

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
HELD OCTOBER 10, 2000**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on October 10, 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
Joseph Faust
Eugene Grossi
Al Hertenberger
Betty Huf
Joan Jankowsky
Jerry Locke
Harve Strouse
James Wybar

CEA/Teachers:

Mick Sander
Joe LoVecchio

Staff:

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

Public:

Madeline Grove
Margaret Shafer
Mark B. Miller
Sina Baranski
Donna Marie Saul

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Huf announced that the Board had met in Executive Session prior to this meeting relative to a legal matter regarding retroactivity of a policy and a real estate matter relative to a sale of excess District property.

Mrs. Jankowsky advised that all Board members had received an invitation to the kickoff of Stackpole's 35th birthday celebration on October 13th.

Mr. Lasher advised that some repairs had been made to the sound system for the meetings and that it was critical that Board members speak into the microphones.

Dr. Reid reported that the previous Sunday several students, parents and staff members had participated in the Walk for Diabetes and that they received a trophy for "Most Enthusiastic Team." Dr. Reid thanked everyone who participated.

PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Homel introduced Mr. LoVecchio, who spoke about the new marching band storage/observation facility. He detailed the process of raising money and having the building erected. Madeline Grove, Past President of the Band Parents, and Margaret Shafer, current President, passed around pictures of the building in its various stages of completion.

Mrs. Huf thanked the parents and everyone involved in the project. Mr. LoVecchio invited everyone to the Celebration of the Bands, scheduled for October 21st.

Mrs. Huf and Dr. Reid presented certificates of appreciation to Mrs. Grove and Mrs. Shafer for their hard work on the project, and indicated that a certificate would also be given to Karen Bucci, who was not in attendance.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Mark Miller of 71 Hamilton Drive, Warminster, stated that he was proud of what the District had done to date. He asked about the cost or value of the library at the high school and stated that he was concerned that it closes at 3:15. He indicated that his children were walkers and that there was no place they could wait for someone to pick them up after school if they were not involved in an activity on a particular afternoon. He felt that it would be worthwhile for the library to be open later so that in such instances children could be accomplishing something and also have a safe place to wait. He also stated his concern about the use of part-time employees where a full-time employee might be warranted. He was concerned about the two part-time guidance counselors at the high school and the fact that part-time staff does not have the same level of commitment as full-time employees.

Mr. Miller also felt that if Elliott Alexander were replaced there would be much better communication with the media. He was also concerned about the revolving schedule of the French teacher.

Dr. Reid responded that there was a recommendation from Administration that a process be put in place for communicating with the media and that this process was being coordinated by Dr. Reid. She also explained that Frank Gallagher was handling business partnerships and community relations.

Relative to part-time positions, Dr. Reid explained that there were currently five full-time guidance counselors at the high school. She indicated that through a special grant, we were able

to contract out for a part-time crisis counselor for 2½ days per week over and above the existing staff.

Regarding the library issue, Dr. Reid explained that there was currently one librarian but if the Board wished, other options could be explored. She also commented, regarding the French teacher, that it was very difficult to attract and retain half-time teachers.

Mrs. Homel stated that she had seen as many as twelve part-time teachers but that there were only two this year, which was a great improvement.

Mr. Grossi stated that there had been a big drop in interest in languages in recent years. He indicated that the District has tried different ways of encouraging students to take languages.

Donna Marie Saul of 589 Lowell Road, Warminster, addressed the subject of changes in the block schedule to 5 period/75 minute courses and the adoption of the same at the middle school. She pointed out that classes would be only 112.5 hours long and that no other district had classes less than 120 hours. She indicated that this was a decline of 18 hours from what was currently being done. She also pointed out that up until 1992 the law mandated 120 hours per course. She felt the students would be shortchanged.

Mrs. Saul also spoke about rumors regarding cutting teacher positions. She felt many changes were being caused by financial concerns and that it was her understanding that cutting positions for financial reasons was against the law. She felt that going to a 75/5 block would not allow for choosing electives until Senior year. She felt that was not the time when electives should be taken but that they should be taken earlier in a student's high school career. She urged parents to mobilize and find out more about what the Board was trying to do.

Mr. Grossi explained that the basic outline of the program was increased time on task. He felt it would give more options to both students and teachers. He felt that stating there were only 112 hours was a gross misrepresentation of the programs. He pointed out that the function of the Finance Committee was to develop a business plan and that was what they were doing.

Mr. Strouse stated that there had been many discussions about block scheduling. He indicated that, as far as he knew, the Finance Committee was recommending that the Education Committee review and determine whether a change in block scheduling was feasible but that there was never any change voted on. He did not believe that anyone on the Board was interested in degrading education.

Mr. Grossi stated that all they were doing was looking at the taxpayers' options and recognizing that fact at the public meetings.

Mrs. Saul stated that it was her understanding that if something was to be done for next year, it must be done by December. She felt that parents should be aware of this and that the teachers' time in front of the students should not be reduced.

Mr. Avery stated that the test scores in the elementary schools were good; in middle school the hours were reduced and the grades were lower; in high school, the same as middle school. He felt there was a clear pattern that when teaching hours go down, scores go down. He felt strongly that he did not want teaching time reduced.

REPORTS

STUDENT COUNCIL

None

MBIT STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

None

GOOD NEWS

Mrs. Homel stated that there was no report for this meeting but there would be lots of good news to be shared at the next meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Reid presented the Superintendent's Report (see attached), highlighting the following items:

- 2000/01 Enrollment Report
- Summer Program/Camp Information
- Vandalism Report, First Quarter 2000/01

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Jankowsky advised that this committee had met on October 2nd and had a very informative program, including the following:

1. Results of the Social Studies assessment for grades 3, 7 and 9 – There were good results for grade 3. In grade 7 there was not good alignment with what we want the students to learn; however, the consultants felt that this was the case in most schools. They suggested that the CRT redesign the curriculum so there is less scope and more depth. In grade 9, the results were inconclusive. This was the first year the Social Studies assessment was done.
2. Results of the Science assessment – This was the third year this was implemented. The test indicated an increase in each of the four strands of the curriculum. There seemed to be a decreasing trend from grades 4 to 6 to 8 to 10; however, there was an increase in each individual module.
3. Math program, particularly grades 8 & 9 Algebra – Out of those taking Algebra at middle school, there were few students who got a *D* or *F*. At high school, the percentage of students getting a *D* or *F* rose.

4. Modern language program – This was the first year of implementation of proficiency standards. By the end of two years, a language student should achieve “novice” status. Mr. Faust felt that it should be clarified that under block scheduling it would be two levels of language rather than two years. Mrs. Jankowsky agreed.

Mr. Grossi questioned the fact that scores seemed to be slipping as students got into the higher grades, particularly in math.

Dr. Masko explained that the students who were taking Algebra I in middle school were at the middle level of achievement whereas the students who were waiting to take it in high school were generally the least able math students. The higher grade levels were achieving at lower levels than their younger peers. Dr. Masko indicated that they were trying to address this and show gains.

Mr. Faust felt that he would be concerned about saying that the PSSA scores were going up. He felt we should look at the change between a student taking the 5th grade test and what he does when he takes the 8th and 11th grade tests. Dr. Sexton indicated that we are starting to look at tracking individual elementary students on the Iowa tests.

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that the next Education Committee meeting would be on November 6th. The topics would include: standardized tests, five-period block schedule, school improvement for Leary, McDonald and Stackpole Schools and basic skills by grade 11.

Mr. Hertenberger asked if there was information available about tracking children who were dropping out and at what age they were doing so. Mrs. Jankowsky stated that this had not been done but that Administration could do it at some point. Mr. Hertenberger requested that they do so. Mrs. Jankowsky indicated that she did not feel that the drop-out rate was a problem in this district. She felt that the issue was to enable all students to reach their potential.

Dr. Sexton indicated that this issue was addressed through our Title I program. He felt that one of the issues was the mobility factor in the district, which can create gaps in a student’s educational program. He indicated that we do try to address this through Title I. (This relates to elementary school only.)

Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Mr. Faust reported that this meeting should have been held the previous evening but that it was rescheduled for Thursday, October 12th due to the religious holiday. Therefore, there was no report at this time.

Intermediate Unit

Mr. Grossi reported that a meeting was held on September 19th. There was a ceremony honoring Rose Marie Kautz for her services as Board President. Also, the Board ratified

a new three-year contract. One of the issues was that the starting salary wasn't improved enough. Mr. Grossi questioned that and pointed out that the I.U. was a service organization to the 13 supporting districts.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 17th.

PSBA

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that the State conference would be held on October 17-20. She advised that if she and Mrs. Huf attended a pre-session event regarding legal liability, the District would then get a discount on its liability insurance of about \$1,800.

AFG

No report. (Mrs. Jankowsky suggested that this matter be removed from the agenda until there was something to report.)

Strategic Planning Committee

No report. (Mrs. Jankowsky suggested that this matter be removed from the agenda until there was something to report.)

FINANCE & LONG RANGE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. Grossi reported that a meeting had been held the previous week and that one was also scheduled for October 16th, to which the public was invited.

Title VIII

No report.

Federal Lands Reuse Authority

No report.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Locke reported that this committee had met the previous week. The committee had reviewed the Carroll Engineering traffic study and there were several options being offered. The committee felt that there should be a crossing guard at a cost of approximately \$1,500 per year. Mrs. Huf pointed out that this matter was on the agenda for later in the meeting so it should be discussed at that time.

Mr. Locke also advised that there was a petition by a group of parents to consider a Penn DOT study in the area of Log College for a group of streets that are more heavily traveled than three years ago. The Operations Committee was against such a study

because the area was within the 1½-mile walking distance. However, they felt they wanted to bring this to the attention of the Board. The parents were concerned with one or two streets but the committee felt that there were about eight streets to be considered. If they were deemed to be hazardous, it would be a major change in busing. The recommendation of the committee was not to do this at this time.

Citizens Policy

Mr. Strouse advised that a meeting was scheduled for October 17th and that the public was invited.

Legislative Liaison

Mr. Faust referred to the Legislative Report included in the Board's packet.

Mrs. Jankowsky was curious about whether PSBA had a recommendation on House Bill 2106 and Senate Bill 1283. She also felt that the Board should know that there was a possibility of an open window for retirement under House Bill 966. She further pointed out that gifted education had been separated from special education.

Mr. Faust explained that many of the special education requirements were duplicated in the new Chapter 16 for gifted education.

Mr. Grossi asked if we had an idea of timing regarding the retirement issue. Mr. Faust advised that if it was to be in this session, it would have to be before November 30th.

At this point, Mrs. Huf requested that #1 under New Business be moved up.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sale of Tax Parcel No. 48-7-2

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Strouse to resolve that the Centennial School Board has determined that Bucks County Tax parcel 48-7-2, located on Street Road in Upper Southampton Township, and containing approximately 9.24 acres is unused and unnecessary for School District purposes.

Be it further resolved that the Administration is herein directed to offer said property for sale by sealed bids in accordance with the provisions of the Public School Code subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The sale shall be "as is" except the School District shall provide good title to the buyer;*
- 2. The sale shall be subject to no contingencies except the title contingency noted previously;*
- 3. The settlement shall occur within sixty (60) days of the approval of the sale;*
- 4. All bids shall be accompanied by a certified check payable to the School District in the amount of 10% of the bid;*

5. *The School District shall have the right to reject any and all bids for any reason; and*
6. *Such other conditions that would normally be included in the sale of real property.*

Lola Biuckians, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Upper Southampton, stated that she was speaking on behalf of the Board and the residents of Southampton. She pointed out that Shelmire Field had been used by Southampton residents for many years and that the fields were irreplaceable. On behalf of the residents and the students, she requested that this matter be tabled until the Board of Supervisors had an opportunity to explore options regarding Shelmire Field.

Mr. Grossi stated that he had no problem with the motion being tabled if the Board wished to give Upper Southampton time to look at their options.

Mr. Faust indicated that, although he had no problem with the request, he had a question about what would prevent us from obtaining bids. Then if Upper Southampton had a better option, the Board could reject the bids.

Mr. Wybar asked what would be a reasonable amount of time for the Southampton Board to consider this. Ms. Biuckians stated that she was asking for two weeks in order to confer with counsel as to what their options would be.

Mr. Strouse indicated that the solicitor had advised that this would be a 3-4 week bidding process, which should allow time for Southampton to determine what they could do.

Mr. Hertenberger felt that the Board should allow Southampton three months since this would affect all the Southampton residents. He did not feel the matter should be rushed and felt that two weeks was not enough time.

Mr. Grossi advised that the reason this matter came up was because they were looking at a five-year business plan.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that the time should be granted and that two weeks would not impact the budget schedule too much.

Mrs. Huf stated that this had been brought forward by the Finance Committee and that she did not have a problem with it.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Strouse to table the motion for a period of two weeks, until the next meeting.

The motion to table passed 9-0.

MINUTES

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that Administration had requested that the Finance Committee minutes of 9/18/00 be removed.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Avery to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the minutes of:

- *Regular School Board Meeting – 8/15/00*
- *Special Meeting of the Board – 9/7/00*

And accepts the minutes of:

- *Finance & Long Range Budget Planning Committee – 8/21/00.*

The motion passed 9-0.

OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Initial Distribution:

Mr. Locke enumerated the following policies for initial distribution:

- 2.6 – Personal Appearance – Staff
- 4.11 – Student Activity/Clearing Funds

Final Approval:

2.18 – Employment of Co-curricular Coaches, Advisors and Club Sponsors

A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revision to Policy 2.18, Employment of Co-curricular Coaches, Advisors and Club Sponsors.

The motion passed 9-0.

Recommendation for Rescission:

2.1 – Salary for Employees

Mr. Locke advised that this policy was recommended for rescission.

Mr. Faust stated that he did not remember this item coming forward at a work session. He also felt that this should be reviewed by the solicitor before any action was taken. Therefore, it should not be acted upon at this meeting. Mr. Grossi agreed that it should wait.

Mrs. Huf indicated that the policy would be forwarded to the solicitor for his opinion and that it would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Dr. Reid asked, for future reference, if a rescission should be treated in the same manner as a policy for initial distribution, i.e., being brought forward first at a work session, then for final approval at the next regular meeting.

Mr. Strouse asked who had recommended that this policy come forward. Dr. Sexton advised that it was recommended by the Administrative Policy Committee.

Mrs. Jankowsky agreed that there should be a work session discussion on a policy recommended for rescission before placing it on the agenda for a vote.

It was the consensus of the Board that the same procedure should be used for a rescission as for any other policy action.

FINANCIAL

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board accepts the:

- *Schedule of Bills – September 2000*
- *Investments – September 2000*
- *Cafeteria Fund Budget Report – September 2000*

And approves the:

- *Treasurer's Report/Fund Profiles – September 2000*
- *Budgetary Transfers – October 2000*

The motion passed 9-0.

Mrs. Huf left the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sale of Tax Parcel No. 48-7-2 [This matter was handled earlier in the meeting.]

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Wybar to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the following Personnel items: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absences; Appointments; Change of Status; Mentor Consultants; Permanent Per Diem Substitutes; Per Diem Substitutes; Co-Curricular Additions, Changes and Deletions; and Reappointment List.

Mrs. Huf returned to the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

The motion passed 8-0-1. (Mrs. Huf abstained since she was out of the room when the motion was made.)

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Huf stated that she had received a letter from Mary Ellen Donnelly thanking the Board for recognizing her at the previous meeting.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Donna Marie Saul of 589 Lowell Road, Warminster, suggested that anyone interested in more information from the Department of Education go to their website at www.pde.psu.edu.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

Starting Time for After-School Activities

Mr. Grossi indicated that he felt the starting time for after-school activities should be 3:00. He suggested that we wait until September to implement this so it can be fully scheduled properly and there would be no disruption to current activities.

Dr. Reid felt that Administration needed some direction from the Board as to whether they wanted Administration to look at this, when they wanted them to look at it and what information they wanted from Administration.

Mr. Grossi pointed out that if the time between 2:15 and 3:00 was supposed to be tutorial and planning time, then activities should not start until 3:00, at the end of the work day.

Dr. Sexton stated that there were two variables at the elementary schools. First, there weren't nearly as many clubs at the elementary schools as we would like. Second, if teachers' personal planning time is between 2:15 and 2:45, can't they be paid for a club at that time and do their planning at the end of the day?

Mr. Hertenberger questioned where the high school students went between 2:15 and 3:00.

Mr. Faust felt that a good starting point would be for Administration to develop a list of positives and negatives of making a time change.

Dr. Reid questioned when a change would be made. Mrs. Jankowsky felt that she would like to wait until September so there would be adequate time to advise people of what was happening and to allow students to plan their jobs, etc. Mr. Wybar and Mr. Grossi concurred.

Appointment of Crossing Guard at WTHS

Mr. Locke stated that a traffic study had been done and possible solutions reviewed. (Also see the Operations Committee Report.) The Operations Committee reviewed the options presented and felt that the best solution was to place a crossing guard at a cost of approximately \$1,500 per year. The township would also pick up some of the cost. Also, it was decided to re-place some

of the school personnel in different areas to help direct traffic. The committee felt that this would be a major step in alleviating some of the problems.

Mr. Rhodes explained that the issue was separated into staff, students and buses. The staff arrived earlier so they were not really the problem. The buses and students arrive at the same time and the problem has been worsening each year since more students were driving to school.

Mr. Grossi felt that we should also look at the number of parking permits being issued.

Mr. Locke felt that the crossing guard was a key starting point, then other factors should be looked at.

Mr. Faust stated that he had two questions. First, he wondered if the rules on parking permits could be tightened up. Second, if the township was going to share the cost, they should approve this also.

Mr. Rhodes indicated that he had spoken to the Chief of Police about the crossing guard but had not discussed whether or not the cost would be shared. If the Board decided to get one, then we could ask if the cost would be shared by the township.

Mr. Grossi felt there was no doubt that a crossing guard was needed but felt we should begin to look at other options also.

Mr. Rhodes felt we should get the crossing guard, then review the other issues and options. He indicated that the Operations Committee had discussed all of this and intended to keep working on it, but felt that the crossing guard was needed.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt it was a good idea and that this would have to come out of budgetary surplus. Mr. Strouse recommended that the Operations Committee prepare a motion for the next meeting. Mrs. Jankowsky suggested that they also check with the township.

Log College Drive

Mr. Locke advised that residents of the Log College Drive area had written a series of letters to Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Lasher. Penn DOT had done a study of part of Log College Drive three years ago and deemed it hazardous. Therefore, they were eligible for busing. The areas of Log College Drive are within walking distance. The people who were petitioning stated that because of the sewage trucks and rec center and buses from Central Bucks that were cutting through various side streets in order to take shortcuts, traffic had increased considerably. Committee members took a trip through this area and did not determine that the traffic was as heavy as some of the parents indicated. They felt that students should still be able to walk. However, the committee wanted to bring this to the attention of the Board. There were other streets that the students needed to walk on that were heavily traveled. However, they felt that if a survey was deemed necessary, it should encompass the whole area, not just the two or three streets that the parents requested.

Mr. Faust asked if there was a cost involved in doing a traffic study. Mr. Rhodes responded that there was no cost for Penn DOT to send a representative and determine if a traffic study was needed.

Mr. Faust felt that where safety of students was concerned, he would like to hear Penn DOT's opinion.

Mr. Strouse asked for Mr. Rhodes's opinion. Mr. Rhodes stated that Penn DOT had previously surveyed only the portion of Log College Drive that the Board had requested and that was the only portion that was deemed hazardous. At this point, the Board would have to authorize Penn DOT to survey this area. Operations are not recommending this but they are asking for the Board's opinion. Mr. Rhodes indicated that he did not feel it was hazardous.

Mrs. Huf felt that if it was a safety issue, then it should be looked at.

There was a consensus of the Board to take no action.

PSBA Seminar on Hiring and Keeping the Best

Mrs. Jankowsky advised Board members that they would be receiving information about this seminar in the next packet.

SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS/CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Schedule attached hereto. Mrs. Jankowsky pointed out the change in time for the Education Committee Meeting on November 6th from 7:30 to 6:30.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she would like the issue of Charter Schools to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting, under Board Discussion.

Mrs. Huf advised that there would be a short Executive Session following this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Faust to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary