

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
HELD JANUARY 25, 2005**

CALL TO ORDER

A Work Session/Regular meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on January 25, 2005, 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
Eugene Grossi
Betty Huf
Joan Jankowsky
Jane Schrader Lynch
Cynthia Mueller

Administration:

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

* Mrs. Baranski arrived at 7:55 p.m.

CEA/Teachers:

Vicky Myers
Tracy Miller
Gina Lenox
Dixie Williams
Deborah Faehner
Beth Campbell
Kathy Patton
Paula Foran
Matthew Markey
Joe O'Connor
Mary Ellen Donnelly

Public:

Amanda Martin
Eric Martin
Patrick Molloy
Margaret Molloy

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Lynch indicated that the announcement would be given later in the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Davis Elementary School Artists

Dr. Larry Belli first acknowledged the presence of Eric Martin in the audience, who had recently returned from Iraq. He thanked Mr. Martin for his service.

Dr. Belli then spoke about Davis Elementary School Students, Amanda Molloy and Eric Martin, II, whose art was selected to be used on postcards announcing the “Child’s Play” exhibition at the Michener Art Museum in Doylestown. The exhibition would open on February 6th and would feature a selection of artwork created by Centennial’s elementary students.

Mrs. Lynch presented certificates to Amanda and Eric recognizing their achievements.

Dr. Sexton noted that the Madrigal singers would perform at the opening ceremony on February 6th and invited everyone to attend.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Blatt shared an overview of a special project that had taken place over the previous 11 days, which involved relief efforts for the tsunami victims in Asia.

Dr. Masko explained that they wanted to make sure the students understood why there was a need and how they could help. He spoke about how this was tied into the curriculum at the various grade levels.

Dr. Sexton stated that they decided the best way to help was to raise some money. The *Save the Children Foundation* was selected since 90% of the funds goes to the victims. He proudly announced that the District would be presenting a check for over \$28,000 to *Save the Children*.

[Mrs. Baranski arrived at the meeting at 7:55 p.m.]

Mr. Blatt reported that there was a move to retain a consultant regarding Act 72 to represent the school districts in Bucks County. Ten districts chose to do this, but Centennial did not. However, an invitation was extended to Centennial to participate in a presentation at the I.U. regarding this matter on January 31st (at no cost), even though we are not part of the consortium. Mr. Vail and two Board members may attend.

Mrs. Mueller recognized the staff and students at Klinger for their excellent Science Fair. There were over 650 projects, with 100% participation. Mrs. Mueller also pointed out that Log College had held its Science Fair recently and, although she was not able to attend, she understood that it was a big success also.

GOOD NEWS

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

Mrs. Homel also reported that Allison Siegfried, a Senior, appeared in a catalog for *Dynamic Sportswear*. She appeared on the front cover and five places within the catalog.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None.

REPORTS

Mrs. Brzezinski requested a copy of the minutes from the previous Finance Committee meeting since she was at an I.U. meeting that evening. She also indicated that she had passed on information to Mr. Blatt to be distributed to the Board regarding the budget and the alternative school.

Mrs. Huf reported that there was an Operations Committee meeting prior to this meeting. There was discussion regarding parents who were concerned with hazardous walking conditions for Davis and Klinger. There was a recommendation by the Transportation Manager that Centennial is within the State Code and at this time there would be no action taken. The parents were advised to contact the Southampton Police to do a traffic study.

Mrs. Huf also advised that there was a capital projects list for information purposes, and that there would be a resolution coming forward to the Board. The capital tour would take place on February 26th.

Mrs. Huf also announced that there would be a public presentation of the Tennent High School feasibility study prior to the next Board Meeting. This will go out over the school channel.

Mrs. Jankowsky reported that the Teacher Induction Plan Review Committee met on January 11th and had a first run-through of the current document. One of the critical things was that pre-induction and post-induction material must be added to this.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

- Education Committee – November 4, 2004
- Finance Committee – November 15, 2004; December 20, 2004

Mrs. Jankowsky pointed out that she was listed as attending the Finance Committee Meeting of November 15th; however, she did not arrive until the Executive Session at 8:00.

Mrs. Jankowsky also had questions about the December 20th meeting, since she was not in attendance. She questioned why the issue of the lift replacement for the bus garage was not listed on this meeting's agenda for this to go out for bid. She asked what was happening with this matter.

Mr. Vail explained that the only bid that must come before the Board for permission to solicit was for bus bids. All others were handled routinely. At this point, they are finalizing the bid specifications. They should be going forward in the next week.

Mrs. Jankowsky also brought up the manner of the payment of invoices for charter school/cyber school tuitions, which was covered in the December 20th Finance Committee minutes. Mr. Vail explained that we would receive notification on students that are identified as Centennial's for verification. In terms of payment, they would have to be submitted directly to PDE for verification through their process before a deduction from the ESBE subsidy would occur. This process would take 6 to 12 months.

Mrs. Jankowsky felt that the Board should be kept informed about whether this new method was working smoothly.

Regarding the lift for the bus garage, Mrs. Huf questioned the procedure. Mr. Vail clarified that this would go back to the Finance Committee for review before being forwarded to the full Board.

Mrs. Mueller indicated that she would like to revisit this matter at the end of the meeting under "*Other Discussion Items*" since there was now a motion on the floor regarding minutes.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to amend the Minutes of the Finance Committee of November 15, 2004, to reflect that Mrs. Jankowsky did not arrive until 8:00 p.m., at the beginning of the Executive Session.

The motion to amend passed 8-0.

The amended motion passed 8-0.

POLICIES

Discussion:

3.13 – Suspected Child Abuse

Dr. Sexton indicated that there were a number of changes to the policy as suggested by the solicitor, and also one recommended by the Citizens Policy Committee. He also pointed out that Item II.D.4. was deleted at the request of Bucks County Children and Youth Services, since they would like us to let them notify parents/guardians at the appropriate time.

Dr. Sexton pointed out that in consultation with our solicitor, we agreed that the term “*serious bodily injury*” should be replaced by “*bodily injury*” in Section IV.A.2.

At the suggestion of Mrs. Jankowsky, Dr. Sexton agreed to reword Section IV.A. by deleting the last sentence and replacing it with something that indicates that terms are being defined.

3.19 – Homebound Instruction

Dr. Sexton indicated that the changes to this policy were mainly wording changes and that this was reviewed by the solicitor.

Mrs. Jankowsky pointed out several housekeeping changes. She also questioned which teacher would be signing Attachment D. Dr. Sexton confirmed that it would be the homebound teacher and that this should be noted on the form.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she had concerns in permitting a 10-day absence before we permit homebound instruction at the high school level, particularly with block scheduling, which makes it like missing 20 days. Dr. Sexton explained that it was not necessary for a student to be out for ten days before homebound services are begun. It could be if an absence of ten days or more is expected. Mrs. Jankowsky suggested that maybe it should be five days at the high school level. Dr. Sexton indicated that that was not discussed by the administrative committee but he did not think Administration would have a problem with changing this if it was the will of the Board.

It was recommended that this be sent back to the Citizens Policy Committee.

Mrs. Mueller stated that she would like assurance that we are looking at the policies in place at the high school, as well as the practices currently used.

Mr. Faust asked if the policy was stating that a parent or adult must be with the student when the instruction was taking place. (III.C.2.) Dr. Sexton explained that an adult must be on the premises when the instruction is taking place, for the student’s protection. He indicated that the wording would be reviewed again by the Administrative Committee.

When questioned about how much instructional time was included, Dr. Sexton pointed out that the Code required only one hour per week for homebound students. Mr. Grossi felt that the entire program should be reviewed more aggressively.

3.28 – Student Health Services

Dr. Sexton pointed out changes to the policy based on amendments to the School Code under Act 187. He indicated that they would be developing a form to go with Section IX.B.

5.2 – School Libraries

Dr. Sexton pointed out minor changes to this policy.

Mrs. Mueller pointed out that if a student does not return a book, their extracurricular privileges are restricted. She questioned whether this was in a policy. Dr. Sexton did not think it was in a written policy.

6.1 – Community/School Fund Raising

Mrs. Mueller did not feel that Section II.F. was being followed, in that students were participating in fundraising activities listed in that section. She felt that the policy should reflect what was being done, or the students should not be permitted to do so.

Dr. Sexton pointed out that the policy stated that students should not participate in these activities. If the parents were participating in selling tickets, etc., that was okay, but the students should not be participating. Mrs. Mueller reiterated that this was happening.

Dr. Sexton felt that administrators and staff should then be reminded that the students were not permitted to do this. Mr. Blatt stated that he was not inclined to have the youngsters involved in these activities, although he did not have a problem with the parents doing it. Mr. Grossi agreed.

OLD BUSINESS

Policy 2.24 - Communicable Disease in the Workplace

A motion was made by Mrs. Jankowsky and seconded by Mrs. Mueller to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves removing from the table the motion to approve Policy 2.24 – Communicable Disease in the Workplace as submitted at the January 11, 2005 meeting of the Board.

The motion to remove from the table passed 8-0.

(The original motion, which was made at the Board Meeting of January 11, 2005, was as follows: “A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the revisions to Policy 2.24, Communicable Disease in the Workplace.”)

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she had requested clarification on this item at the last meeting and that she was now prepared to vote. She understood that there would be two separate policies.

The motion passed 8-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Appointment to Citizens' Policy Committee

A motion was made by Mrs. Baranski and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves the appointment of Mrs. Susan E. Curtis to the Citizens' Policy Committee for a term from February 16, 2005 until June 30, 2008.

The motion passed 8-0.

2. Preliminary Approval – German American Partnership Program

A motion was made by Mrs. Baranski and seconded by Mr. Grossi to resolve that the Centennial School Board grants preliminary approval for a trip to Landau, Germany by a group of William Tennent High School students from June 22, 2005 to July 19, 2005 at a cost to the District for bus transportation not to exceed \$150.00.

The motion passed 7-0-1. (Mrs. Baranski abstained since she had a fear of traveling at this time.)

3. Accept 2003-2004 Audit Report

Mr. Faust stated that this was reviewed with the auditor at the last Finance Committee meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board accepts the 2003-2004 Financial Statements and Single Audit as submitted by Barbacane Thornton and Company for the year ended June 30, 2004.

Mrs. Jankowsky made the following statement, which she asked to be entered into the minutes verbatim:

"Kudos to Mr. Blatt and his administrative team, especially Mr. Vail, for a superb audit report.

"For the third consecutive year under Mr. Blatt's leadership, the report states on page 3, if you prefer text, and page 18, if you are more numerically inclined, that actual expenditures were **1.6 million dollars less than budget.**

"The total savings over the past three years generated by the administration's prudent oversight of the expense side of the budget, as well as the combined effort of staff members in carrying the workload created by vacated positions, **approaches nearly 4 million dollars.**

"At 8 mills per million dollars of real estate tax revenue, **the savings** to our taxpayers amounts to approximately **32 mills** of taxes. Clearly, administration has done its part to provide this community with fiscal responsibility.

“As the Board approaches the budget cycle for the 2005-2006 school year, I am reminded of my remarks to the Board in June of 2004. I, as well as many others, expressed concern over the myopic budget plan that did not address what we estimate to be a 7.5 to 8.5 million dollar deficit at the end of this year.

“This audit report and those of the past two years, confirm administration’s sound fiscal practices. Let us not look as a board to blame them for the fiscal predicament that may confront us shortly. They have done their job in controlling expenses. By contrast, the revenue side of the budget is entirely the Board’s purview.

“Further, let us not look to program cuts that will hurt students to balance the upcoming budget. They deserve better from us.

“In closing, I don’t know what the solutions will be for the upcoming budget if the projected deficit does indeed materialize. However, I do know that we need not look any further than ourselves if we are looking for someone to blame.”

Mrs. Lynch stated that she felt everyone on the Board was aware that these were hard times but she believed that they could meet these challenges. She felt that everyone on the Board took their responsibilities very heavily and she had faith that the Board would work hard to promote a positive budget.

The motion passed 8-0.

4. Impact Aid Application Submission

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Huf to resolve that the Centennial School Board directs Timothy E. Vail, Business Administrator, to prepare and submit the District’s Title VIII (Impact Aid) application for 2005-2006.

The motion passed 8-0.

5. Appoint Impact Aid Representative

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board appoints Joseph Faust, Board member, to serve as Impact Aid representative. This appointment is in accordance with federal regulations requiring the appointment of a representative prior to the filing of Centennial’s funding application in January 2005. Said individual is authorized to sign the completed application as it is submitted to the U. S. Department of Education.

The motion passed 8-0.

6. Sale of MetLife Stock

Mr. Faust explained that MetLife went public and the District was issued shares. Recently we received a statement saying that we have shares totaling over \$300,000. There are some questions as to whether we can legally retain this. Mr. Vail brought this

to the committee and said that the stock should be sold and placed into the capital account since it is a one-time revenue source.

A motion was made by Mr. Faust and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board authorizes Administration to submit the attached resolution to MetLife Policyholder Trust to redeem and sell the 8,305 shares of MetLife, Inc. common stock held in the District's name at the prevailing stock price as of the date of sale. The sale, however, shall be conditioned upon the stock maintaining a value of approximately \$325,000. Upon receipt of stock sale proceeds, Administration is authorized to deposit said funds in the District's Capital Reserve Fund.

Mrs. Mueller asked if the current value of the stock was known, as of this date. Mr. Vail felt that it was right around the same level but that it fluctuated from day to day. He indicated that this would be submitted the following day if the motion passed. He also stated that the stock had doubled in value over the last 12 months.

The motion passed 8-0.

7. Permission to Apply for a Violence Prevention Mini-Grant

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves permission to apply for the following competitive grant for the 2004-2005 school year in the amount indicated: "Be Safe and Sound" Violence Prevention Mini-Grant in the amount of \$10,750.

The motion passed 8-0.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Jankowsky to resolve that the Centennial School Board approves all personnel recommendations, as follows: Resignations/Retirements/Leaves of Absence; Authorization to Employ; Change of Status; Title I Tutor; Mentors; Per Diem Substitute Teachers; Support Staff Substitutes; and Co-Curricular.

The motion passed 8-0.

Mrs. Lynch called for a break at 9:22 p.m. The meeting resumed at 9:30 p.m.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Lynch read from a January 18th letter from Michael Levin, Esquire, regarding School Board Minutes. Mrs. Mueller pointed out that this was the second opinion. The solicitor referred to part of the School Code stating that the minutes are not intended to be transcripts of the items or issues of the meeting; however, a Director may request that something verbatim may be entered if the request is made at the time of the meeting. He cautioned that in case of litigation, verbatim comments could be used. Mrs. Lynch stated that this was in reference to the e-mails.

Mrs. Jankowsky pointed out that she had sent an e-mail to Mrs. Lynch requesting that Mrs. Mueller replace her on the Education Committee as well as the legislative liaison. Mrs. Lynch asked if Mrs. Mueller was agreeable to this. Mrs. Mueller stated that she had no problem with this since she was not on any committees yet. Mrs. Lynch thanked her for agreeing to this.

Mr. Grossi pointed out that by policy the liaison between the townships was usually an officer of the Board. He was appointed as liaison to Upper Southampton. He indicated that he did not mind, but the liaison was usually an officer. He wondered if Mrs. Mueller was willing to do this. Mrs. Mueller stated that she had no problem with this, particularly since she attended the meetings anyway.

Mrs. Brzezinski reported that at the I.U. meeting the postcard from the children at Davis Elementary was presented.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Grossi stated that he had previously asked for information about the current three-zone District organization. His goal was to assure that all regions, including Ivyland, were divided based on one man/one vote; to assure that all communities would have a representative; and to reduce the possibility of “Board stacking” by one political subdivision. He indicated that his goals would focus on the needs of taxpayers, parents and students only.

Mr. Grossi requested information from PSBA relative to vacating the existing jointure agreement and redistributing assets according to market value and recreating an Upper Southampton School Board and/or Charter District that would eliminate the current political influences. This District would offer K-8 and be standards based, and would offer a 9-12 choice. The placement would be based on student needs and the school’s performance relative to a set of community standards.

Mr. Grossi closed by asking the Board to conduct its business in the proper manner, by following policy, using the proper processes and conducting its business in sunshine.

Mrs. Lynch voiced her indignation over Mr. Grossi’s remarks, which she felt were untrue. She stated that she would like to conduct the meeting in a proper way for the public and the School District.

Mrs. Huf stated that she took offense to almost everything Mr. Grossi said. She felt the Board had tried to work together and that the negative attacks were unfair.

Al Hertenberger of 307 Maple Avenue, Southampton, addressed the Board about the fundraising policy. He indicated that this was discussed 2-3 years ago. He felt that it would be hard for Administration to administer this policy and did not see a problem if it was an organized fundraiser within the school. He asked the Board to consider this.

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that she would be interested in the information from PSBA regarding separating from the School District. She felt it would be informative.

Mrs. Jankowsky pointed out that the Board had received information regarding Act 71 from Manheim Central School District about gambling. The information discussed the constitutionality of Acts 71 and 72. She asked whether this was asking the Board for support or if it was informational. Mr. Blatt indicated that it was informational, that he wanted the Board to know what other districts were doing.

Mrs. Lynch stated that everyone had received a legal opinion from PSBA regarding what Mr. Grossi mentioned previously.

Mrs. Lynch indicated that she was looking at the information on Hatboro-Horsham's website regarding Act 72. She felt it would be useful for Centennial to have this also.

Mrs. Mueller pointed out that she had previously brought up the issue, under Legislative Report, regarding Act 71/72 that this was not all done procedurally correct. There was more information in the Legislative Bulletin if any Board members wished to read about it.

Regarding the issue of the lifts that surfaced under review of the minutes earlier in the meeting, Mrs. Mueller questioned whether there were fines involved if we are in violation. Mr. Grossi confirmed that there are significant fines.

Mrs. Mueller stated that she wanted to bring this to everyone's attention, since this was being referred to as an emergency situation. She hoped that this did not get hung up in committee.

Mr. Faust explained that a purchase of that magnitude must go through bid under state law and that we would only be in OSHA violation if we did not take certain safety precautions. He indicated that Mr. Robinson felt that this would be okay until it went through the proper procedure.

Mr. Grossi felt that this should be moved forward as quickly as possible.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Huf and seconded by Mrs. Lynch to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie A. Detwiler
Board Secretary