

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING  
BOARD HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2008**

Members of the Board Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Board Human Resources Committee met on Monday, October 13, 2008, in the Dining Room, at the Education Center. Present were the following school board members: Rosario Amato, Michele Cann, Judith Dexter, Irene Follweiler, Dr. Craig Haytmanek, Charlene Koch, Loretta Leeson, Eugene McKeon, and Benjamin Tenaglia, III. Also in attendance were Director of Student Services Dr. Dean Donaher, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Mary Katona, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Thomas K. Washington, and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph A. Lewis.

The meeting of the Board Curriculum and Instruction Committee and Board Human Resources Committee was called to order by Mrs. Judith Dexter at 6:05 p.m.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR** – Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem, recalls that at the last curriculum meeting he made a suggestion that courtesy of the floor be put back to the end of the agenda items because the public does not know what is going to happen during the meeting. It would allow an opportunity at the end of the meeting to discuss concerns. He referenced the PSSA report on comparisons with other districts and noted that what was presented in September makes Bethlehem Area School District numbers look good, but he stated that not all districts are on the list. The list is not giving a true picture of what should be on the list.

**SUMMER SCHOOL REPORT INFORMATION** – This summer school report for high school was prepared by Dr. Dean Donaher and for middle schools by Mr. Daniel Zettlemoyer and Dr. Dean Donaher. The reports gave the board an update on summer school held from July 7, 2008, through August 1, 2008. The board had no questions or comments.

**DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN** – Mrs. Leeson expressed it is a wonderful direction the district is heading in – including small learning communities. She questioned if it would interfere with current programs in place, e.g., mentorship and wondered if this should be looked at for next year's objective. She would like the district to do what we do well then take the next bite. Dr. Lewis stated that the district is planning to take small variations of a master plan, e.g., Liberty High School is working on a freshman academy approach. This plan has the most impact, and implementation is pushed out.

Mrs. Leeson stated she had no problem with the concept, and prefers time not be taken away from the PLCs or mentoring. She rather see the district do the mentorship and PLCs well, and do planning along with it. She said we need to understand this is not our main priority. Dr. Lewis stated he will have Mrs. Katona contact principals to make sure it does not impact on the current programs, but said it is a high priority. Mrs. Katona said as the mentoring grows and strengthens, it will make sense that small communities will work. Mrs. Leeson said she can see that pathway, but does not want to see the district just to jump on it.

Mrs. Leeson wants to make sure that the action of having principals become instructional leaders more so than managerial leaders is realistic, especially given the construction concerns at Liberty High School. Dr. Lewis suggested Mrs. Durante could be relieved of some of the responsibilities. Mrs. Durante stated we have until February, and looking back we could have done something but not now.

Mrs. Leeson questioned the item on page three regarding tracking system for high schools. She said there are no tracking systems in the high schools, so why is it listed. Dr. Lewis said it suggests it is on high

schools. Mrs. Leeson agrees with the statement on strengthening courses. Dr. Lewis stated that, as far as language is concerned, Mrs. Katona can look at revising it. Mrs. Leeson asked why Distinguished State Leaders are listed on page 5 instead of the superintendent. Mrs. Katona directed her to look on page 4 at the bottom – where the beginning of the item starts. Mrs. Dexter asked Dr. Lewis what he envisions the board's part in this. Dr. Lewis responded he would like to see a lot of support from the board. He would envision the board to partnership with the administration.

Mrs. Dexter wanted to know the due date. She also had school leadership concerns, and wants to know the role of the board involved in school improvement. She would like to see what role the board is expected to play. Mrs. Cann would like to hear examples other than examples from the past.

Mrs. Dexter suggested going back through the minutes from curriculum in the past two years, and looking for ways the board can be involved in developing small learning communities. She offered to come into the high schools and talk with students who might blow off the test and impress upon them to do their best effort on testing dates. She sees it as encouraging and developing an atmosphere during testing dates. Mr. Amato asked how could the board do that as well as attending all the meetings scheduled and functions. He stated students should be prepared for those tests, and we hire personnel to prepare our students. Dr. Lewis stated not that it is not a good idea, but maybe principals would like to embrace this idea. It should be listed under the school level plan at each building not the district plan.

Mrs. Dexter would like consideration made on the role of the board on academic improvement. Mrs. Follweiler believes the board has its role, and it is to set policies. If any item needs to be looked at regarding policies, the board would review them. She does not think administration should spend a lot of time on this. Mrs. Koch stated that the board should try to keep with policies. Dr. Lewis said the administration gathers detail information to put on policies. Everything is contingent. The district does not implement something without board approval. Any policy changes are subject to approval of the board. Anything that has a cost attached with it will be subject to the approval of the board. Mrs. Katona suggested putting the board under technical assistance. Dr. Lewis does not see a problem with this. Mrs. Follweiler asked that it be reviewed again. She said she doesn't know that each item is needed only if it's going to affect policies then it should indicate the board on it or reword it.

Mr. Amato stated that the board is involved with everything, and nothing gets done without the board knowing about it. Dr. Haytmanek asked the board to just let administration do their jobs.

**eSTRATEGIC PLAN** – Mrs. Follweiler commented all is wonderful, but we have to look at the funding and prioritization. Mrs. Leeson reviewed the introductory paragraph inserted into the eStrategic Plan, which stated the plan would be completed in full or in part subject to the financial status of the district.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES** – Dr. Donaher has three recommendations for the board to approve. Dr. Donaher read the three items. Mrs. Koch agreed with all except one. She has a question on one item. The majority is on volunteering, and she does not agree with students taking paid positions that belong to other people. Dr. Lewis indicated the students are assisting them and not taking their jobs. Dr. Donaher will verify that no one has been laid off. He wanted to know if this included removal of trash. Mrs. Koch asked to find another way of wording the volunteer activity. Dr. Donaher will clarify the language. Mrs. Koch feels that working on grounds at church is not volunteering. Dr. Haytmanek stated if the district insists on the program, then volunteering for churches, schools, and communities. He fails to see how cleaning outside the church is least noble.

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION/ENTERTAINMENT DEVICES** – Dr. Lewis stated that the policy has been revised based on the board’s contribution. Mrs. Follweiler took a consensus of the board, and the policy will be put on the Regular Board Meeting agenda this month for approval.

**FEDERAL/STATE PROGRAM BUDGETS** – Dr. Lewis presented the Federal/State Program Budgets to the board for its yearly approval. There was a cut in state and federal funds to the district budget. This affected ETT and CSRI reductions. The district will be impacted in the following areas: the Marvine Family Center, and the ETT grant. Mrs. Follweiler wanted to know if that money could be found else where. Dr. Lewis said the government is cutting back close to 4% of the funds, but we are doing more with less. Mrs. Dexter wanted to know what impact the federal cuts would have on Marvine Family Center. Dr. Lewis stated that Iris Cintron and Stanley Majewski are in the process of starting to look at this. He said the district will look for alternative plans. There will be a reduction in program and possibly some staff members, cuts in computers, and classroom ancillary computer equipment.

Mrs. Leeson would like to know how much of SPARK is covered by grants and how much by the general operation budget. Dr. Lewis said it was a combined grant – Pre-K Counts, CSRI, and school improvement all rolled into one. Regarding the PA Accountability Grant, Mrs. Leeson asked if the district is able to designate where the money goes or is it predetermined. Dr. Lewis replied that it is pre-determined by the state. It is a combined application, however, each section of the application lists its own individual request. Mrs. Dexter wanted to know what programs will the cuts impact. Dr. Lewis responded that the new ETT grant had a new qualifier that the district did not meet. Mrs. Dexter asked if there are any leases the district can get out of. Mrs. Follweiler suggested budget from other areas.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING–HIGH SCHOOLS AND SPARK** – Mr. Washington introduced two memorandums of understandings for board approval. It would allow high schools to add an early morning instructional period and a later period of instruction for the 2008-2009 school year. It also insures that each SPARK teacher will be scheduled a minimum of five preparation periods within one week. Mr. Washington met with Craig Zieger to discuss these memorandums. There is no additional money impact.

Mrs. Leeson has requested the cost of having the SPARK program. Mrs. Follweiler would like to see what is district and what is grant funded.

**APPROVAL OF THE BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT eSTRATEGIC PLAN** – As discussed previously under the curriculum portion of the meeting, Dr. Lewis commented the eStrategic plan will be presented to the board for approval.

**OPEN FORUM** – Mrs. Leeson announced that Mr. Craig, former school board member, resigned from the Board of Northampton County Community College. There is now an opening. Mrs. Leeson received communication from NCCC requesting that our board make a decision on the next board member. She stated the letter indicates that NCCC wants BASD to appoint a minority. Dr. Haytmanek expressed that this is an extended opportunity on behalf of the NCCC board to appoint a minority. BASD had the last two opportunities to appoint a minority board member but did not. Dr. Haytmanek expressed that the district has angered the minority community, which lead to a class action lawsuit. This would prove it to them.

Mrs. Dexter asked if it could be placed on next week’s agenda for discussion. Mrs. Follweiler asked if NCCC had a time limit. Mrs. Leeson answered no, but they are missing one of our board members. Mrs. Koch stated that we have never placed a non-board member on the NCCC board, but because their term is

longer than our board terms we end up with non-board member on the board. Dr. Lewis will put this item as unfinished business at the Regular Board Meeting on October 20, 2008.

Irene Follweiler adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nitza S. Yerger, Confidential Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources