

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
HELD NOVEMBER 11, 2003**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on November 11, 2003, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Jankowsky at 7:51 p.m. The following people registered their attendance:

Board Members:

Sina Baranski
Joseph Faust
Eugene Grossi
Al Hertenberger
Betty Huf
Joan Jankowsky
Jerry Locke
Jane Lynch
Harve Strouse

Administration:

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

CEA/Teachers:

Eileen Poroszok
Joe O'Connor

Public:

Dr. Richard Coe
Rose Gold
Cynthia Mueller
Marie Brzezinski

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Jankowsky led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. She then asked for a moment of silent reflection for Veteran's Day in honor of the men and women who serve our country.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Jankowsky announced that the Board had met in Executive Session prior to this meeting relative to labor negotiations. She also indicated that she and five or six other members of the Cost Containment Committee had met on November 6th.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation to Alcohol Awareness Poster Contest Winner

Congratulations were extended to Paul Kalstein, a Klinger Middle School 6th grader, for being selected as a winner of the Alcohol Awareness Poster Contest sponsored by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Liquor Control Board. Paul spoke about the day he spent in Harrisburg, where he met the Governor. Mrs. Jankowsky read the text of the Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Achievement presented to Paul, which was signed by Mr. Blatt and Mrs. Homel. Paul was selected from among 88 students chosen for recognition out of more than 1,400 entries.

GOOD NEWS

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

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Dr. Richard Coe of the Intermediate Unit stated that he was present to recognize Jerry Locke, who has been on the I.U. Board for a number of years. He thanked Mr. Locke for serving and stated that he felt this was truly a demonstration of extraordinary commitment on Mr. Locke's part. He felt that he would be missed and wished him well.

REPORTS

STUDENT COUNCIL

Greg Crance reported on current happenings at the high school, including the following:

- October 17 – Eagles and Warminster Hospital Health Fair
- October 17 – Hall of Fame Dinner
- October 18 – Celebration of Bands hosted by William Tennent
- October 21 – PSSA's – Grade 9
- October 21 – PSAT's – Grades 10 and 11
- October 25-26 – Play – "Good Help is So Hard to Murder"
- October 28 – Pennsylvania Math League Match
- October 28 – Senior Photos
- Week of November 3 – PSSA Re-testing
- November 6 – Philadelphia Eagles presented check to Eric Marinoff for student government.
- November 10 – Student Government hosted lunch for 28 visiting principals from Thailand
- November 11 – Mr. Austin's class visited Veteran's Day ceremonies
- November 11 – Powder Puff Football Game
- November 12 – Career Fair
- November 17-21 – American Education Week
- November 17 – Report cards to be distributed

- November 20-22 – School Play
- November 24 – National Honor Society Induction

Mr. Crance also reported that the class officers were: sponsoring an Alumni Breakfast on December 23rd; talking about a proposal for Senior Day; talking about having a day every month for students to have a special treat; and preparing for the Prom.

MBIT STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Ezokas reported on current events at MBIT, including the following:

- The Automotive Technology Program received a certification from the National Automotive Technicians Federation for automotive service excellence. The program is now master certified in eight areas.
- The Annual Open House at MBIT will be held on November 19th. Everyone is invited to attend.
- The student-built house is well underway. Bid deadline is November 20th.
- The Cosmetology Salon will be opening by appointment soon.
- MBIT will host the Skills USA VICA Competitions on February 3rd.

Mr. Blatt explained that two of the MBIT student-built houses that have been sold over the years are in his neighborhood and have been inhabited for over twenty years. He felt this was a real credit to the program and the young people.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Blatt reported that he had occasion to join the student government when the Eagles mascot entered the cafeteria with the Channel 3 cameras. There was a \$500 award to the student government through the efforts of Eric Marinoff.

Mr. Blatt also indicated that the Board was aware of an administrative reorganization that was implemented in the last week or two. This has resulted in a savings of well over \$100,000. He recognized the attitude, work ethic and cooperation of the people involved, especially Mrs. Homel, who has assumed greater responsibility in the Special Education Department; Dr. Sexton; and Dr. Masko, who will be picking up additional responsibilities. He also recognized the secretarial staff, social workers and everyone who has picked up additional responsibilities. He felt things were operating in a more efficient manner.

Mr. Blatt explained that Dr. Masko was on a Fulbright Scholarship to Thailand and returned to many additional duties. He brought with him three gentlemen from Thailand, whom he has been hosting at his home. There are now 25 Thai administrators visiting our school district. This has been a wonderful event for our District, and a very positive experience.

Dr. Masko spoke about his hosts in Thailand and how gracious they were during his six-week stay. One of his observations was that kids are kids, with the same concerns. He

spoke about some of the differences and similarities, and felt that he had had many opportunities, both socially and educationally.

The Thai educators have noticed that our teachers are very caring and hard-working. They have commented on our smaller class sizes and on the state of technology. Dr. Masko thanked the School Board for their support.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Baranski reported that this committee met on November 3rd. The main topic was approval of an internship plan for inclusion in the 2004-05 William Tennent Program of Studies. The next meeting will be on November 17th.

Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Mr. Strouse reported that a meeting was held on November 10th and the following items were discussed:

- William Tennent student, Bonnie Fair, was awarded a \$4,000 scholarship to the Culinary Institute of America.
- Scott Salisbury, a Junior at Tennent, came in first runner-up in the World Organization and Webmasters Contest.
- MBIT's Annual Open House will be held on November 19th. He suggested that everyone attend since this is quite useful for Board members.
- On January 12th there will be a dinner served to the joint Board of School Directors for School Directors Month. Mr. Strouse stressed what a wonderful experience this was for the Board.

Mr. Grossi reported that the auditor's report for MBIT was received and accepted.

Intermediate Unit

Mr. Locke thanked Dr. Coe for attending this meeting and speaking on his behalf. He indicated that it was a great privilege to work for the I.U. He wanted everyone in the Centennial community to be aware of the wide variety of programs available for the special education students. He also spoke about what good shape the District's buildings are in and the attention they receive on an ongoing basis.

The next meeting will be held on November 18th.

PSBA

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she had generated a memo to Board members regarding the State Conference held at the end of October. She had focused on "No Child Left Behind" and also the value added assessment system, which will be required to be implemented within the next three years. She felt this would be a positive change.

Mrs. Jankowsky also reported that she had met the new Secretary of Education, Vicki Phillips, and was impressed with her.

Mrs. Huf reported that she had attended the legislative policy council. They discussed the issue of expanded gambling in Pennsylvania, to be dedicated to funding public education. This was supported and passed.

FINANCE & LONG RANGE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. Grossi reported that there was “no check in the mail.” The next Finance Committee meeting would be held on November 17th, with the question being “When do we run out of money?”

Mr. Blatt stated that, with regard to money coming from the State, Mr. Faust has been diligent in forwarding every e-mail he has received. He is beginning to hear that some local school boards are considering closing their doors. There are tremendous implications to that. Mr. Vail and Mr. Blatt met this afternoon to review Centennial’s situation.

Mr. Blatt believed that the legislature was on recess until November 17th; then there will be the Thanksgiving and holiday seasons. While we are hopeful that monies will be forthcoming from the State, he doesn’t see money coming in the foreseeable future. Mr. Faust felt that if the Senate doesn’t take action quickly when they return on the 17th, we will probably be into next year before anything is done.

Mr. Strouse pointed out that the Pennsylvania Constitution requires funding by the State Legislature to provide proper public education. He asked if anyone had heard anything from school districts about filing a lawsuit on this. Mr. Blatt responded that he had not heard anything about that but has heard about certain school districts closing their doors if no funding is received.

Mr. Grossi felt that the legislature should stop playing around with the kids and the taxpayers and get something done. Mrs. Baranski felt that it was the taxpayers’ duty to complain to their representatives about this.

Mr. Hertenberger indicated that he had a question for the Governor. He has promised that we will have full-day kindergarten and pre-school. How does he plan to pay for this? We don’t have the room for it.

Mrs. Huf suggested that if all 501 school districts passed a resolution to close all of their schools for even just one day, maybe the legislature would do something. Mr. Grossi felt that there was no excuse for not having this issue resolved.

Mr. Strouse pointed out that the State has the money and it is gaining interest for the State. The school districts are losing interest on the monies and some are borrowing money, which is costing them interest.

Mr. Blatt stated that both Mrs. Jankowsky and Mrs. Lynch have told him that they were impressed with Dr. Vicki Phillips and that she has been responsive to the superintendents. The education establishment is very encouraged by this.

Title VIII

No report.

Federal Lands Reuse Authority

No report.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

No report.

Citizens Policy

Mrs. Baranski reported that this committee had met on October 21st while she was in Hershey. Dr. Sexton advised that the two policies that appear on tonight's agenda for initial distribution were the policies discussed at that meeting.

Legislative Liaison

Mr. Faust reported that the House passed three appropriations Bills: an income tax bill, House Bill 113 for property tax reduction, and also part of HB113, which is a back-end referendum. There are a lot of little things they put on these bills that would apply only if slots are passed. If the Senate would agree, property tax reduction depends on slot machines.

Mr. Faust felt that if we could get something organized to meet with key legislators, it might help. Maybe we could come up with a compromise we would be willing to accept and take it to Harrisburg. It was productive for us in the past when Board members went to Washington.

Mrs. Lynch indicated that one of the issues she was looking at was that the children are still going to school and the District is still borrowing money. Nothing has impacted the government in Harrisburg to make them do something. Some districts have said they are thinking about bankrupting and closing schools. That is bringing about impact. She is not suggesting that we do that. If that happens, you will see something happening in Harrisburg because no one will want to be blamed.

Mr. Hertenberger reminded the newspapers that he had asked them to investigate this story and they are all ignoring it. They are afraid to ask questions of the legislature. He felt they should pin them down.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Strouse and seconded by Mr. Locke to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the Minutes of:

- *Special School Board Meeting – 10/1/03*
- *Regular School Board Meeting – 10/14/03*
- *Work Session/Regular School Board Meeting – 10/28/03*

The motion passed 9-0.

OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Initial Distribution:

Mr. Locke noted the following policies for initial distribution:

- 5.5 – Materials Selection
- 5.13 – Use of Calculators

Final Adoption:

3.27 – Retention

A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 3.27, Retention.

Mr. Strouse pointed out Section IV. B. and questioned whether there was anything in place to notify anyone other than Seniors who are failing. Mrs. Homel explained that this was noted because of the graduation issue. For the other grades, there is the standard progress report, parent conferences, communication via e-mail, etc. There is not something stand-alone. Mr. Strouse felt that he would like to see something procedurally, even if not by policy, if there is imminent failure.

Mr. Blatt asked if Mr. Strouse felt that there should be something in addition to the progress reports. Mr. Strouse indicated that the policy calls for a specific letter to be sent and he felt that the courtesy should be due to all grade levels. If Mr. Blatt felt that the progress reports fulfill that, then that was okay. If that was the case, then the heading for Section IV. should be changed to read “Senior Grade Level Standing.” Mrs. Jankowsky concurred.

Mr. Strouse directed the Board’s attention to Section A, which indicated that “Written notification ... shall be issued prior to June 30.” He pointed out that under block scheduling, it should also include notification by January 15. Mrs. Homel indicated that this could be added.

Dr. Sexton stated that under Policy 5.7, Reporting Student Progress, if a student is not making satisfactory progress, a teacher shall inform the parents and schedule a conference.

Mr. Faust agreed with Mr. Strouse that the January notification was just as important as the June one because a student might need to schedule a summer course. He felt that a progress report tells about only one course, as opposed to looking at whether a student is on track to fulfill graduation requirements.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if students are told they have x number of credits towards graduation. Mrs. Homel indicated that that information is reviewed with students each time during the course selection process. Mr. Blatt stated that there is ongoing communication to parents and that progress reports let parents know where a student is at a certain point in time. At the January 15th date, it is basically too late to say they need help. It would just inform them that they will probably not receive credit.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that two different issues were being discussed: (1) being on track to graduate; and (2) providing notice so that parents know the child is in danger of failing. Mr. Grossi felt that going back to having standards in the high school would solve the whole problem.

Dr. Masko provided a historical note on the issue. Item IV.A. traditionally served the purpose of informing parents that a student has not received enough credits to move on to the next grade. With the removal of this item, that is no longer the case.

Mrs. Homel indicated that this was brought forward because the present system causes a lot of issues under PSSA.

Mrs. Jankowsky suggested leaving the second sentence of IV. A. Mrs. Homel felt this could be done. Mr. Strouse suggesting adding the January 15th language also and indicated that he was in favor of keeping the 9-12 grade level classifications.

Mr. Blatt suggested the following language for section IV. B.: "At the mid-point of each marking period of each semester, a notice will be sent to the parents of students denoting any credit deficiencies, etc. Such notices will be sent by certified mail." This language could be applied to grades 9-12.

Mr. Strouse agreed with the language, except that he felt sending the notices out by certified mail could become costly. Mr. Blatt suggested that Administration work on the language and bring it back to the Board.

A motion to table was made by Mr. Strouse and seconded by Mrs. Lynch.

The motion to table passed 9-0.

4.1 – Grants

A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 4.1, Grants.

The motion passed 9-0.

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 2003*
- *Investments – October 2003*
- *Cafeteria Fund Budget Report – October 2003*
- *Student Activity/Clearing Funds – July 1 through September 30, 2003*

and approves the:

- *Fund Profiles/Treasurer's Report – October 2003*
- *Budgetary Transfers – November 2003*

The motion passed 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS

A motion was made by Mr. Hertenberger and seconded by Mr. Locke to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the payment for the purchase of a whiteboard in the amount of \$1,512.99 to Numonics Incorporated of Montgomeryville, PA, as it appeared in the October 2003 Schedule of Bills.

The motion passed 7-2. (Mr. Faust and Mrs. Huf opposed.)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Final Approval of WTHS Student Government Trip to Erie, PA

A motion was made by Mr. Locke and seconded by Mr. Grossi to resolve that the Centennial School Board grants final approval for the WTHS Student Government trip to the PASC State Conference in Erie, Pennsylvania, November 13-15, 2003. The cost to the District is \$180.00.

The motion passed 9-0.

2. Permission to Accept an Entitlement Grant

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Locke to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves permission to accept the following entitlement grant for the 2003-04 school year in the amount indicated:

Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities \$27,625

The motion passed 9-0.

3. Internship Program

A motion was made by Mrs. Baranski and seconded by Mr. Locke to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the inclusion of the internship course in the 2004-05 William Tennent High School Program of Studies. Fiscal note not to exceed \$37,468.00.

Mr. Faust stated that he had one concern. This is basically a pilot program that is going into full program status. The true cost of this program is the other half that has been budgeted, so the true cost is \$60,000 to \$70,000.

Mrs. Baranski asked what the \$300 charge indicated in the backup covered. Dr. Masko responded that part of it was for the membership fee for the Chamber of Commerce, but he would need to check what the rest covered.

The motion passed 5-4. (Mr. Strouse, Mr. Faust, Mrs. Baranski and Mrs. Huf opposed.)

Mrs. Jankowsky asked that the information Mrs. Baranski requested be provided.

4. Permission to Bid Buses

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to resolve that the Centennial School Board authorizes the solicitation of bids for the purchase of four 65-passenger school buses and two 24-passenger school buses. Funds to be appropriated from the 2004-05 General Fund Budget upon award.

Mr. Grossi explained that this was part of the ongoing bus replacement program to keep the fleet current, which is funded out of the General Fund Budget.

Mr. Faust pointed out that this used to go to the Operations Committee for review and asked if this had been done. Mr. Locke indicated that it had not. Mr. Grossi stated that the issue of timing was critical in order to secure the best price.

Mr. Blatt suggested that we solicit the bids, then schedule an Operations Committee meeting to review this. That way the Board would not be committed yet. We could then build into the procedure that these requests must go through the Operations Committee in the future. Mr. Faust agreed but felt that care must be taken in wording the bid specifications because some bidders may quote a price depending on quantity.

A motion to table was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Faust.

The motion to table passed 9-0.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mr. Strouse and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the following Personnel items: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absence; Authorization to Employ; Change of Status; Mentors; Homebound Tutor; Per Diem Substitute Teachers; and Co-Curricular Additions, Changes and Deletions.

The motion passed 9-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Baranski indicated that she had received an e-mail from Patricia Haley requesting the Board to consider having nights for conferences so that working parents can attend. Other Board members had received this e-mail also.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

Mr. Hertenberger thanked the I.U. for their good work, stating that he had used the facility for his two children. He expressed his concern that more people were not using these services.

SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS/CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Schedule attached hereto.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary