

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
HELD DECEMBER 14, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on December 14, 2004, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lynch at 7:40 p.m. The following people registered their attendance:

Board Members:

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

Administration:

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

* Mr. Faust arrived at the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

CEA/Principals/Teachers:

Karen Adams
Bob Stremme
Patti Pierantozzi
Jessica White
Christina Ward
Jamie Dorsey
Andy Mahony
Susan Barazani
Lizabeth Stanfield
Mary Ellen Donnelly
Joe O'Connor
Eileen Poroszok

Public:

Bernie O'Neill
Bonnie Zuckerman
Jane Hannon
Larry Hannon
Christine Ann Piferski
Joshua Piferski
L. Lieberman

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Lynch thanked Board members for their hard work during the year. She indicated that being a Board member takes a tremendous amount of time but felt that the Board had made many accomplishments. She also stated that there would be many issues to be addressed in the upcoming year. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. She also hoped that Hanukkah was good for those who had just celebrated it.

Mr. Blatt stated that very recently Debbie Lewis, a secretary at Klinger Middle School had passed away after a lengthy illness. Mr. Blatt indicated that she would be missed.

PRESENTATIONS

Recognition of District Employee, Larry Hannon, by Representative Bernie O'Neill

After an introduction by Mrs. Lynch, Mr. O'Neill stated that it was a great pleasure to honor one of Centennial's employees. He spoke about the importance of the support staff – the unsung heroes. Mr. O'Neill spoke about the titles Mr. Hannon had won and presented him with a Citation from the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania.

GOOD NEWS

Mrs. Homel congratulated Mr. Blatt for being honored for his years of leadership, dedication and public service as part of the kickoff for the 17th Annual Scouting for Food Campaign for the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Blatt was honored by the Bucks County Commissioners with a Proclamation that November 16, 2004 be known as "David P. Blatt Day" throughout Bucks County.

[Mr. Faust arrived at the meeting at 7:48 p.m.]

Mrs. Lynch presented Mr. Blatt with a Certificate of Recognition from Centennial School District.

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

Mrs. Jankowsky announced that the National Honor Society held its annual induction on October 30th, with 45 people being inducted.

Mrs. Mueller stated that she had had the pleasure of attending Klinger's Winter Concert. She thanked all of the teachers for their roles, as well as Mr. Dinkins, who came down from the high school to help.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None.

REPORTS

STUDENT COUNCIL

Daniel Klenk reported on the following items:

- The Boys Basketball fan club has sectioned off an area at games called “*The Jungle*” in order to boost school spirit. This is open only to students.
- December 4 – Future Business Leaders of America held Breakfast with Santa.
- Many charities were receiving donations from various clubs at Tennent.
- December 8 & 9 – Key Club blood drive.
- December 11 – Key Club sponsored a Winter Ball to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation.
- December 7 – Senior Sweetheart Nominations were announced.
- Tennent teachers and staff were preparing for the annual Christmas show.
- Mr. Klenk also reviewed the recent sports statistics.

MBIT STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mike Weglinski reported on the following items at MBIT:

- December 13 & 14 – MBIT underwent an audit.
- The MBIT Open House was held recently.
- Four sealed bids were received for the student-built house.
- The salon is open to the public on Friday afternoons by appointment.
- Aspirations Restaurant is serving lunch to the public on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- February 1 – MBIT will be hosting the Skills USA competition, with over 70 different competition areas.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Mr. Blatt indicated that most items had already been covered. He stated that he had had the opportunity to visit MBIT the previous week and was proud that Tennent was very well represented. He felt that Dr. Irwin, the new Director, seemed to be off to a very fine start.

Mr. Blatt noted that all of the schools were alive with holiday activity. He felt that this was a very happy, fulfilling and rewarding time in the schools.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Baranski reported that the Education Committee had met and discussed block scheduling. They came to the conclusion that they would bring this to the full Board. This matter would be voted on later in this meeting.

Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Mr. Faust stated that there was no meeting in December, but there would be one in January.

