

November 3, 2011

A regular meeting of the Board of Education, Union Free School District of the Tarrytowns, was held on Thursday, November 3, 2011 in the Multi Purpose Room at John Paulding School, commencing at 8:00PM.

Present: B. Joseph Lillis, President
Vincent Nadile, Vice President
Mimi Godwin, Trustee
Craig Laub, Trustee
Paul Rode, Trustee
Katharine M. Swibold, Trustee

Roll Call

Absent: Sheila J. Conklin, Trustee

Also present: Howard W. Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Barbarann Tantillo, Assistant Superintendent
John J. Staiger, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Business
Michele Milliam, Principal John Paulding School
Rosemary Prati, Principal, Morse School
Debbie Hand, Principal, Washington Irving School
Michael Scarantino, Asst. Principal, Washington Irving School
Elizabeth Lopez, Principal, Sleepy Hollow Middle School
Carol Quinones-Smith, Asst. Principal, Sleepy Hollow MS
Carol Conklin, Principal, Sleepy Hollow High School
Anthony Baxter, Asst. Principal, Sleepy Hollow High School
Kathy Conley, Chief Information Officer

Call to Order

Executive Session

Public Session

Trustee Godwin, moved, seconded by Trustee Swibold, that it be
RESOLVED: That the Board goes into executive session to discuss particular personnel matters.

CARRIED 6-0 7:45PM
No formal action was taken.

**Meditation
Pledge to the Flag**

CARRIED 6-0 8:03PM
Trustee Rode moved, seconded by Trustee Swibold, that it be
RESOLVED: That the Board returns to Public Session.

**Communications,
Petitions &
Requests from the
Public**

President Lillis indicated that Trustee Conklin is attending her son's All-State chorus concert this evening and could not be in attendance.

There was a moment of silent meditation, after which the Pledge to the Flag was given.
President Lillis asked that the following be remembered who recently passed away: Doris Pompa, the grandmother of Dana Pompa, technology teaching assistant at SHMS/HS; John Bueti, the father of Christina Miles, elementary teacher at Morse School; Winona Mills Blackburn, who served as a teacher and department chair until her retirement from the district in 1995.

President Lillis congratulated the following: Bridget and John Bentley, on the birth of their baby girl, Grace Harding; Kelly and George Pangis who welcomed a baby boy, Ryan James.

CARRIED 5-0-1

Yes: Trustees Godwin, Laub, Nadile, Rode, Swibold
Abstain: Trustee Lillis

**Minutes:
10/20/2011**

Trustee Nadile moved, seconded by Trustee Godwin, that it be
RESOLVED: That the Board of Education, having received copies of the minutes of the regular public meeting of October 20, 2011, approves same.

President Lillis reported that tonight is the second reading of the naming facility in honor of Michele Chebetar. There being no further discussion on this topic, President Lillis noted that a third reading and adoption will take place at the November 17th BOE meeting.

Board Matters:

Trustee Swibold reported that the Board of Education, the EPTA, PTSA & SEPTA will be presenting a legislative advocacy presentation on December 1st, hosted by Lisa Davis, Executive Director of WPSBA. The presentation will address how we can get involved with legislation and items that affect school budgets. Fliers about the presentation are on the desk by the entrance to the multi- purpose room.

Dr. Smith reported that this week has been designated School Board Recognition by Governor Cuomo. He handed each board member a coffee mug as a token of the District's appreciation. President Lillis, on behalf of the Board, thanked Dr. Smith for the gifts.

President Lillis noted that tonight's presentation to the Board is the annual student performance report. We will be directly addressing the District In Need of Improvement designation. Academic performance is of utmost importance to the Board, as well as to the community. No one is happy about this designation and the presentation should provide some context for you. The superintendent and his team have put together a presentation that hopefully will put the issue in context for us, discuss the data and then address the ongoing actions. The Board did have an active hand in helping to shape this presentation. On Tuesday evening, Trustees Conklin, Rode and Swibold met with Dr. Smith to go over the report, offer suggestions and refine the presentation.

**Superintendent's
Report**

Dr. Smith reported that we'll start off by giving a basic overview of where we stand and we'll talk about the state testing program. We'll go into a little more depth on the results and talk about the significance of it, as far as how we interpret data, its strengths, areas for improvement and talk about where students end up. Nothing in the presentation should come across in a way that sounds like it's an excuse or we're glossing over anything. On the other hand, there are aspects of our performance that are really good news, and we'll share that as well. Nothing that I say or that any staff member says should be interpreted in any way, shape or form as pointing fingers at or laying blame at the feet of any subgroup of our student population. Dr. Smith introduced the following presenters: Kathy Conley, Chief Information Officer; Dr. Barbarann Tantillo, Assistant Superintendent; Carol Conklin, Principal – Sleepy Hollow HS; Dr. Debbie Hand, Principal – Washington Irving School and Elizabeth Lopez, Principal – Sleepy Hollow Middle School.

Dr. Smith indicated that NCLB is a federally mandated program that pushes school achievement standards higher each year until peaking in 2014. There's an arbitrary timeframe of 10 years in which all students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in both ELA and Math. Last year New York State raised proficiency standard scores and added more questions to the tests. In order to meet learning standards on the English test, students have to answer 45 out of 60 questions correctly. There are established subgroups and an established mechanism for accountability of schools. Each year the target is raised and if, along the way the rate of increase is faster than the rate of increase in student performance in any subgroup in any one year, then in the second year also falls short of the target in any subgroup, the district or school can receive this designation (SINI). We look at growth for our students in two ways: grade level comparison and cohort growth. Our experience in ELA grades 3-8 (2011) showed that there was an average performance of 3% points higher than in 2010. We also look at cohort growth, there again we experienced growth overall. Our rate of growth exceeded the growth in the county and the state level. We fell below target in two subgroups: LEP and special education. Subgroups are not established by school districts but by NCLB regulations. While the ethnicity breakdown is mutually exclusive, the other categories are not. There is a lot of overlap and the same students can appear in different subgroups.

The presentation included:

- Presentation Contents
- What determines the state report card status of schools and school districts?
- Student Performance Overview – On Target
- Average Performance Growth
- District Performance – Grades 3-8 ELA & Math
- Student Performance Overview – Below Target
- What are the NCLB Accountability Subgroups?
- Anticipated NCLB 2011 Accountability Status
- Performance Target Progression Grades 3-8 ELA
- State Testing and Accountability Program
- What is the nature of the elementary tests that are used to determine student proficiency?
- What is the nature of the secondary tests that are used to determine student proficiency?
- Relationship of raw scores to performance levels
- How have the NCLB requirements for performance on these tests impacted schools?
- What is the status designation progression?
- What is the required response to a Year 1 SINI - Basic designation?
- District Assessment Results and Comparisons
- 2011 ELA State Assessment Proficiency (% Scoring 3 or better on scale of 1 - 4)
- How close did we come to being a District in Good Standing again this year?
- Program Rigor Comparison
- How close did we come to hitting all of the Math performance targets this year?
- Regents (Integrated Algebra, Algebra 2/Trigonometry, Geometry, Global History & Geography Regents, US History & Government Regents, Living Environment Regents)
- Data Analysis and Interpretation
- ELA

- Math
- District Response
- Graduation Outcomes
- College Acceptances

The above is a partial overview of the presentation. The complete presentation will be posted on the District website by Monday.

Board Comments/Questions:

- What professional development activities are we doing to address these needs?
- What are we doing with differentiated instruction in all levels?
- Program rigor comparison chart – I would like to see the math behind that so I can understand how the comparison was made to other districts
- With regard to the state tests - you can expect a difference between the feedback that parents get thru our own internal assessment vs the state tests but I think there's a lack of general feedback overall from the perspective of homework being given, tests coming back, tests even given. There are inconsistencies from grade to grade and teacher to teacher at the elementary level. Do we look at data at a specific delivery perspective, section by section?
- I am struck by the amount of data you're dealing with and the amount of tests students take. So much time and energy is spent on data and numbers, this is a huge concern for me. Where is the education of the students?
- The average percentage scoring range is low (level 4), what do you attribute that to? It seems to be low in math for our district?
- How do we get our kids out from under the banner of being a DINI? Looking at 3-8 grade experience (subgroups) do you remain confident that given the heterogeneous grouping that we have now that you're going to be able to deliver the focused attention that the students need, in order to get the level of proficiency that they need, in order to get out of this designation as soon as possible.
- School quality review – what can we do as a community to help?
- What are the financial implications that come along with this designation?
- In the areas of improvement that we noticed this year (Grade 3-8 math), are we seeing any consistencies, are we identifying new weaknesses or new strengths?

Citizen's comments included:

- Seems to be a lackadaisical response. There are other schools who have similar cohorts and they're not failing. Why do we not compare to other schools that are succeeding? How are we going to respond to failure in this area?
- The community hasn't seen this important topic discussed at other BOE meetings. We want to work with the school and community. This matter is extremely important and we all need to be involved.
- Like it or not, NCLB is what we have. I don't want to live in a district that's been designated a District in Need of Improvement. Very soon, if we don't solve this, you will find yourself with a very different district within the next few years. You spent a tremendous amount of

time on this presentation, but I do not understand what the plan is? I beg you to include parents in this matter, it is not enough for such an important topic to have an annual check in and talk about the subject.

- Concerned that the designation of our district could have negative effects. How many districts in Westchester are designated DINI? How many districts are likely to join our district?
- How probable is it that change is coming? Can we petition the state?
- Differentiated instruction -is it consistent with all teachers? How are we meeting the needs of all the students? RTI – how are we moving into it? What plans are we putting into place to measure the children's' growth outside of the test scores?
- Class sizes have increased tremendously, budget constraints continue, DINI is not a good thing. There is a severe change, especially for the real estate market. How will proposed budget cuts (if any) affect student learning? People want to be involved, this impacts everyone in the community.
- This is a serious problem. We need a strategy, what did we do last year? What are we doing this year and what are we going to do if they don't reduce the bar. Is there a consequence?
- We need more transparency. We do want to work together toward success, we have a problem.
- I really think it's important to keep parents engaged, how is the Board and administration going to keep parents engaged in this matter?
- What can we do to get Hispanic families involved in board meetings? There are no translators here, spanish speaking parents will not understand this presentation. We all want the best for our children, we need to get parents engaged.
- The comparison slide of our school district & Irvington; graduation rates; competitiveness of schools.
- Differentiation in classrooms? I do communicate with teachers, time and time again, I get no information from them. Work is not being sent home, homework is not being corrected by teachers.
- Timeframe for when differentiated math program will take place? Have you looked at other districts and what they're doing to turn around their designation?
- The potential for this designation was known a year ago. The District should utilize its ability to share information with parents and citizens so they can be aware of what's going on. How do you feel about the way you are communicating with parents?
- We need to focus on what form this waiver is going to take? It's going to be important that we discuss this issue in the context of the budget.
- I feel that we need answers, nothing gets solved. I come to these meetings and never get answers to my questions. We're all concerned parents and we expect to have our questions addressed.

President Lilis noted that we will try to schedule a forum to continue this discussion.

CARRIED 6-0

Trustee Swibold moved, seconded by Trustee Nadile, that it be
RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following Staff Personnel Motions, as listed:

**STAFF
PERSONNEL:**

In accordance with Policy #9020, be it
RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following instructional/non-instructional substitute staff for the 2011/12 school year:

Substitute Staff

Lorena Veliz	Teaching Assistant	\$13.00 per hour
Lorena Veliz	Clerical	\$14.73 per hour
Ysmelda Rondon	Bilingual (Spanish) Translator	\$25.00 per hour
Jean O'Brien	District Website Maintenance	\$45.84 per hour
Nicole Occhipinti	Teaching Assistant	\$13.00 per hour
Nicole Occhipinti	Teacher	\$85.00 per diem
Lindsay Zekus	Teacher	\$85.00 per diem
Lindsay Zekus	Teaching Assistant	\$13.00 per hour
Katy Guzman	Bus Driver	\$21.49 per hour
Gail Alexander	Health Aide	\$13.00 per hour
Gail Alexander	Clerical	\$14.73 per hour

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby revises the unpaid child care leave of absence for Bridget Bentley, Elementary Teacher – Washington Irving School, effective December 15, 2011 through December 23, 2011.

**Unpaid LOA:
B. Bentley
K. Pangis
E. Andrus**

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby revises the unpaid child care leave of absence for Kelly Pangis, Health Teacher – Sleepy Hollow High School, effective December 7, 2011 through January 29, 2012.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby grants an unpaid leave of absence to Eric Andrus, School Monitor – Sleepy Hollow Middle School, effective December 1, 2011 through December 9, 2011.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following to Winter 2011 stipend positions, as per the attached list: (Appendix #1)

Winter stipends

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following to the Rosetta Stone After School Enrichment Program, for the 2011/2012 school year:

**After School
Program**

W.L. Morse School		
Ysmelda Rondon	Substitute Teacher	\$35 per hour

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following staff to the After School Program for the 2011/2012 school year: (Grant funded)

John Paulding School		
Kathleen Jones	Teacher	\$35 per hour

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following to serve as sporting events supervisors for the 2011-2012 school year:

Sporting Events Supervisors:

Bruce Diggle
John Cincotta

CARRIED 6-0

Trustee Swibold moved, seconded by Trustee Rode, that it be
RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following Student Personnel Motion, as listed:

STUDENT PERSONNEL:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education accepts the recommendations from the Committee on Special Education (CSE) at its September 21, 28, 2011 meetings and the Committee on PreSchool Special Education (CPSE) at its September 9, 23, 2011 meetings as attached. (Appendix #2)

CSE/CPSE Reports

CARRIED 6-0

Trustee Swibold moved, seconded by Trustee Nadile, that it be
RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following Finance & Facilities Motions, as listed:

FINANCE & FACILITIES

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education hereby modifies the 2011-12 general fund budget from \$64,754,401 to \$64,789,012.58 for e-rate funds. *Discussion followed.*

Modification of 2011-12 budget

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education hereby modifies the 2011-12 general fund budget from \$64,789,012.58 to \$65,914,950.85, for tax certiorari court ordered payments. *Discussion followed.*

CARRIED 6-0

Trustee Godwin moved, seconded by Trustee Rode, that it be
RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following General Motions, as listed:

GENERAL:

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby adopts the revised 2011-2012 School Calendar, as per the attached. (Appendix #3)
Discussion followed.

Revised 2011-12 school calendar

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education is authorized and empowered to execute an agreement with Yulissa Moscoso, 145 Cortlandt St., Apt. #7, Sleepy Hollow, NY, Childcare provider for Spanish classes, at a rate of \$8.00 per hour, not to exceed \$400.00, for the 2011/2012 school year. (Grant funded)

**Agreements:
Y. Moscoso
L. Kapica**

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education is authorized and empowered to execute an agreement with Leo Kapica, 29 West Franklin Street, Tarrytown, NY, Childcare provider for Spanish classes, at a rate of \$8.00 per hour, not to exceed \$400.00, for the 2011/2012 school year. (Grant funded)

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to enter into a contract with NMG Evaluation, 12 Maple Court, Cortlandt Manor, NY, to conduct an independent evaluation of the 21st Century Community Center Program, K-4 and SHHS, at a fee of \$20,000, effective for the 2011/2012 school year. (Grant Funded)

GENERAL:

**Agreement:
NMG Evaluation**

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby accepts, with appreciation, the following gift:

Gifts/Donation:

Julie Larsen Maher and William J. Maher, of a check in the amount of \$3,200, to be used to reinstate Winter Cheerleading for the 2011-12 season. *Trustee Godwin noted that these parents worked so hard to raise these funds. This is another example of how our parents came through in a moment of need. They should be commended for all their efforts!*

J. & W. Maher

New Business

New business: Trustee Laub suggested that the board hold a forum to continue the dialogue from this evening. The community is restless and the Board needs to address their concerns. President Lillis indicated that the Board will discuss this at a later time and come up with a plan.

CARRIED 6-0

11:45PM

Trustee Swibold moved, seconded by Trustee Nadile, that it be
RESOLVED: That the meeting of the Board be adjourned.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Nelly Valentin
District Clerk

Appendices

Appendices:

- #1 Winter Stipends 2011
- #2 CSE/CPSE Reports
- #3 Revised 2011-12 School Calendar