

WHITE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR SESSION MEETING

MINUTES

MONDAY

JANUARY 28, 2019

6:30 PM

The Regular Meeting of the White Township Board of Education was held on the above date in the White Township Municipal Building, Belvidere, NJ with the following members in attendance at roll call: Mr. Panetta, Mrs. Nusser-Meany, Ms. Howell, Mrs. Sroka, Mrs. Lensi, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Nikolopoulos and Ms. Lee. William Thompson, CSA and Dawn Huff, Business Administrator/Board Secretary were also in attendance as well as 7 members of the public.

Mr. Panetta opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and stated that the meeting had been duly advertised and the public properly notified through notification to The Express-Times, Star Ledger and the White Township Municipal Clerk in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Ms. Lee to approve the minutes as submitted from the December 17, 2018 Regular Session Meeting and the January 7, 2019 Reorganization Meeting and Executive Session. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

Mr. Panetta recognized and congratulated Mr. Thompson and Mr. LaBar for their recent induction into the Belvidere High School Hall of Fame.

CSA REPORT

Mr. Thompson recognized student achievement in the Spelling Bee and All-Star Band, discussed budget development and anticipated continuing decreases to our state aid, provided an update on the upcoming QSAC visit by the County and reviewed the SSDS report, a biannual obligation to report incidents of violence, vandalism and HIB, as well as training and programming opportunities. Mr. Thompson noted upcoming dates including the Great Kindness Challenge, PTO Book Drive, PTO Kindness Assembly, the 100th day of school, PTO Someone Special Dance and the upcoming conference schedule.

Mr. Thompson welcomed Mr. Skirbst to the meeting this evening to provide an overview of a STEM Club he would like to advise, which would provide instruction and materials to students in grades 6-8 to design, build, test and race solar-powered cars in accordance with the guidelines and rules of the competition. Mr. Skirbst noted this is an opportunity to focus on students and take advantage of an already existing program. Mr. Thompson noted he'll seek Board approval later in the meeting to approve Mr. Skirbst as the Advisor of the STEM club.

APPROVE SUBMISSION OF THE BI-ANNUAL BOE REPORT ON VIOLENCE, VANDALISM AND HIB

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Ms. Lee to approve submission of the Bi-Annual Report on Violence, Vandalism and HIB for the reporting period September 1 – December 31, 2018. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

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OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Fiorentino congratulated and welcomed new Board members. Mrs. Fiorentino noted that she has had issues in the past scheduling parent/teacher conferences through the Realtime portal. Mr. Skirbst noted that the Jr. Solar Car Sprints competition for the STEM Club will be held on May 13th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PERSONNEL

Mr. Panetta noted that the Committee met and discussed special services, continuation of the shared services agreement for Business Administrator services with Hope Township, and plans for a STEM Club.

Motion – Personnel

A motion was made by Mrs. Williams and seconded by Mrs. Nikolopoulos to approve the following agenda item #1. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

1. Approve a STEM Club Advisor

To approve Henry Skirbst, as STEM Club Advisor, for a STEM club for grade 6-8 students, February – May 2019, at the stipend amount of \$800.

TRANSPORTATION

No updates.

POLICY

Block Motion – Policy

A motion was made by Mrs. Lensi and seconded by Mrs. Williams to approve the following agenda items #1 through #4. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

1. Approve a Second Reading of Policy #2416 – Programs for Pregnant Pupils

To approve a second reading of policy #2416 – Programs for Pregnant Pupils

2. Approve a Second Reading of Policy #5752 – Marital Status and Pregnancy

To approve a second reading of policy #5752 – Marital Status and Pregnancy

3. Approve a First Reading of Regulation #2260 – Affirmative Action Program for School and Classroom Practices Compliant Procedure

To approve a first reading of regulation #2260 – Affirmative Action Program for School and Classroom Practices Compliant Procedure

4. Approve Memorandum of Agreement for 2018-2019 with the NJSP

To approve the Memorandum of Agreement for 2018-2019 school year with the New Jersey State Police.

FINANCE

Mrs. Sroka noted the Committee discussed calculating high school tuition rates and the large reconciliation bill due to Belvidere for the 2017-2018 school year.

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FINANCE - continued

Mrs. Huff and Mr. Thompson will meet with Belvidere this week to express the district's concern over the disparity between Belvidere's projected tuition rate and the actual cost. The Committee agrees that the 2017-2018 reconciliation cost should be paid with yearend monies from this year's budget. The Committee reviewed a first draft of the budget and Mrs. Huff cautioned that there are still many unknowns at this point including state aid allocations for the upcoming year. The group discussed some key items in the budget including shared services, capital projects, and a Chromebook initiative.

Block Motion – Finance

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Mrs. Lensi to approve the following agenda items #1 through #8. Motion carried as follows: Ms. Nusser-Meany – yes, Ms. Howell – yes, Mrs. Sroka – yes, Mrs. Lensi – yes, Mrs. Williams – yes, Mrs. Smith – yes, Mrs. Nikolopoulos – yes, Ms. Lee – yes and Mr. Panetta – yes.

1. Approve December 2018 Board Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report

To approve the December 2018 Board Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report in agreement. After review of the School Business Administrator's monthly financial reports and upon consultation with the Business Administrator and CSA, this Board of Education does hereby certify that as of December 31, 2018, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(a), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

2. Approve January 2019 Bill List

To approve the payment of the January 2019 bills in the total amount of \$1,071,277.17 for all funds.

3. Approve December 2018 Cafeteria Bills

To approve the payment of the December 2018 Cafeteria bills in the amount of \$3,767.98.

4. Approve Budget Transfers

To approve budget transfers for December 2018 in the amount of \$5770.22.

5. Approve a Revised Tuition Contract with Celebrate the Children

To approve a revised tuition contract with Celebrate the Children for one student (ID#9132106692) to attend the program for a tuition cost of \$71,500 and the cost of the personal aide of \$51,840 for the 2018-2019 school year.

6. Approve Resolution for Waiver of Requirements in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI)

WHEREAS, NJAC 6A:23A-5.3, provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the district's participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2019-2020 school year, and

WHEREAS, the White Township Board of Education desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that it projects having fewer than 40 Medicaid eligible classified students;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the White Township Board of Education hereby authorizes the Business Administrator to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in the County of Warren an appropriate waiver of the requirements of NJAC 6A:23A-5.3 for the 2019-2020 school year.

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Block Motion – Finance - continued

7. Approve Resolution for Participation in Coordinated Transportation with Warren County Special Services School District for 2019-2020

WHEREAS, the White Township School District Board of Education desires to transport students for the purpose of special education, non-public school education, or their own public school students to specific destinations; and

WHEREAS, the Warren County Special Services School District hereinafter referred to as WCSSSD offers coordinated transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the WCSSSD will organize and schedule routes to achieve the maximum cost effectiveness;

NOW THEREFORE, it is agreed that in consideration of pro-rated contract costs, plus a 4% administration fee as presented to the White Township School District Board of Education as calculated by the billing formula adopted by the WCSSSD's Board of Education, does approve its participation in said coordinated transportation for 2019-2020 in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract as offered by WCSSSD for 2019-2020.

8. Approve Staff Travel

To approve the following staff travel:

- Stephanie Quinn to attain a HIB certification for Anti-Bullying Specialists in Oceanport, NJ on February 1, 2019. The cost of the certification is \$99 and mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$55.
- Dawn Werkheiser and Alison Walsh to attend mandatory PARCC training in Whippany, NJ on February 21, 2019. There is no cost for the training and mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$50.
- Marlene Saraiva to attend the NJ Special Education Annual Summit in Monroe Township, NJ on February 12, 2019. The cost of the summit is \$149 and mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$40.
- Dorothy Buel to attend the 2019 Psychotherapy Networker Symposium in Washington, DC on February 21-23, 2019. The cost of the symposium is \$479.99.
- Frank Panetta, Dorissalba Sroka, Rachel Nikolopoulos and Colleen Williams to attend NJSBA workshop "Ready, Set, Bargain" in Trenton, NJ on January 25, 2019. The cost of the workshop is \$149 per participant with mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$50.

CURRICULUM

Mrs. Sroka noted the Committee met and discussed progress on a new master schedule, a Chromebook initiative, a LEAD program to deter drugs and alcohol for 6th graders, STEM club, shared services, and 8th grade health topics.

Block Motion – Curriculum

A motion was made by Mrs. Lensi and seconded by Mrs. Nikolopoulos to approve the following agenda items #1 through #4. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

1. Approve a Field Trip for Grade 1

To approve a field trip for approximately 23 grade 1 students to the Lehigh Valley Zoo on May 31, 2019. The cost per student is \$11 and the cost for the bus transportation is \$300.

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Block Motion – Curriculum - continued

2. Approve a Field Trip for Grade 4-8 Instrumental Music

To approve a field trip for one student to participate in the Warren County Sixth Grade All-Star Band on February 27, 2019. There are no costs associated with this field trip, parent will transport.

3. Approve a Field Trip for Grade 5-6 GEM

To approve a field trip for approximately 3 students to the WCCSE Spelling Bee program at Phillipsburg Middle School, Phillipsburg, NJ on February 12, 2019. The cost of the transportation to be determined and will be shared with other participating districts.

4. Approve a Field Trip for Grade 3-4 GEM

To approve a field trip for approximately 8 students to the WCCSE Phabulous Physics program at Mansfield Elementary School, Mansfield, NJ on March 1, 2019. The cost of the transportation to be determined and will be shared with other participating districts.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Mrs. Nikolopoulos noted that the LENS firm presented to the Committee on school safety and security and the group is in the process of getting quotes and prioritizing various safety and security measures. Mrs. Nikolopoulos further reported on the purchase of additional dehumidifiers, modifications to the generator, and upcoming use of the facility.

Block Motion – Buildings & Grounds

A motion was made by Mrs. Lensi and seconded by Ms. Lee to approve the following agenda items #1 through #5. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

1. Approve a Use of Facility Request

To approve a use of facility request from Warren County Little League for use of the playing field March 15 through June 15, 2019.

2. Approve a Use of Facility Request

To approve a use of facility request from the White Township PTO for use of the gymnasium on March 25, April 10-12, 2019 for a talent show, auditions, rehearsal and performances.

3. Approve a Use of Facility Request

To approve a use of facility request from the White Township PTO for use of the cafeteria on February 8, 2019 for a Someone Special Dance.

4. Approve a Use of Facility Request

To approve a use of facility request from the White Township PTO for use of the cafeteria on April 5, 2019 for egg stuffing for the egg hunt.

5. Approve a Use of Facility Request

To approve a use of facility request from the White Township PTO for use of the gymnasium on October 4-5, 2019 for a Tricky Tray.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Mrs. Lensi noted the Committee discussed the change in the schedule for February conferences, feedback on the Facebook page, February's White Spotlight, Mrs. Wheatley, and ways to incorporate student recognition into Board meetings.

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BHS BOARD MEMBER

Mrs. Williams noted that Belvidere's meeting focused on an issue with the Soccer Club which was discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Williams also noted that there were questions about the large 2017-2018 tuition reconciliation, and they conducted interviews for a vacancy on their Board of Education.

Mrs. Lensi asked about Freshman Sports. Mrs. Williams noted that there won't be competitive sporting events for freshman but, if there's enough interest, they may have some intermural teams for these groups.

SHARED SERVICES LIAISON COMMITTEE

Motion – Shared Services

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Mrs. Lensi to approve the following agenda item #1. Motion carried as follows: Mrs. Nusser-Meany – yes, Ms. Howell – yes, Mrs. Sroka –yes, Mrs. Lensi – yes, Mrs. Williams – yes, Mrs. Smith – yes, Mrs. Nikolopoulos – yes, Ms. Lee – yes and Mr. Panetta – yes.

1. Approve a Shared Service Agreement for Business Administrator Services

To approve a shared service agreement with Hope Township Board of Education for Business Administrator services July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2022, pending Warren County Department of Education approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Thompson provided an update on the 2018-2019 District Goals. Mr. Thompson noted that he'll continue work on improving the learning environment by focusing on communication with all stakeholders with many initiatives including morning announcements, responsiveness to questions and inquiries, sharing information in a timely manner, weekly updates to the Board, and an active Committee structure, while always putting students at the forefront of each conversation.

Mr. Skirbst noted he's seen a marked improvement in the atmosphere around the building.

Mrs. Sroka thanked Mr. Thompson for all of the work he is doing to create a positive environment in and around the school community.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF HIB INCIDENTS

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Ms. Lee to acknowledge receipt of two HIB investigations not deemed HIB incidents since last meeting. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Christianson suggested that it might be better to have scheduled times for groups using the playing fields so there are no arguments.

Mrs. Gonda expressed concern about the treatment of behaviorally challenged students and asked if there is a Board Committee to handle this issue. Mr. Thompson noted that parents should reach out to him and the Supervisor of Special Services for assistance with these issues.

Mrs. Christianson asked if the Governor was suggesting the use of a rifton chair for behavior modification. Mr. Thompson noted that there is no plan to have any mechanical restraint equipment used at the school and that the new policies put in place in the fall were to assure appropriate staff training and parent notification.

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OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT - continued

Mrs. Fiorentino asked if staff have been trained. Mr. Thompson noted that identified staff have been trained.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Ms. Lee to convene to Executive Session at 7:39 p.m. to discuss pending litigation. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

Be it resolved by the White Township Board of Education that it shall meet in closed session this evening to discuss pending litigation.

The board will publicly disclose information pertaining to the topics discussed as soon thereafter and once the reasons for non-disclosure no longer exist.

The topics to be discussed are within the exemptions that are permitted to be discussed in private session pursuant to P.L. 1975c chapter 321.

A motion was made by Mrs. Nikolopoulos and seconded by Mrs. Lensi to adjourn the Executive Session at 8:50. Motion carried as follows: Ayes - 8, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

APPROVE A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Sroka and seconded by Ms. Lee to approve a settlement agreement with R.S. and R.S. in the matter of R.S. and R.S. o/b/o C.S. v. White Township BOE and authorize insurance counsel to take all steps necessary to conclude the case. Motion carried as follows: Mrs. Nusser-Meany – yes, Ms. Howell – yes, Mrs. Sroka – yes, Mrs. Lensi – no, Mrs. Williams – no, Mrs. Smith – abstain, Mrs. Nikolopoulos – yes, Ms. Lee – yes and Mr. Panetta – yes.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Lensi and seconded by Mrs. Nikolopoulos to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Motion carried as follows: Ayes – 9, Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Huff
Business Administrator
Board Secretary