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**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES INDEX
OCTOBER 10, 2011
EXECUTIVE SESSION 5:05 P.M.
REGULAR SESSION 7:00 P.M.
WILLIAM ANNIN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Carlsson.

I. Salute to Flag

II. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Carlsson, Mr. Koch, Ms. Kusel, Ms. McGowan,
Ms. McKeon, Ms. Shah, Ms. Sherwyn, Ms. Wooldridge

ABSENT: None

III. Executive Session – 5:05p.m. – William Annin Middle School Conference Room

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bernards Township Board of Education met in closed session to discuss: review of qualifications of persons under consideration for employment; and negotiations; and further

BE IT RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public interest or without violation of the confidentiality of personnel.

On motion by Mr. Koch, seconded by Ms. Shah, and approved by all present, the Board recessed into closed executive session at 5:05 p.m.

On motion by Ms. Sherwyn, seconded by Ms. Shah, and approved by all present, the Board returned to public session at 6:45 p.m.

The Board reconvened the regular meeting in the William Annin Middle School

Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

IV. Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:00 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Auditorium

V. Statement of Public Notice

This was a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, and you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. We do not have a specific time limit, but we ask that you keep your comments brief. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. In instances where the Board feels that there is a misunderstanding or inaccuracy, a member of the Board or Administration will address it in the Board Response portion of the agenda.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action.

If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

VI. Student Representative

Ridge High School Student Government Vice President Ruthie Robinson attended the meeting. She spoke on activities during the recent Anti-Bullying week. Ms. Robinson

highlighted activities for Homecoming weekend including the pep rally, senior dance and senior tailgate. The Student Government is working with the alumni committee to schedule events during that weekend including tours of the building.

VII. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Valerie A. Goger read her letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective June 30, 2012. Dr. Goger thanked present and past Boards of Education, administrative colleagues, and professional staff for their dedication to the district and its students. She noted the tireless fundraising efforts of the PTO organizations to enrich school offerings.

Assistant Superintendent Regina Rudolph read her letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective June 30 2012. Ms. Rudolph spoke on the dedication and vision of the professionals she has worked with, the community members, and thanked her personal staff for making her tenure in Bernards Township such an enriching experience.

VIII. Board Presentation

1) Mathematics Common Core Standards – Supervisor of Math Marian Palumbo

Dr. Palumbo stated every 10 years the teaching of mathematics is reviewed with the goal of improving the education of students. One major difference in this revision is having looked at other high achieving countries (Singapore and Japan). The new Common Core Standards for Mathematics program focuses on the depth of program, understanding of content, and method of teaching. A program goal is to align mathematics education across the country.

Dr. Palumbo highlighted:

- the standards as set forth by the Council of Chief State School Officers and The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
- a comparison between the former NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards and the new Common Core Standards by grade level when disciplines are taught
- two significant new mathematical practices: students needing to make sense of problems and persevering in solving them, while attending to precision
- standards are now very detailed with K-8 being clearly described; at the high school level the 'how to' is left up to the district
- a review of content domains in grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12
- the weave of information from K-5 to 6-8 to 9-12

Dr. Palumbo explained the implementation of the standards between 2011 – 2014 with

new state assessments due in the 2014-15 school year. States had the choice of joining one of two groups who are developing an assessment system. New Jersey has joined The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. There will be two summative and two formative components to the assessment process.

IX. Public Forum on Agenda Items

Congratulatory comments were made regarding the resignations of Superintendent Goger and Assistant Superintendent Rudolph with appreciation for all they have accomplished to move Bernards Township's education program forward. Other comments were made regarding the amount of homework and its impact on student stressors.

X. Committee Reports

Finance

Chairperson Susan McGowan stated committee discussion at its meeting on September 21 included the annual district audit, and use of an online auction site for disposal of equipment no longer serviceable. The committee's upcoming meeting is on Wednesday, October 12 at 4:00 p.m.

Personnel

Chairperson Susan Carlsson stated the contract between the Board and the BTAA (Bernards Township Administrators' Association) ends on June 30, 2012. Preliminary meetings have been scheduled to begin the negotiation's process.

Ad Hoc Facilities

Chairperson Bill Koch stated the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13 at 4:00 p.m.

Curriculum

Chairperson Robin McKeon stated the committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, October 14. Highlights from the previous meeting included review of textbooks and summer curriculum writing projects, and the new SAT/ACT prep course. Forty projects were completed this past summer. Ms. McKeon suggested, if Board members have not already done so, they visit the homework portal that links directly to teachers' websites at WAMS & RHS.

Policy

Chairperson Elaine Kusel stated the committee will schedule a meeting, when necessary.

Community Relations

Chairperson Audrey Sherwyn stated the committee met with the PTO Advisory Council on Monday, October 3, where concerns or questions from the PTO organizations are addressed. Ms. Sherwyn noted that Ms. Wooldridge writes summaries of Board meetings to be posted on the district website. She spoke about the November 3rd re-screening of *Race to Nowhere* at RHS PAC, upcoming events through the Municipal Alliance (student stressors, *Race to Nowhere*, 21 for Reason and its presentation at the November 14 Board meeting). Ms. Sherwyn also mentioned the Save our Schools initiative regarding approval of Charter Schools, and Board attendance at the upcoming NJSBA conference.

Liaison Reports

Susan Carlsson updated the Board on the NJSBA Legislative meeting. Governor Christie will continue his efforts to reform tenure, implement merit pay, and move the school election from April to November.

Ms. Sherwyn mentioned the upcoming Senior Health Summit at the YMCA on October 20 and the Youth Summit for 8th grade students at William Annin Middle School on October 21, Project Graduation and the Senior tailgate.

XI. Board Forum

1) Discussion of Student Stressors

Comments were made regarding the progress on the upcoming homework survey (will be reviewed at the Board Curriculum Committee meeting and forwarded to full Board), teachers' awareness of the homework issue, mid-term exams at the high school, and timeline for implementation of changes following the homework survey.

XII. Public Forum on Other Than Agenda Items

Comments were made regarding student stressors, the level of homework between college prep and honors or AP courses, academic integrity and the district definition of cheating, and the number of minutes between periods at the middle school.

Director of Curriculum Sean Siet explained the review of homework procedures, contact with other districts, teachers in depth review of surveys in department meetings prior to distribution, the issue of tests not being returned to students, problem of cheating/plagiarism, explanation of honors or AP students 'teaching themselves' and ultimately the students' responsibility for selecting their course load.

XIII. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Koch, seconded by Ms. Kusel and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Markarian
Board Secretary