

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
HELD JUNE 12, 2000**

CALL TO ORDER

A Special Meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on June 12, 2000, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Huf at 8:02 p.m. The following people registered their attendance:

Board Members:

Scott Avery [Sworn in at this meeting.]
Joseph Faust [Arrived at 8:12 p.m.]
Eugene Grossi
Betty Huf
Joan Jankowsky
Jerry Locke
Harve Strouse

Staff:

Sandy Homel
Victor Lasher
Dr. Michael Masko
Dr. Nancy Reid
Dr. Thomas Sexton
Timothy Vail

Public:

Jean Avery
Bud Avery
Robert A. Shaffer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Huf led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

SCHOOL DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Strouse to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the appointment of Scott S. Avery, who is a resident of Region 3, to the Centennial School Board until the term expires on December 3, 2001, as ordered and directed by the Court of Common Pleas of Bucks County.

The motion passed 5-0.

The oath of office was administered to Mr. Avery, who then took his seat at the Board table. Mrs. Huf welcomed Mr. Avery on behalf of the Board.

DISTRICT GOALS – 2000/2001

Mr. Grossi pointed out that there were many tasks enumerated on the list of recommendations, many of which were daunting. He indicated that he saw them as tasks rather than goals. He reviewed the suggestions he had made at the previous meeting, as follows:

1. Ensure that the facilities are being used efficiently, including making sure that they are being effectively paid for by other users. He suggested some options for raising rents and using the facilities more efficiently versus redistricting and closing schools.
2. Have students interface with teachers for 375 minutes.
3. Adhere to the contract language. We cannot have any policy that goes against the contract.

Mr. Grossi felt that his proposal would require less teaching staff.

Mr. Faust arrived at the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Mr. Strouse felt that we want to enhance student performance and the Board needed to find ways to do that. He felt that looking at the facilities usage and intensifying the intensive schedule to get more time on task would be ways to achieve this. He felt that was what the Board should be looking at for Administration to pursue in conjunction with the strategic plan.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that what Mr. Grossi had mentioned were tasks under the goal statement that Mr. Strouse had suggested.

Mr. Strouse repeated the statement he had suggested at the previous meeting, as follows: To examine the educational delivery systems of the District to determine cost savings while maintaining and increasing student performance.

Mr. Grossi felt that his three suggestions should be bullets under Mr. Strouse's statement.

Mr. Faust indicated that Mr. Strouse's statement had come out of the Finance Committee and also tied into the preliminary budget. He felt that the Board should look at items that would provide significant cost savings to the District.

Mrs. Jankowsky suggested using Mr. Strouse's statement with Mr. Grossi's three items as bullets under that statement, as follows:

To examine the educational delivery systems of the District to determine cost savings while maintaining and increasing student performance, by examination of:

- Facilities utilization.
- Adherence to contractual agreements.
- Examining student instructional days to increase time on task.

Discussion ensued regarding facilities usage and the amount other districts pay for use. Dr. Reid advised that at one time she had asked other districts for an increase. At that time, they were paying \$6,000, which was then increased to \$10,000. Dr. Reid suggested that if this was one of the areas to be looked at, she could speak to the other 12 Superintendents and advise them that this may be happening.

Mr. Locke suggested that the increase could take place on a graduated basis over a period a several years.

Dr. Reid asked if this matter and the elementary building utilization were the two areas the Board wanted Administration to focus on. She also asked if the Dorothy Henry School should be addressed.

Mr. Strouse felt that the Board should not give Administration all the tasks that needed to be reviewed but rather to give Administration suggestions. He did not want Administration to be limited to these items. He did not want to define the specifics of what Administration should be doing. He felt Administration should come back to the Board with their suggestions about facilities usage.

Mrs. Jankowsky advised that she saw this as an issue that the Board should address separately. She felt that the following was the language that should be used in the motion: “To examine the educational delivery systems of the District to determine substantive cost savings while maintaining and increasing student performance, by review to include but not be limited to:

- Facilities utilization
- Increasing time on task for all students
- Adherence to all contracts and agreements with the District.”

Dr. Reid advised that the other piece that she did not want to lose was the fact that Administration was in the process of developing a new strategic plan. She indicated that she would like the Board to give consideration to one of the bullets being “by implementing the strategic plan.”

Mr. Strouse agreed that this could be added.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that the strategic plan had its own weight and its own mechanism for coming before the Board that would be in addition to this. Mrs. Huf agreed.

Dr. Reid wanted to be sure that the importance of the strategic plan was recognized and that these goals would not take precedence over the strategic plan.

Mr. Faust agreed that the strategic plan had a life of its own and would come forward on its own merit at the proper time. He felt that it should be left as a separate issue.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Strouse to resolve that the Centennial School Board adopts the following district goal for the 2000/2001 school year: To

examine the educational delivery systems of the District to determine substantive cost savings while maintaining and increasing student performance, by review to include but not be limited to:

- *Facilities utilization;*
- *Increasing time on task for all students; and*
- *Adherence to all contracts and agreements with the District.*

Robert Shaffer of 1150 Mill Creek Road suggested that the word “maintaining” should not be included in the motion. After discussion, it was decided that it should remain in the motion.

[Mrs. Jankowsky requested that the minutes be transcribed verbatim at this point.]

Dr. Masko: I would like to point out a potential source of confusion with the words “time on task.” I think everyone in this room understands what is meant here by time on task. As I understand it, it means increasing the amount of contact time in any given day between students and teachers. Outside of this room, time on task is generally understood to be the amount of time that students are attending to the tasks in the classroom. For example, you may have a 45-minute classroom period. If the average student is really only attending to the class work and engaged in class work for thirty minutes of that time, increasing time on task means getting those students to attend up to 45 minutes the entire class period. I just want to point that out and ...

Strouse How do you suggest we change it?

Masko Um...

Jankowsky ... get back to the instructional day...

Masko Increasing instructional time for all students.

Huf As opposed to time on task

Grossi Instructional time, right? Not contact time.

Jankowsky The second bullet then would read “Increasing instructional time for all students.”

Masko Yes

Strouse Okay.

Jankowsky The first bullet was facilities utilization.

Huf Okay.

Reid I have a question – clarification. You talked about by review, but not limited to. In terms of the review, we’ll be reviewing these three areas and coming to the Board with recommendations in these three areas for next year. With recommendations, with a timetable, then for implementation in subsequent years.

- Masko As soon as possible, yes.
- Reid In subsequent years, the recommendation may come in terms of the very next year, 2001/2002. Others may come in terms of subsequent years. So next year – I just want to clarify – is the year of study and recommendations, with implementation then in subsequent years.
- Jankowsky That would be my understanding.
- Strouse Yes. Even to the point of examining some of these recommendations in the budget process is a critical piece of the objective for next year.
- Huf Mr. Faust
- Faust I just want to go back to focus on the finance side. I mean, if we're going to say next year is just a period of study and everything else, that means we're back to status quo next year because we'll only have studies, we won't have any implementations ready and that means we're at a \$3 million deficit.
- Strouse We're looking to implement – we're looking for this, for a significant amount of this, to be a part of the budget process.
- Reid Some of it for 2001.
- Faust For 2001.
- Strouse For implementation in 2001.
- Faust I'm just saying, I don't want nothing for 2001.
- Grossi To maintain the fund balances, and you have money to play around with, if you have finances and resources and you say okay I need a significant chunk of it next year. But I just think that you can stretch it over another year and you can use your interim financing until the savings are realized, understanding that it may take a two or three year implementation. We may not be able to get it all but I think if you get a fairly large portion of it up front, it then gives us room to manipulate with the available cash. If you run out of available cash, then we can't do that.
- Faust I don't disagree. But I just don't want zero and then...
- Grossi Zero we can't have.
- Reid Take as an example. For instance if a recommendation comes forward after we look at the elementary school piece, to close an elementary school, if a recommendation... For that to occur for the 2001 budget that recommendation would have to come to the Board by November or December because you don't say in February or March that you're going to close an elementary school.
- Grossi We don't disagree.

- Sexton A recommendation should happen now to start the process.
- Reid I mean we may come up with a recommendation in September or October that we're going to look at that because if you're going to look at that for 2001, you have to start that process...
- Grossi However, if you know that resource is available, that's a different set of circumstances. Some of our concerns in Finance is we didn't know that's what we wanted to focus on. What resources were available at that point. That's different. That's a finance plan in order to fund that similar to what we did when we had the technology. We knew that the bond issue was coming. We needed some available cash to fund the first year. When the bond issue was paid off we used that cash to buy the technology. What I commonly refer to as bridge money, to bridge the gap between what our current need was and it all came out in the wash. We can do that once the decision is made, even if it's a year or two down the line. But I think clearly what Joe's pointing out, the decision sometime in that process has to be made. Implementation could be further down the line for a number of reasons. But once you know it's going to be implemented, then you know you have some evaluation of what the resources are and you can manipulate things to make that happen.
- Strouse Clearly, we're targeting a significant amount of these dollars to be part of next year's budget process. That is the objective.
- Reid Well, that is why I wanted to talk about it because, you know, some of these things don't just happen overnight. You don't make an announcement overnight. You have to, you know, allow for...
- Strouse You can be done all your objectives by February.
- Huf Do we have a motion and a second? Mrs. Jankowsky.
- Jankowsky Perhaps we should again, you know, whether or not the Board sees need... Perhaps the motion needs to have a statement that says that the review and examination should include an implementation timetable.
- Huf You can make your resolution as long as you want.
- Strouse I'm happy to leave the motion as it stands.
- Grossi I think we should – I think it's very clearly defined.
- Jankowsky Well, we all think that we made it clear until about six months later when we all say.. Oh, well I thought we meant this or I thought we meant that, and it gets to be a little bit...
- Huf Can you add that to the end of your resolution in a few words?
- Jankowsky I can. Just with that sentence. I'd like to amend it to include the review should include an implementation timetable.

- Strouse No, I don't agree. I think these need to be overall objectives without that kind of concern at this point. If we wanted to add that at some point...
- Huf There is time involved and that's why we're looking at them.
- Strouse I don't agree.
- Huf It's just an open window.
- Jankowsky How do you expect it to come through the budget cycle without saying, and maybe you need to put that somewhere, you need to link it to a timetable.
- Grossi We're going to start on this month's Finance Committee meeting.
- Faust I'm not sure your language puts ... your language states a timetable. The timetable could be 2006.
- Strouse I don't want to start developing a timetable tonight. I want to set up objectives and from here, after this, we'll start looking at specifics.
- Grossi The only thing I would say is that you should be significant – I mean you're going to get into too much detail then.
- Huf Well, I think that Dr. Reid has a picture here and I think that this Board has been very clear tonight as to how they expect it to start working, so if this Board is not in agreement to add a timetable to that motion, then that's acceptable to me. But bear in mind that Mrs. Jankowsky did ask for one. But I think, listening to Dr. Reid and hearing what went on here tonight, that this is being asked to be put into effect to show some quick resolution.
- Grossi I think by natural course of events there'll be a timetable.
- Jankowsky I would just ask that the minutes reflect the content of this conversation verbatim.
- Sexton Just a question for clarification. Is there a fiscal expectation that the Board is looking at here?
- Huf I've heard the figure of \$1 million bantered about.
- Faust Oh, I think I've heard \$3 million.
- Huf What's the fiscal note? You don't want to put a timeline on it. You might want to put a fiscal note, but...
- Grossi There are a number of combinations I can envision that go anywhere from \$1 million to \$3 million. I couldn't answer that until you start getting into the detail and data.
- Strouse You don't want the Earl Schieb version -- \$29.95

Grossi I mean, it's a serious effort to do a couple things on my part. But I don't know how much you'll put back in because I think we're gonna put some things back in. I can't envision where we're gonna be at because I don't know, quite frankly, there, it's awfully hard to do that up front. The numbers will come out pretty quickly.

Huf Okay, the motion has been moved forward and seconded.

[Verbatim transcription ends here.]

The motion passed 7-0.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Bob Shaffer of 1150 Mill Creek Road, Southampton, stated that he had some concerns, not necessarily involving goals that were discussed tonight but he has a serious problems with the fact that Math is not a required course for Seniors at Tennent. He felt that this was a serious shortcoming. He mentioned some specific tasks that graduates should be able to do. He indicated that local businessmen had informed him that graduates do not know basic Math, including basic word problems, fractions, etc. He felt that we should go back to fundamentals.

Mr. Shaffer stated that another problem he saw was the poor SAT scores of Centennial students compared to our neighboring school districts. He felt that could be a goal for Administration to push the students to achieve greater performance in academics.

Mrs. Homel stated that it is a matter of how the students sequence themselves whether or not they get math in Senior year. She did feel that Mr. Shaffer made some good points and that they should be looked at closely.

Mr. Faust stated that we do require four Math courses. Science and Social Studies are not any more stringent than Math. As far as a goal for the SAT scores, there is a goal present that came out of the high school study about how much SAT scores should improve each year. As far as basic skills, that is coming out of the strategic plan (standards that we expect students to meet). He indicated that he didn't disagree with any of Mr. Shaffer's points but felt that they were already being worked on.

Dr. Reid advised that she wanted to share with the Board and the public the District's deep loss and sympathy for a former administrator, Shelley Salaman, who had retired two years ago. She indicated that Ms. Salaman had met an untimely death the previous Friday afternoon in an automobile accident. She stated that everyone was deeply saddened and shocked. She conveyed sympathy to the family and Stackpole students, staff and parents. Mrs. Huf added that the Board felt the same.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Faust to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary