



## **Study Session MINUTES - April 10, 2017**

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

In Attendance: M. McClure, J. Hackworth, L. Ashbaugh, A. Loeffler, A. DiClaudio, J. Nehlsen, D. Tompa, M. DiNinno, E. Hewitt, N. English, C. Monroe, M. Plance, R. Rizzo, D. Zolkowski, T. Good (via phone)

Absent: D. DiPietro, J. Hurt-Robinson

Visitors in Attendance: M. Fusko, D. Lohr, F. Aughenbaugh, R. Spohn, B. Orbin, W. Wilton, K. Krajca, K. Morda, C. DelRosso, B. Scassera, G. Scassera, R. Bertucci, K. Hemingray, K. Migely, K. Sebastian,  
Additional Visitors who did not sign in

Dr. DiNinno reported that the Model UN students had a successful experience during their trip to Rome and several students earned awards. She thanked everyone for their support and indicated how pleased she was that the students were able to have this opportunity.

Dr. DiNinno shared that several guests will be joining the board at the April Regular voting meeting including teacher Rachelle Poth who has earned several awards this year, students who have achieved impressive athletic awards and a student who has illustrated a published book.

Dr. DiNinno provided the board with an update on enrollment sharing that Tenth Street is projected to have 315 students, Verner 198 and the JHSH 444 during the 2017-18 school year. These totals are projected at this time and do not include outside placements.

Dr. DiNinno shared that the board committees will be reporting out on progress.

Dr. McClure indicated that she liked the committee work being completed and how Dr. DiNinno has been arranging the board agenda based on committee work and reports. She indicated that there is a lot of work that goes in to committee work explaining that the committees strive to use their efforts to bring information to the full board for a vote after a lot of time and deliberated discussion has occurred. She thanked the committees for their efforts and openness to inclusiveness. Dr. McClure praised the Finance Committee for their hard work and explained that at one point the 2017-18 budget had a deficit of about \$1 million dollars. That deficit was brought down to 700,000 and then about \$400,000, and eventually to the current deficit of about 214,000 as a result of much hard work and diligence.

Dr. DiNinno thanked Mr. Nehlsen, Mr. Hackworth and Ms. Good for their commitment to working on the development of a budget that addresses academic, current and future district needs. She said the group has been working diligently seeking realistic and practical ways to meet student needs and be fair

and responsible to tax payers. She then asked the Finance Committee to provide an update, which was in the form of a planned presentation.

Mr. Nehlsen provided the board with a presentation on the current status of the budget sharing that expenditures at this point in the budget process still exceed revenues by about \$214,000. He indicated that the gap needed closed and this is accomplished by cuts and reductions and/or a tax increase. The budget is still in the process of being analyzed and developed. Final recommendations to the budget will occur in June. Mr. Nehlsen then reviewed aspects of the ESCO project indicating that this can result in savings in some areas. After reviewing details of the ESCO project, the Finance Committee recommended that the board consider moving forward with the recommendations and follow the timeline for the plan. A review of current and future capital projects, debt service and Bonds was also provided in detail. The finance committee answered many questions regarding all of these topics.

Dr. DiNinno then provided updates on Education Committee topics along with Mrs. Ashbaugh, Mr. Hewitt and other principals respectively. Updates and reports on the following were provided:

- Student Handbook (17-18): Mr. Hewitt – Jr. High Additions, Proposed Changes
- Program of Studies (17-18): Mr. Hewitt – Highlights, Detail Grid, Math Pathway
- The need for a Reading Specialist and Math Intervention teacher at the 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade level to address identified student needs and support their success. The group explained that this has been an identified need for quite some time and that they have continued to seek ways in the budget to pay for these resources.

Dr. DiNinno and Mr. Hewitt then discussed potential ways that the Social Studies and Physical Education programs could be adjusted to help assist with obtaining the needed Reading and Math intervention teacher resources; especially since the 17-18 budget still has a deficit of \$214,000. Several revisions to the Social Studies program at the secondary level were shared by Mr. Hewitt.

The committee explained that the district did not want to increase class sizes at the elementary level and they looked at every area to examine potential alterations, including building nurse positions, counselor resources, increasing elementary class sizes, and revising the manner in which elementary specials were being implemented. They also examined staffing in all special areas to determine impact on employment and ultimately school culture in the event a teacher would need to be furloughed as a result of the decision. They emphasized that a creative way to continue physical education programming, without furloughing a teacher, would be to continue with a more traditional physical education class each week at the elementary level, make no changes to the physical education program at the JHSH, and to create a plan to more fully integrate physical activity into the curriculum each week at the elementary level. Time would be needed to create the integration plan so that a genuine commitment to more quality physical activity could be assured. New wellness policy guidelines also encourage the use of more integrated physical activities for children. Recess should also be considered as an important part of the day and a means to encourage outdoor physical activities. Additional details pertaining to outdoor and indoor recess options and daily recess for all elementary students were also shared. Dr. DiNinno shared that the district's commitment to small class sizes continued to be a priority.

Dr. DiNinno and solicitor Falco Muscante indicated that in order for the potential revisions to take place the board needed to follow specific PDE guidelines. A resolution to make these changes needed to be passed by the board. It was also noted that passing the resolution did not commit the board to these changes.

Dr. DiNinno then indicated that before presenting the resolution, she would like to take some time for public comment.

Several parents commented on their desire to keep two traditional physical education classes per week in the elementary school schedule. Many parents asked the board members specific questions about the way thing would be done and made suggestions for cuts in other areas instead of altering the physical education program.

The board then passed the following resolution with 5 members voting to approve the resolution, 1 member voting not to approve the resolution (J. Nehlsen) and 1 member abstaining (D. Tompa). 2 members were not in attendance at the meeting.

Dr. DiNinno then shared the new Social Studies Textbook being recommended by the Social Studies staff and asked the board to review the recommendation sheet for details of the book. She also invited any board member to take the book home and review the board prior to the April Regular voting meeting where a request for adoption will be made.

On behalf of the Student Life committee, Alex DiClaudio then reported that it is in the process of reviewing supplemental job descriptions.

Dr. Loeffler shared that Forbes culinary students are excited in their program and that she attended the last meeting. Dr. Loeffler also indicated that the state has not made any changes to the education budget at this point.

Mrs. Tompa reported that a short meeting was held at Eastern Area School and that they were also saving money with energy projects. She indicated their enrollment is growing and RSD has 3 students attending.

Dr. DiNinno shared that the following motions will be included on the April agenda for consideration and approval:

- Board Policies:
  - Third Reading – (626) Federal Fiscal Compliance; (808) Food Services
  - First Reading – (209.2) Diabetes; (609) Investment of District Funds; (246) Wellness
- AIU Agreements: AIU -Educational Services ; AIU pricing guide; AIU Notice of Adoption – policies and procedures; IDEA-Part B
- Price Lunch Equity - USDA
- Metz Renewal
- Bridge Reimbursement Resolution
- Program of Studies – Mr. Hewitt
- Handbooks 17-18
- Personnel – Dr. DiNinno
  - Hires: Paraprofessional
  - Additions to substitute list
  - Supplementals: Softball, Athletic Event Workers

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:10 p.m.

An executive session was held to discuss personnel matters from approximately 10:15 to 10:45.