

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
January 31, 2005

The Penn Manor School Board met as a Committee of the Whole at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room at Manor Middle School. Present were Mr. DeLuca, Mrs. Friedman, Mr. Geist, Mr. C. Willis Herr, Mr. Kreider, Mr. Lyon, Mr. Rintz and Mrs. Wert. Dr. Frerichs was absent. Present from the administrative staff were Mr. Stewart, Mrs. Griffis and Mr. Johnston. Mr. Skrocki was absent. Also in attendance were Mr. Reisinger, Mrs. Rhoades, Mrs. Katey Knapp and Mrs. Howard.

Mr. Herr asked if there were any Citizen's Comments. There were none at this time.

Mr. Herr asked the committee whether there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of the January 10, 2005, Committee of the Whole Meeting. Hearing none, on a motion by Mr. Rintz a second by Mrs. Friedman, and a unanimous voice vote, the Minutes were approved as printed.

Mr. Stewart stated that following a recent judicial review hearing board members expressed an interest to learn more about a drug testing program. Mr. Stewart contacted Dave Bender, with the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Council. He reviewed information provided by the Lancaster Drug and Alcohol Information Center regarding youth drug and alcohol use in Lancaster County compared to Pennsylvania and nationwide. He report that the survey was sent to 5300 students in 6 school districts. Mr. Herr questioned the accuracy of the survey. Mr. Stewart replied that although it is impossible to verify the accuracy of the survey it was completed anonymously and probably fairly accurate. Mr. Stewart also contacted and met with Dr. David Poore, Hempfield School District Superintendent regarding Hempfield's drug testing policy and procedures. Mr. Stewart reported that every Hempfield student who participates in an extra-curricular activity or applies for a parking permit must sign the consent form for random drug testing. If the student does not sign the form, they will not be allowed to participate in the activity or receive a parking permit. The student is assigned a number. A computer program selects the number of students for random testing. The nurse collects the urine sample and it is tested 2 ways. A non-negative sample is sent to a certified lab for further testing. Mr. Stewart explained the procedure for notification of the results to the parent and student. If there was no valid medical explanation for a positive test result and the student is found in violation of the policy, the policy procedures will be followed. Mr. Herr questioned if a student was found violating the policy would they be tested more often. Mr. Stewart stated that the student would be removed from the activity or the parking permit removed. He also said that the Drug Testing Policy and the Substance Use Policy are different and separate from each other. After some discussion Mr. Rintz stated that he would encourage such a program at Penn Manor. Mr. Stewart encouraged the board to review the information distributed and talk with their constituents. If additional information is required, Mr. Stewart suggested that various groups including the coaches, parents and students should be contacted.

Mr. Stewart informed the board that the cell phone contract for the district is ending June 30 and Mr. Skrocki and Mr. Reisinger have explored cell phone options. Mr. Reisinger reported that the beginning of the year is the E-rate season, which is the federal program that provides discounts for telecommunications. He explained that the current cell service, Cingular, has had a lack of quality service in several pockets throughout the district. He said two companies, Cingular and Nextel, responded to the request for proposal. Mr. Reisinger stated that Nextel provides two-way paging services and a quick connect feature, which is very desirable for safety and keeping the cost down. For better communication cell phone usage would be extended to other key people in the district including principals and head custodians in each building. He said the use of the two-way radio will help create a safety net especially when there is a power outage in a building. Although the additional phones will double the cost the district will get a 40% E-rate discount for telecommunication. Mr. Reisinger reported that the loaner phones from Nextel worked well and the signaling was good. Mr. Rintz asked if the current phones are allowed for personal use. Mr. Reisinger replied calls are allowed for emergencies; however, if a personal call is made on the cell phone the individual is expected to reimburse the district. He also stated that phone numbers can be restricted to specific areas or numbers. Approval for placement of this item on the February School Board Meeting Agenda was approved on a motion by Mrs. Wert, a second by Mr. Kreider, and a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Stewart informed the board that for the third year Mr. Reisinger won an Award of Achievement for 2005, from the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials. The winning entry was titled "Supercharged Web Publishing: Building Low Cost, High-Impact Digital Classrooms and Virtual Communities." It is based on the Moodle platform. Mr. Stewart distributed the newspaper article about the award. Mr. Herr congratulated Mr. Reisinger.

Mr. Johnston updated the board on the healthcare provider search. He stated that because Healthguard went out of business effective July 1 a new provider will be needed. Mr. Skrocki and Mr. Johnston were on the consortium committee to search for a new provider. He reported that Coresource and HealthAmerica were the finalists. The committee will be recommending HealthAmerica to the consortium. He reviewed the highlights of the HealthAmerica plan including pricing, administrative costs and flexibility for duplicating the individual school district plans. The committee was impressed with the culture of the company, customer service, quick response to questions and their wellness philosophy. He also stated that Lancaster General Hospital and Lancaster Regional Heart chose HealthAmerica as the carrier for their employees. He said this item will be presented to the board for a vote at a later date.

Mr. Stewart distributed data regarding the current student enrollment in Penn Manor, the Pennsylvania Department of Education student enrollment projection and Gilbert Architect's elementary enrollment study. He reviewed current class sizes as compared to the data from PDE and the Gilbert study. He stated that he anticipates increased enrollment in some grade levels; however, the middle school enrollment should be declining. Mr. Stewart presented a preliminary list of professional staffing requests for next year. Three staff members have been requested for the middle school for special

education students moving up from an elementary school. The added staff would allow the students to provide for their special needs and stay in the district, rather than sending them to an IU supported class. A middle school reading and middle school math teacher is being requested to provide additional support for students who are in need of specific training. Mr. Stewart reviewed the middle school section sizes, high school classes and average class size. Support staff requests include a technology staff member to help manage the data load, an additional custodian at the high school and a part-time middle school guidance secretary. Mr. Lyon stated that many modifications and additions have been done in the elementary school to try to get children to read up to grade level. He questioned the need for a reading teacher in the middle school for struggling students and will there always be a need for help despite the programs. Mr. Stewart replied that the district has become more transient and the state and federal agencies are putting more emphasis on testing in grades 3-8. Resources need to be channeled to help the students and take some of the burden from the classroom teacher. Mr. Stewart stated that as the budget is developed he may be presenting a shorter list of recommendations.

Mrs. Griffis provided the board with information on homeless children. She reported that last year Penn Manor had 7 children who were considered homeless. In the past students have lived in tents, cars, shelters or other areas. She explained that the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act has been amended and is now part of the No Child Left Behind Act. Homeless students, no matter where they are living, have the right to stay in the school of origin or in a local school. The school district must provide transportation to the school of origin. The child must attend school immediately even if there are no records for enrollment, given free or reduced lunch and is entitled to all special services. She stated if a dispute arises over school enrollment the child must be admitted until the dispute is resolved. The parent must be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal.

Mr. Johnston provided preliminary budget information. He reviewed the budget calendar and enrollment projections. He stated that the enrollment projections, not per pupil costs, are used to determine the amount of money allocated to the buildings for their 2005-06 budget. Each principal will determine how the money will be allocated and a written justification will also be provided. He reported the Student Services budget includes assessment materials, training and travel for the school psychologists, Special Education Department expenses, nursing services, learning support aides, ESL, gifted and homebound. Mr. Johnston pointed out where to find the various budget categories on website and stated that all budgets will be updated routinely. He stated that early projections are not dependable but show that revenue will probably come in higher than expected and expenses will be very close to what was budgeted. The summaries and projections will not be available until March but he reminded the board that projections made last year indicated an increase of approximately 6% with the new debt or the prospect of Act 72.

The support staff salary band adjustment was reviewed by Mr. Johnston. The current ranges for the support staff compensation plan were created in the spring of 2003 and have been used for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years. Each position has a low, mid and high point salary range. PSBA has recommended a 2.3% salary adjustment based

upon salary market movements. Mr. Johnston explained the graph to support moving the ranges 2.3%. He stated that changing the range will have no impact upon individual salaries. He said eventually the plan should be evaluated to insure that the positions and ranges accurately reflect the jobs performed and the market rates to keep Penn Manor competitive. After some clarification and discussion, approval for placement of 2.3% salary band adjustment on the February School Board Meeting Agenda was approved on a motion by Mr. DeLuca, a second by Mrs. Wert, and a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Stewart distributed the Manheim Central School District Resolution in support of the legal action taken by the Family Support Network. He stated that Mrs. Wert originally brought this to the attention of the board. After some discussion at a previous meeting it was decided that the resolution would be sent to the solicitor and discussed again. Mr. Stewart reviewed comments from the solicitor and inquired if the board wanted him to prepare a resolution for the February 7 meeting. It was decided that Mr. Stewart would prepare a resolution to support the legal action and present it to the board at the next meeting for approval.

The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 9:30 p.m. on a motion by Mr. DeLuca, a second by Mrs. Friedman, and a unanimous voice vote.