

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2010**

Members of the Board Human Resources Committee met on Monday, November 1, 2010, in the Superintendent's Conference Room, at the Education Center. Present were the following school board members: William Burkhardt, Michele Cann, Michael Faccineto, Irene Follweiler, Loretta Leeson, Eugene McKeon, and Benjamin Tenaglia. Also in attendance were Director of Information Technologies Frank Arbushites, Assistant Superintendent for Education Dr. Jack Silva, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Thomas K. Washington, and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph J. Roy.

The meeting of the Board Human Resources Committee was called to order by Mrs. Irene Follweiler at 6:30 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – None

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION SPECIALIST ASSIGNMENT UPDATE – Mr. Arbushites spoke about the Technology Integration Specialists (TIS). He stated they were reduced from seven to four, and it has been a difficult challenge covering all the schools resulting in more teachers to service.

Mr. Arbushites said, "The IT department is composed for technology experiences as well as an education experience. The TISs share their experience with teachers and each other. The decrease in TISs has not been easy, they have been spread thinly across the district, and projects now take longer to complete. The TISs make sure that all those tools are in place so that the teachers and students can integrate technology effectively in the classroom. The TISs also help with preparing the budget requests and researching software titles, testing software to make sure they properly support the curriculum. In summary they are a critical component of the department. One of the things I said to Dr. Roy when I first met with him is that I do not want the IT department just to be thought of as the department that fixes things, sets up equipment, or keeps it running. We have educators in the department, and we need to maintain our focus on the educators who work in the department. I do not think technology integration happens by accident. It really has to be a planned and a purposeful activity, and we need people in the department who can continue to help our teachers and students learn to use technology effectively. I think we need to do all we can to preserve the educational focus of the department and the work that the TISs do to bring that kind of support to the department. Do you have any questions for me?"

Mr. Faccineto asked, "How is Liberty High School handling this because they had nobody assigned but Freedom had a full time person?" Mr. Arbushites replied, "All of the TISs are sharing the support of Liberty High School currently. They all have different areas of expertise so what we are doing we have a primary point person who takes care of Liberty and the other TISs assist if there are specialty areas that they have a lot of expertise in then they will go to Liberty and go work with the staff on specific projects.

Mrs. Leeson asked, "Have we looked at models at other schools and what other successful districts are doing with technology?" Mr. Arbushites asked if she was referring to the integration piece; she said yes. He added, "I have many counterparts in other schools districts in the area. Several of them have technology integration specialists on staff that work with teachers on a regular basis, others have few, or none. I think with the technology history here at Bethlehem, we have always had that kind of support and I think it has enabled us to excel in the early years and enables us to continue to do great things with technology as the bar gets raised higher. Every year we have new software, new operating systems, new projects, and new opportunities to collaborate with other people. I think we need to continue providing that kind of support."

Mrs. Leeson stated, "It was my understanding...going back many years ago we started the one-to-one laptop program. When we started the one-to-one laptop program, teachers really were not necessarily prepared or trained. The idea was kind of to learn on the job, but that is why the TIS were put in the schools to help the teachers then kind of learn as they go to use the technology, but that was a number of

years ago like 8-9 years ago.” Mr. Arbushites confirmed it was back in 2002. Mrs. Leeson continued, “Many of the teachers since then have learned to integrate technology into their everyday classroom activities, and so this is where I think the role of the TIS in our district should probably be taking a little bit of a change. There should be some changes going on. I remember reading some of the emails, and it sounded as if some of the technology integration specialists were getting involved in the projects that the teachers were doing. I thought we originally kind of had planned on the technology integration specialists really helping to guide the teacher in developing technology and integrating it into his/her classroom; not really come in and do the project for them, but how to use them most effectively in the classroom. Mr. Arbushites added, “I think all of those things are true. I think some of that depends on the teacher’s level of comfort in using technology. If they are very skilled and very comfortable with technology, maybe the TIS only needs to be involved on a passive basis, but if they are still learning it themselves as we still have with new programs always coming onboard, we often have the TISs taking a more active role with regard to teaching classes, planning lessons, so there are times when the TISs sort of speak will do it for them and they will work in the classroom directly and instruct students. Other times they can be an extra pair of hands to help out in the classroom and also to just work in a collaboration and set up the collaborations to enable the teachers to carry it through. Mrs. Leeson stated further, “I think the idea of kind of weaning away from just reducing some of our TISs was the idea that it is time now for the teachers to take ownership of doing some of this on their own. I think some of our younger teachers come equipped with the technological expertise. For some of our other teachers, they grow quite a bit in their ability to use technology.”

Mr. McKeon asked, “Could you provide to the board (it does not have to be another presentation) what local districts are using from a man power prospective, so we get an idea. I am concerned about the fact that...and I appreciate everyone sharing in Liberty, but that is a 3,000 population and maybe we have...and you are right Mrs. Leeson we did cut...two theories: one, they should have accumulated some experience in order to do most of it on their own, but the other issue is we might have cut our nose off to spite our face trying to look at budget dollars. I need some comfort level that the number we have is the right number. You can give it to Dr. Roy, and he can get it out in our weekly package.”

Mr. Faccinetto stated, “My only concern (and to go off what Mrs. Leeson said) if we cut back, some teachers maybe wait longer now for support, and just say well the heck with it we are not going to do it because we got to keep moving off our lessons. And then we have some students that get a good technology built curriculum because teachers are comfortable with it and others that just do not because they are not comfortable. Is it fair to say that there is a lot more technology integrated in the classroom now then there was 8 years ago, so to say they were not and they forget, why do we even have professional development then because you learn to teach in college why even learn anything else. It is a lifelong learning process as technology changes and software changes. They are still going to need support in what they do. I do not know that we need 6, 8, or whatever we had, but the fact that Freedom and Liberty, I think, should have their own specialist and however you break up the rest. Do we have lag times? Are there people waiting? If there were not a demand for it, I would think we would not have the use in there. It would just be a natural no-brainer, but it seems like we have a high demand for the service. Mr. Arbushites agreed, “I think we do. As you said there are more things becoming available, there are more people and more needs to be serviced around the district. We are a very big district and some of the projects that teachers want to undertake are complicated from a technical standpoint. We just want to be able to support them so that they do not throw up their hands and say I do not have time to do this or I do not want to do this...just because the resources are not necessarily there. We do have some lag time. We always encourage people to plan ahead of time so we could service their needs properly. I think for the most part we have been successful in reaching the people that have contacted us. We have also written a number of things into the curriculum especially over at Broughal Middle School when we developed that curriculum a few years ago. There are a number of things written right into the curriculum that you cannot do it if you did not have the technology, so that is where that role continues to have a great need.”

Mrs. Leeson added, “Just a point of clarification – I do not believe it was the intent not to have a TIS at

Liberty High School. I think it was a retirement. I do not think it was not the intent of not having a full-time person there.”

Mrs. Cann asked how many TIS does the district have now. Mr. Arbushites answered, “four.” Mrs. Cann said, “I do not ask ideally because that could be a hundred, but what number do you think would be most efficient.” Dr. Roy said 99! Mr. Arbushites added, start the bidding. Mr. Arbushites stated, “I think we will always have needs that grow to expand to the number of people we have available. I personally would love to see, and this is just a suggestion, perhaps two at the high schools, two at the middle schools, and two at the elementary schools. I have not talked about that to anybody else yet, but that I think would create a nice balance between elementary, middle, and high school. Mrs. Cann commented that in elementary the needs are not as greater as they are in high school, but there are more of them.

Mr. Burkhardt asked, “Can we also over lay this with the tech support people to see how they are divvied up.” Mr. Arbushites said he would get the information for the board. He also said, “We have nine support technologists and seven technical assistants.” Mr. Burkhardt would like to look at the whole picture and see whether the district has spread those things equally.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other questions, comments.

Dr. Roy announced that Dr. Silva is officially on the payroll as of today. Mrs. Follweiler welcomed Dr. Silva and asked if he would like to say something.

Dr. Silva stated, “I met with Frank this morning. You always want to meet with the technology person as soon as you start so that you understand the district and Mrs. Leeson asked a very good question about at what point...there has been a lot of training and they should know...and Frank said there are different needs and different levels. We found in the research and implementing different types of technology support initiatives that most younger teachers and teachers who are comfortable with technology just need an introduction. They get it. The teachers who are a little more resistant technology their biggest fear is trying technology and then failing in the lesson and now trying it the second or third time, so they require a little bit more of a push-in intervention, work with the kids, work with the teachers. So when you are developing a strategy for pushing in, you really have to have the two levels – the young teachers who know Wiki and blog, teacher web pages are, and sometimes teach the other teachers just by example and work very comfortably with the kids. But then there are the others who push and really give, I do not want to say lesson development, but technology lesson development integration at the same time and that is what makes it stick for them. I think when you ask what type of research is there that shows what makes for successful integration, it sort of that two track with the support focus on those two tracks. Mrs. Leeson asked, “But for how long though?” Dr. Silva replied, “The more Wikis, blogs, all the rest that come in smart boards, it never stops. There is always the newest technology. I think we are seeing a generation of younger teachers starting who are inclined to just start with a level of integration who need less of a turn around time, less of an integration, so I do not know how long specifically. Some of the staff has been added with the current initiatives, not forever, there comes a time you move on to the next thing.”

Dr. Roy added, “The challenges also are the pace has changed. If we started this in 2002, I do not know that Web 2.0 was up running and accessible to schools at that point. With the Wiki spaces, blogs, so forth were not available. It takes a change in technology, always creates that issue of how much training am I going to have, how much training do we pursue on our own.”

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other questions, comments.

BOARD POLICY 005 – ORGANIZATION – 2nd READING – Mr. Washington directed the board to page two of this policy. He said, “We were going to change all committee persons, and actually when I look at it we should take the “s” off of committees and put it on as *chairperson*. We just need to make that change. That was the only change being made to Policy 005.” Mrs. Follweiler said that is correct. She

asked the board, "Is there any other questions, comments. Are the additional changes okay to put on the agenda for a final reading and vote?" The board agreed.

BOARD POLICY 006 – MEETINGS – 2nd READING – Mr. Washington directed the board to page 11, section 13, letter C. He stated we are striking the last letter. Mrs. Follweiler took over and read the change in the paragraph. Mr. Washington continued and read the changes made to paragraph E.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if the board had any additional comments on Policy 006. She asked if the changes were okay to put on the agenda. The board agreed.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NOVEMBER 15, 2010, REGULAR BOARD MEETING:

BOARD POLICY 005 – ORGANIZATION – 3rd READING – No objections. This item will be placed on the November 15, 2010, Regular Board Meeting Agenda for a third and final reading.

BOARD POLICY 006 – MEETINGS – 3rd READING – No objections. This item will be placed on the November 15, 2010, Regular Board Meeting Agenda for a third and final reading.

TUITION WAIVER STUDENTS – Mr. Washington stated this item is being pulled from the agenda at this point as Child Accounting needs to get additional information. He said, "It was on this agenda because we thought we would have the information, but we are going to pull it at this point."

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – Steve Antalics, 737 Ridge Avenue, Bethlehem, had two items. He said, "I heard mention the fact that there is no TIS at Liberty this year. I did not hear reasons why or how. This is not an audibly friendly room to the visitors so you may have said something, which I did not hear. The question I have is, "The absence of the TIS at Liberty was that answered properly to the board?" Mrs. Follweiler replied yes and that Mr. Faccinetto had asked that question and the answer was that Liberty TIS had a retirement and the other TISs throughout the district cover Liberty High School, so they are not without the support. They just do not have someone stationed there. Mr. Antalics resumed, "Also in the second part, in Policy 006 there is a statement about hearing of the public, and it says that a member of the public... now that is very general, but I have heard at past board meetings that if you do not reside within a district, you cannot speak at a board meeting. Is *public* anybody that shows up, or is it restricted?" Mrs. Leeson answered, "I think that is being clarified on page 11, section 13 C. That it is one of our taxpayers, unless the majority of the board members or the chairperson invites someone who has special knowledge about the issue, so in other words just anyone from another state cannot come in and take up time talking about an issue that is pertinent to us, but if they have knowledge about an issue that we are discussing then either the chairperson or the majority of the board can ask for them to be there and to speak on it." Mr. Antalics asked, "But in other words if someone has knowledge and comes in unannounced, they would not be allowed?" Mrs. Leeson replied, "The chairperson or the majority of the board can accept that." Mrs. Follweiler gave an example to Mr. Antalics, "Recently we had this occur at one of our board meetings where people from the county had something to say to the board on a subject that was shared between the county and the board, and Mrs. Leeson was chairing the meeting and welcomed them to speak." Mr. Antalics asked again, "So it has to be cleared by the chairperson of the meeting." Mrs. Follweiler added, "Or the majority of the board."

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other courtesy of the floor. None.

OPEN FORUM – Mrs. Cann said, "May I suggest since we have some time between meetings, we can..." Mrs. Follweiler stated, "We do have executive session between meetings." Dr. Roy said, "We did discuss this, and we will start to schedule these immediately following. We did not do that this time, but we will start to schedule advertisements *immediately following* so that we keep moving forward."

Mr. Tenaglia requested that the Secretary of the Board record the "yeas and nays" when the board takes a vote rather than the results "5 yes 4 no" rather than the "motion passed/motion failed." Mrs. Follweiler

asked, "So when we are not doing a roll call vote?" Mr. Tenaglia replied, "When we are doing a roll call vote." Mrs. Follweiler asked, "So when we are doing the roll call vote. Is it not recorded – everybody's name and how they voted on a roll call vote?" Mr. Tenaglia said, "It is not recorded that way by the secretary when she announces the results." Mrs. Follweiler added, "When we have the vote at a typical meeting, names are written down and then it says motion pass or failed." Mr. Tenaglia said, "As oppose to previously where we got the yeas and nays." Mrs. Leeson added, "I believe that we still in the formal record have everyone's vote, but I think what you are just referencing is immediately right there." Mr. Tenaglia said, "She has the information. It is immediately... the recording of the results." Mr. McKeon said, "Just the count is what you are looking for instead of just the motion." Mrs. Follweiler asked that the Secretary of the Board be asked to do that. She asked if everyone was in agreement with that. The vote was 7 yes 0 no."

Mrs. Leeson said, "I was wondering if we could again look for a count down clock so that we can have for courtesy of the floor. I believe city council has one, so maybe we can find out where they got it. I think it would be much nicer than at times having to say to someone you only have 30 seconds left. A large countdown clock so people can see it."

Mr. McKeon had a suggestion regarding Mr. Antalic's acoustic issue. He said, "Bethlehem Township supplies to their audience headphones for the people. They are wireless headsets that somebody can pick up at the table and somebody sitting in the audience can listen to the conversation without being concerned about the echoes and the... I think it is something we should look into." Mrs. Follweiler asked Dr. Roy to examine the possibilities.

Mr. Faccinetto said, "We had a lot of feedback over the weekend about the solar project at Spring Garden. Is there any interest in looking into that or can it be shifted more over the retention base? It is all marked down on the ground and it is a huge chunk of land that is disappearing. Apparently the people in the school seem to feel that they were misled somewhat as to how it was going to be laid out or on the same page. I do not know if it is too late; I know we have contracts." Dr. Roy said, "I spoke to Mr. Fazil today and this is something that goes back a number of months almost a year under development. That is why they were marking. Mr. Fazil said there might be equipment out there this week to start to do the installation, so it is pretty late in the game to say let us change it. My understanding is it was really a particular person at the school. The principal is comfortable with the outline. We also were not sure that the understanding of that person at the school was... there are markers in a lot of places, some marked underground cable, so that was mistaken as part of the boundary. Mr. Fazil was going to visit the school this afternoon or tomorrow to talk a little about the layout and the space that remains. The plans have been approved. They are ready to install that is why they are there. They have been discussing this for a year." Mr. Faccinetto said he understands, but at least the district addressed their concerns.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there were any other open forum.

Irene Follweiler adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

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