

SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
125 Jackson Avenue
South Plainfield, NJ 07080
Telephone: 908-754-4620

Committee of the Whole Meeting/Board Retreat – Wednesday, July 18, 2018 – 5.45 P.M.
South Plainfield High School
200 Lake Street
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Seesselberg called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

II. SALUTE TO FLAG

III. ROLL CALL- Stephen Fried

Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary

Present: Mrs. Anesh, Mr. Both, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Giannakis, Mr. Pennisi, Mrs. Wolak, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Seesselberg

Absent: Mr. Cassio

Also Present: Dr. Noreen Lishak, Superintendent; Ms. Mary Malyska, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Stephen Fried, Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary; Mr. Marc Zitomer, Legal Counsel

IV. BOARD PRESIDENT

South Plainfield Public Schools Mission Statement:

Students are the focus of the South Plainfield Public Schools. We will provide a dynamic, rigorous, relevant and technology-enriched curriculum, guided by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Our mission is to develop life-long learners who are prepared to succeed in a global and diverse society. We are resolved to educate the whole child, instilling the desire within our students to question and to become divergent thinkers who can achieve their fullest potential.

In accordance with the terms of the Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was posted in all school buildings, the Administration Building, Borough Clerk's office, Police Headquarters, Public Library, four newspapers, and W.C.T.C. on January 8, 2018.

Please be advised:

- There is no smoking on school grounds - inside or outside - at any time.
- Please silence all electronic devices.
- Pursuant to District Policy #0167, each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes' duration and no participant may speak more than once on the same topic.

Mr. Giannakis said that in re-reading the May 9th minutes that were approved, he realized that he did not abstain on 11C, #85 and would like to do that right now to amend that and correct it.

Mr. Seesselberg announced that the board needs to go into a brief executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 7-0

The Board returned from executive session at 6:01 p.m.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation to Retirees

High School
Patricia DeSantis

Middle School
Marie Scotto

Kennedy School
Laura McCreesh

Dr. Lishak said that Ms. Scotto and Ms. McCreesh were unable to attend. Mrs. Boyle presented the Certificate of Appreciation to Mrs. DeSantis.

2. Good News and Progress in our Schools

Dr. Lishak said that as many of you may have already read, Governor Murphy has announced changes to the PARCC Assessment and graduation requirements for the coming school year. As of today, the school district has not received any instructions on the proposed changes and therefore will continue to plan for regular test administration. In the event that the New Jersey Department of Education provides an update and guidance we will inform the parents and students accordingly. The PARCC Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are expected to arrive in district by late August. The ISRs will be mailed home for parents record. A copy of the student scores will be kept in the district, as required.

Dr. Lishak reported that the summer months here in the district have been very busy. The district has a number of teachers working on updating course curriculum and alignment to the New Jersey Student Learning Standard. We also have ESY programs running at Roosevelt School, a Title I Program in ELA and Math at Grant School as well as the ongoing PARCC classes and assessment continuing through the first week of August. Presently, we have a number of

positions we are working to fill throughout the school district, ranging from paraprofessionals to teachers from the elementary level all the way up through the high school.

Facility work is underway at all of the schools in the district. Projects ranging from floor tile replacement to complete HVAC replacement system at the Middle School. The Board will present a full update on these projects during our August meeting.

Dr. Lishak said, as a reminder to parents and students, the opening day packet will be available online August 20th. At that time, students schedules will be available on the High School website.

VI. AGENDA ADDITIONS AND/OR DELETIONS

1. Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

VII. CURRICULUM/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

DISCUSSION

VIII. FINANCE

DISCUSSION

IX. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

DISCUSSION

X. PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buildings & Grounds

Mr. Giannakis said that the Buildings and Grounds Committee has not yet met this month.

Curriculum

Mr. Pennisi reported that the Curriculum Committee met on July 11th at 10:00 a.m. In attendance were Ms. Malyska, Mr. Pennisi, Mr. Cassio, Mr. Seesselberg and Mr. Both. They discussed the summer math assignment that was presented by Mrs. Garrison along with other items. There were concerns from parents about the math assignment. Both an e-mail and a letter were sent to the parents addressing the concerns.

The committee was also informed that the curriculum writing this year will all be done on-site. In the past, sometimes curriculum could be written on their own but starting this year it will all be done on site.

In regards to the Title I Summer Program and Summer PARCC administration, the dates were given out late because the district received them late. Mr. Pennisi said that they are planning the dates for next year assuming they have to have it and if they don't need it they can just withdraw the dates.

Mr. Pennisi said that Mrs. Garrison presented the flip classroom survey results. There were mixed feelings. He said that Mrs. Garrison likes the idea of flip. They discussed it and she talked about it being part of the class and not a total flip classroom. He said that there was teacher engagement also. He said that they are going to review classroom procedures so that every teacher that is using it will be using it the same way. The procedures will be reviewed with the staff to ensure continuity.

Mr. Pennisi said that the assessment schedule is set for now. He said that they also discussed the 8th grade Annapolis and Washington trip that is set for June 5-7th.

Mrs. Boyle thanked Mary Malyska, Anu Garrison and Dr. Lishak for all of the help with the confusion over the summer math. She said that she thinks that there is one parent who still has confusion and she is sure Mrs. Garrison will contact them. Mrs. Boyle said that four years ago, Dave Knarr did a flip classroom as a pilot for his honors calculus class and it worked out well. They were all given tablets and at night they went home and answered all the questions and came back the next day and discussed them. Mrs. Boyle said that she thinks that the flip classroom in that aspect worked really well.

Finance

Mr. Chapman said that the Finance Committee had a brief meeting on Monday. They met with Mr. Smith and he was waiting for the year-end financial to be completed. Mr. Chapman said that it was a brief meeting and nothing major and out of the ordinary was discussed.

Policy

Mr. Pennisi said that the Policy Committee met on July 9th at 10:00 a.m. In attendance were Dr. Lishak, Mr. Pennisi, Mr. Cassio, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Giannakis. The following three policies were reviewed:

Policy 8630 – Bus Driver and Bus Aide Responsibility – This policy will be worked on during the summer. They added language for checking driver's Motor Vehicle history and they are contacting the insurance company to obtain their input. This is a result to what happened in North Jersey and they found out that the driver had all kinds of violations.

Policy 2624 – Grading System – Administration is in discussion with the staff and the association to add language to add a minimum number of assessments and also to include what is considered an assessment and also the time they have as far as posting it.

Dr. Lishak added that there is a meeting with Mrs. Joffe tomorrow. Mr. Pennisi said that there were some concerns over the year where parents were not getting the feedback in a timely manner so we are going to put something in policy so that can happen.

In regards to the Family Leave policy, a dealing for staff to notify the district that are coming back will be added. That is for management purposes so that if we need to fill a position we don't have last minute notices that they are not coming back.

Mr. Pennisi said that there is a new policy on cyber threats that Strauss Esmay is in the process of creating a policy. That will be reviewed upon receipt.

Public Relations

Mr. Chapman said that the Public Relations committee hasn't met but he reminded everybody that the district newsletter that we started in April will go out in August to announce the school opening information, facilities updates, etc.

Shared Services

No Report.

Special Education

No Report

Traffic Liaison

No Report

SEPAC Liaison

No report

Legislative Liaison

Mrs. Boyle said that the Governor was able to stop a shutdown. She said that the school funding formula has been reworked for what she believes to be the third time. Our district is remaining the same at \$81,000. Mrs. Boyle said that she is not sure if the Governor is going to try to review that again. Mrs. Boyle said that she, as the President of the County School Boards Association, met with Assemblywoman Pinkin and Christopher Jones. They discussed the school funding, underfunded mandates, special education, charter schools and the fact that charter schools are not being held accountable for their curriculum and reports. Mrs. Boyle said that this is a big issue and she knows that Assemblywoman Pinkin has a voice and brings it back to her constituents so hopefully we will hear more. Mrs. Boyle said that when she had Assemblyman Coughlin

come to the May County Meeting he talked about cyber threats and social media and said that hopefully that's going to move forward.

DISCUSSION:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education approve the foregoing reports

MOTION: Mr. Pennisi

SECOND: Mr. Both

VOTE: 6-0

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Giannakis left at 6:08 p.m.

Prior to Executive Session the Board of Education held their annual retreat with guest speakers Maryann Friedman, New Jersey School Boards Association Field Service Representative and Marc Zitomer, Legal Counsel.

Mr. Seesselberg said that there are a few other things that need to be discussed in executive session in regards to the board retreat. He asked if anyone had anything else for the board retreat.

Mrs. Boyle said that she thought that we do the board goals and district goals in public. Mr. Seesselberg said that at the request of Dr. Lishak, she would like to have that discussion in executive session and then we will come back and then announce the goals. Mrs. Boyle said that in the past it was always in public. Dr. Lishak said that she hasn't had the opportunity to send the list to review. She said, if you would like, she could send those to you and then we can approve them in August.

Mr. Zitomer said that district goals are generally discussed in public. Dr. Lishak asked if the board wanted her to send them the goals so that they have the opportunity to review and are not seeing them blind for the first time.

Mrs. Boyle asked about the board goals. Mr. Seesselberg said that we can do the board goals in the public and then hold off on the district goals until August if Dr. Lishak has some suggested ones that we should consider. Dr. Lishak said for our district goals that she has quite a number and she doesn't want to give them to the Board blind. Mrs. Boyle said that is fine as long as they are talked about in public in August. She said she is okay with that.

Mr. Seesselberg asked if there was any other discussion. He said that we have to come up with district and/or board goals for the agenda for the latter part of the meeting tonight. He said that we can do the board goals right now and get those three done and add those to tonight's agenda and then for August after Dr. Lishak sends us her

suggestions in Friday's packet we can discuss is next month.

Mrs. Boyle asked if we are each going to give what we would like to see as a board goal and then narrow them down.

Mr. Chapman said that he is fine with doing it but he said that the last two years we did not do it out here. Mrs. Boyle said that it was public and it was videotaped. Mr. Chapman said ok and that he understands.

Mr. Seesselberg said that we are discussing suggestions for board goals. Mrs. Boyle read her suggestions for Board goals: Continue to raise academic achievement levels for all students; continue to increase awareness of content of curriculum, arts, athletics and extracurricular activities and clubs by posting on the BOE website and the parent letters that are sent home by e-mail; hire a permanent Business Administrator; and continue to enable all students throughout promotion of critical thinking, expand character education and volunteerism through our many programs.

Mr. Chapman said that he echoes hire a permanent BA and he said that he would like to see the Board go to a three-committee system. Mr. Pennisi said that we need to look at our committee structure. We have a ton of committees and a lot of them overlap.

Mr. Seesselberg read the following from Mr. Giannakis: find a permanent Business Administrator; and continue to ensure all referendum work is completed at or under budget and timely and continue to support administration and give them all of the tools they need for success.

Mr. Seesselberg's three suggested board goals are; search and hire a full time Business Administrator; support, through funding and staff, the administration's goals to improve student achievement; and complete the referendum projects on schedule and within budget.

Mr. Seesselberg said they know what the first goal will be. Dr. Lishak suggested to Mr. Seesselberg that perhaps he would want to discuss some type of a survey on the demographics. Mr. Seesselberg said that he was going to leave that for district goal.

Mr. Seesselberg said for number one we can put continue search for a permanent Business Administrator. He asked the board members what they would like number two to be. Mrs. Boyle asked Mr. Chapman to repeat what he said about three committees. Mr. Chapman said that at the convention two years ago there was a committee system model that consists of three committees. He said he's not going to get the this one hundred percent correct but there is a business committee that would handle finance and buildings and grounds, one that would handle education and one that would handle facilities. He said that Hillsborough did it and they did a presentation and to Mr. Chapman he said that it looks to be a very efficient way.

Mr. Chapman said that we can have bigger committees. Mr. Seesselberg said that one of the other advantages to that is that the monthly calendar was a lot tighter because there weren't all the committees scheduling and he thinks they all met within one or two days of each other in the same week so it was a little bit easier on the board members.

Mr. Seesselberg asked if there was any other discussion. Mr. Seesselberg said he had something else to discuss about that but will discuss in executive session.

Mr. Pennisi said that the referendum projects should be added. Mr. Seesselberg said he will add to continue to ensure all referendum work is completed at or under budget in a timely manner.

Mr. Seesselberg said that he will add to reassess and revamp the committee structure. He said that doesn't give us any definite thing right now but we can discuss it as a board goal in the coming year. Mrs. Boyle said that she has a questions about that. She said when you said the committees can be bigger there would be more board members involved on those three committee or you would still share the information with the members that are not on. Mr. Seesselberg said that being that there would be limited meetings and he is remembering this from months ago when he looked at it, you can have bigger committees but you would have to do the notification like if there are five or six people on a certain committee you would have to do the usual 48-hour notice. Mrs. Boyle said that we used to have that. Mr. Seesselberg said that it will be like one meeting. Mr. Seesselberg said that he thinks they did it one night and if the committees overlapped they spread it over two nights but for a couple of the committees they didn't overlap so they just met together.

Mr. Zitomer said to keep in mind that it becomes sometimes difficult to have a majority of the board put on a committee. That is considered a meeting, obviously, that has to be advertised for each committee meeting. You have to, by law, have a public participation session at every one of those committee meetings now, you have to have minutes, there is a lot more involved. He said that he is not saying that it is good or bad, he just wants the Board to be aware of it in terms and most boards do not have a majority on a committee. Mrs. Boyle said that is what Mr. Pennisi said. We used to do that in curriculum and the public came.

Mr. Pennisi said it had to be open as a regular board meeting. Mr. Zitomer said you would have to know that in advance. Mr. Pennisi said the curriculum meeting was posted. Dr. Lishak said that you are essentially creating more public meetings. Mrs. Boyle said that there were also times where we would combine finance and buildings and grounds. Mr. Pennisi said that it all needs to be looked it. He said that it doesn't mean we are going to a three committee. Dr. Lishak said that maybe you can word it as eliminating unnecessary committees. Mr. Seesselberg said that it doesn't necessarily have to be a board goal, we can discuss it in the year.

Mr. Pennisi said that the goal says to look at and possibly restructure and it doesn't mean you are going to do it. Mr. Seesselberg said we can list is as reassess the board

committees. Mr. Zitomer said, reassess and potentially restructure. Mr. Chapman said that we obviously don't want to have the majority involved. He said that he pulled up the committees and they are education, governance and operations.

Mr. Seesselberg reviewed the goals they will add to the agenda: continue to search for a permanent Business Administrator; Continue to ensure all referendum projects are completed at or under budget and in a timely manner; reassess the board committee structure.

Mr. Seesselberg said that if there is no other discussion we will add that for approval at the regular meeting tonight.

Dr. Lishak said if you want if you have that one that we talked about that you would like for the district goals that we go ahead and put together a demographic study to address the possible increase in student population or individual school population, we can do that as a district goal and she said she can give you the other two that are academics. She said if you are fine with them then we can go ahead and do those now

Mr. Seesselberg said that way he had reworded it and he has to talk to Dr. Lishak about it was to monitor the projected increase of residential construction in the Borough and assess its potential impact on schools. That would be a district goal.

Mrs. Boyle said you are not talking about what we paid a former superintendent to do. Mr. Seesselberg said no, this isn't a redistricting, this is just, we are putting in all this housing on the south side, we have to be a little more proactive in monitoring what's going up and how it is going to affect our schools. Redistricting may be one of the options, it may be extensions on existing schools, it may be rearranging the students in the existing schools that we have but we just have to monitor what is happening in the next two or three years and it's not just the new construction, we have neighborhoods in town that are getting young families move in as the old residents move out. That's one of the problems over in the Franklin area because those small cape cods are being bought by young families. Dr. Lishak said that Franklin's population has not been growing, Riley and Roosevelt are growing. Kennedy continues to remain the same but it's one of the highest populated now. Mr. Seesselberg said that redistricting may be one of the options but we just want to monitor and see what happens so we are not hit one year and we have to worry about getting more busses and things like that. Just monitor what is happening in town and have a little more cooperation with the Borough planners. Dr. Lishak said that at some point, depending on what happens with the building and the amount of students moving in, you are going to have to do a demographic study.

Mrs. Boyle said that she is sure but she doesn't think that the south side, the mandate by COAA is going to take place for at least five years or more. There is nothing moving in there although it is mandated and accepted. Mrs. Boyle said it's always good to look at just in case.

Mr. Seesselberg said, even if the construction hasn't started, it will be planned. Builders

will go in and say they want to build forty houses on this lot of land and we should have some type of awareness of that. It may take a year or two to build it but just so that we know what is happening in the town. Dr. Lishak said that she has a couple more if you want to use them. Mr. Seesselberg said that Dr. Lishak can send the goals to the board and then they will review and discuss in August.

Mrs. Boyle asked if you have the cost for that. Mr. Seesselberg said there wouldn't be any cost at all, maybe a minimal one but it's just to be aware of, have a little more contact with the Borough Planning Board and things like that. Maybe going to a planning board meeting or just being aware of what's in town so that we can get in their face a little bit and say you are doing all this stuff to our town and it could hurt the quality of life in our town or money we have to put out for another school, another extension. More buses more teachers and things like that so it's not so much a cost it's just an awareness.

Mrs. Boyle said ok because we paid \$15,000 for a study that went nowhere and they wound up using the county demographics which amounted to nothing. Mr. Seesselberg said that would be one of the district goals and we will discuss that in August.

Mr. Seesselberg said that he spoke with Maryann from NJSBA beforehand and their scores are higher this year than last year so that is in a good direction. He said he also asked her to talk about the upcoming programs at school boards. Most of them are at night or on Saturday's and they are great to go to, you just have to book them through the administrator's office if there is a cost. You can sign up for the free ones on your own. He said that the security one that he did was through the Business Administrator's office. He said to please take advantage of the offerings because you get a lot of knowledge out of them.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

RESOLVED, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 47-1A-1 *et. seq.*) that the Board meets in closed session at this time to discuss confidential matters pertaining to: (select one or more)

1. a matter rendered confidential by federal or state law
2. a matter in which release of information would impair the right to receive government funds
3. material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy
4. a collective bargaining agreement and/or negotiations related to it
5. a matter involving the purchase, lease, or acquisition of real property with public funds
6. protection of public safety and property and/or investigations of possible violations or violations of law
7. pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation and/or matters of attorney-client privilege
8. specific prospective or current employees unless all who could be

- adversely affected request an open session.
9. deliberation after a public hearing that could result in a civil penalty or other loss

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session shall be made public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

MOTION: Mr. Pennisi SECOND: Mr. Chapman VOTE: 8-0

Mr. Giannakis returned to the meeting during executive session.

XIV. AGENDA APPROVAL

RESOLVED, that the agenda for the regular public meeting on July 18, 2018, as may have been modified, is hereby approved.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Both VOTE: 8-0

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board, there was a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Both VOTE: 8-0

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Fried
Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary