

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
HELD NOVEMBER 13, 2001**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on November 13, 2001, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Huf at 7:40 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

Administration:

David Blatt  
Sandy Homel  
Victor Lasher  
Dr. Michael Masko  
Jean Rollo  
Dr. Thomas Sexton  
Timothy Vail

CEA/Teachers:

Sunshine Milnazik  
Tracy Laverty  
Beth Campbell  
Gail Gismondi

Cliff Bowen  
Craig Shapiro  
Aaron Francis  
Woody Martin

Public:

Rose Marie Cwik  
Rita Barger  
Donna Marie Saul  
Cynthia Mueller  
Mary Ellen Walsh  
Lori Ann Price  
Steve Ullrich  
Susan Roney  
Lisa Panzer  
Debbie Witzel

Michelle Pfeiffer  
Annamarie Arnold  
Diane Fabiani  
Denise Schwartz  
Debbie Oswald  
John Van Note  
Michelle Nunn  
Vicki Boruta  
Jill Finlay  
Ronda Bressler

Public (Continued)

Beth Hartman Kramer  
Ellen Sklar  
Sharon Williams  
Millie Noll  
Marie McGirgen  
Ryan McGirgen  
Kaitlyn Rauchut

Lawrence Roach  
Karen Balestro  
Jane Young  
Patricia Valentine  
Janet Marinoff  
Linda Greenberg

**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 School District litigation.

Mrs. Huf advised that the order of the agenda would be changed, with the permission of the Board, to move up the student reports.

**REPORTS**

**STUDENT COUNCIL**

Paul Midzak reported as follows:

- On October 16<sup>th</sup> PSSA testing was held.
- The Celebration of Bands took place on October 19<sup>th</sup>.
- October 22-26 was Red Ribbon Week, during which SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) members handed out red ribbons.
- The Homecoming Game and Dance were a success.
- On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, parents held Basket Bingo to raise money for the Senior Prom.
- On November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Senior Powder Puff game was held. The Seniors won.
- On November 15-17 there would be a School Play, "*The Crucible*." Free tickets would be available to Board members and senior citizens.
- The sports teams were doing very well.

**MBIT STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

None.

**PRESENTATION – Middle School Transition and Implementation Plan**

Mr. Blatt made opening remarks, indicating that they tried to make the presentation as clear, succinct and concise as possible. He explained the background of the timeline on this since his arrival in the District.

The following items were discussed:

- Dr. Masko – The International Baccalaureate Middle School Years Program.
- Mr. Blatt – Program Development Guidelines
- Dr. Masko – Stated curriculum requirements (under Chapter 4.)
- Miss Spirk – Current schedule at middle schools
- Mrs. Homel – Proposed schedule of 5-period day as opposed to 8-period day.
- Dr. Clark – Teams and the benefits of a team approach.
- Dr. Masko – What needs to be accomplished if Board approves plan for middle school changes.
- Mrs. Homel – Additional considerations.

Mr. Blatt indicated that everyone in the group was available to be called with questions.

Mrs. Huf asked for comments from the Board.

Mr. Grossi asked if instructional time would be taken away by using the team concept. Mr. Blatt responded that there would be 300 minutes of instructional time.

Mr. Grossi asked what would be the change in staffing with or without the teams. He seriously questioned the effectiveness of teams and stated that if we use them, that we need to establish a criteria for their effectiveness. He stated that if we were going to put in an International Baccalaureate Program that assesses students, he would like to see an assessment piece for the teams.

Mrs. Jankowsky made the following observations:

- The Health/Phys Ed change – this is nothing more than what we are considering for the high school.
- Concerning the rewrites on curriculum documents – this was done on the high school going to block scheduling within 3-4 months, so this is the same time frame.
- RE: 5-period model and the fact that there is no other similar model out there – if we wouldn't try new things that no one else has done, we wouldn't have a 4-period block at the high school.
- Regarding eliminating the tutorial if we go to a 5-period block – in a 75-minute program, students will have more time on task so that the tutorial could be built into the class time.
- Interdisciplinary projects do impact amount of coverage you have on your curriculum.
- Staff development --- this is critical to the success of any model that is developed.

