

UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
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SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Minutes
December 1, 2008

The December business meeting of the Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board was held on Monday, December 1, 2008 in the Unionville High School Library. Mrs. Brown, President, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

The following members were present: Mrs. Kathleen Brown, President, Edward Murray, Vice-President, Curt Baker (Via Telephone Conference Call), Karen Halstead, Dr. Paul Price, Dr. Corinne Sweeney, Timotha Trigg, Edward Wandersee and Dr. Therese West. Also present were Sharon E. Parker, District Superintendent, Kenneth Batchelor, Sharon Allen-Spann, Robert Cochran, Rich Hug, community residents, members of the press, and Denise Miller, Recording Secretary.

Superintendent Parker announced that the Work Session on December 15, 2008 may contain action items as presented.

There were no comments from residents or from School Directors.

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Dr. West to approve adoption of the 403(B) Plan Document as presented on the attachment.

Mr. Wandersee stated that this plan amends the list of approved vendors.

Mr. Cochran commented about the three documents that were provided by Penn Serve, the company appointed at the November 17, 2008 Board meeting. They included the Board resolution to adopt a 403(b) Plan or amend the list of approved vendors; the Adoption Agreement that included checkbox options on how the plan will operate (i.e. selections, defined limits, etc.); and a boilerplate public school and university 403(b) plan document as provided. This is the final step to have the plan up and running for January 1, 2009, in accordance with regulations. We have also discussed the plan with the U-CF Education Association, inclusive of changes and vendor choices.

Mr. Murray stated that all 501 school districts in Pennsylvania are required to do this. Mr. Cochran added that all districts in the United States must comply with these regulations.

Motion carried (9-0).

Mr. Wandersee stated that the Board would not take any action on the Bond issue until certain issues are resolved with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

There were no action items for Personnel or Co-Curricular and Student Life tonight.

**CALL TO
ORDER**

**MEMBERS
PRESENT**

**SUPER-
INTENDENT'S
REPORT**

FINANCE

**Adoption - 403(b)
Plan Document**

Dr. West reported for Communications regarding items discussed at this morning's meeting:

1. Video Initiative for Board Meetings – There have been numerous discussions over the past few years regarding televising or podcasting our meetings. Rich Hug has a wonderful, affordable (\$60 per year) way to do this via an electronic format that would be uploaded to a company and allow direct links from our web site to the videos.

Mr. Hug commented about having reviewed this over numerous years to provide accessibility to the community. Since we serve seven townships, cable did not work for us. We can upload our video each month because of the advent of Web 2.0. Mr. Hug provided a demonstration of a Board meeting in Wisconsin via our website and stated that this process would allow access for community members who could not come to meetings.

Dr. West stated that the videos could also be archived. Mr. Hug added that this technology is similar to *You Tube*, where the videos cannot be downloaded. He stated that our videographer, Sarah Hoopes, was videotaping us tonight as a test.

Mrs. Halstead thinks this is a great idea.

In response to Dr. Price's comment, Ms. Parker stated that we hope many members of the community will view the videos. It is our responsibility to provide this to the community. Mr. Hug responded to Dr. Price's question regarding the ability to know the number of viewers, stating that we could probably track that via a counter in the system.

Dr. West commented about the second part of this initiative to provide a Superintendent's message. Ms. Parker stated that she wanted to provide information out there (as was done in Wallingford-Swarthmore School District) as a time to share the news rather than waiting until the Board meeting. Mr. Hug demonstrated such a message as provided by a Superintendent in New York state. Ms. Parker sees this as a direct parallel to the *Food for Thought* sessions where she offers comments and takes questions from community members.

2. E-Calendar – Mr. Hug demonstrated this calendar where, for example, items that are added as District Office or School Board items are automatically uplinked to the home page. Office Managers at the schools will be able to take building items and put them right on the web as soon as possible.
3. Community Conversation - Nancy Mohr (Executive Director, Chester County 2020) will lead this meeting on January 28, 2009.

COMMUNI- CATIONS

Video Initiative – Board Meetings

E-Calendar

Community Conversation

Communications - Continued

4. Wall of Honor Invitation – Ms. Parker provided information regarding the two events on December 11, 2008:
 - Afternoon Program – 1:00 PM, UHS Auditorium
 - a. Introduction of honorees who will make a presentation regarding their life at UHS and beyond
 - b. Members of the senior class will be present; Honorees will be escorted by members of the student body who represent the activities in which they participated at UHS
 - c. Public reception – UHS Library, following the presentations
Members of the public are invited to attend.
 - Evening Program – 6:30 PM, Mendenhall Inn
 - a. Everyone is invited to attend – there are presently 100 people registered.

Ms. Parker thanked Rich Hug and the fine committee members who worked on this honor.

