

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
HELD OCTOBER 12, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on October 12, 2004, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lynch at 7:35 p.m. The following people registered their attendance:

Board Members:

Sina Baranski
Marie Brzezinski
Joseph Faust
Rose Gold
Eugene Grossi
Betty Huf
Joan Jankowsky
Jane Schrader Lynch
Cynthia Mueller

Administration:

David Blatt
Jean Rollo
Dr. Thomas Sexton
Timothy Vail

CEA/Teachers:

None

Public:

Julian Meisner, III
Daniel Klenk
Adam Sellers

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Lynch announced that there was an Operations Committee meeting at 6:00 p.m., and at 7:00 p.m. the Board observed a school bus and its safety features.

Mrs. Huf stated that she had attended the memorial service for Henry Ray earlier in the day and that everyone spoke highly of him. He was involved in getting the Special Experience Room.

Mrs. Jankowsky thanked members of the band boosters who sent tickets to the Board for the Celebration of Bands on October 16th. She felt this was always a wonderful event. Mrs.

Jankowsky indicated that the Board had also been given complimentary tickets to the William Tennent Hall of Fame Game on October 15th.

Mrs. Lynch spoke about the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference in Hershey, which she found very interesting and useful.

PRESENTATIONS

None

GOOD NEWS

Dr. Sexton presented the Good News Report (see attached.)

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Julian Meisner, III, of 638 Whittier Drive, Warminster, requested that he be able to schedule a meeting with the Board privately, including the Superintendent, to discuss the District's failure to address his concerns, since February. He indicated that he would not bring up the individual complaints unless the Board wished him to at this time.

Mr. Blatt stated that the first time he heard that there was a complaint about this was at 11:41 that morning (October 12) when Mr. Meisner exchanged e-mails with some of the professional staff and copied Mr. Blatt on those e-mails. He had been unaware of the problem until that time.

Mr. Meisner stated that according to the staff he spoke to several weeks ago, Mr. Blatt was made aware of the problem.

Mr. Blatt stated that he would go on record that Mr. Meisner did not have his facts correct. He had absolutely no awareness or communications from Mr. Meisner until 11:41 that morning. At that time, he was in meetings. Subsequent to that, he spoke to some District personnel and asked them to fill him in. He received a brief synopsis and asked that Mr. Meisner receive a response, which he did. Up until that morning there was no contact from Mr. Meisner to Mr. Blatt. Now that he was aware that there was a problem, he would be pleased to meet with Mr. Meisner to resolve the situation. All of the communications that he saw had taken place within the last eight days.

Mr. Meisner stated that he had documentation transpiring with the staff, including dates and times. He acknowledged that Mr. Blatt was only copied this day. He was under the impression that Mr. Blatt was receiving these communications in the past.

Mr. Meisner felt that he had been lied to in the past by the staff and requested a due process hearing. There was some disagreement as to the facts.

Mrs. Jankowsky suggested that it would be more productive for Mr. Meisner to consider scheduling a meeting with the Superintendent. Mr. Meisner indicated that he tried to do so that

morning with Mrs. Doh, but she instructed him to attend this meeting. He stated that at this time he would proceed to request a due process hearing.

Mrs. Jankowsky reiterated that it would be a good idea for Mr. Meisner to schedule a meeting with Mr. Blatt and, if necessary, to be followed by a meeting with the Board.

Mr. Faust indicated that he had a concern at this time, since this involved a special education matter, which was highly confidential. He felt that a meeting with Mr. Blatt, and then the Board, should be scheduled within two to three weeks' time.

Mrs. Huf indicated that she had met Mr. Meisner for the first time tonight and he answered a few of her questions. However, before tonight they had never had any conversations with each other.

Mrs. Lynch asked Mr. Meisner if he would agree to a meeting. Mr. Meisner responded that he would not. On September 14th he requested a pre-hearing conference, according to the Procedural Safeguards letter that was sent to him by the School District. He indicated that the Superintendent had ten days to convene that conference, which he did not do. He felt this had gone on long enough. He felt the District had disregarded the Procedural Safeguards.

Mr. Blatt reiterated that the first time he was aware of this problem was today. He reminded Mr. Meisner of a meeting they had had two years ago, which was very pleasant and civil. He extended that same offer to Mr. Meisner now. He assured that he would review any document Mr. Meisner requested and would try to resolve any questions or issues he had. He indicated that he could not fix things or get involved unless he knew there was an issue.

Mr. Meisner gave the due process request to Mrs. Lynch. He did not believe the District's delay tactics would serve any purpose. He felt he had followed every instruction he was given.

Mr. Grossi stated that an offer was made for Mr. Meisner to come in and discuss this with the Superintendent. If he did not wish to do so, then he should proceed to due process.

Mr. Meisner asked if he would be able to schedule a meeting with the Board. Mrs. Lynch indicated that that was not the process. Mr. Meisner stated that, if that was the case, he would be taking this to the State Department of Education since he has received no action or response from Administration. He now has a six-year old boy who doesn't want to go to school. He thought that the resolution of the problem should be that his child be progressed to first grade by the next morning.

Mr. Blatt again extended the offer to meet with Mr. Meisner. He indicated that he could find time within the next couple of days to meet with him. He assured him again that he knew nothing about the situation until that afternoon. Now that he knew about it, he would begin to address it. If it was Mr. Meisner's desire to bypass the avenues for relief, that was his right; but he did not feel it was in his best interest. However, he did have the right to go to the Department of Education, who would conduct an investigation and, in six months, there would be some kind of judgment. Mr. Blatt did not know what that would solve. His suggestion was that Mr. Meisner call him and set up a meeting to try to take steps to resolve the issue.

Mr. Meisner indicated his desire to file a personnel complaint against Mr. Blatt.

Mrs. Lynch stated that Mr. Meisner had overextended his time under Community Comments. She stated that she felt sorry for his situation and requested that he not make it worse.

REPORTS

STUDENT COUNCIL

Daniel Klenk, the Senior Class President, reported on the following:

- The Senior Class did very well on the PSSAs.
- Students of the month for September.
- September 28 – League of Women Voters had signups for voting.
- September 24 – Picture Day
- Back to School Night was held recently.
- Key Club hosted a yellow ribbon bake sale to benefit our troops.
- Tennent celebrated German Week recently. There are 19 German exchange students throughout the school.
- Auditions for the fall play were held. The play will be November 18, 19 and 20.
- Homecoming King and Queen nominees were named.
- The Homecoming Game would be on November 22nd; the Dance on November 23rd.
- The 49th Annual William Tennent Cross Country Invitational was held on October 9th. Both the boys' and girls' teams did very well.
- Aid for Friends has begun their community service.
- Cap and Gown measurements would be taken on October 13th.
- The two new clubs, Young Democrats and Young Republicans, were preparing to debate.
- In sports, all the teams were off to an excellent start.

MBIT STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Adam Sellers, a member of the Senior class, reported on events at MBIT, as follows:

- On November 18 the Annual MBIT Open House would be held.
- Counselor in-service activities were scheduled for December 7th, 8th and 9th.
- The student-built house was well underway.
- The MBIT student salon was now open on Friday afternoons by appointment.
- MBIT will be hosting the Skills USA Competitions on February 1, 2005. Students will be competing in over 70 areas.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Blatt reported that they have been searching for a Principal for Klinger Middle School. He gave a brief summary of the process, indicating that they had advertised in

professional journals and other media. The 42 responses were paper screened by administrators and narrowed down to eight people to interview. These eight were interviewed by teams and narrowed down to four candidates, who were then interviewed by the full Board. The candidate who was chosen was Mr. Joseph Nawn, an Assistant Principal at Beverly Hills in Upper Darby. Mr. Nawn accepted Centennial's offer. Mr. Blatt then introduced Mr. Nawn and welcomed him as the Principal-designee for Klinger Middle School.

Mr. Nawn thanked everyone for placing trust in him and stated that he couldn't wait to meet the children.

Mr. Blatt stated that they felt they had a real dynamic team now at Klinger.

Mr. Blatt related that at the previous Board Meeting there was some confusion about some information regarding a flier that was supposed to be sent out. He had since researched this and spoken to the gentleman involved, informing him that the District could not send out a flier.

Mrs. Gold indicated that she had also spoken to the man, who stated that he had not actually spoken to Mr. Blatt previously about the flier.

