

EAST WINDSOR REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, HIGHTSTOWN, NJ 08520

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Date: MARCH 22, 2010 7:30 p.m.

The Board of Education of the East Windsor Regional School District held a Regular meeting on MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hightstown High School Cafeteria, located at 25 Leshin Lane, Hightstown, NJ.

1. WELCOME

Board President Alice Weisman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and read the Open Public Meeting Act Statement as follows:

“Written advance notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with law. Minutes of this meeting are being kept by the Board Secretary and will be made available promptly to any member of the public requesting them from the Board Secretary at the Administration building 25A Leshin Lane, Hightstown, NJ. Minutes will be provided at cost and in accordance with Board policy.”

Ms. Weisman asked “Are there any Board members present who believe this meeting to be in violation of the Open Public Meeting Act?” No one objected. “There being none, we may proceed.”

Members Present: Paul Connolly, Stu Dolgon, Bruce Ettman, Suzann Fallon, Bonnie Fayer
Bob Laverty, Susan Lloyd, Kennedy Paul and Alice Weisman

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Michael Dzwonar, Interim Superintendent
Kurt Stumbaugh, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
David Coates, Board legal counsel

Fire Code Compliance: Ms. Weisman made the following announcement: “In compliance with the fire code of the State of New Jersey, I call your attention to the emergency exit for this room, which is located.....” (Ms. Weisman pointed to the emergency exit.)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. A APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Laverty moved seconded by Ms. Fallon, to approve the agenda with the following revision: the addition of a second executive session. On a roll call vote of the Board, motion to approve was carried unanimously.

3. B RESOLUTION FOR CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Laverty moved, seconded by Mr. Dolgon, to approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Windsor Regional School District will hold two closed sessions during its regular meeting on March 22, 2010. These closed sessions concern:

- Personnel matters, Litigation, Contract matters, and Attorney /Client Privilege.

Minutes will be available in accordance with Board policy when the need for confidentiality no longer exists. On a roll call vote of the Board, Motion to approve was carried unanimously.

3.C FIRST EXECUTIVE SESSION

4. AUTHORIZE THE SUBMISSION OF THE PRELIMINARY 2010-11 BUDGET TO THE COUNTY OFFICE FOR APPROVAL

The approval of a tentative budget for submission to the Mercer County Superintendent of Schools is the first of two actions the Board will take on the budget prior to the election. The Mercer County Superintendent of Schools will verify the budget in accordance with a checklist prepared by the Department of Education and approve it for advertising. The Board will vote a second time on the budget after the public hearing. Changes can be made to the budget at that time.

School District policy and NJAC 6A:23B-1.2(b) provide that the Board of Education shall establish in the annual budget a maximum expenditure that may be allotted for such travel and expense reimbursement for the 2010-2011 school year. The 2010-11 budget includes a maximum of \$15,625 for this purpose.

Tentative Budget Presentation:

Mr. Dzwonar gave a very detailed presentation on the 2010-11 tentative budget. The reduction of State aid was discussed and measures deployed to address the impact of the reduction were presented in detail.

ACTION:

Mr. Lavery moved, seconded by Ms. Fayer to recommend the following:

That the Board approve the 2010-2011 Tentative Budget and authorize the Chief School Administrator and the School Business Administrator to submit to the Mercer County Superintendent of Schools the 2010-2011 Tentative Budget which includes:

Total Operating Fund Budget of \$73,808,955 and a

Local Tax Levy of \$56,804,450

Total Special Revenue Fund Budget of \$1,436,571,

Total Debt Service fund Budget of \$3,652,264 and a

Local Debt Service Fund Tax Levy of \$3,498,316.

For the Travel Maximum, that the Board of Education establish the School District travel maximum for the 2010-2011 school year at the sum of \$15,625 and that the School Business Administrator shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

On a roll call vote of the Board, Motion to approve was carried unanimously.

4. A APPROVAL OF 2009-10 FUND BALANCE (added at meeting)

Discussion:

Mr. Lavery commented that the motion is for a 4% levy; as we have achieved a critical mass in the progress of student achievement, further reductions will be harmful to the students of the district. We want to maintain the quality of our education programs.

Ms. Weisman commented regarding the 4% cap, that we will still need almost \$3 million in cuts. We have tried over the past 3 years to bring in as fiscally conservative a budget as possible. We managed to bring in budgets well below the authorized caps of 4% and at or below even 2%, while still making incredible strides in student achievement and programs. We can't do the 2% cap. It is harmful to the District at the 4% cap. Ms. Weisman commended that East Windsor Township Mayor and Council on their success in bringing rateables into town. The increased rateables allows for raising revenue while moderating the tax increases. The Hightstown situation is the opposite. A lack of rateables/industry in Hightstown creates a greater tax burden.

Mr. Dolgon commented that in 2006, because of the overcrowding at the McKnight School, the Board did its best to ensure that that school was open in Sept. of that year, and in order to do that the Board had to take money out its reserve fund. A new law was passed which penalized the Board of about 3 million in lost revenue for the following year. This action hurt our District tremendously. The DOE admits the District was harmed, but no relief was granted. We continue to feel the effects. The priority of this Board has always been to ensure that the education of the children of East Windsor and Hightstown is at a level we can be proud of.

Mr. Ettman expressed gratitude to the administrators for the fast work on the budget. They have done an astounding job in a small block of time. We are in a tremendous dilemma. Our district has been unfairly penalized. We went out of our way to maximize efficiency. We have successfully managed the tax levy increases to less than 2% per year for several years. He spoke about the advantage that East Windsor Township has over Hightstown in that it has more rateables to provide tax revenue. Mr. Ettman is very proud of the work we have done in the past five years. Through a lot of hard work we have moved this District forward.

ACTION: Recommend the Board approve the appropriation of \$457,284 for the fund balance for the 09-10 school year to cover the reduction in state aid in the same amount.

Mr. Lavery moved, seconded by Ms. Fayer to approve the fund balance as submitted. On a roll call vote of the Board, motion to approve was carried unanimously.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Dzwonar expressed congratulations to all the cast and crew of the high school drama club production of "Beauty and the Beast". It was a very excellent performance. The students were phenomenal. He commented on the technology plan that is on the exception list for approval tonight. Looking back 4 years to the previous technology plan, we have met or exceeded nearly all the elements in our vision for the expansion in technology in the district schools.

6. FIRST OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Eugene Sarafin of Hightstown commented on the East Windsor Education Association non-acceptance of a pay freeze and read from a letter that was extremely critical and derisive toward the EWEA decision to not accept a wage freeze.

Robert Thibault of Hightstown followed up on Mr. Sarafin's comments on the EWEA failure to even consider a wage freeze. The majority of the top salaried people don't live in the district. He quoted the rate of salary and benefit increases in the past years. Taxpayers are being forced to pay for ridiculously high salaries and benefits afforded to the teachers. His message to the teachers is to enact the freeze and share the pain. Give the taxpayers a break.

Eugene Sarafin of Hightstown commented on the fine presentation and analysis of the budget Mr. Dzwonar presented tonight. EWRSB does a marvelous job of educating our children. Please keep up the good work.

John Martucci of East Windsor is a resident for 5 years and likes the community. When he moved here taxes were \$6,000 a year and are now \$8,600. That is quite a jump. Education consumes a huge part of our tax dollars. He supports a teacher wage freeze. The teachers should make a contribution. We have to reduce spending.

7. FIRST OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Weisman spoke on the Technology enhancements. She commended Mr. Dzwonar as head of our Technology Department for his hard work in moving the IT department forward. We have interviewed Superintendents from Districts who are far behind the East Windsor School District in the implementation of technology. We have experienced amazing growth in this area over the past 6 years.

Mr. Lavery also emphasized the significant IT improvements. Our children are exposed to a vast array of IT resources that greatly enhance the instructional programs. He detailed the District's phenomenal accomplishments in this area, and stressed that these have been directly geared towards student achievement.

Mr. Connolly is very impressed with the results of the District's IT efforts over the past 3 years, that we have met the goals we initiated three years ago.

Ms. Fallon commented that it is amazing that CSA candidates from other districts do not have as much technology resources as our District does. She also commented that she is very annoyed with our Governor over the cuts.

Ms. Weisman commented that the high school production of Beauty and the Beast is a good example of our District's progress. The music program is vastly improved. The students and employees work very hard and it shows. We have an incredibly talented music department.