Mr. Grossi stated that he was informed that Drexel was removing their sponsorship from the Engineering program since students are not going into engineering. He indicated that he would pursue this if there are students who are interested in pursuing engineering.

Mr. Faust stated that in the past they had discussed having this available to our students in the high school. Mrs. Jankowsky felt that it would be nice to introduce this into the high school together with the computer assisted drafting courses.

Mrs. Brzezinski felt that the Board should find out how many students were interested and what the cost would be. It was decided that Mr. Grossi would check into this.

Intermediate Unit

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that there had been no meeting since the previous report.

FINANCE & LONG RANGE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. Faust reported that the Finance Committee had met on November 15th and that the results of that meeting were reported on at the November Work Session. The next meeting of the Committee would be on December 20th.

Title VIII

No report.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that on December 6th a preliminary presentation was made regarding the feasibility study done at the high school. Three different plans were presented. A final report would be presented in January or early February.

Mr. Grossi stated that one of the concerns was the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems at the high school. Something will have to be done with those fairly soon. Also, the amount of asbestos that is encapsulated will need to be addressed in the near future. Mr. Grossi felt that the three plans were very complete, detailed and quite well done.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that it was the opinion of the firm that the auditorium was in very good condition and that most of the suggestions dealt with the academic building.

Mr. Faust congratulated Administration, Mr. Lasher and Mr. Blatt for the fact that we got more than our money's worth by finding the firm that conducted the study.

Mrs. Mueller encouraged Board members to attend the next meeting regarding this matter. She felt that the gentleman did a fine job of addressing all of the issues raised at the prior meeting.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that if nothing else was done, the Board should consider the schematic for loading and unloading children in the morning and afternoon, in the interest of traffic control.

Mrs. Brzezinski felt that the next presentation should be on the radio so the public could hear it. Mrs. Jankowsky agreed, suggesting that it be held in the Board Room so that it could be broadcast.

Mrs. Brzezinski asked if Administration had checked into several architectural firms or if they just picked one. Mr. Blatt explained that they put out a request for proposal and that about nine firms originally responded. They were interviewed, their references were checked, and the cost for the study reviewed before selecting this firm. Mr. Blatt felt they had done a fine job so far.

Mrs. Lynch stated that the next meeting would be a public one, held in the Board Room.

Citizens Policy

No report.

Legislative Liaison

Mrs. Mueller reported that many Bills had been signed by the Governor, including the following:

- Act 147 – Mental Health Care for Minors
- Act 168 – Tax Collector Practices
- Act 178 – Alternative Fuels Grants
- Act 183 – School Broadband Discount
- Act 187 – Asthma Medication/School Taxes
- Act 197 – Child Internet Protection
- Act 192 – Local Tax Enabling Act

Mrs. Mueller indicated that information on these items could be found in the December 10th issue of *School Leader News*. She requested that Dr. Sexton review these in relation to current policies and to get them on the agenda if need be.

Regarding Act 147, Mr. Faust stated that under prior law a student could opt out at age 14 regardless of parental wishes. The changes to the law have given parents the right to get a child mental help beyond the age of 14.

Mr. Faust also mentioned that the Governor was talking about moving the primary dates up, particularly in presidential election years. He felt that if the District went into Act 72, this could cause problems with preparing the budget.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if Act 183 regarding broadband was in addition to the e-rate. Mrs. Mueller indicated that the e-rate had pretty much gone away. Mrs. Jankowsky requested Administration to look into whether the e-rate had disappeared.

MINUTES

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

- *Work Session/Regular School Board Meeting – 10/26/04*
- *Regular School Board Meeting – 11/9/04*
- *Work Session/Regular School Board Meeting – 11/23/04*

The motion passed 8-0.

OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Final Approval:

1.5 – Electronic Participation at Non-Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that Item I.B.9. had been added since the Board's last discussion. There was a memo from Dr. Sexton explaining this.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the adoption of Policy 1.5 – Electronic Participation at Non-Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings.

Mr. Faust questioned Item I.B.3., which stated that the majority of Board members physically present at the meeting must approve electronic participation. Since the policy would approve this, he questioned whether the Board needed to approve it again.

Mrs. Jankowsky explained that this was a compromise. She believed that the reason for doing this was because it was done in the past.

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that she resented Section II. She indicated that she had a problem with this policy and would be opposing it.

A roll call vote was taken, as follows:

<i>Mrs. Baranski</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Mueller</i>	<i>Yes</i>

<i>Mrs. Brzezinski</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mr. Grossi</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Gold</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Jankowsky</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Faust</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Lynch</i>	<i>No</i>

The motion failed 4-4.

2.17 – Retirement Incentive Program

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that this item had come out of the Finance Committee so she would defer to them.

Mr. Faust explained that there were two separate drafts. Draft #1 offered staff members the right for early retirement and basically would pay medical benefits until age 65 if the District received more than 25 applications. It also has a step where if the District received more than 35 applications, it would offer the medical benefits plus a bonus of \$5,000.

Mr. Faust went on to explain that Draft #2 was basically the same but did not include the step of additional benefits for over 35 persons retiring.

Mrs. Mueller questioned why a retirement incentive would be offered without putting this in a contract negotiation. Mr. Faust indicated that this was discussed many years ago but it was decided to keep it out of the contract. He stated that this was done five or six years ago and that there are distinct benefits for both sides. At that time, it was not part of the collective bargaining agreement.

Mrs. Mueller stated that she was opposed to doing anything with retirement this way.

Mr. Faust pointed out that when they looked at the demographics the last time, there was not a major impact. The timing is due to the projected budget deficit for this year. This is a way to start addressing it, as there are significant savings.

Mrs. Mueller questioned whether an age can be put into the policy as opposed to years. She wondered whether putting an age could be considered discriminatory and asked whether the solicitor had reviewed this. Mr. Faust stated that the solicitor did review this policy.

Mr. Faust clarified that there was support in the Finance Committee for moving the incentive program to the Board and that it was decided that both options should be presented.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that this was offered in 1999, which was prior to the pension benefit increase that was generated by the state legislature in 2001 where the pension

benefits were increased by 25%. She pointed out that the minimum cost to taxpayers to provide medical benefits to 25 staff members would be \$337,000. The District would be saving about \$1.2 million. However, Mrs. Jankowsky felt that the District could save money without spending a penny. They could start by voting against block scheduling, which would save about \$600,000 per year. On average, about ten staff members retire per year. That would generate another \$600,000 in savings. Mrs. Jankowsky felt that due to these figures and the fact that the state legislature had already provided a pension enhancement that the community was paying for, she could not support this.

Mrs. Brzezinski felt that the teachers needed to retire earlier since the children were more difficult; therefore, she would support earlier retirement. She asked which version of the policy was better for both sides. Mr. Faust stated that each Board member must make their own decision.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she was supporting this policy because if there were people who were getting medical benefits, they would leave. Mrs. Mueller pointed out that there were some teachers who would like to retire but didn't need these medical benefits. For those people, this wasn't a big incentive.

Mr. Vail explained that there was a provision in the policy for the people who didn't want the medical benefits. This was the sick day provision. He indicated that the last time there were six or seven retirees who chose that option. Mrs. Mueller pointed out that if they didn't have a lot of sick days, that was not an incentive for them. She also pointed out that some people might incur a penalty from PSRES.

Mr. Grossi stated that the state's increase was 37%, rather than 25%. He indicated that this had always been coordinated with the contract in the past. He felt that this was an irresponsible proposal at this point, that it was not coordinated with any plan of action, and he would tend not to support it. He felt that if a six or seven year averaging was done, there would be almost no savings.

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Gold to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves Version #1 of the revisions to Policy 2.17, Retirement Incentive Plan.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that the people in the Centennial community, as well as other school districts in the state, were the ones paying for the retirement giveaway by the state legislature.

A roll call vote was taken, as follows:

<i>Mr. Faust</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Jankowsky</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Gold</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mr. Grossi</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Brzezinski</i>	<i>No</i>

<i>Mrs. Mueller</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Mrs. Baranski</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Lynch</i>	<i>Yes</i>

The motion failed 3-5 (as to Version #1).