Mrs. Lynch said that she had spoken to Parks & Rec and that this situation was just a miscommunication. They will mail out the information.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Baranski reported that an Education Committee meeting was held on October 4th. Mr. Kinney, the Health & Physical Education Curriculum Resource Teacher at Tennent thanked the committee and the Board for their support of curriculum renewal for 2004-2005.

The Committee also talked about the Special Experience Room, and Mr. Blatt and Dr. Masko provided an update regarding the renovations. The replacement for the Star machine would cost \$375,000 and would take about a year.

The Committee also spoke about the William Tennent block scheduling evaluation overview. Dr. Masko explained the process, timeline and stakeholder involvement in this. There will be an evaluation of the block and non-block.

There was also a curriculum renewal overview for the Social Studies, Science and Kindergarten. They agreed to recommend \$400,000 for curriculum renewal, which would be brought before the Board for a vote.

Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Mrs. Huf reported that there was a meeting the previous evening, at which the following items were discussed:

- Dr. Irwin gave an enrollment report as of October 1st. There were 888 students, which had dropped by about 40, some due to conflicts in schedule.
- The Strategic Plan was reviewed. Mrs. Huf felt it was very aggressive.
- The proposed 2004-05 goals, strategies and initiatives were reviewed.
- The communicable diseases policy was discussed. There was some concern that this be in agreement with the sending districts, so it will be reviewed further.
- The Spring 2005 Adult Evening School courses and employment of staff were approved.
- The 2005-2008 Strategic Plan was approved.
- There were 12 motions to approve Articulation Agreements with Bucks County Community College, and three more motions to approve Agreements with Pennsylvania College of Technology.

Intermediate Unit

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that a lot of information was given out at the last meeting to be distributed to Board members. She had no further report.

The next meeting of the I.U. would be on October 19th, at which there would be an Act 72 presentation.

FINANCE & LONG RANGE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. Faust reported that the Finance Committee had met on September 20th. He indicated that this Board had already taken action most of the items discussed at that meeting, including the budget calendar, District repository and Act 72 preliminary discussions.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee would be held on October 25th.

Title VIII

Mr. Faust reported that Mr. Vail was just in Washington at a conference reviewing Title VIII. Letters should be sent out in November.

Mr. Vail reported that the highlight of the conference was meetings on Capitol Hill with representatives from our two Senators and our representative from the House. He made a plea for appropriation of the special earmark for Centennial, indicating that we are in a unique position because of the military students.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt it would be important for the District to inform the newly-elected representative of the District's position. She indicated that Congressman Greenwood gave us a tremendous amount of support.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that the Operations Committee had met earlier in the evening and addressed two transportation issues.

The next meeting would be on October 26th.

Citizens Policy

Mrs. Baranski reported that this Committee met on September 21st. Two policies were reviewed: Suspected Child Abuse and Animals in the Classroom.

At its October 19th meeting the committee will review policies on Solicitation, Student Attendance and Community/Student Fundraising.

Legislative Liaison

Mrs. Mueller stated that all legislative issues were related to Act 72. All the Superintendents and School Board Directors from Bucks County were involved in this. She indicated that in the near future, property owners would be receiving a mailing about this. She stressed that it was important that the enclosed form be filled out and returned.

MINUTES

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

- Regular School Board Meeting – August 17, 2004
- Regular School Board Meeting – September 14, 2004

Mrs. Lynch requested a minor revision to page 1 of the Minutes of August 17, 2004.

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that she would abstain from voting on the August 17th meeting since she was absent. Mrs. Mueller echoed that statement.

Mr. Grossi requested that the September 14th Minutes be pulled. Mrs. Jankowsky agreed.

The motion passed 7-0-2 (as to the August 17, 2004 Minutes, as revised.) (Mrs. Brzezinski and Mrs. Mueller abstained.)

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of September 14, 2004.

The motion passed 9-0.

OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Initial Distribution:

Mrs. Jankowsky enumerated the following policies for initial review:

- 2.24 – Communicable Disease
- 5.9 – Animals in the Classroom
- 7.24 – Acceptable Use of Computer Technology

Regarding Policy 2.24, Mr. Faust stated that the MBIT Superintendent decided that he was going to meet with the other Superintendents regarding this so that all the policies are in line, or possibly having one policy that would cover all five entities (the four districts and MBIT.) Mr. Faust felt that we might want to get input from the other districts on this.

