

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BOROUGH OF MORRISVILLE  
Morrisville, Pennsylvania

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
**Work Session**—Wednesday, February 20, 2013  
Large Group Instruction Room  
Morrisville Intermediate/Senior High School  
7:30 p.m.

***This meeting was recorded for televising***

The regular monthly agenda meeting of the Morrisville Board of School Directors was held in the LGI Room located in the Morrisville Intermediate/Senior High School, 550 West Palmer Street, Morrisville, Pennsylvania on February 20, 2013, after due notice of the meeting had been given as required by law. Mr. Miller, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Miller made a motion to appoint Mr. Paul DeAngelo as the Recording Secretary for tonight's meeting. This motion was seconded by Mr. Parker, and passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**ROLL CALL**

*The following members were present on roll call:*

Messrs. Buckman, DeWilde, Parker, Stoneburner, Stout, Miller, Worob, Dingle, and Ms. Kartal

*Members absent:* N/A

*Quorum Present:*

Also attending this evening's meeting was Mr. William Ferrara, Superintendent; Mr. Paul DeAngelo, Business Administrator; Mr. Tony Gesualdi, Director of Special Education/Pupil Services; David Truelove, Esq., Solicitor; media, MEA representatives and members of the community.

Mr. Miller stated that this evening we are going to start doing something a little different. He distributed an agenda format that he made to be used for this evening's meeting, and then moving forward next month, will hopefully use this format. He stated that this form is being used to prevent confusion between when we are using the agenda for business meeting versus the agenda for an agenda meeting, when reports should be given, and so forth. Mr. Miller stated that we will still be referring to the pink copy when it gets to the action items because this form has been updated since the time that he typed his version.

### **Student Spotlight**

- Science Symposium Team

### **Student Representatives to the Board**

### **Morrisville Opportunity Education Foundation – MOEF**

### **PTO Report**

### **Superintendent/Administrator's Reports**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- November 14, 2012 Monthly Agenda Meeting
- November 21, 2012 Monthly Business Meeting
- December 3, 2012 Re-Organization Meeting

## **PUBLIC SESSION #1 (Agenda Items Only)**

There were no speakers for Public Session #1.

### **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

#### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### ***Education Committee Report – Mr. Miller***

Mr. Miller stated that the Education Committee met last Tuesday, February 12, 2013, and we had a very large turnout. Mr. Miller stated that they talked about teacher evaluations. Mr. Ferrara stated that the State of PA is coming out with something called a PA Performance Indicator. He will post everything in a power point on the website and then went to explain how this will work. Mr. Miller stated that they also talked about the Program of Studies. Mr. Ferrara stated that the Program of Studies will need to be approved by the Board and should be on the agenda in February, and then explained the process that will take place once it is approved. Mr. Miller stated that at this meeting they also revisited the tuitioning out program and received more pros and cons to that option, they started discussing the cyber courses and referred to the handout he distributed to the Board members which lists the courses we currently offer. Mr. Miller discussed what our program might entail and the options we are looking into. Mr. Miller stated that we have only scratched the surface and will be weighing the pros and cons and invited the public to attend the next meeting which will be held on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Stoneburner stated that we have been discussing a five period day versus a six period day. He asked if the cyber courses would be able to be as widely applied to the student population so as to have an effect on most of the students in allowing them to have the extra course that they are not getting if we were to go from a six period day to a five period day. Mr. Ferrara stated that our scheduling is based on what students select and we would have to see how many students would select to take the cyber courses, and if we had enough students, it would work with the new schedule.

Mr. Miller stated that it is not as if we are eliminating the classroom environment for those students who either need it or want it; this is something where it would allow some flexibility. He stated that the committee is also exploring other options, and he asked anyone who may be interested in knowing what will be discussed at upcoming meetings to please contact him at [dmiller@mv.org](mailto:dmiller@mv.org) and he will be more than happy to respond back on what the topics to be discussed will be.

- Discussion – Full Day versus Half Day Kindergarten

Mr. Ferrara stated that they have been discussing this matter since last year and the Board needs to decide which way they want to go. Mr. Ferrara stated that they have also been discussing the options of having an educational screening tool that we could use when students register for Kindergarten and the option of offering an extended half day program for those students who have an educational deficiency.

Mr. Miller asked what the normal day for half day Kindergarten would look like. Mr. Ferrara stated that we would be focusing on Reading and literacy. Mr. Miller expressed his concerns about socialization for the Kindergarten students and what would be offered along those lines. Mr. Ferrara stated that all specials would be handled by the Kindergarten teacher and would take place once a week in the various areas (Art, Music, etc.). Mr. Ferrara discussed how the schedules would work and the time period of half day versus full day Kindergarten.

Mr. DeWilde asked there is any chance that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program or some other program could be expanded to take advantage of anything that we feel may not be covered in a half day program. Mr. Ferrara stated that they are looking into a program through the Department of Health which could possibly be offered and they should have more information by March.

Ms. Kartal expressed her concerns if we have to go to a half day Kindergarten and the options for a self-pay day care after school. Mr. Ferrara stated that if we do go with half day Kindergarten programs in the morning only, we would have four classrooms available in the afternoon to offer an after school program. Ms. Kartal asked for updated information on the various programs and Mr. Ferrara stated that Mr. DuPell will get this information to the Board. Ms. Kartal also expressed her concerns about having Art and Music for Kindergarten students to offer them a well-rounded program.

Mr. Dingle asked for costs regarding half day programs versus full day programs and Mr. Ferrara stated that he will get this information to the Board.

Mr. Stoneburner asked why we are looking into changing the program at all from what it is now and if it is a budget/money issue. Mr. Ferrara stated that the budget always drives a lot of our initial discussion, and once they looked into this matter it was found that there is no significant difference in a half day program versus a full day program academically.

The Board members discussed our current programs and our enrollment figures for Kindergarten, and discussed the possibility of getting out a survey to the parents to get their opinion on how they like our current half day Kindergarten program.

Mr. Ferrara stated that a decision needs to be made as soon as possible in order to move forward with staffing and facility decisions.

Mr. Stoneburner asked for public input prior to next week's meeting when the Board will make a decision on this matter.

Mr. Worob stated that there are very few ways to save money in this District, and he feels that this is one way that we can save money and we need to take that into consideration. Mr. Miller stated that this is true, but we don't want to make it purely a financial decision.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, Science Symposium Trip to Florida
2. Approval, 2013-14 IU #22 Program Services and Instructional Materials and Research Services Budget
3. Approval, High School Program of Studies
4. Approval, Full Day versus Half Day Kindergarten

Ms. Kartal expressed her concerns on making a decision on the Kindergarten program and feels that the Board needs more time to look into this. Mr. Ferrara stated that the Board really needs to make a decision no later than March so that the parents, when registering their children for Kindergarten, will know what type of a program we will be offering.

Mr. Buckman stated that his feeling would be to go with a half day program and then extend it if need be.

Mr. Parker asked if the Board would be able to be informed by next week if the after school programs would be available. Mr. Ferrara stated that we would not know by next week and most likely will not have that information until June or July. Mr. Parker asked if the children who were found to need an extended program would fall through the cracks if we go with a half day program. Mr. Miller stated that there would be provisions for those students to be offered an extended day.

Mr. Stoneburner asked Mr. Gesualdi if he feels that the half day program versus the full day program would have any effect on those students with special needs. Mr. Gesualdi stated that it would not affect any of our special needs students and explained the transition of special needs students from pre-school programs to Kindergarten programs.

Mr. Miller asked what the ramifications would be if we were to delay registration. Mr. DeAngelo suggested that we keep the registration dates as we have them now, stating that at the minimum we would have a half day program, and the determination for a full day would be decided at the March Board meeting versus the February Board meeting. Mr. Ferrara stated that this would also give us more time to ask the parents of their interest in the other programs that we may be offering after the half day Kindergarten program. Mr. Miller suggested having a post card size survey asking the parents if they would be interested in an enrichment program after school hours, at an additional cost, etc. where the parents could check either yes or no, and then we would have an idea of how many people would be interested. Mr. Miller asked the Board members to have any comments they would like to have included on this survey ready for this Saturday's Board Retreat. The Board members discussed what they felt should be included on the survey.

Mr. Gesualdi informed the Board that most of our special needs students that will be transitioning from pre-school to school age programs have already registered for next year, and during the meetings held in January with those parents, they were told that the Kindergarten Program, at this time, is to remain the same for next year, but could possibly change.

In regards to the Program of Studies, Mr. Miller discussed the Inclusive Honors Classes. Mr. Ferrara stated that for all of our Honor Classes, we do not have the ability to offer these classes as standalone classes because we do not have enough students signed up for these classes. These classes may include Honor students as well as College Prep students and general students, but their assessments are different and he explained the differences. Mr. Ferrara stated that we will make a general statement at the beginning of the Program of Studies saying that any course can be inclusive, and the statement saying that we do not offer all of the courses every year should be removed.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, Program and Service Budget with the Bucks County IU #22 for 2013-14.

Mr. Ferrara asked that this item be removed since it is also listed for approval on the agenda under Education Committee.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE/FINANCIAL/HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### ***Facilities Committee Report – Mr. Stoneburner***

Mr. Stoneburner stated that the committee is discussing what the different building options are, alternatives for use of M. R. Reiter, Manor Park and Grandview. He stated that they have gotten some assistance offered from the Little Bulldogs and the baseball community in Morrisville for the Athletic Field and they will be discussing their plans in the future. Mr. Stoneburner stated that they have been discussing the Grandview Gardens concept, lighting in the Auditorium, and income options for sporting events and things of that nature. He stated that the Facility Committee meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the LGI.

Mr. Miller asked how the Grandview Gardens project will be handled with the different groups of interested parties who have expressed interest and if someone will be drawing out a plan for the overall project. Mr. Stoneburner stated that he wants to find out who is interested and in what areas, and he will also be meeting with Mr. Gober for the educational perspective on this project and then come up with a plan. Mr. Ferrara stated that he has met with two individuals from Snipes and they will be contacting Mr. Stoneburner with their ideas, and they will also be working with Ms. Glaum-Lathbury and the Environmental Club to do some educational environmental stations in our courtyards.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, Edmentum/Study Island (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math Program) in the amount of \$1120.
2. Approval, Compass Learning in the amount of \$9945.
3. Approval, Tremco - Annual Roof Inspections (all buildings) in the amount of \$19,364.
4. Approval, Omni Sealcoat in the amount of \$1820 to repair cracks in the parking lots at the Morrisville High School (2,800 lineal feet).
5. Approval, Cafeteria Ceiling Audio System from Whitaker Brothers, Inc. in the amount of \$4495.16.
6. Approval, RFP – Fire and Alarm Protection (Awarded Vendor: Fire and Security Technologies).

Ms. Kartal asked for an explanation on the roof inspections mentioned in Item #3. Mr. DeAngelo stated that last January they had presented to the Board doing roof inspections for both the high school and Grandview at a much lower cost. Then they asked for an inspection of the roofs for ALL of our buildings including Manor Park and M. R. Reiter. Mr. DeAngelo passed along a book to the Facilities Committee to review and stated that if they would like to look over this information first and table this item at this time they can certainly do that. Mr. DeAngelo stated that one of the things they did in the facilities budget since we saved money on the electric with the lighting project, there is now money that can be allocated to these inspections. The Board discussed this matter and felt that it would be better to look over all the information and options provided before making a decision at this time, and chose to remove this motion for next week's Business meeting.

Mr. Donovan, Food Service Director, was asked to speak regarding the Cafeteria Ceiling Audio System (Item #5). He described the Fresh Start Program in the cafeteria which was started in the beginning of the school year. He stated that the audio system that we currently have in the cafeteria runs on the same system that cell phones run on which causes interference, and most of the time we have no audio at all. Mr. Donovan described the programs that are currently held in the cafeteria throughout the day and stressed the needs for a communication system in the cafeteria in the areas of control, to promote sales, and to have presentations for our students. Mr. Donovan explained what the new audio system would consist of. He then gave an update on where we stand at this point in Food Services. Mr. Donovan stated that he contacted three companies for quotes on the new system, only two got back to him, and only one met our requirements. Mr. Miller stated that legally we are required to ask for three quotes, and if we only get one, we have met our requirements as long as we stay under the threshold of \$10,000.

Mr. Miller asked if we were given a breakdown of the various costs for the new audio system. Mr. Donovan stated that he was given a break down, but he did not have it with him, and gave some of the prices off the top of his head. Mr. Miller stated that if only have the main audio system installed, all of the additional things could be purchased over the course of the year, cutting the price in half. Mr. Miller asked what the possibility would be to use a portable system. Mr. Donovan stated that he brought in his own personal amp and microphone, but it is a hard room to fill. Mr. Ferrara asked if we have ever tried our wireless microphone in the cafeteria. Mr. Donovan stated that it is what they currently use which does not work properly. They discussed the FCC regulations and how they change quite often, and how this could possibly be another problem we are currently encountering.

Mr. DeAngelo asked if any of the money we received from the Fresh Fruit Grant could be used towards the new audio system, or if we could possibly look into the Safety Grant or some other area to help defray some of these costs. Mr. Donovan stated that he does not believe that the Fresh Fruit Grant would apply in this case, but we could possibly look into the Safety Grant.

Mr. Stoneburner asked for a copy of the two quotes we received. Mr. Miller stated that he would like to see how we have done budget wise for the past few years in Food Services. Mr. Donovan stated that two years ago we had a \$40,000 loss and this year we have a \$20,000 loss in Food Services. Mr. Miller asked if we could possibly look into a more personal way to reach the students to purchase lunches, especially those entitled to free and reduced lunches. Mr. Ferrara stated that we have a listing of those students entitled to free and reduced lunch and a phone blast could go out to those parents asking them to have a discussion with their children to take full advantage of this program.

Ms. Kartal expressed her frustrations on spending money on an audio system for the cafeteria when our auditorium has poor lighting and a poor sound system, and if these systems were updated, the District could bring in more money by renting out the auditorium for other functions to be held there. Ms. Kartal asked if there was any way that we could have music companies that we currently work with come in and show them what we need and maybe they could possibly held us out in getting what we need.

Mr. DeAngelo asked Mr. Donovan if the daily announcements can be heard in the cafeteria at this time. Mr. Donovan stated that he is always in the kitchen, so he does not know if they can be heard. Mr. DeAngelo asked if Mr. Donovan could check with Metz, since they make money in this area, to see if they have speakers in place that they could give some recommendations or suggestions or possibly have some financial sharing in this matter. Mr. Donovan stated that he would check with Metz.

Mr. Parker stated that he feels that if announcements cannot be heard in the cafeteria, he feels that this is a safety hazard; therefore possibly money could be used from the Safety Grant for the updated audio system.

Mr. Stoneburner asked when the last time we had our roofs inspected. Mr. DeAngelo stated that he believes that the last time we had any roof work done was when we had the renovations done at Grandview and that warranty was only for the work that was done at that time. He stated that he will look into when the last time any true roof work was done and get this information to the Board. Mr. DeAngelo stated that Tremco recently did some repair work to the roof in the cafeteria for a very minor cost, which continued to leak and did some more damage, but other than that he doesn't know of any roof work done other than when we took out the bond for the roofing project quite a few years ago.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### ***Human Resource Committee Report – Mr. DeWilde***

Mr. DeWilde stated that a meeting will take place on Monday evening, depending on everyone's availability, at 7:00 p.m., which will be a closed meeting and not open to the public.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, Confidential Secretary Agreement
2. Approval, Tuition Reimbursement
3. Approval, Group II Contract (2013-14/2014-15)
4. Approval, 2013-14 Administration Plan
5. Approval, Appointments
  - a) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Hires
  - b) Long-term Substitutes
  - c) Extra-curricular positions
  - d) School Psychologist Intern 2013-14
  - e) AESOP Substitutes
  - f) Paraprofessionals
6. Approval, Rescind Motion approved at the November 14, 2012 Board Meeting for MESPA-ERIP (Maximum of 3 employees - \$15,000 each – not to exceed \$45,000)
7. Approval, MESPA-ERIP (Maximum of 3 employees at \$25,000 each – not to exceed \$75,000)

Mr. Truelove stated that he discussed Item #1 (Approval, Confidential Secretary Agreement) with Mr. Ferrara and it does not involve any expenditures, therefore, it should be removed from the agenda for approval.

Mr. Ferrara stated that Mr. DeWilde and the Human Resource Committee will have information on Saturday at the Retreat regarding Item #4 pertaining to the expenses of the various plans that the administration has looked at per the direction of the Board, not only for 2013-14 but for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Miller stated that there are also a few options for the Group II Contract (Item #3) that are being looked at in regards to what will be done in the future.



Pertaining to long-term substitutes, Mr. Ferrara stated that we are looking into one at the elementary level and one in special education. Regarding paraprofessionals, one is due to a retirement and one is due to a leave.

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Policy #005, Organization

Mr. DeAngelo stated that he could not find a policy that referenced the actual stipend payment, so he asked for the Board's consideration to put a line in the policy which states that the Board Secretary and the Board Treasurer positions are volunteer positions or something to that effect.

Mr. Miller stated that he believes that the current policy does make mention of a stipend. Mr. DeAngelo stated that the old policy does state that the Board Treasurer can receive something, but does not have an amount stated. Mr. DeAngelo stated that the recommended language change will be placed on the shared drive on Friday.

## **BUSINESS OPERATIONS/FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### ***Finance Committee Report – Mr. Dingle***

Mr. Dingle stated that the Finance Committee met last evening and having just recently taken over this position and starting up a new committee, they discussed how the committee is structured. He stated that on top of the items that will be on the agenda, they will be discussing the areas of expenses for the District, the areas of potential revenue, and the financial ramifications of any of the initiatives, plans or ideas that any of the other committee's plan to be working on. Mr. Dingle stated that they discussed ways of controlling costs by using the District's finances more responsibly. He stated that it is the Finance Committee's hope to always get at least 2 or 3 bids/quotes for any work to be done or merchandise to be purchased so the Board has something to look at and possibly break them down by costs and have a better understanding and make more responsible decisions. Mr. Dingle stated that they also discussed the Morrisville Athletic Budget and each Board member received a copy of a spreadsheet with those figures. Mr. Dingle discussed the spreadsheet and hopes that it will give each Board member an idea of where the money is being spent on athletics and possibly where costs can be controlled. Mr. Dingle stated that he will also be preparing a similar spreadsheet pertaining to the costs for each of our facilities. He stated that at this point they don't have anything to base the costs on what it would cost the District for tuitioning out our students, but they do feel that the creation of cyber programs and possible increase in enrollment could drive down the cost of our per student numbers. Mr. Dingle also stated that they discussed how the possible increase in enrollment could also increase our cost per student. He stated that they also discussed fund raising ideas.

Mr. Miller stated that when receiving the spreadsheet on facility costs, the costs for administration be put on a separate spreadsheet. He also stated that everyone needs to realize that some of the equipment is hand me downs, especially in the middle school, and when we see no costs in that area, we need to keep that in mind.

Mr. DeAngelo stated in regards to the RFP's and the bids/quotes, the Board's exercise in running a small advertisement in leading to the website worked out well. He stated that we spent about \$200 and for the Fire Protection we had about 4 suppliers that bid on that job, and for the Architect we had 9 bids. In the past, we have only gotten about 1 to 2 bids.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approval, Class of 2015 Activities Account
2. Approval, Tax Assessment Appeal Recommended Settlement
3. Approval, Budget Transfers
4. Approval, Excess Items
5. Approval, Treasurer's Report
6. Approval, Investment Report
7. Approval, Payment of Bills

#### **Joint Borough Council/School Board Report – Ms. Kartal**

Ms. Kartal stated that the February meeting was postponed until March 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Kartal stated that our school was approved for a Safe Route to School Grant in the amount of \$9,150 which came out of the Walk-ability Study. She stated that Mr. DuPell is putting together a team based on the activities approved under this Grant, and she explained some of the activities that will be involved. Ms. Kartal explained that as part of this Grant, an Advisory Board has to be formed, which must include a member of the School Board (herself), a Borough Council member, which will likely be Nancy Sherlock, a representative from the Police Department, a community member (non-parent), a parent, and a student. She is still waiting for the status of the replacement of the pedestrian signs, they are working on the School Zone process, and they also discussed the missing cones.

#### **Public Relations/Communications Report – Mr. Miller**

Mr. Miller stated that they haven't had a meeting yet, but would like to see the committee (Mr. Miller, Mr. Dingle, and Mr. DeWilde) get together in the near future to discuss effective ways of increasing communication of the District to the community and our school community. He referred everyone to the website [www.mv.org](http://www.mv.org) for updated information, and if anyone has any suggestions he asked that they reach out to any of the committee members.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. DeAngelo stated that last month the Board had asked about the playground and the extra expense we received for the mulch. The job required more mulch than was originally quoted to meet the inspection for school claims services. He stated that he will be going back to the contractor to ask how much stone was used from Grandview and how much was originally going to be used to try to come up with a fair price. Mr. DeAngelo stated that he should have this figure by Wednesday's meeting in order to be able to pay this bill.

## **OLD BUSINESS (continued)**

Ms. Kartal asked that an update be added to the agenda regarding donations made on line. Mr. Truelove stated that we are looking into this matter.

## **LIAISON REPORTS (These reports will be given at the Business Meeting of the Board)**

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- a. Lower Bucks County Vocational Educational School
- b. Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22
- c. Pennsylvania School Boards Association/Legislative

## **NEW BUSINESS**

# **PUBLIC SESSION #2**

There were no speakers for Public Session #2.

Ms. Kartal stated that she had the honor of meeting Gunnery Sergeant Walters from the Marines. She stated that he is the recruiter for the Morrisville School District and during their conversation he stated to her that he has limited access to our school for recruitment and for bringing in graduates who are currently in the military who want to visit their teachers. Ms. Kartal asked that we connect with this gentleman and open our doors to him to be able to speak with our students and let them know what opportunities they have to offer. She passed his information onto Mr. Ferrara. Mr. Ferrara stated that by law, we cannot give the military more access than we give colleges. He stated that by law, colleges can come formally once a year, and the same would apply to any branch of the military. Mr. Ferrara stated that if anyone is denied access, they should come to see him personally and he will make arrangements to have them come in after school hours to which there is no limit due to the fact that it is not a formal request to have a table set up outside of the cafeteria. Mr. Truelove stated that he will check into the number of times that a school is required to allow formal access for the military to visit our schools for recruitment.

Mr. Buckman stated that he remembers in the past, problems that we encountered with the recruiters coming into our school and parents were complaining.

Mr. Miller stated that he feels that it is great that some of our graduates who joined the military want to come back to visit our school and wear their uniforms, etc., but this should be done after school as not to interrupt the class during the school day. Mr. Ferrara stated that if any teacher wanted to discuss this as a career, they could invite them to visit the classroom and speak with the students during class.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 p.m. This motion was seconded by Ms. Kartal, and passed by a unanimous voice vote.

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Damon Miller, President

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Wanda Kartal, Secretary