

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY/CAFETERIA
DECEMBER 12, 2013 – 6:35 PM**

CALL OF ROLL

Mr. Richard E. Arline
Mr. Delvin Burton
Mr. Thomas J. Lewis
Mrs. Eva M. Nagy, Vice President
Dr. Julia M. Presley, President

Mr. Richard Seamon – arrived at 7:40 PM
Ms. Keisha Smith-Carrington - absent
Mr. Robert T. Trautmann
Mrs. Betty Whalen – arrived at 6:57 PM

Student Liaison
Monil Patel –
absent

Mr. Edward Q. Seto, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. John Calavano, Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary
Ms. Eveny Pagán, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction – arrived at 7:45 PM
Mrs. Gail Reichg, Director of Personnel - absent
Ms. Lynne Crawford, Director of Pupil Personnel Services - absent
Mr. Orvyl Wilson, Director of School Management

And 15 Members of the Public

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Mr. Lewis led the Board in the pledge.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Mr. Calavano read the following statement:

In accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act” P.L. 1975, c. 231 (Sunshine Law), the schedule and notification of this meeting have been provided for on August 23, 2013 and December 6, 2013. Copies of this notice were faxed to the **Courier News**, the **Home News Tribune**, **The Star-Ledger**, **The Trenton Times**, Franklin Township Clerk/Manager, WCTC Radio, District Schools, Offices and Associations, PTO Presidents, and posted on the Central Administration Building notice board.

Mr. Lewis read the following statement:

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Mission of the Franklin Township Public Schools is to provide excellent educational opportunities that meet or exceed New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for every student; maintain an environment that engenders an appreciation of the value of every student; develop every student to his/her highest potential; and instill the attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary to become independent, contributing members of a democratic, multi-cultural society.

DISTRICT GOALS

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION: *To develop and implement a comprehensive assessment program designed to meet the needs of all students through the use of formative and summative assessments aligned to the common core standards and integrated into instruction.*

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: *To promote community engagement and effective communication to and from all stakeholders.*

CULTURE AND CLIMATE: *To continue the District’s efforts to safeguard students and staff, enhance the culture and environment of our schools and improve relationships among and between students; staff; parents/guardians; and the community that promote respect, motivation for learning and creativity in and for our students.*

FACILITIES: Utilizing the District’s 2011-2021 Long-Range Facilities Plan, finalize a building program (including application for state grants and outside funding sources) that will enhance and improve the District’s delivery of education to all students; provide additional classroom space to address the projected enrollment growth over the next several years; address critical maintenance issues in all existing facilities and consider potential changes to the delivery of education.

I. Action to Adopt the Agenda

Moved: Mr. Trautmann Seconded: Mr. Arline

Yes Yes Yes Yes Absent Absent Yes Absent Yes
Arline Burton Lewis Nagy Seamon Smith-Carrington Trautmann Whalen Dr. Presley

Confidential Session – Library

Moved: Mr. Arline Seconded: Mr. Lewis

Motion to adjourn to confidential session at 6:38 PM to conduct an HIB (Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying) Hearing and a confidential personnel matter. Minutes of the confidential session will be made public when the reason for confidentiality no longer exists.

Yes Yes Yes Yes Absent Absent Yes Absent Yes
Arline Burton Lewis Nagy Seamon Smith-Carrington Trautmann Whalen Dr. Presley

Returned to open session at 7:35 PM in the Cafeteria.

Reconvening roll call – All board members were present, with the exception of Mr. Seamon and Ms. Smith-Carrington.

II. Presentations

- Donna L. Japhet, CPA, PSA, Lerch, Vinci & Higgins, LLP, auditor, presented the Audit for fiscal year 2013 and Mr. Calavano discussed the Corrective Action Plan.
- Tom Lewis, John Felix, Janice Regan and Miriam Francis presented the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Social Justice recommendations.

III. Superintendent’s Update

Budget Process Timeline

Mr. John Calavano, Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary, Ms. Maureen Manning, Assistant Business Administrator, members of the business office, my cabinet and I have begun to meet with content area Directors/Supervisors and building Principals to review their proposed budgets for the 2014-2015 school year. It is expected that the Finance Committee will begin to review the preliminary budget work in January. By the end of February, 2014 we should be in receipt of the state aid numbers so that a preliminary budget can be reviewed by the Finance Committee and presented to the full board.

There is pending legislation that could extend the deadline to submit the preliminary budget to the County Office for approval. This pending legislation may also alter the timeline for a district to hold a public hearing on the budget. I will continue to keep the board and public updated on the process.

While it is early in the budget process, we must keep certain realities clear. We will need to propose a preliminary budget that falls within the 2% cap. We will need to budget for the renewal of positions which were added this school year in areas such as the Alternative School Program and special education. Additionally, we will be evaluating additional programs to service our classified students as they outgrow their current programs.

Accordingly in an effort to be fiscally prudent, educationally sound and avoid any unpleasant surprises as the budget process continues, I have asked the Finance Committee to consider and the full board to discuss the privatization of our paraprofessionals. We have all been moved by the great show of support in the past for the paraprofessionals and the work that they do for the students of Franklin Township Public Schools, but the fiscal reality that was evident last year has not and will not change. Many, if not all, of the paraprofessionals that service our students could return to Franklin and continue their work with our students next year, but they will be employees of an outside agency and the district would not have to carry the cost of their pension and benefits.

Again, I am well aware of how sensitive a subject this is and, accordingly, I am seeking guidance from the full board tonight as to their thoughts on how we should proceed in crafting our proposed budget.

Meeting with Substitute Teachers

On December 4th I met with a substitute teacher in response to her request for a meeting. Three other substitutes accompanied her to the meeting. They requested the restoration of the \$110 level of pay for substitutes who worked 120 or more days during the 2012-2013 school year. I expressed to the group that I will not make a recommendation to adjust the per diem rate for substitute teachers for 2013-2014. However, I did commit to discussing an adjustment for substitutes that fit the requirements. I will ask that the Finance and Personnel Committees discuss this proposed adjustment after the board's reorganization meeting in January.

IV. Board President's Report

Did You Know?

Franklin High School Cheerleaders Qualify for Nationals!

On November 23, 2013 the Franklin High School Cheerleading Team made history by winning the Large Varsity Non-Tumble Division at the UCA Northeast Regional Competition in Toms River, NJ. This is the first time FHS Cheer has ever won a Regional Competition. With this win our team has received a bid to compete at the UCA High School National Championship in Walt Disney World in February.

This will be the first time FHS will be represented in a National Cheerleading Competition and look they forward to returning to Franklin High School with a trophy.

V. Comments From The Public *(5 minutes per speaker – agenda items only)*

The meeting was opened for public comments on agenda items only at 8:16 PM on a motion by Mr. Trautmann, seconded by Mr. Burton. All board members were in agreement. There were no public comments at this time.

Motion to close the public portion of the meeting by Mr. Trautmann, seconded by Mrs. Whalen. All board members were in agreement.

VI. Committee/Liaison Reports

Mrs. Whalen, Communications Ad Hoc Committee Chair, reported on the November 20th meeting.

Mrs. Nagy, Policy Committee Chair, reported on the December 3rd meeting.

Mr. Seamon, Facilities Committee Chair, reported on the December 11th meeting.

Mr. Burton, Finance Committee Chair, reported on the November 18th meeting.

VII. New Business

1. Review of December 19, 2013 Action Meeting Agenda
2. Action Items for December 12, 2013

Action Items

Administration

A-01 Designation of Position - Affirmative Action Officer

Moved: Mr. Seamon Seconded: Mr. Trautmann

Appoint Mr. Orvyl Wilson as the District's Affirmative Action Officer for the period December 16, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Arline	Burton	Lewis	Nagy	Seamon	Smith-Carrington	Trautmann	Whalen	Dr. Presley

HIB Investigation Report

R-01 HIB (Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying) Investigation Report

Moved: Mrs. Nagy Seconded: Mr. Lewis

Acknowledge receipt of the HIB Investigation Report for the period November 5, 2013 through December 3, 2013 as detailed in the exhibit attached hereto and made a part of the minutes. (Exhibit R-01)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Yes</u>						
Trautmann	Whalen	Arline	Burton	Lewis	Nagy	Seamon	Smith-Carrington	Dr. Presley

Personnel

P-01 Personnel Report No. 9, dated December 12, 2013

Moved: Mr. Seamon Seconded: Mr. Trautmann

As recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, approve Personnel Report No. 9, as detailed in the exhibit attached hereto and made a part of the minutes. (Exhibit P-01)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Whalen	Arline	Burton	Lewis	Nagy	Seamon	Smith-Carrington	Trautmann	Dr. Presley

VIII. Comments From The Public

The meeting was opened for public comments at 8:45 PM on a motion by Mr. Trautmann, seconded by Mr. Burton. All board members were in agreement.

Lorri Mountainland, FTEA President, asked the board to consider the impact of privatizing the paraprofessionals.

De Sanders pointed out that Gail Reichg's last day of employment is tomorrow and inquired if the board has received a recommendation for her replacement. She requested to know when administration became aware of the issue regarding the Vice Principal at Elizabeth Avenue School and if anything could have been done differently in a situation such as this. She suggested a policy to monitor new employees before giving them tenure. Ms. Sanders spoke about the Superintendent in Highland Park, staff turnover in our district and in-house promotions. She indicated that she is very pleased with the high school guidance department.

John Felix acknowledged the great work at the high school under the leadership of Jim Bever. He spoke about the reorganization meeting next month, the current board leadership being compromised due to the ethics charges and their continued leadership will be ineffective for the future of the district. Mr. Felix expressed his support of Mr. Arline and felt he could restore integrity to the board. He thanked Dr. Presley for speaking about the passing of Nelson Mandela.

Linda Powell apologized for the misinformation regarding her food service comments that she made at a prior board meeting. She spoke positively about the high school.

Angela Barkley spoke of Dr. Presley serving the district well as Board President and pointed out that neither Messrs. Connell nor Schaeffer were at the meeting now that the election is over. She thanked Dr. Presley for bringing up Nelson Mandela and requested to know what was done in the district regarding his passing. Ms. Barkley expressed concern with the Elizabeth Avenue School Vice Principal and the district's hiring practices. She also spoke about racial imbalance in district hiring and requested that action be taken to ensure a better balance.

Myra Mitchell expressed concern with the fallen administrator. She requested to know, if an arrest was made in November 2012, when administration was made aware of the arrest and what actions were taken. Ms. Mitchell indicated that she herself is being investigated and requested to know who is paying for her investigation attorney. She indicated that she has no reason to lie.

De Sanders suggested that the Superintendent check new employees periodically. She stated that she and the community support Dr. Presley and admire her integrity.

John Felix questioned how a compromised board leadership can be focused enough to work with administration and move the district forward.

Linda Powell spoke about Nelson Mandela and that Myra Mitchell inspired her daughter to become a teacher. She expressed her hope that the intimidation and bullying in the district will end soon.

Motion to close the public portion of the meeting at 9:20 PM by Mr. Trautmann, seconded by Mr. Lewis. All board members were in agreement.

Adjournment

Moved: Mr. Burton

Seconded: Mr. Lewis

Action to adjourn at 9:20 PM.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Arline	Burton	Lewis	Nagy	Seamon	Smith-Carrington	Trautmann	Whalen	Dr. Presley

Respectfully submitted,

John Calavano
Board Secretary