

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2009**

Members of the Board Human Resources Committee met on Monday, February 9, 2009, in the Dining Room, at the Education Center. Present were the following school board members: Michele Cann, Judith Dexter, Irene Follweiler, Dr. Craig Haytmanek, Charlene Koch, Loretta Leeson, Eugene McKeon, and Benjamin Tenaglia, III. Also in attendance were Acting Director of Technology Frank Arbushites, Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance Administration Stanley Majewski, and Director of Special Education Richard Agretto, 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 Human Resources Committee was called to order by Mrs. Irene Follweiler at 9:49 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – None

TRANSPORTATION POLICY 810 – FIRST READING – Mr. Washington presented the policy with additional language for the first reading as per a request from the Transportation Department. Mr. Washington stated that Transportation asked that the policy contain guidelines regarding transportation to alternate locations, for example, parents asking that their children are dropped off at a daycare, grandparent’s home, or in joint custody instances. Mr. Washington stated that the research done confirms that it creates chaos amongst the bus drivers and students because drivers are not sure what day students are to be dropped off at another location, and by creating guidelines and a form, it will make this simple. If the board approves the additional language, a form would be developed so parents could make a request.

Dr. Lewis advised the language would reduce movement to “a consistent drop off or pick up point for the student during the course of the week” so as to avoid checker boarding all over the place.

Mrs. Leeson would like the language to be cleaned up and make it clear by stating exactly what we want, and she does not think the district necessarily has to have all the details just so that there is consistency. Mr. Washington stated that the language came directly from Mr. Himmelberger, but he can go back and review the language.

Mrs. Dexter asked Mr. Washington what has been done to notify the stakeholders regarding the proposed change to the policy. The district must already have some students going to baby sitters or having a different arrangement on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, so there must be a list of people who have a vested interest in this policy change. She asked if they have been notified. Mr. Washington confirmed that the district is already providing this service, and the change is to alleviate some of the confusion. He pointed out that this situation is very confusing for the bus drivers, children, and teachers, and we want to streamline it. Mrs. Dexter is not arguing the change, but wants to make sure the stakeholders are notified and suggested that perhaps Mr. Himmelberger can help in notifying them. Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were students as of today that go to a different location during the week, and if so, those stakeholders should be notified.

Mr. Washington shared this with the board in order to put the policy into practice for the next school year. Mrs. Koch would like bus drivers to be notified as well. Dr. Lewis stated that the policy was brought to the board because the drivers were impacted and it was brought to Mr. Himmelberger’s attention.

Mrs. Cann stated that the language in the policy is very clear. Mrs. Leeson stated that she does not think the policy is necessarily what just goes on the paper only but what goes with it. She said the policy sets guidelines and does not think the district has to go into more specification. She suggested that it says, “approvals on request basis and if space is available at an already existing bus drop off at the same stop every a.m. and p.m.”

Mrs. Follweiler recommended that Mrs. Leeson give suggested changes to Mr. Washington, and in turn he will review the changes with Mr. Himmelberger.

Dr. Lewis stated that Mr. Himmelberger was asked to be as specific as possible, so there is no question within the policy. Dr. Lewis also reiterated Mr. McKeon’s statement that he felt all the language was needed. Dr. Lewis felt the district needed to be very clear in the policy. This is the expectation – drivers should not be dropping off students Monday here and Tuesday there. They get a Monday through Friday drop-off that has been preapproved if this is followed and if there is a seat available, so that bus drivers know when they get the form that it has gone through the approval process. Because otherwise it is all over the block. Whether this is a guideline printed out and handed out as part of the policy or the policy itself, it is needed.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other questions. She stated that the policy was not ready to be added to the Regular Board Meeting on February 23, and polled the board for a second reading. The board agreed to a second reading of the policy.

PROPERTY RECORDS POLICY 706 – FIRST READING – Mr. Washington presented this policy for its first reading. The language was added to help the district with laptops that may become absolute and provide the district with an opportunity to sell obsolete equipment internally.

Dr. Lewis informed the board that Easton Area School District has been using this process for a number of years and has managed to generate anywhere between \$150,000 to \$250,000 annually. He stated that these are generally pieces of equipment that the district either has to find somebody to haul them away or buy them out for one dollar at the end of their useful lease. Easton Area School District has been offering it to specifically the employee who had the equipment. If that person does not want to purchase it, it goes into a pool that is then part of a lottery for distribution. We felt it was a way to infuse some cash. They use a web site for a small fee; you get a price for each model of computer. That is the going price that you would find on eBay or some other enterprise. There is no debating; there is nobody getting a special deal. This is the price of that model at the end of its useful life.

Mrs. Leeson wanted clarification on the end of useful life and end of lease, and when we determine that a computer has reached its useful life. Dr. Lewis answered when it has a value of the one dollar buy out. Dr. Lewis gave her an example – the computers that the teachers currently have are probably well beyond their useful life and at six or seven years are worth a one dollar buy out. The district is in the sixth year of the teacher laptops, we can secure a value for each laptop at www.usedprice.com that would be able to generate revenue, and there are a lot of people who say, “all I am doing with it is using it for internet and email access, and I’ll buy it for \$100 or \$150.”

Mrs. Leeson was not disagreeing and thinks this is a good idea, but wanted to know how the district determines useful life – are we saying that useful life is at the end of the lease; what deems useful life? It may be worth only one dollar at the end of the lease, but may still have useful life within our district. A dollar buy out at the end of the lease is not always the end of the useful life.

Mr. Arbushites stated that it does not necessarily mean the end of the computer. Mrs. Leeson asked what if a teacher wants to keep her own laptop, but we can still put the equipment into a classroom and have a use for them. Mr. Arbushites spoke about the warranty, as warranties expire and computers get older, and because teachers use them so heavily, they are starting to fail in rapid numbers and parts availability becomes very limited, so that is another thing to consider when is the useful life of a laptop over.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if the district removes the district software. Dr. Lewis replied yes. Mrs. Follweiler asked about selling equipment out to the public because as a nonprofit institution are we permitted to do that. Dr. Lewis answered that we can do it with the policy change in reference to the software question. He referred the board to the last page of the policy where it addresses this issue, "Only software that is not licensed through the district will remain on the laptops." The district is not responsible for any support, there is no warranty, and equipment is bought as is.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if we could sell it outside the district. Mr. Majewski answered that in fact the policy always indicated there were various ways the district would be able to sell any used or obsolete equipment, which you will see in items 1 through 5 in ways we are able to sell equipment. We are able to sell it directly to an individual in a noncompetitive basis, which was not available before; it had to be through public auctions, solicitations, and bids.

Dr. Lewis said a revision will be made; it was supposed to be district laptops and desktops because we have a ton of obsolete desktop computers available. Mrs. Follweiler suggested just saying computers, that way the district is covered. Mrs. Cann asked to add for some clarity in the second last paragraph where it says, "computers not purchased by the individual staff member..." insert "on the same terms as detailed in the previous paragraph," because it does not say anything about how much they pay and that it is as is.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other questions. She polled the board for a second reading or to be put on the agenda on February 23, 2009. The board agreed to put the policy on the agenda on February 23, 2009.

FACILITIES POLICY 707 – FIRST READING – Mr. Washington presented the policy for a review. He directed the board to page 2 and pointed out the language added for Class IA. The language talked about the activities of the district-based youth athletic programs. He stated that Dr. Lewis met with them and came up with this language. Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any questions. Mr. McKeon had a comment regarding the Bulldogs. He spoke to the Bulldogs' basketball representative, and they have no issues on their behalf. Dr. Lewis has a letter from the Bulldogs, but did not get a letter from the Hurricanes yet. Dr. Lewis stated the district did a fair compromise, and both groups said they understand that they have to help.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any questions or comments. She asked how is it determined which sports the district will assist financially. Dr. Lewis referred the board to Class IA. It is youth sports that feed into our programs, so if indeed we have a program in it that would be one that would qualify. Mrs. Follweiler stated, for example, the YMCA uses the LHS pool, and are they paying full fee or half fee. Dr. Lewis asked if it is a feeder program or is it a corollary program. Mrs. Follweiler does not see how it is different from basketball. Dr. Lewis stated that would be the test. Mrs. Follweiler said there are chances that the kid will go to FHS or LHS or you have the chance that the kid goes to BECA or elsewhere. There is no guarantee that someone that participates will attend our schools. Mr. Majewski pointed out the definition under Class IA – it is whatever athletic program the board approves. Mrs. Follweiler had another question and wanted to know if the district has approved an athletic program as identified as a district-youth program. Mr. Majewski replied as of to date the district has not approved any. Mrs. Follweiler stated what she fears is that the district is opening the door to, in her opinion, not just to

athletics. She asked if the district was being fair to all other youth activities. Dr. Lewis feels that the board needs to make a decision based on whether that is a youth organization that is running a program that feeds our athletic programs. The district has discussed this with the youth groups and reached a middle ground, and they support it and are appreciative of it. The worst thing that could happen would be they cut the programs and then our kids have nowhere to go. They could not afford to run the programs if those leases added \$30,000 - \$40,000 to their operating budget.

Mrs. Leeson stated the fee charge in some locations is double because there is a site manager and a custodian. She asked that one of the things the district can look at is incorporating one person. She suggested that the site managers can assume the light custodial duties that are necessary or the custodian could assume the site manager's responsibilities. That way the cost would be a little more reasonable to our groups and in some ways accomplishing the same goal. She is not sure why two people have to open up the doors for a youth group to come in and play basketball for an hour, and why the district has to charge them twice. Dr. Lewis stated the site manager is there with background knowledge of the equipment, electric dividers, the raised baskets, the lighting, and the amplification system. A custodian would not have all of that knowledge. There is a danger if we have a site manager doing light custodial work; the district could be grieved and that opens up too many contractual barriers.

Mrs. Leeson has seen this in most other places the district has rented space from who do not have a site manager and custodian. You have one or the other. Dr. Lewis stated that we are using this mainly in the pool areas and gymnasium in the high schools.

Mr. McKeon commented the Bulldogs organization and Freemansburg get a subsidy from Bethlehem Township in the amount of \$50,000 which helps offset some of their fees. He was not sure if the Hurricanes get anything. Mrs. Follweiler says that brings her back to her point from several meetings ago and how is that different than what was already classified as Class II which is community recreation organizations supporting primarily the students of Bethlehem Area School District. She questions how that is not the Bulldogs or Hurricanes. She stated that this shows how the district was not properly implementing the policy as it was written. Dr. Lewis disagreed and stated that they were Class I originally and were not paying anything. Mrs. Follweiler asked how were they Class I when Class II clearly states "community recreation organization supporting primarily the students of Bethlehem Area School District." They are a community organization; they are supported by Bethlehem Township in Freemansburg, they are financially supported by their community, and they are primarily serving the students of BASD. Mr. McKeon confirmed that only Bethlehem Township is paying for the baseball.

Mr. McKeon spoke about going through the definition changes in the classes, the movement from Class I to Class II, and moving them out of II and putting them in IA. Mrs. Follweiler asked if she was wrong that in saying that Class II has not always read community organizations supporting primarily the students of BASD. That could have always been a Class II, what is the difference, and what organizations fall into that category compared to the category calling district-based youth programs. She would like a name of an organization that is a community recreation organization that is not going to be treated as fair and financially supportive by the district as something we are calling a district-based youth program.

Dr. Lewis stated for the most part they are groups that have assets, for example, in Boy Scouts and in Girl Scouts, they have building facilities, major equipment investments, camp investments, executive directors, there are assets in the borough boys' clubs and girls' clubs, and they are Class II. He stated that the difference he sees between Class I and Class II, those organizations while they are supportive of our kids, are organizations that are nonprofit in nature, but they are organizations that hire employees, they are nonvolunteer, they have executive directors, they have staffs, they have offices, and they have assets.

The youth organizations tend to be 100 percent volunteers and believes therein lies the difference. Unlike YMCA has assets, officer and executive director, and it pays salaries. Youth programs have volunteers, they go after different funding, and fund raising sources. They might get contributions from local boroughs and municipalities, but they are in essence a volunteer organization and that is how the district interprets the difference between the classes. Mrs. Follweiler stated that is not spelled out in the policy, but makes sense.

Mr. Tenaglia stated that what Dr. Lewis says is true, but at the troop level they do not have assets, etc. They are volunteers. There is a disconnect from a large nonprofit salary organization and the volunteers who working directly with the youth. Dr. Lewis said most of the scout programs that take place are organized at the council level and directed down to the troops and the packs. He saw it more as an asset based organization, hiring personnel versus all volunteer effort.

Mrs. Follweiler is not against the use of the district facilities, but just wants to make sure the district is being fair and equitable to all organizations in the community. Dr. Lewis asked if she would be more comfortable if it is spelled out “district-based youth programs that are volunteer run formally recognized by the Board of School Directors” would that answer it. Mrs. Follweiler stated that would definitely clarify it better than what we have now, but right now we are assuming that the board will recognize at some later date the little Hurricanes and little Bulldogs. We are ready to set the policy and assuming that the board would recognize those two groups. I don’t know what other groups are out there in the community.