Mr. Blatt explained that it appeared that the policy that MBIT was promoting was somewhat inconsistent with the practices in the sending districts. He indicated that when we asked questions, we were led to believe that it was almost boilerplate from PSBA, which further confused the issue. There was discussion about bringing all the districts into the same type of policy.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she would not normally be supportive of writing policies in this way, since we don't always share the same issues and values. However, in this particular instance, she thought she might be inclined to go along with it.

Mr. Blatt indicated that the Board would reserve the right to approve the policy.

Final Approval:

2.26 – Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Mrs. Jankowsky explained that there were some revisions made to this policy, per the Board's request.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Gold to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 2.26 – Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.

The motion passed 9-0.

FINANCIAL

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

- *Schedule of Bills – September 2004*
- *Investments – September 2004*
- *Cafeteria Fund Budget Report – September 2004*

and approves the:

- *Fund Profiles/Treasurer's Report – September 2004*
- *Budgetary Transfers – June 2004
October 2004*

The motion passed 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Permission to Accept a 2004-05 State Entitlement Grant

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Brzezinski to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves permission to accept the following 2004-05 state entitlement grant in the amount indicated:

<i>Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Students</i>	<i>\$36,859</i>
---	-----------------

The motion passed 9-0.

2. Permission to Accept Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grants

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Baranski to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves permission to accept the following competitive grants for the 2004-05 school year in the amounts indicated:

<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant Davis Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>
<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant Leary Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>
<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant Longstreth Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>
<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant McDonald Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>
<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant Stackpole Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>
<i>Title I Parent Involvement Mini-Grant Willow Dale Elementary School</i>	<i>\$500.00</i>

The motion passed 9-0.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the appointment of Joseph Nawn as Principal of Klinger Middle School.

The motion passed 9-0.

Mr. Faust left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the following Personnel items: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absence; Authorization to Employ; Mentors; Title I Tutors; Homebound Tutors; Per Diem Substitute Teachers; Support Staff Substitutes; Substitute Custodian; Student Work Study Program; and Co-Curricular (with the exception of item #5 under Authorization to Employ, which was voted on above.)

Mrs. Mueller requested that item #8 of Resignations be pulled.

The motion passed 8-0. (Mr. Faust was out of the room at the time of the vote.)

A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mrs. Huf to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves item #8 under Leaves of Absence.

Mrs. Mueller stated that she felt this was a conflict of interests for her as a committee woman, so she would be abstaining.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she would be voting against this. She had supported Mr. O'Neill's request in the past but could not continue to do so at this time. She felt it was in the best interest of the position to fill this on a permanent basis.

Mr. Grossi explained that there was an interpretation of the policy that he did not think was correct the last time. He felt this was well beyond the policy. He felt the policy was being violated, and that this was a precedent that should not be set. He indicated that this was difficult because Mr. O'Neill was a good friend and a loyal employee, but he felt the Board had stretched this already. He indicated that he would be opposing this motion.

Mrs. Huf stated that she would be supporting this motion, indicating that Mr. O'Neill was loyal to the District for many years.

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that Mr. O'Neill was a wonderful teacher and was always there for the kids. She felt they would be causing no grief to anyone by waiting until the election was over since it was only another month. She indicated that she would support this request.

Mrs. Gold agreed with Mrs. Brzezinski, stating that she would be supporting this motion absolutely.

Mrs. Baranski stated that she was also in support of the motion.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she was in support of this since Mr. O'Neill was a long-term, dedicated teacher. He was asking for unpaid leave. Mrs. Lynch stated that she had not seen a policy that indicated that this was not permitted.

A roll call vote was taken, as follows:

<i>Mrs. Jankowsky</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Gold</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Huf</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Grossi</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Lynch</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Brzezinski</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Mueller</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
<i>Mrs. Baranski</i>	<i>Yes</i>

The motion passed 5-2-1. (Mr. Faust was out of the room at the time of the vote.)

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None.

Mr. Faust returned to the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

Mrs. Baranski stated that the Education Committee thanked Biz Kenney for the fruit baskets and flowers.