Ms. Fayer also commented that Beauty and the Beast was an excellent performance. She commented that the sound system needs improvements. At times there was horrible feedback that drowned out the kids voices. In this budget crisis there is no way we can take care of that problem. At some point, maybe as a community we should try to look at a foundation or some private funding to help us. We have to become much more creative in how we fund things. Ms. Fayer also spoke on the World Language state mandates. The world language program definitely needs improvement. It is up to us to request the Governor to either pay for some of these mandates or remove the mandates. These mandates must be matched with adequate funding.

Ms. Lloyd expressed gratitude and thanked the Board for their support during her difficult time.

Ms. Fallon spoke on the new diabetes law that will take effect. Would like to have more information on this when it is available.

Mr. Ettman commented that we need to get the budget passed and hopes the public supports us. We do the best we can using the flawed structure the State of NJ tax rates. The ratables drive the tax levy. It is important to balance the needs of education and needs for funding for that education. We always have strived to do an excellent job in managing this district and its costs.

Mr. Dolgon commented that the educational progress of our District is clearly evident in our State standardized tests. He also enjoyed the high school musical and found it a welcome relief from the past few months of budget stress and continued gloom regarding budget cuts.

Mr. Dzwonar commented that the District test scores are higher than they have ever been. He shared detailed statistics with the Board. He cited very impressive data demonstrating District growth.

Mr. Dolgon commented that most of the public do not know exactly what a school board is. We are nine elected community members from different walks of life and backgrounds, who come together to support the District and the students. We do not have social or political agendas we are obligated to. We get paid zero dollars for all the work we do and hours we spend at Board meetings and attending Board training. The Borough and Township Council members get paid. We get nothing. We always strive to make the best decisions for the students and the community.

Mr. Connolly urges all residents to become involved in their District. To come to meetings and ask questions. We do understand the economy is very tight now. We see this at our own jobs. Creating this budget was not easy. It should be stressed that we are making significant cuts.

8. MOTION TO APPROVE ROUTINE ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

- A. Staffing
- B. Emergent Hiring
- C. Out of District Placement
- D. Professional Services
- E. Supplemental Educational Services Provider Agreement
 - Club Z! Tutoring Central Jersey.
- F. EWRSD Technology Plan for 2010 to 2013
- G. Donation from Multiplex Cinema to HHS
- H. Donation from Hightstown Woman's Club to HHS
- I. Field Trip Approvals
- J. Volunteers
- K. Approval of Minutes: March 3, Special Meeting, March 8, Regular Meeting & March 10, 2010 Special Meeting
- L. Bill List – March 22, 2010

8. A STAFFING – as submitted

8. B AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENT HIRING PENDING COMPLETION OF CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

Move that the Board of Education approve the submission of applications for emergent hiring pending completion of the criminal history background check to the County Superintendent for the following individual(s): **Anthony Marchetta** **Teacher**

8. C OUT OF DISTRICT PLACEMENT- REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAMS
Private & Public Schools

Thomas J. Rubino Academy

Tuition March 3, 2010 through June 30, 2010

1. Student	#9800593	Reg.	\$6,600.00
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8. D PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The special education department requires services of consultants to provide children with disabilities a free appropriate public education as defined by The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Name	Type of Service	Rate
UMDNJ	Bedside Instruction	\$45.00 per hour

8. E SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDER AGREEMENT

Approve the contract for the following Supplemental Educational Service Provider which will provide services for Economically Disadvantaged Title 1 students at Kreps in accordance with federal NCLB regulations:

CLUB Z! TUTORING CENTRAL JERSEY

8. F EWRSD TECHNOLOGY PLAN FOR 2010 TO 2013

The East Windsor Regional School District plans to continue to promote state of the art technology to actualize the District’s vision for student’s achievement. The submitted Technology Plan reflects the District’s mission to provide students and staff with the skills and resources necessary to reach their highest potential using current technology networking and telecommunications equipment.

8. G DONATION FROM MULTIPLEX CINEMA TO HHS

Multiplex Cinemas at Town Center, c/o Ms. Jiviens, 319 Route 130 North, East Windsor, NJ 08520 would like to donate three movie passes to students of Ms. Leigh Tsujino, School Social Worker at Hightstown High School. These passes will be used as incentives for her students to reach their behavioral goals.

8. H DONATION FROM HIGHTSTOWN WOMAN’S CLUB TO HHS

Hightstown Woman’s Club, Mrs. Shirley Olsen, President, 6 Farr Ave. Hightstown, NJ 08520 would like to donate \$1000 to the Music Department of Hightstown High School. The donation will be used to refurbish musical instruments or help needy students be able to purchase their own instruments.

8. I FIELD TRIP APPROVALS

Field Trip planned for Hightstown High School:

4/24/10 Ecology Club **Sandy Hook National Park** Hartshorne Drive, Sandy Hook, NJ

Field Trips planned for Melvin H. Kreps School:

5/21/10 Team 6 Red **“IRL: In Real Life” George Street Playhouse**
9 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ

5/13/10 Student Council **NJASC Spring Awards Program 2010**
Six Flags Great Adventure Route 537, Jackson, NJ

Field Trips planned for Perry L. Drew School:

4/22/10 4th Grade Team **Disney Nature Earth Special**
AMC 24 Hamilton Theater, Hamilton, NJ

4/27/10 Kindergarten Jenkinson’s Aquarium, Point Pleasant, NJ

5/26/10 2nd Grade **NJ State Museum/Planetarium**
205 West State St., Trenton, NJ

5/28/10 5th Grade **End of Year Trip**
Constitution Center, Philadelphia, PA

6/30/10 2nd Grade **Visit Pen Pals**
Clark Mills School, Manalapan, NJ

Field Trips planned for Ethel McKnight School:

4/8/10 Student Council **Senior Citizens Center**
Lanning Blvd., East Windsor, NJ

5/27/10 5th Grade **NJ State Planetarium**
205 West State St., Trenton, NJ

4/30/10 4th Grade **Liberty Science Center**
222 Jersey City Blvd., Jersey City, NJ

8. J VOLUNTEERS

The Board of Education approves all volunteers who serve in the District.

The following have offered to volunteer/chaperone at Grace N. Rogers School:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Mrs. Shropshire-Sands (Jevon) | Mrs. Cunin |
| Mr. Mermelstein (Jenna) | Mr. Mondschein |
| Mrs. Santos (Luis) | Mrs. Riggio |
| Mrs. DeCristofaro (Matt) | Mrs. Tabora |
| Mr. George Emslie (Danielle) | |

The following have offered to volunteer/chaperone at Hightstown High School:

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Diane Ackerman | Yessina Ortiz |
| Kathryn Nathanson | Kerri Peterson |
| Helene and Larry Nelson | Diane Trube |
| Cheryl Jump - Assistant Softball Coach | |

The following have offered to volunteer/chaperone at Walter C. Black School:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs. Lucille Dill | Mrs. RuthAnn T aylor |
| Mrs. Esther Frasso | Ms. Carmen Vasquez |
| Maria Suin | |

8. K APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR MARCH 3, SPECIAL; MARCH 8, REGULAR; and MARCH 10, 2010 SPECIAL MEETING

As submitted. Copies on file in Board Secretary's office and on District website.

8. L BILL LIST for March 22, 2010

The Bill and Claims Report must be approved by the Board of Education before being submitted for payment.

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves the payment of bills and claims in the amount of **\$1,474,116.50** as submitted in the attached report.

Mr. Laverty moved, seconded by Ms. Fayer to approve the routine agenda items by exception as submitted. On a roll call vote, motion to approve was carried unanimously.

9. SECOND OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Eugene Sarafin of Hightstown commented on the 4 % raise for teachers. Asked what that would potentially save the District. Mr. Dzwonar responded that it would be approximately 1.7 million overall which would include all groups. Mr. Sarafin added that it is a good idea to hold off on a raise for at least a year. He does not want to see staff lose their jobs. Cited the wage freeze in West Windsor as an example.

Bertrand Fougnyes of East Windsor commented that the District technology progress is impressive. Communication between parents and teachers is vastly improved. He also introduced himself as a Board of Education candidate.

Robert Thibault of Hightstown commented that the NJEA stridently opposes the reduction of benefits. He cited information from the NJEA website.

Eugene Sarafin of Hightstown commented that blame should go to our local governing bodies. The calculation of our property tax is flawed and unfair.

10. SECOND OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

No one spoke.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

12. OPEN SESSION

13. ADJOURN

Kurt Stumbaugh, Board Secretary