Mrs. Leeson asked if the district was going to recognize all the CYO programs, which are volunteer based and many of the kids are feeding into our programs. Mrs. Follweiler asked if there was any more discussion on this. Mrs. Dexter would like to personally see the YMCA recognized as sponsoring feeder programs. Dr. Lewis stated he would classify the YMCA the same as Boys’ and Girls’ Club. They have assets, paid coaches, and programs. Mrs. Cann commented that the difference with YMCA and CYO is that these outside entities would exist outside the district. The other organizations would not exist if the district did not exist.

Mr. McKeon asked Mr. Majewski if AAU falls under the Class II category and if they were paying for anything in the past.

Mrs. Follweiler polled the board to put the policy on the agenda for a vote. The board agreed to have the policy put on the agenda on February 23, 2009.

REVISED TRANSPORTATION POLICY 810 – SECOND READING – The second reading will be held on March 2, 2009, at the Board Human Resources Committee Meeting.

REVISED PROPERTY RECORDS POLICY 706 – SECOND READING – The second reading will be placed on February 23, 2009, Regular Board Meeting agenda.

REVISED FACILITIES POLICY 707 – SECOND READING – The policy will be presented for approval at the Regular Board Meeting on February 23, 2009.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) – GAME HELP – Mr. Washington presented the board with a response to a request that Mrs. Dexter made asking for an opinion from our solicitor on the MOU in terms of game help and our ability to negotiate a different price for those non CBA members. Mrs. Follweiler asked if there was a discussion on the MOU. Mrs. Follweiler stated, as she understands it, the district has set the practice and Attorney Spry feels that we need to do this.

OPEN FORUM – Mrs. Dexter stated that the board received a revised policy on the club sports that was amended during the last meeting. One of the changes was not picked up. She thought it was agreed to delete the medical coverage trainer. Mr. Washington will revise this.

Mr. McKeon understands right now the Liberty High School girls' Lacrosse program has a coach, who happens to be a very qualified medical doctor. He asked what happens if Freedom High School comes in, and they do not have the benefit of having a medical doctor.

Mr. McKeon commented if the district has an athletic event, we really should have a trainer there to treat injuries, but not necessarily at practice time. His concern is when there is a severe injury on the playing field and now there is no medical expertise that you get through an athletic trainer or Dr. Saxton. Mrs. Dexter suggested they dial 911. Mr. McKeon still thinks it should be in there for at least athletic events not necessarily for practices. Mrs. Follweiler asked if anybody knew if the youth athletic groups have a trainer on staff when they are using our facilities. Dr. Lewis answered that they do not, but they do have an insurance policy that Mr. Majewski verifies.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if the board had anything else. Mrs. Dexter said the board received a 360° evaluation with a memo indicating that she would like to participate in evaluating administrators – she wanted to make it clear that is not quite what she had said. A 360° evaluation of anyone does not have one definition. Some 360s mean every possible group or interest group who interacts with that person participates in the evaluation and some have a smaller group. The particular one that the district has according to Dr. Lewis's explanation involves only the teacher's input and administrator input when evaluating a supervisor. When we talked about the idea of a 360° evaluation, Mrs. Dexter specifically had indicated her preference for a tool that would include parent and student input because that is the school community that she believed should also have some input. Research has been done that shows when there is a true 360° that does include parent and student input, the student achievement in the school has gone up. She sent out the article to all board members with her clarification. Mrs. Dexter stated that she felt teachers should have input and be part of the evaluating instrument. She just thinks they should be broader. Her view is this: since we are already involved in the process and did not have a chance to look at the instrument before it was already implemented, we ought to just go with this year and then reevaluate in another year to see if that same instrument works or whether we should consider one that is broader. There are many out there and, in fact, Mr. Gross had sent her some ideas. The article she sent to the board came from him initially that would include parent and student input.

John Delvecchio, Bethlehem Township, commented on Mrs. Leeson's statement on eliminating one of the positions like the site manager. He commented how it was run years ago. Day shift custodian had all the keys, and on Saturdays and Sundays, the head custodian would open up buildings and check the furnaces on his own. He suggested the district could use the head custodian at nighttime to get down to one person. The head custodian knows how to run the building.

Irene Follweiler adjourned the meeting at 10:34 p.m.

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