Mrs. Baranski also commented on the parking on Centennial Road during community events. She indicated that a man and a few of his neighbors who live across the street from the school called to complain about the parents and coaches parking along the side of the school fields on October 2nd and 3rd. The man called the police, who indicated that they could not park in the street, even on the side of the school.

Mrs. Baranski told the police officer that the School Board had approved the baseball and soccer teams to use the fields, and asked the officer where they were supposed to park, if they should park in the grass. The officer responded that he couldn't tell them whether or not to park there because that was school property. Mrs. Baranski made the decision as a School Board member

that the people should park in the grass because the School Board approved the use of the fields for soccer and baseball and it was their responsibility to provide parking.

Mrs. Baranski stated that she resented the implication that they parked illegally and were driving in an irresponsible manner. She felt that this was a public street and anyone should be able to park there. She felt the sign stating that it was resident parking only should be removed. She also suggested signs go back up on the school side stating that there was no parking during school hours. She felt the handicapped parking should be at the top of the fields closer to the schools as it was supposed to be. She resented people calling the police and bullying other people just because they think they can.

Mrs. Baranski closed by saying that we will not deny the use of our facilities and fields to community organizations. She, as a community member and "soccer grandma", won't tolerate the harassment or bullying of our children by anyone.

Mr. Grossi stated that this has been going on, probably with the same gentleman who has been at this meeting and who moved in next to a school. There are certain times of year that those fields are being used. He stated that he supported Mrs. Baranski's position. As long as people don't park in other people's driveways or endanger anybody, people need to park.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she had a question for Mr. Blatt. She had received a phone call from an Intelligencer reporter inquiring as to whether Tennent was engaging in conversations with Wood regarding the Thanksgiving football game. Her response was that, as far as she knew, it had not been a topic of this Board since the directive to look for alternative opponents for Thanksgiving Day. She asked if there was something going on between the High School and Wood.

Mrs. Lynch indicated that the same reporter had called her home and left two messages. He said that he had received electronic communication that the Wood game was back on. Mrs. Lynch stated that she called Mr. Blatt because she was confused. She indicated that she personally talked to Archbishop Wood, and had heard from Tennent parents, from Wood parents, and from students. She stated that it was a nice meeting. However, someone decided to do an e-mail about this, which was only a personal meeting. She indicated that she would love to get this game back for the children, not this year but maybe next year.

Mrs. Huf stated that she also attended the meeting and there was no decision. It was an open discussion for the students. She had also been contacted by parents, community members and students, and she wanted to hear what Archbishop Wood had to say. She indicated that she had not said anything since then because she understood that there were petitions going around both high schools and she was hoping that a report would come forward from those petitions so that we could discuss what the next step is.

Mr. Grossi stated that this was the first he had heard about this. He felt that a resolution of the issue should start with a heartfelt apology to the students and players that were looking forward to the last game, who were insulted because they had to play a game with someone else two weeks later. He indicated that this was a tradition and that things shouldn't get in the way of a tradition. The players, cheerleaders, band and others worked hard preparing for the game. They

were insulted by the whole issue, and should be apologized to. He felt that he was not open to the quality of leadership that allows something like this to happen. He felt the leadership of the school was directly responsible.

Mrs. Lynch didn't feel that attacking was the answer but that it was time to move forward.

Mr. Grossi stated that he knew this was a valuable fundraiser and would certainly support that if the game was played, to do it for nothing, that the money could be contributed to some agreeable charity.

Mrs. Huf stated that some of the students who asked about this were members of the football team. But the decision to cancel the game was made by adults, not students. Prior to the end of last year she had been asked if we could do a survey of the students at Tennent and Wood to see if there is interest in the game. At that time, Mr. Blatt had indicated that it was too close to the end of the year.

Mrs. Baranski stated that she knew a lot of the students wanted to have the game. She felt that, at this point, we should just move on and allow them to have their game, if not this year, then next year.

Mr. Grossi distributed data regarding the PSSA scores and discussed Centennial's place in the rankings and the effect of block scheduling. He pointed out how Upper Moreland's scores had improved when they eliminated block scheduling.

SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS/CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Schedule attached hereto.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Gold to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary