle School, effective June 30, 2006.

Motion to accept the resignation of Kathleen Petriccione, TA/IA at French Hill School, effective June 30, 2006.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Ms. McCoy, to accept the resignation of Cathy Russell, webmaster for the district, effective June 30, 2006.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to accept the resignation, for purposes of retirement, of Joan Mellusi, TA/IA at Strang Middle School, effective June 30, 2006. Ms. Mellusi is retiring after 10 years with the district.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Appointment

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to approve the emergency appointment of Amanda Bulson, as a computer technician, Step 1 of the Computer Technician salary schedule, effective June 22, 2006, a prorated salary of \$777.49. This position is subject to a probationary period of a minimum of 12 weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Creation of Position

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to approve the creation of a Lifeguard position to be in compliance with Westchester County Health Department guidelines, with the following special requirements: Incumbents must possess a current life-guarding certificate from one or more of the following: the American Red Cross; American Heart Association; YMCA; or Boy Scouts of America; and must also maintain current certifications in first aid and CPR as a professional rescuer.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Summer Programs

Motion by Mr. D'Alessandro, seconded by Ms. Harris, to approve the appointment of the following teaching assistants/instructional assistants, OT's and nurses for the special education summer extended year program (nurses and OT's at a daily rate of 1/200th of their regular salary; and the teaching assistants/instructional assistants at their regular hourly rate):

Sue Berman – OT (consulting 2 hours per week @ \$50 per hour)
Susan Brunelle – Nurse
Suesana Correa-Sartario – COTA
Linda Belanger – TA/IA
Arlene Capozzoli – TA/IA
Eileen McCannon – TA/IA
Johanna Racioppo – TA/IA
Karen Rustad – TA/IA
Elizabeth Solow – TA/IA
Michelle Villano – TA/IA
Millie Voss – TA/IA
Barbara Woska – TA/IA
Dawn Benevento – TA/IA Sub
Debbie Drapala – TA/IA Sub
Angela Nigro – TA/IA Sub
Isabelle Scherpf – TA/IA Sub
Janet Summers – TA/IA Sub

Motion to approve the appointment of the following teaching assistants/instructional assistants for the summer reading program, at their regular hourly rate:

Kathy McNamee (7/17 – 7/28)
Margaret Saggese (7/31 – 8/11)
Mary Hayes (8/14 – 8/25)

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

CURRICULUM

District Plan

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Harris, to recertify the Yorktown District Plan of School-Based Planning and Shared Decision-Making, following consultation with and full participation by the District Shared-Decision Making Committees convened for the purpose of the Biennial Review as required by CR100.(b), (d), and (f). Endorsing this action include the Superintendent of Schools, YAAS, the YCT, and District PTSA.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

BUSINESS OFFICE/OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Administrative Offices

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to authorize the Board of Education to approve a change order not to exceed \$40,000 to install an access ramp, concrete walkway and drainage remediation at the new administrative offices at Yorktown High School, the cost of which will be charged to the Phase I Capital Project.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to authorize the expenditure of funds not to exceed \$15,400 for moving expenses related to the occupation of the new administrative offices, the cost of which will be charged to the Phase I Capital Project.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Phase I Construction

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Corrado, to authorize the School District Administration to use any unspent funds from the Phase I Construction Project to reduce any outstanding debt from the project. The amount of the debt reduction will be reported back to the Board of Education.

6 Aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Review of Tentative Agenda for June 12, 2006 Business Meeting.

There were no questions.

Public Comment

None

Board of Education Comments

Mr. Miller asked that the newly elected Board members receive a copy of the Report on Differentiated Instruction.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. D' Alessandro, to adjourn the meeting.

5 aye 0 nay Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Board Secretary