

PUBLIC HEARING ON MEETING AGENDA

The public hearing on matters appearing on this meeting's business agenda commenced at 8:07 p.m. No one wished to address the Board on any agenda matters and the hearing was then closed. No public in attendance.

BOARD RETREAT

Discussion and Review of the results of the 2011-2012 Self Evaluation.

FORMAL BUSINESS AGENDA

The Board of Education took the following actions on the business agenda items for this meeting.

BOARD OPERATIONS

JANUARY 12, 2012

Motion made by Dr. Diuguid seconded by Dr. Pruitt

18. the Board accepted and approved the results of the 2011-2012 Self-Evaluation.

Roll call on Board Operations Motion #18; Motion approved 8-0.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Dr. Diuguid and seconded by Mr. Rose, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Robert S. Finger, CFE, CGFM
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**NOTES FOR MINUTES
JANUARY 12, 2012
BOARD RETREAT MEETING
REVIEW OF BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY**

Quantification of Relative Value

Mrs. Fisher would like to see a different type of summary where board members can rank the areas in terms of importance. Mr. Rodriguez suggested discussing only areas with three or more votes less than Vital.

Planning

Mrs. Fisher suggested to only commenting on unsatisfactory ratings. Dr. Pruitt said community input is important and needs improvement. Both Dr. Walser and Dr. Diuguid agreed that community input is necessary. Mr. Rodriguez said overall based on ratings, planning is adequate but needs improvement. Goals should be set in the summer. Mrs. Rice said that tonight's exercise should help the board with setting goals. Mr. Rose stated that he was surprised with the results. Feels that the board has done all that they can do to solicit community input as best as possible. Dr. Diuguid feels that planning and goal setting should be done over the summer. Mr. Rose feels that 10 year planning is too vague, no more than 2 or 3 years out. Mrs. Williams said moving the election to November and not voting on the budget will provide stability and enable future planning. Mrs. Fisher said long range planning is necessary as teachers need training. Dr. Walser said continuity of board membership is important, however, laws keep changing so quickly which doesn't lend itself to future planning. Ms. Pinsak said there has been financial planning done by the board, i.e. ESIP, busing study.

Policy

Mrs. Fisher said she does not feel that board operates as a board making policy. She feels that the policy committee responds to state mandates, does not formulate policy that is specific to Teaneck. Mr. Rodriguez asked about failure by previous board attorney to properly update policies. Mr. Finger explained the process to date with updating and revising the policy manual. Mrs. Williams stated that while problems were noted in this area, solutions have already been implemented.

Student Achievement

Mrs. Williams noted that she has not observed on her survey but that just means she has not seen or been involved in that particular area, not intended to be a negative comment. It is her first year on the board so she has not seen everything. Mr. Rodriguez clarified his comment that he would like to see an 80% graduation rate from four year colleges, not the high school. The high school graduation rate is already well above 80%. Mrs. Fisher said she feels setting high standards is only adequate as not all students are bound by high standards. Both Mrs. Fisher and Dr. Walser feel that more assessments are needed. Mr. Rodriguez feels that standards are high, raised the GPA for athletic participation. Mr. Rose feels the discussion tonight is important and is learning from it, provokes further discussion. Mrs. Williams wants to add a sheet to the survey to rank priorities.

Finance

Mrs. Rice feels that the details are delegated to members of the Finance Committee. Dr. Walser said that an annual audit is done and the Finance Committee reviews all bills. Dr. Diuguid spoke about the process for approving bills and the reason bills lists are reviewed by the Finance Committee. Mr. Rodriguez said there is an excellent paper trail to support

expenditures. He has been reviewing the bills as Chair of the Finance Committee. Mrs. Fisher asked about the comments, Mr. Rodriguez spoke about the comments and how to raise revenues.

Board Operations

Only one area with an adequate rating. Mrs. Fisher does not feel that the committee method lessens the work of board members, but rather makes more work for administrators. She suggested that committees be evaluated annually for effectiveness and whether to continue or dissolve a committee. Dr. Walser does not feel that a board of the whole would work better than a committee. Mrs. Williams feels that committees are working well. Mrs. Rice commended the board for sharing the burden by working with committees.

Board Performance

Mr. Rodriguez asked why there was an adequate rating under Ethics. Mrs. Fisher responded that everyone knows her reasons.

Board/Superintendent Relationship

No comments.

Board/Staff Relationships

Mrs. Rice would like to be able to recognize staff members that are doing a great job. Dr. Pruitt said it would be helpful to have designations for teachers such as Master Teacher in order to recognize good work, but union contracts prohibit that. Dr. Diuguid said that recognizing teachers will get bogged down when dealing with the union.

Board and Community

Mrs. Fisher does not believe the board anticipates issues and trends well, rated unsatisfactory. Dr. Diuguid feels that the board needs to listen to the community, but there are many different voices. The board needs to lead and push its' agenda going forward for the community. Mr. Rose said the community has a disconnect with the board, changing times, students attending charters and nonpublic schools. Dr. Walser said dealing with a diverse community takes hard work; the board has done well, but has to remember you cannot please everyone. Ms. Pinsak said that was an open house at the High School this evening, many parents of students attending charters and nonpublic schools are interested in enrolling their children at the high school. Mrs. Fisher said all board members need to make the effort to reach out to the community whenever possible. Our parents need to support the public schools their children attend. She said she has tried to engage the community through the Conversation Continues movie series this past summer. Dr. Walser said strides have been made to engage the community, the board should be proud of what has been done. Mr. Rodriguez feels that there is a challenge in dealing with non-English speaking population in the community. Mrs. Williams feels we could do a better job of accentuating the positive whenever we can. Mrs. Rice agreed, but need more meaningful parental involvement, need to make a connection with parents. Need a real community relations program in place, need to make connections with Holy Name Hospital, Rotary Club and Farleigh Dickinson University. Mr. Rose would like to see students go to the hospital and nursing homes to perform and showcase their talents. Mrs. Fisher said the position of Community Outreach Coordinator is a good start, but need to partner with more groups and need a systematic program be put into place. Dr. Walser stated that it takes time, but there has been a good start, there is movement. Ms. Pinsak stated that she and Mr. McHale are meeting with the principals to review the progress each school is making towards student achievement goals.

Challenges and Solutions

Dr. Walser and Dr. Diuguid agree that the challenges have been discussed through the review of each survey area. Dr. Diuguid feels there is a need for better evaluation of teaching staff. Mr. Rose feels the boards' goals and objectives are in line with the comments in the Challenges and Solutions section. Mr. McHale spoke about working with the principals to ensure evaluations are done the same in each building. Dr. Pruitt stated that staff evaluations are of utmost importance. Mrs. Fisher said evaluations may be irrelevant if pending legislation is approved that puts evaluations in the hands of the principal instead of the central office. Ms. Pinsak spoke about the reduction to the number of students taking the Alternative HS Assessment Test. Mr. Rose suggested and the board agreed that a demonstration of how Skyward works should be done at a board meeting this year. Dr. Walser suggested that the board prioritize the Quantification of Relative Value by ranking each area from 1 to 9, 1 being the most important and 9 the least important.

Upon conclusion of the review of the Self-Evaluation survey, there was a brief discussion regarding board member attendance and the impact on board operations when a member has poor attendance. The board members agreed that Dr. Walser, as board president should speak directly with the board member with poor attendance.