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Brzezinski to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves Version #2 of the revisions to Policy 2.17, Retirement Incentive Plan.

Mr. Vail explained that in year 1 of this plan, with 25 retirees, the cost would be \$337,350, with a savings of \$1,320,000. Mr. Grossi did not feel that when this was carried out through the years there would be any savings. Mr. Faust felt that was a matter of interpretation.

Mrs. Mueller felt that a specific number should be stated as to what the health benefits are, such as in North Penn School District's policy.

Mr. Faust stated that this was a one-time offer and the Board has the right to renew the offer at any time. Basically, what was being done was renewing the 1999 offer with some modifications.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that this was a terrible policy for the Centennial taxpayers and that it was not comprehensive. She did not understand why the taxpayers should have to add on to what was given by the state legislature. She felt that should be ample incentive for people to retire, and that we would be throwing tax dollars away.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

The motion passed 5-3 (as to Version #2.)

Mrs. Lynch called for a recess at 9:27 p.m. The meeting resumed at 9:38 p.m.

3.23 – Solicitation

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Gold to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 3.23 – Solicitation.

Mrs. Jankowsky explained that this policy was extensively discussed at the previous Work Session.

The motion passed 8-0.

3.26 – Student Attendance

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Brzezinski to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 3.26 – Student Attendance.

Mrs. Jankowsky explained that this policy was extensively discussed at the previous Work Session.

The motion passed 8-0.

4.14 - Transportation

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Brzezinski to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the adoption of Policy 4.14 – Transportation.

Mrs. Jankowsky indicated that the suggestion at the last meeting was to incorporate the state guidelines, which has been done.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to amend the motion by revising the beginning of the second sentence of Section II.B. to read: “However, in the interest of student safety, the Centennial School Board has chosen...”

The motion to amend passed 8-0.

The amended motion passed 8-0.

FINANCIAL

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

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

and approves the:

- *Fund Profiles/Treasurer’s Report – November 2004*
- *Budgetary Transfers – December 2004*

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that she was concerned about vandalism. She indicated that there was an incident with a broken window at Stackpole where a window had been hit with a BB gun years

ago. Recently it was hit with a ball by accident. She questioned whether restitution would be made.

Mr. Blatt stated that we are in pretty good shape as far as vandalism. We take a consistent stance regarding restitution for any act that might be considered vandalism. As far as recouping money from the insurance carrier, we have a deductible of \$7,500 per incident, so we have to identify the perpetrator to recoup money for an incident. Mr. Blatt indicated that we have done pretty well with this.

Mr. Grossi asked how much earned income tax was collected last year. Mr. Vail indicated that it was pretty close to the projection. Mr. Grossi requested that information regarding earned income and occupational privilege taxes be included in the next Board packet.

The motion passed 8-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Lynch stated that after the Reorganization Meeting on December 6th, some issues were raised pertaining to the reorganization. She read a letter from the solicitor stating that Mrs. Jankowsky, in an e-mail to Mrs. Lynch, questioned the results of the reorganization. She raised the language of Policy 1.3 and past Board practice and suggested that it was inappropriate for the Board to elect two representatives from Warminster Township to leadership positions. The provisions of Policy 1.3 state that the President and Vice President shall be, if possible, from different townships. The School Code provides that the President and Vice President shall be elected from the membership of the Board but does not prescribe any qualifications other than the person must be a Board member. Board policy may not dictate to an individual Board member how he or she must vote. It was Mr. Garton's opinion that Policy 1.3 as a statement of Board policy could not be used as a basis for requiring a Board member to vote one way or another with respect to the Board reorganization.

Mr. Grossi stated that it was a longstanding practice in the District to have the President and Vice President from different townships and that he agreed with this practice. He did agree that Ivyland should be represented and he asked what the process would be to see that the townships and boroughs and all parts of the community were fairly represented. He asked that the solicitor and/or PSBA provide the process by which the Board can address the issue of one man, one vote throughout the District. He did believe that Ivyland should have a vote. There was also an issue of one political subdivision dominating another political subdivision. He felt this could be resolved by redistricting. He believed there was a problem with the current arrangement and that we should take the legal remedies available.

Mrs. Baranski stated that there were three different regions and she felt that everyone should have an equal opportunity for any position. The Board voted on this and she felt it was very fair.

Mr. Faust stated that he believed in other districts there was a census adjustment every ten years where the regional lines were redrawn, not necessarily by municipality but by population. He

saw no point in objecting to what the rules are but recommended that we ask Mr. Garton since he also represents one of the districts that shifts the lines.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that according to the minutes from the November 9th meeting she asked for a second opinion about entering an e-mail communication into the record. However, instead of going to a second solicitor for that, it appeared that the Board went back to Mr. Garton for a second opinion. She felt that when a second opinion is requested, it should be from a different person. She again requested a second opinion, from a second solicitor, regarding the ability of a Board member to enter e-mail communications into the record.

Mrs. Lynch explained that since it was indicated that Mr. Garton had not gone deep enough into the policy, she went back to him for another opinion.

Mrs. Jankowsky read an excerpt from the Minutes of November 9th, page 73, stating that she wanted “*another solicitor’s opinion.*” She again requested a separate opinion from another solicitor. She felt it was of vital importance to the Board to know the policy regarding e-mail communications.

Mr. Grossi stated that he didn’t think Mr. Garton went deeply enough into the policy. He felt that when a second opinion was asked for, it should be obtained from someone else. He also felt that PSBA could provide a document free of charge.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she felt the issue was resolved.

Mrs. Brzezinski stated that she was misquoted in the newspaper as having nominated Mrs. Huf at the previous meeting, which she did not do; Mrs. Gold nominated Mrs. Huf. Therefore, she will no longer be speaking to reporters.

Mrs. Jankowsky requested clarification as to whether we were going to PSBA. Mr. Faust stated that he had no problem with going to PSBA but indicated that we have an opinion from a District solicitor. He pointed out that PSBA is an organization and he did not know if they have the same E&O insurance that the solicitor has.

Mr. Grossi did not see why he could not get an e-mail from a parent and ask for it to be put in the record. Mrs. Brzezinski pointed out that the sender might not want to be in the public record. Mr. Grossi indicated that we put written letters in the record all the time.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that PSBA would not give an opinion; she felt they would suggest that we contact our solicitor. She again requested an opinion from another solicitor. Mrs. Lynch stated that we would go to Mr. Levin for another opinion for Mrs. Jankowsky; if she (Mrs. Lynch) did not like Mr. Levin’s opinion, she would go back for an opinion for herself.

NEW BUSINESS1. Final Approval for WTHS Academic Team Trip to Scholars' Bowl

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to resolve that the Centennial School Board grants final approval for the WTHS Academic Team trip to the Scholars' Bowl in Dix Hills, Long Island, New York, on January 7-8, 2005. The cost to the District is limited to the use of the school van and the cost of a rental van that is estimated to be \$300.00.

The motion passed 8-0.

2. Final Approval for WTHS Marching Band Trip to Orlando and Daytona, Florida

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Baranski to resolve that the Centennial School Board grants final approval for the William Tennent High School Marching Band trip to Orlando and Daytona, Florida, on February 9-13, 2005. The cost to the District is \$800.00 for substitute teachers.

The motion passed 8-0.

3. William Tennent High School Block Schedule

A motion was made by Mrs. Baranski and seconded by Mrs. Gold to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves development of modifications to the current block schedule at William Tennent High School, with time for thorough planning, preparation, and communication. Any modifications or changes to the current block schedule will be introduced in September 2006. They will keep the Board up to date with progress.

Mrs. Brzezinski asked if the Board would see the formula. Dr. Masko indicated that it would.

Mr. Faust stated that he was concerned with the way this motion was written. It was his understanding that there was another step where the Board would actually vote on the modifications, and if the Board was not happy with the modifications, they would go back for more modifications. He did not see that language in this motion. Mr. Blatt felt that Mr. Faust captured the essence of the discussions of the Education Committee and the understandings that a lot of them held.

Mr. Faust felt that the minutes of an Education Committee meeting did not carry the same weight as a motion from the Board. He would like to see something similar to what was in the minutes be stated in the motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Brzezinski to amend the motion to read as follows: The Centennial School Board approves development of modifications to the current block schedule at William Tennent High School, with time for thorough

planning, preparation, and communication. Administration will subsequently forward recommendations for modifications and forward changes to the current block scheduling to the Education Committee for approval. This not only goes to the Education Committee for approval, it must go forward eventually to the full Board for approval. Any modifications or changes to the current block schedule will be introduced in September 2006.

Mr. Grossi felt there needed to be performance parameters. Mr. Faust felt these performance goals or a sunset provision should be made as the modifications come back. Unless the modifications are approved, nothing has been changed. Mr. Blatt felt that whatever was decided on should have a sunset provision.

Mr. Faust wanted to reserve the right to say that if the modifications are not what they were hoping for, they can say they don't want block scheduling. He felt Administration had a good idea what their concerns were.

Mrs. Baranski stated that there were teachers, administrators and students there were excited about block scheduling. It can be improved. If it is thrown away, we will be years behind. Mrs. Lynch agreed.

Mr. Grossi felt that we invested in this and it didn't cut it, so we should move on.

Mr. Faust stated that through this motion the Board has acknowledged that block scheduling has not been as successful as we had hoped. Through modifications we are hoping that we can improve it. He felt this was a fair compromise. If the modifications don't work, there would still be the option of going to a more traditional schedule. We are trying to meet in the middle for the betterment of the students.

The motion to amend passed 6-2. (Mrs. Jankowsky and Mr. Grossi were opposed.)

Discussion continued on the amended motion. Mrs. Jankowsky stated that it seemed that at this meeting, with the passage of this, the Board had already spent almost \$1 million. There was \$337,000 spent on the retirement incentive, and the maintaining of this schedule was an additional \$600,000. When this was originally passed, there was a sunset provision. She felt that the results did not justify continuation of the program and stated that she would not vote for it. She hoped that the Board would get more responsible with spending the taxpayers' money.

Mrs. Baranski stated that if we can't give the best to our students, we don't belong here. Mr. Grossi stated that the data proves that this is not the best; we are not listening to the results. Mrs. Gold indicated that that was why the Board was discussing modifying this now.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that if there was even the slightest trending in positive improvement in this data, she could support it. She felt taxpayer money was being wasted.

Mrs. Brzezinski felt that they should give Dr. Masko and his team a chance.

Mrs. Lieberman of 396 Byron Road, Warminster, stated that most of the block scheduling schools were doing inferior work with regard to the economic standing. She felt there was plenty of data available for anyone who wanted to look at it.

Mr. Faust was not sure how Administration was planning to develop the modifications. If they were going to look to outside sources, he hoped that they would speak to Mrs. Lieberman. He also indicated that although we were pretty focused on PSSA scores, there were other things that colleges were looking at, such as AP's, amount of electives, etc. He stated that although he was not a major fan of block scheduling, hopefully we could make it work with some modifications.

Mr. Grossi stated that he would like to see real time on task in Math and Language Arts. H wanted a realistic needs assessment of classroom space and wanted smaller class sizes.

The motion passed 6-2. (Mr. Grossi and Mrs. Jankowsky opposed.)

4. Position of Director of Special Education/Special Services

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves reinstatement of the position of Director of Special Education/Special Services with a compensation consistent with the salary range outlined in the CAA Agreement (\$96,605 - \$112,752 prorated).

Mrs. Jankowsky requested Mr. Blatt to review the information for the listening public. Mr. Blatt referred to a memo dated December 2nd on this topic. He also mentioned an article in the newspaper that referenced a similar situation at Central Bucks, which was analogous to some of the issues that Centennial grappled with. About 20% of Centennial's students need special education services. Mr. Blatt referenced a discussion that had taken place in the spring where counsel had given an opinion on the number of administrators and his assessment was that the District was not top heavy. Mr. Blatt also referenced for the Board in general terms some of his opinions as to what would take place if this position was not staffed. He mentioned the savings as being approximately \$296,000, with \$75,000 per year in reoccurring savings.

Mr. Faust stated that he believed this was an important position in the District, which was eliminated a few years ago as a cost-savings attempt. He stated that we are in a very difficult budget and that at the previous meeting there were additional positions approved for Reading. He felt that Mr. Blatt and Administration had done an excellent job cutting costs; however, last year most of the money they saved was spent so that a tax increase could be avoided. Considering that more recurring expenses were added, we are further in the hole. There must be some kind of corresponding savings to go with this. The Board must prioritize. He indicated that he still had major reservations about doing this at this time, especially when it calls for creating a position in the middle of a budget.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that the ongoing savings Mr. Blatt was projecting came from making a cut in personnel. The \$75,000 covers approximately two-thirds of the position. Mrs. Jankowsky read from an e-mail sent by Mr. Blatt to the Board stating that he was confident that we can affect additional cost containment actions that will provide the necessary dollars to fund the position going forward. He indicated that he would not recommend anything that was not in the best interest of the District.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she was 100% in favor of hiring a Special Education Director. She felt that Centennial had one of the best special education programs in Bucks County.

Mrs. Mueller pointed out that this was one of the most mandated areas that the District had to deal with. If one of the 1,200 special education students would bring a case before the Board, we would be spending a whole lot more than what this position would cost. She felt the District needed to limit its liability and that this was an area that gives us great exposure. She felt that if the Superintendent thought this was what was needed, that was a just reason.

Mrs. Gold stated that she was totally in favor of reinstating this position but that the money that was saved has been spent. She would have to know what was going to be cut before she could stand behind this.

Mr. Blatt pointed out that if history was the best predictor of the future, we have come in under budget by about \$5 million in the aggregate in the past few years. Although sometimes it is difficult to identify savings, good management seizes upon opportunities that arise. The administrative team recognizes the need to be fiscally prudent; however, there is also the point of legal exposure the District has in special education. He felt the position was sorely needed.

Mr. Grossi stated that we must fill the position and move on and deal with the financial issue when it comes up.

Mr. Faust stated that he was not opposed to this – he was just looking for matching cuts.

Mrs. Lynch questioned the consultant position, his salary to date, and whether he would be retained if a Director were hired.

Mrs. Homel responded that the consultant was working two to three days per week and that he has saved the District in legal fees that we would have had to pay otherwise. We have been able to pay him with IDEA funds. If a Director is hired, she would like the consultant to help out until the Director is at full tilt.

Mrs. Mueller pointed out that there are already cases and that we could have more cases that will far exceed this position. The Board must look at the big picture. This is too important to delay. She felt it must be moved forward. Mr. Faust felt that he was looking at the big picture. He did not want to create a position now and have to get rid of it in July.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she understood the concerns but felt that the Superintendent's past actions should warrant the Board's trust in this matter. He has underspent every budget since he has been with the District. Mrs. Lynch did not think that anyone was saying they did not trust the Superintendent.

Mr. Grossi stated that there was not a question of having the money to the end of the year, and felt that this needed to be done until then. At some point, the issue would have to be faced in the budget going forward.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she would support this until the \$76,000 ran out.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

The motion passed 4-2-2.

Mr. Blatt stated that he did not want to go through with this and bring someone forward and then have the Board not approve this.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mrs. Mueller and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the following Personnel items: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absence; Authorization to Employ; Change of Status; Mentors; Per Diem Substitute Teachers; Support Staff Substitutes; Summer/Student Employment; Student Work Study Program; and Co-Curricular.

The motion passed 6-0. (Mrs. Baranski and Mrs. Lynch were out of the room at the time of the vote.)

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that she had received an e-mail from Mrs. Lieberman dated December 7, 2004, regarding the Math program at the high school.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

Mrs. Jankowsky complimented the students from Longstreth Elementary for the beautiful artwork that was on display.

SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS/CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Schedule attached hereto.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Brzezinski and seconded by Mrs. Gold to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 7-0. (Mrs. Baranski was out of the room at the time of the vote.). The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary