

UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
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SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Minutes
September 19, 2005

The September meeting of the Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board was held on Monday, September 19, 2005 in the Unionville High School LGI. Mr. Wandersee, President, called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Mr. Wandersee requested that the group stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

The following members were present: Edward Wandersee, Keith Knauss, Kathleen Brown, Curt Baker, Stephen McClaskey, Bruce Swayze, Dr. Corinne Sweeney, and Timotha Trigg. Also present were Dr. John Kenney, District Superintendent, Dr. Brenda O'Hern, Robert Cochran, Jim Fulginiti, Rick Hostetler, Rich Hug, Thomas Marinelli, Andrew McLaughlin, Dr. Jim Price, Maria Schwab, Bruce Vosburgh, Gail Wolfel, Lexi Crampton, student representative, community residents, members of the press, and Denise Miller, recording secretary.

Mr. Wandersee stated that the Board had met in Executive Session following the Work Session on September 12, 2005 to discuss personnel and certain legal matters.

Dan Gabor, East Marlborough Township resident, thanked Dr. O'Hern for taking his idea for an Honors Social Studies course and bringing it to Curriculum Council. He hopes it will become a course for incoming sophomores next year. He commented that the UHS Student Council is trying to raise \$50,000 in 50 days for relief to the victims of hurricane Katrina. Donation boxes are available in the building.

Marypat Tang, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that she was told a couple of years ago that anyone teaching Algebra I or above needed secondary math certification regardless of in which building they were teaching. Dr. Kenney stated that this is no longer the case. Under No Child Left Behind, you have to be highly qualified. At the middle school level, you have to take a test for middle school math certification. At the high school level, you would need secondary certification. The highly-qualified specialist does not apply in Pennsylvania until the end of the 2005-06 school year but all of our middle school teachers are now certified and highly qualified by the state.

**CALL TO
ORDER**

**MEMBERS
PRESENT**

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS**

Karen Halstead, East Marlborough Township resident, shared with the Board that there is a great deal of concern with the new climate survey. She stated that people are afraid to answer honestly. She has received many phone calls from teachers, staff members, and custodians who may or may not have been selected to participate and they are afraid to be honest. Mrs. Halstead encouraged them to be honest but there is a great deal of fear for discrimination or possible retribution. She suggested that one or two Board members who are trusted and beloved in the community be present when people are going into the room to assure them that they need to be honest and that no comment will come back to haunt them.

Mr. Wandersee stated that Mrs. Halstead's comments were certainly timely. He stressed that everyone on the Board respects the confidentiality of the people we hired to do this work is looking at this work and being able to do a climate study to judge, gauge and evaluate the working environment within our school district. Candor is important but confidentiality is absolute. Nobody will know any comment that anyone has made specifically with a name associated. He asked that Mr. Baker expound on his comments.

Mr. Baker commented regarding key elements of the study. The concern that he has heard around confidentiality is about not wanting specific responses to be known but concern about even knowing who are the participants. That was at the Board or the administrative level. Based on that concern, it's probably not a great idea to have Board members at the door. He's speaking with two of the consultants tonight who are preparing this study. He doesn't know how you could provide assurance that participation in the focus sessions would not be identified by the name but the number of participants in each focus group, and that becomes the mechanism relative to each individual. You could not possibly bridge it to each person because the consultants do not know. The Board and administration will never see or have any ability to see who the respondents are except by demographics (i.e. you're a teacher from Chadds Ford Elementary). Every conceivable precaution is being taken to prevent the disclosure of anyone's ideas during this study.

Mr. Baker stated that he is the only individual who has the attendance list. No one besides him will know with the exception of the recent retiree and student groups. Mr. Marinelli was asked to assist in providing names of recent retirees and Mr. Fulginiti assisted with student names. Mr. Baker is grateful to them for helping to facilitate that process. You run the risk of protesting too loud but the reality is that it is set up in such a way that it will be extremely difficult or impossible for someone to draw a line to a specific individual. The sessions are not being recorded. Our goal is to create as pure an environment for these conversations as possible. The intent is there will be a communication from the consultants along these lines in the next few days.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**BOARD
COMMENTS –
ORGANI-
ZATIONAL
CLIMATE
STUDY**

Mrs. Brown commented that the Board is doing its part and it's not like there is a firing squad outside. She cautioned that if participants were not candid, the Board could not react in a positive way.