Mr. Faust asked whether any consideration was given to the special education delivery system when this model was being developed. Mr. Blatt responded that we are required by law to provide a certain program for special education students and that we will continue to deliver this.

Dr. Masko advised discussion was held regarding whether students with attention problems or learning difficulties would have trouble with 75-minute periods.

Mr. Hertenberger asked about the impact on staff. Mrs. Homel discussed areas where staff would be reduced and stated that it would probably be six per building. Dr. Masko indicated that this was an estimate.

Mr. Wybar asked about the reduction in reading. Mr. Blatt stated that he felt the more reading we have, the better, and that the proposed configuration would not serve the students as well as another configuration. Mrs. Homel stated that that was a concern that they had, that putting reading into language arts would not serve a student as well, particularly if they were having trouble.

Mr. Grossi and Miss Spirk debated the issue of teams and their effect on class size.

Mrs. Jankowsky expressed her concern about music and art. She felt that having these groups meet before and after school would not be beneficial.

Mrs. Huf questioned the necessity of having students come in 12 minutes earlier in the morning. She wondered why it could not be added at the end. Mrs. Homel explained that in order to deliver the 5-period day, with 300 minutes of instruction, it was necessary to add 12 minutes to the day. She indicated that to add it at the end of the day was not possible because of transportation issues.

## **COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

Barbara Moskow of 1300 Stephen Way, Southampton, stated that she felt the children were overstructured and that 75-minute period were too long. She felt that there was a big difference between the age of the middle school students and the high school students in their ability to handle longer class times.

Cynthia Mueller of 228 Gravel Hill Road, Huntingdon Valley, expressed her confidence in our Superintendent and principals. She stated that she would like to hear what their professional opinions were on this. She also wondered why we were looking to change the scheduling when we have blue ribbon schools. She felt that a better approach might be to improve on what we have. Also, she was concerned about the loss of the tutorial period. She felt that some students needed one-on-one or small group time outside the regular classroom.

Mr. Grossi spoke about how badly Centennial was performing compared to other districts. He stated that he did not want to be last.

Cliff Bowen of 1087 Valley Road, Warminster, asked if one of the primary goals was to improve student performance and wondered what a reasonable number would be for our students' to aim for.

Mr. Grossi spoke about the standards of the I.B. program.

Donna Marie Saul of 589 Lowell Road, Warminster, stated that now it is difficult to deliver gifted education with either Reading or English. She wondered how the teachers were going to deliver all three in one period under the new schedule. She also questioned having only one semester of Science in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

John Van Note of 526 Fisher Lane, Warminster, pointed out that Mr. Grossi stated that teams don't work but he presented no evidence to substantiate this. Mr. Van Note felt that the teams have been very successful. He also felt that music and art help with abstract thinking, which is very important in the math section of the SAT's. He wondered whether the Board planned to address the shortfalls of the study, i.e., that there was no parent or student involvement.

John Roney of 147 Colonial Drive, Warminster, stated that reading was one of the most critical things for our children to learn. He also felt that to cut back on music and arts was to cut back on critical thinking skills. He asked the Board not to forget about the children here, that they are the future. He felt that change could be beneficial but could also be detrimental if you don't include the parents, teachers and the children. He wondered if anyone had asked the children how they felt about the team issue.

Elizabeth Link of 1432 Glen Echo Road, Huntingdon Valley, asked if this was a done deal. Mrs. Huf responded that it was not a done deal, but a presentation. No vote was taken on this yet. That would happen in December. She indicated that she was surprised that the parents had not received notice of this and that they were not more involved. She found it extremely disturbing that they would consider this change without spending some time at the middle schools. She did not feel that the 6<sup>th</sup> graders could sit through a 75-minute period. She also indicated that taking away the tutorial could be very detrimental to the students who need extra help and was upset about taking away the music and art periods.

Mr. Avery stated that if the tutorial was eliminated, there would still be before and after school. He spoke about the fact that music and art could still be held after school and that there were options available.

Mr. Grossi pointed out that the I.B. was focused on the average student, and also on the top and bottom students. He felt that the problem was that students were not competing with their neighbors.

Steve Ullrich of 323 Belair Road, Southampton, stated that he was associated with the Burgundy Hills Town Watch. He proposed that his organization conduct a school dog search for drugs at Klinger Middle School. He offered to pay for the first two searches (\$200 per 3-hour search.)

Regarding the 5-block presentation, Mr. Ullrich commended Administration on a very thorough presentation. He felt that there were some positive aspects. He enumerated some concerns:

- Length of the periods and attention span of the children.
- Effect on the arts, gifted and learning support and sports.
- Is the quest for the higher test scores going to be at the expense of a well-rounded child?
- With the lack of tutorial period, he wondered if the teacher was busy helping the children who took longer to pick things up, would the children who pick things up quickly become a behavior problem?
- Children may have to pick between music and sports.

He asked Mr. Blatt what his feelings were on the 5-period schedule. He also asked Miss Spirk what was the reaction of the teachers and why weren't they asked what they think about it.

Mr. Blatt stated that he felt we needed to find common ground to do the best for our students. The thing that concerned him the most was that there was no model to examine. He understood thinking outside the box but said that he hesitated to experiment with our students. He also felt that the 75-minute period was too long and was concerned about the effect on music and the arts.

Miss Spirk stated that they did not solicit input from the teachers. They were directed by Dr. Reid not to share any of the information discussed at their meetings and not to solicit input from the staff.

Mr. Locke stated that he would like to see modifications to the game plan, taking into consideration the comments of parents, teachers and Administration. He would like the best recommendation, based on input from staff, parents, Board members, etc. He would like Administration to present what they would recommend.

Mr. Avery wondered if there was a model for a 6-period day. Mr. Blatt responded that there was. Mr. Avery stated that if it was possible to provide an opportunity to present a six-period day, he would like to see it.

Stephen Gresh of 441 Citation Lane, Warminster, stated that he thought the School Board's job was to reflect the wants and needs of the community in education, art, music and development. He didn't know what benefits would be had from throwing out the whole program and starting over.

Kate Hendrickson of 331 Hogeland Road, Southampton, stated that the committee was instructed to present plans that met certain criteria. She felt that now the professionals should be asked their opinion of this model. Regarding the I.B. program, she wondered if the kinds of schedules used by other schools had been noted, and if they had changed to a different schedule at the same time as implementation of the I.B. program. She asked if these issues could be addressed.

Linda Greenberg of 196 Hogeland Road, Southampton, felt that the proposed changes were very rash and that maybe something less drastic would be in the best interest of the children. She was not sure there had been ample opportunity to assess how we are doing under the new standards.

She also felt that in middle school the children needed the opportunity to explore their needs, what they are good at, what they enjoy and who they are. She also felt the educators should be asked their opinion.

Mr. Strouse thanked the administrators for bringing forward what was requested. He appreciated the work they put into it. He also thanked the public for their presence at this meeting. He felt that their opinions were important.

The meeting recessed at 10:25 p.m. and resumed at 10:38 p.m.

## **REPORTS (Continued)**

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Blatt called the Board's attention to the report received from Middle Bucks regarding the adult program, which was distributed to the Board in the Friday Update. He indicated that the Centennial Gold Card letter is on its way to senior citizens in the District.

Mr. Blatt stated that he was pleased with the activities that took place for American Education Week.

### **GOOD NEWS**

Mrs. Homel presented the Good News Report (see attached.)

### **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that the Education Committee had met on November 5<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following topics:

- The math material selection process and estimated costs.
- The technology education program – they are looking at totally revamping this program.
- Recommendation by Administration to add a Reading/Language Arts lead teacher.

The next meeting of the Education Committee was set for the first Monday in December.

### Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Mr. Faust reported that the Executive Council had met the previous evening. He summarized the meeting as follows:

- The calendar of upcoming events was reviewed, including MBIT's annual Open House on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Presentation by Dr. Laws of Central Bucks School District involving their desire to obtain property from the tech school and for an elementary school.
- Reviewed Dr. Lees' salary.

- A motion was approved authorizing Administration to advertise and solicit bids to conduct a feasibility study for establishing a comprehensive delivery system and upgrade the existing facility.

Mrs. Huf commented that she was concerned that the appraised value was too low. She wondered if it were possible to get another appraisal done. Also, she considered the formula for Centennial to be too low. She indicated that she had asked Mr. Blatt to obtain information on how that formula was reached.

Mr. Faust advised that Central Bucks would be requesting time at one of our upcoming meetings to make a presentation.

Mr. Grossi stated that he had received an analysis of the adult evening program and that he had several questions.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if Mr. Levin had been involved in the Central Bucks issue. Mr. Blatt indicated that he had not, but that he could contact Mr. Levin if the Board wished. Mr. Faust suggested that Mr. Levin attend the meeting at which Central Bucks made their presentation to the Board.

#### Intermediate Unit

Mr. Grossi advised that there would be a meeting of the I.U. on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### PSBA

Mrs. Jankowsky reported on two upcoming seminars, "How to Assess Tests" and "Roles, Responsibilities and Relations of School Board Members." She felt that both would be worthwhile.

#### **FINANCE & LONG RANGE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Mr. Grossi advised that there would be a meeting of the committee the following week. At the previous meeting there was a report from Berkheimer.

#### Title VIII

No report.

#### Federal Lands Reuse Authority

No report.

## **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Locke reported that at the last committee meeting Mr. Lasher had presented a very comprehensive report on the air conditioning of the schools. He indicated that this was currently being reviewed by members of the Board.

### Citizens Policy

Mr. Strouse reported that this committee had met on October 16<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the policies which would be presented at this meeting for initial distribution. The next meeting was scheduled for November 20<sup>th</sup>.

### Legislative Liaison

Mr. Faust referred to the report contained in the Board's packet.

## **MINUTES**

*A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Avery to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of October 9, 2001, and accepts the minutes of the Finance and Long Range Budget Meeting of September 10, 2001, and the Education Committee Meeting of October 1, 2001.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

## **OPERATIONS AND POLICIES**

### Final Approval:

#### 2.1 – Salary for Employees

*A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 2.1, Salary for Employees.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

#### 3.21 – Use of Behavior Support Techniques

*A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 3.21 - Use of Behavior Support Techniques.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

### 3.27 – Promotion and Retention

*A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revision to Policy 3.27, Promotion and Retention.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

### 6.3 – Home and School Associations and Other Advisory Councils

*A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 6.3 - Home and School Associations and Other Advisory Councils.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

### 7.19 – Weapons/Explosive Devices and Caustic Substances

*A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 7.19 – Weapons/Explosive Devices and Caustic Substances.*

Mr. Strouse asked if the changes had been reviewed by counsel. Dr. Sexton advised that they had and that there was a letter from Mr. Levin included in the Board's packet. Dr. Sexton explained that the changes bring the written policy into line with operational procedure. Until now, the operational process allowed for discretion; however, the policy did not. Dr. Sexton clarified that there would be no discretion about bringing violations of this policy to the Board, but the Superintendent would have discretion pertaining to the recommendation of consequences. Dr. Sexton suggested that there possibly should be some discretion in the policy for what cases are brought to the Board.

Mr. Wybar felt that this seemed too broad. He felt that there should be some provision that provided more discretion. Mr. Strouse suggested that Mr. Levin be brought in for a discussion

*A motion was made by Mr. Hertenberger and seconded by Mr. Grossi to table this policy.*

*The motion to table passed 9-0.*

### Initial Distribution:

Mrs. Huf enumerated the policies for initial distribution, as follows:

- 5.5 – Materials Selection
- 6.2 – Facility Use

## **FINANCIAL**

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

- *Schedule of Bills – October 2001*
- *Investments – October 2001*
- *Cafeteria Fund Budget Report – October 2001*
- *Student Activity/Clearing Funds – July 1 – September 30, 2001*

*and approves the:*

- *Treasurer's Report/Fund Profiles – October 2001*
- *Budgetary Transfers – November 2001*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

2. Pupil Transportation Contract for 2001/02
3. Cooling Tower Bid

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

- (2) *Authorizes an additional pupil transportation contract for the 2001/02 school year. The total cost of this additional contract is estimated at \$675.00.*
- (3) *Approves the Cooling Tower Bid No. 02-01 to be awarded to Extreme Mechanical Contracting at the lowest responsible bid amount of \$39,950.00. This will be a capital reserve expenditure.*

*The motion passed 9-0.*

1. William Tennent High School Graduation Requirements

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

*Health will be a component of Physical Education in grades 9, 10 and 11, effective with the class of 2006; thereby, students will enroll in a total of 1.5 credits of Physical Education/Health, delivered .5 credit per year.*

*The fourth year of Physical Education will be an elective effective with the class of 2003.*

*Cost to the District is \$28,700: \$5,000 for textbooks and curriculum materials and \$23,700 for ½ teacher, if needed.*

Mr. Faust stated that he had a problem with the fourth year of physical education being an elective. He felt that requiring 2 credits rather than 1 ½ would be better. He felt that physical education was an important part of a well-rounded student. If we were making the fourth year elective, he wondered if it would be made more attractive or if it would be the same as the other three years.

Mr. Blatt stated that making the fourth year an attractive and challenging elective might be a good idea. Possibly it could be something competitive.

*A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Locke to call the question.*

*The motion to call the question passed 9-0.*

*The motion passed 8-1-0. (Mr. Faust opposed.)*

## **PERSONNEL**

*A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Locke to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the following Personnel items: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absence; Appointments; Change of Status; Adult Ed Program; Permanent Per Diem Substitute Teachers; Support Staff Substitutes; Substitute Bus Driver; and Co-Curricular Additions, Changes and Deletions.*

Mr. Strouse requested that Item 1 under Appointments be pulled.

*The motion passed 9-0 (with the exception of the item pulled.)*

*A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mr. Grossi to approve the first item under Appointments.*

*The motion passed 7-2 (Mr. Strouse and Mr. Faust opposed.)*

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Mrs. Huf referred to the list of communications attached hereto.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

Craig Shapiro of 449 Nicholas Drive, Southampton, stated that he did not believe that cutting physical education and combining it with Health was a good solution. He also felt that there should be a look at how the middle school process was run. He did not feel that we should be last athletically either.

Linda Greenberg of 196 Hogeland Road, Southampton, commented on the weapons policy. She wondered if there was a time frame related to due process. She felt that a student might be unavailable for a hearing if they were in the hospital for psychiatric evaluation.

Mr. Blatt explained that there was a time frame designated by law, which was up to ten days, and that anything after that was considered an expulsion.

Janet Marinoff of 51 Fern Road, Southampton, stated that she wanted to publicly commend Administration for presenting a complete package. She indicated that the public was promised that there would be an opportunity for a public forum and asked when that would be.

Mrs. Huf responded that no date had been set yet.

Mrs. Marinoff questioned whether there would be a vote on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Huf stated that the Board had asked Administration for more information, so she felt that that information should be provided first. She indicated that if a public meeting was needed prior to December 11<sup>th</sup>, one would be scheduled.

Mr. Locke suggested that Administration hold a public meeting, rather than the Board holding one.

Donna Marie Saul of 589 Lowell Road, Warminster, asked if the time frame was made as part of a motion. Mrs. Huf responded that it was not, but that it was at the direction of the Board and that parents were promised a meeting. Mrs. Saul questioned how parents would be advised of the meeting.

Mr. Grossi addressed the subject of physical education. He stated that we had built tennis courts so the students could have life experience in physical education. We also built a physical fitness facility. He suggested that the program needed to be modernized.

Regarding the subject of scheduling, Mr. Grossi agreed with Mrs. Saul. He indicated that the Board had stated that a decision on a schedule needed to be made by December 11<sup>th</sup>. He agreed that there should be a public meeting and that the details of a 6-period day needed to be worked out also.

Mrs. Huf advised that she and Mr. Blatt would get a game plan together and advise the parents.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENT**

None

## **SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS/CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

See Schedule attached hereto.

**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 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Vickie A. Detwiler  
Board Secretary