5. Key Communicator Program – On hold until David Voss comes to work with us; Met with Paula Massanari today to discuss the formal process in place in her current school district.
6. David Voss – Discussed similar topics; An e-mail was sent to Board members to request any topics they would like to see him address
7. Board Intranet – Mr. Hug commented about the *Right to Know* law that becomes effective January 1, 2009, and the need to manage our information in a more electronic format. Ms. Parker stated that more community members are requesting information electronically and not everything is in that format. We will look at how we can do more of that with the community.

Mr. Hug demonstrated a Board documents page from another school district. It would cost some money to contract with these folks. We currently use First Class for our internal network/e-mail, which provides for e-mail, a calendar; bookmarks; a personal calendar; contacts; allows a place to store committee minutes and documents, agendas; a place to store Board meeting information between agendas and departmental topics. It would eliminate the Friday delivery format for the most part, but would create an electronic Board packet.

Mr. Murray commented about the Chester County I.U.'s use of an electronic Board packet. Mrs. Brown stated that it would allow for easy storage and access of information. Mr. Wandersee inquired as to how we would accomplish all of this. Ms. Parker stated that this is exciting, although retraining and rethinking would be necessary, particularly with the Board meetings rotating from site to site each month. We will need to work on a process. Dr. Price suggested utilizing school laptop computers.

**Communications
(Continued)**

**Wall of Honor
Invitation /
Program**

**Key
Communicator
Program**

David Voss

Board Intranet

Ms. Parker commented regarding today's challenging day, with police action playing out in the Pocopson area. She received a call at 6:55 AM regarding the road closure and was offered caution due to a party who was allegedly in the area of the Simon Pearce Restaurant and may or may not have had a weapon. We were offered caution and decided on a two-hour delayed opening for Pocopson Elementary School.

Superintendent Parker complimented the Pennsylvania State Police at Avondale and the West Chester Police, stating that she received six calls and was advised when helicopters would be arriving in the area. The delayed opening of school kept cars off the road, allowed police to do what they needed, and did not jeopardize the children. Once we were given clearance from both police agencies, the decision was made to open school.

Our technology was utilized to inform Pocopson Elementary parents via rapid dial phone calls and e-mail notices, as well as a posted e-mail notice by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on Philly.com. Ms. Parker stayed at the District Office to answer calls, while Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Nolen and Mr. Hostetler went to Pocopson Elementary ("Y Care" was open). Mr. Cochran worked with the Transportation folks. Everything that needed to happen did so in a right way, in great part due to the technology and the communication plan. We heard from a principal of Immaculata High School in New Jersey who wished us well and kept our actions on file for their reference. We have also received kind and supportive comments from our parents. We have dealt with two calls of concern that were received.

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the School Calendar for the 2009-2010 school year as on the attachment (pp. 10.a.1-2, 11-15-08 Draft).

In response to Mr. Wandersee's question about whether all final adjustments were made to the calendar, Mr. Hug stated that we received approximately 10 e-mail comments. The comments were varied and included starting school earlier, starting later, and the length of winter and spring breaks.

Motion carried (9-0).

Mr. Wandersee commented about the revisions in the following policies, and the need for a second first reading:

1. Policy No. 249: Pupils – bullying (pp. 10.e.1-3, revised)
2. Policy No. 218: Pupils – Code of Student Conduct (pp. 10.e.4-18, revised)

Ms. Parker stated that a question was raised regarding some language on the first of three pages (Policy 249), where some revisions were made by our solicitor. We could postpone this action until the meeting on December 15th, and make that a blended meeting. Mr. Wandersee agreed with this suggestion, and offered his fellow Board members an opportunity to comment.

Mrs. Trigg commented about our authority to monitor and discipline bullying outside of school.

**Superintendent's
Comments –
Police Action,
Pocopson
Elementary Area**

**LEGISLATION
AND POLICY:**

**2009-2010
Calendar
Approved**

**Policy No. 249:
Bullying, Revised
& Policy No. 218:
Code of Student
Conduct, Revised
(First Readings)**

Ms. Parker stated that as the school is seen as a nexus of relationships between students and students presenting as victims, we can take that liberty and have been doing so for two and one-half years. She used a fictitious example of students who live in close proximity of one another but whose basic contact is in school. If there has been tension in the community and there are notes in school, harassment, bullying by friends of Party A and Party B, then the school can act on it. If there have been threats outside of school, it is incumbent upon us to work with the local police and inform parents of steps that are being taken. Rather than inappropriate behavior at a party on a weekend, we are talking about specific threats of violence and endangerment to students that may be reflected in school. We already have a bullying policy but are required to have a policy in place to comply with current law by January 1, 2009.

Mrs. Trigg stated that this seems more specific to student-to-student bullying (versus adult bullying), and she wondered why we were not concerned with all bullying. Ms. Parker commented about the law being somewhat narrow and specific, having been drafted for student-to-student bullying. Adults in a community who harass students are subject to broader laws within our Criminal Code. Student-to-student bullying was the focus of our legislators. After speaking with our solicitor, it was stated that staff-to-staff and adult-to-student bullying would be addressed through criminal proceedings. The bullying policy is mandatory and must embed the Code of Student Conduct (which was not included previously). We have had a Code of Student Conduct for years, although it had never been approved by the Board previously.

In response to Mrs. Trigg's question about receiving calls regarding student-to-student or non student-to-student bullying, Ms. Parker stated that such information should be reported to her so that appropriate action can be taken. She commented about intimidation, stating that it is still somewhat of a gray area. If someone feels victimized, she hopes they will access the resources of the school district. We will take it forward in the most appropriate manner and report to police if laws have been broken. In the case of a teacher, she would hope the parent would telephone the police. We do have resources and can be a clearinghouse for the district.

Mrs. Halstead commented about having received telephone calls also, and she will now present them to Ms. Parker. Superintendent Parker stated that they would serve as a communication link and should let us know the concern. There may also be some concerns of which we are aware that we have to act upon anyway.

Mrs. Brown commented regarding suspensions for Level E offenses (from one to three days) to Level F offenses (minimum of ten days) in the Code of Student Conduct. The former wording referenced a maximum numbers of days (vs. a minimum). Ms. Parker commented that this is a full discussion we have not been able to have. Policy 218 is one that will possibly be amended at a later date.

Mr. Wandersee asked about the ability to amend the policy if we wish to do so. Ms. Parker stated that we have not had a process of discussion, although this document has been in place. Mr. Vosburgh stated that it had been in place for over 15 years. Superintendent Parker added that it is now becoming policy. Mr. Wandersee stated that this would be an excellent opportunity to talk with the PTO's and make adjustments, as necessary. He stated that we would consider this the first reading for Policies No. 218 and No. 249.

Mrs. Trigg commented regarding § 12.3 School Rules/Governing Board and § 12.5 Corporal Punishment in the proposed Code of Student Conduct, requesting that we may wish to review the appropriateness of some of the language in the policy. Ms. Parker stated that this section had been taken directly from the Public School Code and is classically reminiscent of the 1940's. She suggested that a review could be considered at the Co-Curricular and Student Life Committee meeting. Since committee assignments are under review presently, Ms. Parker suggested that a highlighted/stricken version of the policy could be presented by the Administration for possible consideration in February.

Mr. Baker left the telephone conference call connection to the Board meeting at this time.

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the following Board Policy:

1. Policy No. 801: Operations – Public Records (pp. 10.c.1-18)

Mr. Wandersee commented regarding the length and tediousness of the policy, most of which originated from the General Assembly's Bill.

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Dr. West to approve the Release and Settlement Agreement for Student No. 2008-09-01 as on the attachment. Mr. Wandersee stated that this agreement had been discussed in Executive Session.

Motion carried (8-0).

Mrs. Brown indicated that with the new Right to Know law, some personnel items could not be included in Board packets or in e-mail correspondence. Ms. Parker suggested to her, and she concurs, that brief Executive Sessions could be held following the Board Work Session to discuss any personnel or student issues that cannot be sent out in Board packets or via e-mail. This would be a Committee of the Whole meeting to help in avoiding any surprises on Board meeting days.

There is also a need to appoint a new Board Secretary in Mrs. Brown's place since she has been elected as Board President. Mr. Cochran stated that the Board Secretary is required to sign checks and documents. A member of the Board serves in this role in approximately 20% of school districts; the Business Manager in about 30% of districts (with another individual serving as Treasurer; currently Dominick Guiseppe in U-CF); and a support staff member in approximately 50% of districts.

Mr. Wandersee commented about previous discussions, stating that it would be appropriate to have a Board member in the role to sign legal documents. Mrs. Brown stated this sometimes slows up the workings of the office. Mr. Murray commented about the need for stability in the Business Office, adding that we have had two Business Managers in 32 years. He and Dr. Sweeney would be comfortable with the idea of doing that here.

**Legislation and
Policy
(Continued)**

**Policy No. 801:
Open Records
Approved**

**Release &
Settlement
Agreement:
Student No.
2008-09-01**

It was moved by Dr. Price and seconded by Dr. Sweeney to appoint Robert W. Cochran, Director of Business and Operations, to serve as Board Secretary to fill the unexpired term of Kathleen M. Brown, effective through June, 2009.

Motion carried (8-0).

Mrs. Brown requested that Board members provide input to her regarding any preferences for Board assignments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert W. Cochran
Secretary

**Board Secretary
– Robert W.
Cochran**

**Board Input
Requested RE:
Assignments**

**MEETING
ADJOURNED**