Mr. Wandersee closed the subject and asked for comments after the meeting or telephone calls regarding this subject.

Katie Donovan, East Marlborough Township resident, commented that large numbers of the participants are already known to many, many people. Within each school, participants are known to almost everyone in that school. They want assurance from the Board that any action from this will be investigated by you.

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. McClaskey to approve the Minutes for the August 15, 2005 Work Session (pp. 3.a.21-23) and the Minutes for the August 22, 2005 Regular Board Meeting (pp. 3.a.1-20).

Motion carried (8-0).

The following committee meeting minutes were reviewed:

1. Curriculum Committee Meeting – September 12, 2005 (pp. 3.a.24-33)

Mr. Wandersee requested that the Secretary file the committee minutes.

The following financial statements and reports were reviewed:

1. General Fund Treasurer's Report – August, 2005 (p. 3.b.1)
2. Capital Reserve Fund Report – August, 2005 (p. 3.b.2)
3. 2005-2006 GF Function Revenue Analysis with Details of 6100's and 7000's as of August, 2005 (p. 3.b.3)
4. 2005-06 General Fund Function-Object Expenditure Analysis as of August, 2005 (pp. 3.b.4-6)
5. Category Expenditures Analysis – August, 2005 (p. 3.b.7)
6. Capital Projects Fund Report – August, 2005 (p. 3.b.7a)
7. Outstanding Projects Summary – August, 2005 (p. 3.b.8)
8. Construction Project Reports – August, 2005
 - a. Unionville High School HVAC Project (pp. 3.b.9-10)

Mr. Wandersee asked that the Secretary file the financial statements and the reports.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS**

**MINUTES
APPROVED**

**FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS**

The following activity account reports were reviewed:

9. Activity Account Reports
 - a. Unionville Elementary School Field Trip Account 2004-05
(pp. 3.c.1-2)
 - b. Chadds Ford Elementary School 2004-05 Field Trips
(pp. 3.c.3-5)
 - c. Pocopson Elementary School 2004-05 Field Trips
(pp. 3.c.6-9)
 - d. Hillendale Elementary School 2004-05 Field Trips
(pp. 3.c.10-15)

Mr. Wandersee requested that the Secretary file the reports.

It was moved by Mr. Swayze and seconded by Dr. Sweeney to approve the Bill List dated August 31, 2005 in the amount of \$2,299,860.68 (pp. 3.d.1-20).

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. McClaskey to approve the Bill List dated August 31, 2005 for Collegium Charter School in the amount of \$4,612.81 (p. 3.d.21).

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Mr. Swayze and seconded by Dr. Sweeney to approve the End-of-Year Budget Transfers for 2004-2005 as on the attachments (pp. 3.e.1-2).

In response to Mr. McClaskey's question, Mr. Cochran stated that we don't know yet how close we are to the final year-end numbers. Our auditor, Tim Umbreit, was in this week and we are awaiting a final number from him as well as one number from Blue Cross.

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Mr. Knauss and seconded by Mrs. Brown to approve a Change order in the amount of \$22,000.00 for the purchase of curtains for the Unionville High School Auditorium. This is an additional item that is not listed on the agenda for this evening. Mr. Knauss commented that the budgeted amount for this item was \$35,000.00 in the Capital Reserve fund.

Motion carried (8-0).

BILLS PAID

**BUDGET
TRANSFERS –
E.O.Y. 2004-05**

FACILITIES:

**CHANGE
ORDER - UHS
AUDITORIUM
CURTAINS**

Mr. Knauss reported for Facilities that air-conditioning has been installed in two dozen or so rooms as part of the HVAC Project. We are moving ahead with the remainder of the rooms. The project is on schedule and is going well. He received a few positive comments from high school students at the beginning of the year.

**Facilities
(Continued)**

The Facilities Committee solicited bids for the long-range facilities plan this past week. They listened to proposals from four firms regarding five-year or longer plans as to what we are going to do with our current facilities, improvements, expansion plans, and athletic fields. This will be discussed further at the next Work Session.

**Long-Range
Facilities Plan**

Mrs. Brown stated that there were no action items for Curriculum this month. We have had a lot of meetings and expect quite a few things to be coming along in the pipeline in the next month or so.

CURRICULUM:

Mr. Wandersee stated that there were no action items for Finance this evening. Mr. Cochran commented that we are continuing to consider the potential refunding of the Series of 1998A and 2001 debt. We are looking at it for potential sale in November or December with closing in January. In other areas, we are wrapping up our annual audit. The AFR (Annual Financial Report) is due by the end of October and we see no problem meeting that deadline. The state auditors are scheduled to come in sometime soon.

FINANCE

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Swayze to approve the following personnel item (agenda item 7.a):

PERSONNEL

- a. Professional Conferences
 - 1. Approve attendance at (9) Professional Conferences as on the attachment (p. 7.a.1)

**PROFES-
SIONAL
CONFERENCES**

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Knauss to approve the following personnel items (agenda item 7.b.):

RETIREMENT

- b. Retirement (1)
 - 1. Susan Beach – Unionville High School Secretary, effective April 3, 2006

S. Beach

Mrs. Brown commented that Mrs. Beach is part of Unionville High School and she doesn't know what she'll do when she calls the office. Dr. Sweeney stated that her children have said that Mrs. Beach runs the office.

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Brown to approve the following personnel items (agenda items 7.c. through 7.f.):

- c. Resignations (4)
 - 1. Martin Reber – Chadds Ford Elementary Technology Support Paraprofessional and District Energy Educator, effective September 16, 2005
 - 2. Jose Velez – Patton Middle School Custodian, effective August 26, 2005
 - 3. Laurie Schiltz – Food Service, effective August 29, 2005
 - 4. Vera Miller – Food Service Floater Substitute, effective August 29, 2005

- d. Reclassifications (5)
 - 1. Jenny Robinson – from Patton Middle School Team Teacher to District Staff Development Coordinator, effective August 24, 2005
 - 2. Karen Perugini – from 3-Hour to 5-Hour per Day Paraprofessional at Hillendale Elementary School, effective August 29, 2005
 - 3. Bernadette Hutchison – from Chadds Ford Elementary Paraprofessional (3.25 hours per day) to Pocopson Elementary Paraprofessional (6 hours per day), effective August 29, 2005
 - 4. Kathryn Lange – from Food Service Assistant to Unionville Elementary Food Service Cook (5 hours per school day), effective August 29, 2005 at a salary of \$10.48 per hour
 - 5. Catherine Gunn – from Food Service Substitute to Pocopson Elementary Food Service Assistant, effective August 29, 2005 at a salary of \$10.00 per hour

- e. Substitutes (4)
 - 1. George Litzenberg, Jr. – Mathematics & Physical Science
 - 2. Jesse Drelick – Health & Physical Education
 - 3. Joel C. Hughes – Elementary
 - 4. Andrea Mazzagatti - Elementary

- f. Supplemental Contracts (10)
 - 1. Gerald Little - 7th Grade Boys' Basketball Coach
 - 2. James Kavanaugh - J.V. Girls' Basketball Coach
 - 3. Gerald Little - Middle School Track Coach
 - 4. Katie Horning - Middle School Track Coach
 - 5. Judy Hurley - Unionville Elementary Head Teacher
 - 6. Janet Dadds - Unionville Elementary Kindergarten Grade Chair
 - 7. Cathy Quigley - Unionville Elementary First Grade Chair
 - 8. Dawn Oldenski - Unionville Elementary Third Grade Chair
 - 9. Scott Broomall - Unionville Elementary Fourth Grade Chair
 - 10. Don Silknitter - Unionville Elementary Fifth Grade Chair

Motion carried (8-0).

**Personnel
(Continued)**

RESIGNATIONS

M. Reber

J. Velez

L. Schiltz

V. Miller

**RECLASSIFI-
CATIONS:**

J. Robinson

K. Perugini

B. Hutchison

K. Lange

C. Gunn

SUBSTITUTES

**SUPPELE-
MENTAL
CONTRACTS**

Personnel - Continued

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Knauss to approve the following personnel item (agenda item 7g.):

g. Employ (12)

1. Daniel Reuss – Patton Middle School Mathematics Teacher (LTS), first semester of the 2005-06 school year, effective September 2, 2005 at the Master's + 30 Step 1 salary level, pro-rated at .5
2. Robert Green – Unionville High School One-on-One Paraprofessional Aide, effective August 29, 2005, at a salary of \$11.75 per hour
3. Margarita Clyde – Patton Middle School .2 Spanish Teacher (LTS), for the 2005-06 school year, effective August 24, 2005, at the Batchelor's Step 1 salary level, pro-rated
4. Bobby Andrews – Floater Custodian, effective August 29, 2005, at a salary of \$12.22 per hour
5. Lauren Wells – Student Assistance Specialist (8 hours per day x 190 days/year), effective approximately October 3, 2005, at a salary of \$28.81 per hour
6. Suzanne McIntyre – Chadds Ford Elementary Food Service Assistant (2.5 hours per school day), effective August 29, 2005, at a salary of \$10.00 per hour
7. Dana Chew – Hillendale Elementary Food Service Assistant (4 hours per school day), effective August 29, 2005, at a salary of \$10.00 per hour
8. Elizabeth Mills – Chadds Ford Elementary part-time Paraprofessional (3.25 hours per school day), effective September 12, 2005, at a salary of \$11.30 per hour
9. Sandra Litvin – Patton Middle School Math/Science Teacher, effective upon release from current school district, at the Master's Step 11 salary level
10. Francois Guillonneau – Patton Middle School Custodian, effective September 5, 2005 at a salary of \$12.22 per hour
11. David Custer – Patton Middle School Custodian, effective September 12, 2005 at a salary of \$12.22 per hour
12. Silvia Tlaseca – Patton Middle School Custodian, effective September 12, 2005 at a salary of \$12.22 per hour

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Swayze to approve the following personnel item (agenda item 7.h.):

h. Leave (1)

1. Charlene Stone – Maternity Leave from September 12, 2005 to December 5, 2005 as on the attached letter (p. 7.h.1.)

Mr. Wandersee commented that we all wish her well as she is traveling to China to expand her family.

Motion carried (8-0).

**Personnel
(Continued)**

EMPLOY:

D. Reuss

R. Green

M. Clyde

B. Andrews

L. Wells

S. McIntyre

D. Chew

E. Mills

S. Litvin

F. Guillonneau

D. Custer

S. Tlaseca

LEAVE:

C. Stone

Mr. Swayze stated that the agenda item regarding bus stops is an informational item and no action is needed.

Mr. Swayze reported for Transportation regarding the following items:

1. Start of School – Went well for the Transportation Department; Parents of new Kindergarten students were clicking away with their cameras!
2. Request Letters from Parents – Mr. Swayze assured everyone that their requests and concerns were taken seriously. Each one is checked out by the Transportation Department and they are working very, very hard to get at each situation as quickly as possible.
3. Bus Ridership – We are anticipating higher ridership on the secondary buses due to the decline in parking spaces and fuel costs. Drivers are reporting that the number of students riding is high and adjustments will be made as necessary, including an additional bus or two to be routed. Every driver is back from last year, which is a great compliment to the administration of the Transportation Department. We may have to seek another driver or two.
4. Fuel Prices – The increase in them will impact the Transportation Department. Fortunately, prices were locked in sometime ago. There will be further efficiencies by reducing the anti-idling practice where some drivers start their bus engines early.
5. Geri Nickle – She is a 25-year employee who will retire on October 15, 2005. We wish her a happy, healthy retirement.

Mr. Wandersee complimented Gail Wolfel and Bob Cochran for the work they have done. He stated that we all receive a lot of phone calls at the beginning of the year. This makes sense and he encourages people to let them know their problems. It's not easy to balance, provide good service, and run the department in a cost-efficient manner with the size of our school district. He appreciates their efforts.

Mrs. Trigg stated that the following item (12.a.1) had been discussed in Executive Session on September 12th.

It was moved by Mrs. Trigg and seconded by Mr. Knauss to approve the Special Education Release and Settlement Agreement for Student No. 2005-2006-3 as on the attachments (pp. 12.b.1-10).

Motion carried (8-0).

TRANSPOR- TATION

BOARD POLICY :

Special Education Release & Settlement Agreement – Student No. 2005-2006-3

Lexi Crampton, Student Representative, reported regarding the following items:

1. Student Council – Held their first meeting of the year
2. Magazine Sale – Beginning at the high school
3. Student Congress – Getting under way and planning to start it up
4. Hurricane Katrina Relief – The high school, along with other U-CF schools, is working toward raising \$50,000 in 50 days to aid those in need following Katrina's devastation in the Gulf States.
5. PIAA Award – We have won this District I award for sportsmanship for the third year in a row!
6. Welcome – to Kathleen Feehery, Interim Assistant Principal
7. Fall Play – Will be *Alice in Wonderland*
8. Educator Program – used in many classes and is a really helpful tool. Thanks to the Board for funding the program.

Mrs. Brown stated that last year, there was some talk of getting representatives to the School Board Work Sessions. Dan Gabor, UHS student, commented that it would fall under Student Congress, which will begin to have meetings before school. Anyone who wants to come to meetings before school is welcome. A representative will be chosen.

There was no report for the Center for Arts & Technology/Special Education/Intermediate Unit due to Mr. Murray's absence this evening.

Mr. Baker reported for Communications regarding:

1. PTO Advisory Committee – First meeting will be held on Monday, September 26, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. in the Patton Middle School Library Classroom
2. Organizational Climate Analysis – We're grateful for those who have responded to participate as focus study group candidates and have received a good response from every focus group to date. This will be a truly extraordinary undertaking in terms of the process that is undertaken and the speed at which the Board will be receiving the recommendations that are made.

Mr. Wandersee reported for Legislation regarding:

1. Pay Increases in Harrisburg – They are basically in turmoil over them.
2. Tax Reform – The Governor has called a Special Session to try to tie gambling funds to tax rebates around Act 72. He would propose that he take out the issue of the wage tax but maintain the restrictions on school districts by tying any increases to the state average weekly wages. This is not universally accepted on both sides of the aisle. The most popular one is relative to the general taxation to expand the sales taxes to a broader range for food and clothing, perhaps cut the amount down and divvy out

(Continued)

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVE
REPORT**

**C.A.T./
SPECIAL
ED. / I.U.**

**COMMUNI-
CATIONS**

**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT**

Legislation (Continued)

the funds from Harrisburg to the respective school districts. Of course, you could see immediately what that would do to local control of the school districts. He doesn't want to criticize it until we see the details on it. Also, there is a move afoot by the Governor on an Act 72 proposal to force it onto the school districts without the voters having an opportunity to approve it.

3. Bill Passed – in the House and is now before the Senate to allow real estate taxes to be paid in 12 monthly installments or in four quarterly installments, effective July 1, 2006. That would freeze school property taxes for certain low-income people if they qualified for forgiveness. Mr. Wandersee hopes to have more definitive information for the next report. Mr. Baker asked whether the transition costs would be fully funded by the state, once the payment plan is approved. Mr. Wandersee stated that you would not get any payment discount but would still pay your lump sum.

Dr. Kenney provided the Superintendent's report:

1. Eric Chang – Congratulations to our 2005 graduate who received an award at the Governor's School for Health Care at the University of Pittsburgh on July 29, 2005 for his "Got Milk" project that he completed last year!
2. Property Tax Reform – Tim Allwein from the Pa. School Board Association will lead a regional community discussion on September 29th from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Unionville High School LGI room. This will include some of the decisions that may have been made in Harrisburg. School Board members from across the region and elected officials will be present.
3. Hurricane Katrina / Displaced Families – We have two new students (Grades 2 and 11) in the district. We may have a second wave once families have been allowed back to their devastated home areas.
4. PSSA / AYP – Data was to be released to the public sometime this evening. All of our schools and sub-groups did make AYP under No Child Left Behind. The annual report on achievement will be given at the October 17th School Board meeting.

**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT**

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT**

Superintendent's Report (Continued)

5. Senator Robert Byrd – Was successful in attaching to a particular Bill a mandate that all school districts teach about the Constitution. On Friday at Pocopson Elementary, some of our 3rd graders were informing their teachers what the Constitution was and here are some of their comments:
- *The Constitution is a document that keeps the U.S. government having rules to keep America good.*
 - *The government wrote a document called the Constitution. It's a group of laws for the United States and they wrote it 2,000 years ago and we still follow it today.*
 - *It's a big document with a lot of rules on it.*
 - *The Constitution is something important. I'm wearing red, white and blue because it's so important.*
 - *The Constitution was a document that had rules and plans to run the United States. It also said how long the government gets to stick around.*
 - *Somebody wrote the U.S. Constitution 200 years ago because our country should not be ruled by a king. We want to be free and not be treated mean like my sister treats me!*

Dr. Andrew McLaughlin provided an Elementary School Report:

- Hillendale Elementary –
 - Library getting new carpeting with funds from the PTO. It's improved aesthetically and is also more efficient for the students.
 - TV, DVD and Video are in each classroom and we hope to be able to go to closed circuit broadcasting.
 - The Board members are invited to visit the outdoor classroom. The plantings and work done last year by the PTO and students have created a wonderful place for learning and provided Hillendale with an alternative environment for science instruction.
- Unionville Elementary –
 - Enjoyed a wonderful start to the new school year
 - Sneak-A-Peek – Ice cream treats and lunch were enjoyed by parents and students and it was very well attended on August 25th.
- Chadds Ford Elementary –
 - Mosaic – 6-feet long and includes 1,000 photos taken by the children themselves; they highlight the May Fair, student performances, Donuts with Dads, and everyday life at Chadds Ford.
 - CFE TV – Exciting, new TV studio located in Chadds Ford to televise events, special projects, and live TV shows.

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT
(Continued)**

**Elementary
Report**

(Continued)

Elementary Report (Continued)

- Pocopson Elementary –
 - First Day of School – Has caused anxiety on occasion for Kindergarten students and their parents. The Boo-Hoo Breakfast and Lunch were designed to ease the anxiety. Parents were invited to breakfast and met important staff members and other parents after they dropped their children off at class. Parents felt more comfortable being closer at hand, knowing they were seconds away from their children if there was a problem.
 - Good Behavior – Year-long incentive program where students compete against other grades on how well they travel between classes. Students are also randomly selected to see if they have participated in Spirit Day. At the end of the year, the winning grade will be awarded with the Patriot House Cup.
 - Classical Music – You will experience this when entering Pocopson. It sets a lovely atmosphere and signals that their morning broadcast will start.

Mr. Bruce Vosburgh provided the Patton Middle School report:

- Enrollment – We began the year with 1,013 students (40+ over last year), which is the highest we have ever seen.
- Student Council Officers – First meeting is today and the officers for this year are:
 - President – Sonny Clark-Turner
 - Vice-President – Robert Crowley
 - Recording Secretary – Allegra Gray
 - Corresponding Secretary – Jude Nalls
 - Treasurer – Nick Orenshaw
 - Parliamentarian – Jay Conroy
- New Family Social – was held last week in the middle school cafeteria, sponsored by the PTO
- Hurricane Katrina – We've collected \$3,500 to date for the 50-50 fund raiser
- Magazine Drive – Kicked off on September 15th and will run through September 30th. This is the major fund-raiser for Student Council.
- Open House – September 21st
- School Pictures – September 26th
- Mid-Progress Reports – Will come out on September 29th.
- Parent Visitation Day (October 12th) - Has been rescheduled to Tuesday, October 11th
- Middle Level PRAXIS – Allows teachers to teach through Geometry, as long as it's at the middle school.

Elementary Report (Continued)

Middle School Report

Mr. Jim Fulginiti provided the Unionville High School report:

- Kathleen Feehery – Welcome to her as our Interim Assistant Principal
- Sportsmanship Award – Congratulations to Dennis White, coaches and students for this honor (third year in a row).
- Hurricane Katrina - \$10,000 has been raised to date toward the 50-50 challenge, which runs to November 22nd and is a district-wide effort
- National Merit – 7 Semi-Finalists; Top 1% of students who took the PSAT (16,000) will move on to compete to be finalists (which turns out to be 1/2 of 1% who will make that); 11 Commended students also. Congratulations to all of them!
- Open House – Thursday, September 22nd at 7:00 p.m.
- Life track – Survey that will go out to students who graduated this past year; The data will help us with our programming.
- Spring Musical - *Beauty and the Beast*
- Susan Beach – It is bittersweet to accept Susan's retirement request. We will certainly miss her and she has done a great job!

Dan Bloch, East Marlborough Township resident, commended Drs. Kenney, O'Hern, and Sweeney for meeting with him the other day regarding the secular calendar issue. He understands that there is a drive to eliminate all holidays, including Good Friday. Mr. Bloch reiterated Dr. Kenney's comments: 1) If 50% of the student body or more were off (in years to come), we would have to revisit this issue again as to how they would be addressed and 2) We have tried to eliminate or cut down the Community Fair days but people with clout may have an influence on the Board's decision.

Mr. Bloch emphasized that all religious holidays should be considered. He cannot really see how it is a truly secular calendar until there were none of them. He moved here partly because of the consideration for the religious holidays and asked whether the Board could revisit the 50% of student body absent and Community Fair issues.

Mr. Wandersee commented that we must give it a chance first and then take a look at exactly what the situation may be. He stated that he appreciated Mr. Bloch's comments and hopes that he appreciates that they are concerned with issues of that nature and need to take a look at it. Mr. Wandersee stated that he could not offer any words to satisfy Mr. & Mrs. Bloch, adding that the Board struggled with this for several meetings and did not make their decision lightly. They felt it had to be tied to the PSSA testing. We were having kids pulled out of the schools once or twice a week. We'll have to see how it goes.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS**

Dr. Sweeney stated that with regard to people with clout, we had a nice discussion and when asked how the Board felt about the Community Fair, that was not a reflection of her response. Mr. Wandersee commented that it still distresses some of them as well but it needs to be addressed.

Mr. Bloch stated that he never thought it was done with any vendetta but it does not seem that we ended up with a secular calendar. He asked that if we revisited certain days off we look at all of them. Mrs. Brown stated that if we had 50% of the kids out on certain days, we would have to revisit them.

Janet Wilson, East Marlborough Township resident, asked whether the three consultants had a set of questions that the participants in the organizational climate survey would need to complete. If so, could they be posted on the web site? Mr. Baker responded that they could be posted in a matter of time. The intent of the instrument is to give it in a non-prepared manner so that each district employee who did not do a focus group survey could submit it at that time. At that point, he doesn't see why the questions could not be posted on the web.

Sharon Silverman, Birmingham Township resident, commented regarding an accident involving Bus 40 while traveling to Pocopson Elementary last week. The glass in the bottom of the front door had been broken off but no children were injured. Mrs. Gail Wolfel, Transportation Supervisor, commented that this was a non-reportable incident since it did not involve two vehicles. She does an investigation and files a report but this was not the fault of the driver. In response to Mrs. Silverman's question, Mrs. Wolfel stated that past incidents that were a driver's fault do add up. There are federal regulations stating that they must do motor vehicle checks on each driver who holds a license each year. If a driver has an accident, we also do another one per district policy.

Sara Bleemer, Birmingham Township resident, made the following comments regarding the calendar changes:

1. She wants it acknowledged that each school in the district had meetings scheduled on the high holidays of the Jewish religion. She recognized that some of the meeting dates have been changed and that this was not meant to be hurtful. It does, however, say a lot to her that it was not even considered – it is a problem.
2. Dan Bloch raised a question that was not answered. He was told that the Spring Break would be scheduled after the PSSA's. It just happens to be the week of Holy Week on this year's calendar (two weeks after the PSSA's). If it were the week after Holy Week, there would have been a greater response to the calendar. She doesn't feel that everyone realizes it because they will be effected next year. She asked why it was placed a week later.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

Dr. Kenney stated that when the 2005-06 calendar was designed, the current policy was not in place. Even in the new policy, it indicates that Spring Break will occur one to two weeks after the testing but the Board said they wanted it one week after the PSSA's. One of his concerns is that we know there is a science PSSA coming. The current calendar was approved before the policy was approved. The calendars for 2006-07 and beyond include the Spring Break one week after the PSSA's. Mrs. Bleemer asked if secularization of the calendar was decided separately from the Spring Break scheduling. Dr. Kenney responded that it was all together. He also stated that Section 1502 of the Pa. School Code indicates that except when Monday is fixed by the Board as a weekly holiday, school cannot be held on Memorial Day, July 4th, Christmas, Thanksgiving or New Year's Day. We are not permitted to be in session by School Code on those five days.

Tom Alexander, Birmingham Township resident, congratulated the faculty and staff for a pretty smooth opening. In response to Mr. Alexander's question, Rick Hostetler stated that the trailer is still parked at Chadds Ford Elementary School since it is used for storage, pending another structure to replace it.

Vic Dupuis, East Marlborough Township resident, encouraged the Board to post the organizational climate survey on the web site, particularly for parents and students who will be participating in it. He stated that people could print and download them and it would be a good exercise for consistency of response. Mr. Dupuis asked whether there was any possibility of using the savings from the refunding of our bonds to do something with our athletic fields. Mr. Wandersee responded that any savings would go into consideration with next year's budget requests but he has noted Mr. Dupuis' comments.

John Olsen, East Marlborough Township resident, commented that it concerns him that if you are in an area that is a majority of a particular religion and you vote by children being out in that case, you basically put children of other religions at a disadvantage. Their interests aren't protected because they aren't in the majority number so you have this desperate impact. He thinks that to feel a sense of community there needs to be some sensitivity to that issue here. He hopes that decisions that are made with regard to the calendar would be sensitive and recognize that today you are the majority and maybe tomorrow you could not be but everyone should have the feeling that they have been considered in the calendar development.

Mr. Olsen also stated that he is concerned about the design of the organizational climate survey. He has been involved in surveys in a variety of different contexts. The design of the survey often has skewed results that may be in the way of how questions were asked, the limitation on only one person

(Continued)

in a particular area getting the survey so you could figure out who the person was. He is afraid that people will not give candid answers. He wondered if the Board could provide them with a description of the survey design. Mr. Baker stated that it's there on the district's home page under the news section, survey method.

Mr. McClaskey welcomed everyone back to school. It's nice to have the children back in school mode. He is looking forward to participating in the climate survey next week. As a participant in the calendar issue, Mr. McClaskey stated that he was very supportive of trying to secularize it. He noticed that there were a lot of days early on in the year that we were out and they attempted to even things out (as colleges and universities do). He understands that the 2005-06 calendar was just an oversight. This has been corrected in the calendars for 2006-07 and beyond.

Mr. Baker commented regarding specific language that we discussed at length that seems to be absent from this dialogue. Dr. Sweeney stated that it was distributed in the Student Handbook. Also, she commented that when dealing with sensitive issues, you need to be sensitive. She accepts Mr. Bloch's comments as far as activities that were planned on Jewish holidays.

Mr. Baker congratulated the entire district on a successful opening. He appreciates the classical music at Pocopson. Mr. Baker thanked the administrators for their visibility at events at the schools – wonderful!

Mr. Knauss commented that with regard to Mr. Dupuis' comments, he has had a number of people talk with him about the fields. We have enough fields for our needs for our school district but they get used up after hours or for events. He stated that fields are not inexpensive. He has study results here that would tell you that to purchase land and develop a general purpose athletic field would be in the \$1-2 million range. The knee-jerk reaction would be to increase the number of fields because we need more fields so that they don't get used. He would be uncomfortable if we used educational funds to subsidize recreational field development. Mr. Dupuis stated that people are asking for the existing fields to be usable for the school. Mr. Knauss commented that they would have to not be used on weekends and at nighttime. The question is do we limit the usage by outside activities, which are really for our kids or do we spend educational dollars to increase the capacity of our fields? It's a difficult decision.

Mrs. Brown offered congratulations for a great start back to school. She congratulated the high school and staff with regard to the HVAC project. It is not impacting the students too heavily. She also had dinner with some people from "C" floor this evening who are very happy and it's good for the kids. Mrs. Brown stated that the organizational climate survey will be as good as what people put into it. If they don't, we won't have a clue as to what is going on. This is an opportunity to say your peace and it is unlikely that it will come back to haunt you but if so, come and tell us.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**BOARD
MEMBERS'
COMMENTS**

Dr. Sweeney commented that in her tenure on the School Board, this climate evaluation is the most important initiative that this Board has undertaken. She hears the comments about confidentiality but she trusts the process and asked that each participant be very open and honest. Dr. Sweeney stated that she is willing to meet directly with anyone who has any concerns regarding the calendar. She feels that the Board's intent is right.

Mr. Swayze welcomed everyone back and congratulated the administration, faculty, parents and students on a very smooth start-up for the school year. The opening was particularly wonderful in the Transportation Department. He hopes the warm weather will continue so we will appreciate the air-conditioning!

Mrs. Trigg thanked everyone involved with the successful start of the school year. In response to her question, Lexi Crampton stated that the Student Council is taking new photos of students for display in the frames that were removed from the UHS LGI room. Mrs. Trigg stated that she looks forward to seeing them.

Mr. Wandersee thanked everyone for coming out tonight to express their opinion. Our comment period has degenerated into a question and answer period tonight but he feels that some of the issues were important enough to discuss in depth and gave some Board members an opportunity to reflect on their own points of view on this. He is very sensitive to the issues in the community regarding minority groups. We're trying to work on something here with a secular calendar based on improving the educational process and not get into pitfalls. We also recognize that we still have work to do. It's a work in progress.

Mr. Wandersee stated that the Organizational Climate Study is being done and had been discussed in the early part of the year. The Board does want to find answers and we can't help you if you don't help us. It will be completed in as highly a confidential manner as is physically possible to do. He asked that individuals call Mr. Baker or him with any questions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Brown
Secretary

**BOARD
MEMBERS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**MEETING
ADJOURNED**