

Nippersink School District #2  
Regular Board of Education Meeting  
January 27, 2009

MINUTES

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education, Nippersink School District #2, was called to order by President Patty Anderson at 7:00 P.M. in the Nippersink Middle School Library.

Members Present: Anderson, Bushing, Bianchini, Samuel, Maurer, Offerman (arrived at 7:05 P.M)

Also Present: Dr. Oest, Superintendent

**Consent Agenda**

Items listed on the Consent Agenda included the following:

- ✓ Regular Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2008
  - ✓ Closed Session Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2008
  - ✓ Board Bills \$1,372,691.72
  - ✓ Treasurer's Report
  - ✓ Employment : Cristie Harr, RGS 10-month Secretary; Rebecca O'Brien, Playground Supervisor
  - ✓ Part-Time to Full-Time Status: Nathan Villegas
  - ✓ Leave of Absence: Kathy Colburn
  - ✓ Approval of Destruction of Closed Session Audio Recordings: 06/26/07
- Motion by Maurer and seconded by Bianchini to approve the consent agenda

items as submitted.

Roll Call

Ayes: Bushing, Bianchini, Maurer, Samuel, Anderson

Nays: None

Absent: Offerman

Motion Carried: 5 – 0

**Public Input**

John Puleo – spoke of Board Policy 2:70. Mr. Puleo also spoke of his support of Pierre Langlois to fill the Board Member vacancy and of the importance of the Board's decision in this regard.

Rob Johnston – spoke of a similar vacancy on the Library Board and how the interviews for appointment to that position were changed to open session interviews and suggested that the same be done for the District 2 vacancy. Mr. Johnston also spoke of his support for Mr. Langlois' appointment to the District 2 Board.

**Reports**

- Revenue/Expenditure Report, Special Education Revenue/Expenditure Report, Imprest Account Report, ISDLAF Report, Transportation Report
- Administrative Reports

**Superintendent**

Dr. Oest mentioned that 2 FOIA requests had been received and responded to; one regarding the purchase of the Schmitt Property and another related to accident reporting procedures. Other points included ISBE approval of the holiday waiver request and the scheduling of a Shared Services meeting

### Business Manager

Dr. Hain was not in attendance. His Board report was included in the packet provided.

### RGS Principal

Mrs. Jones extended her appreciation to the PTO. Fundraising efforts over the past few years have been for the purpose of a playground replacement. The goal has been accomplished. The new equipment has been ordered, received and is waiting to be installed. Mrs. Jones was asked to convey the Board's appreciation as well.

### SGE Principal

Mr. Pittman spoke of the January 5<sup>th</sup> Teachers Institute Day. The K-2 Reading/L.A. Curriculum Review teachers were introduced to "Power Standards." Power Standards provide focus for both instruction and assessment. Also discussed was the RtI Plan timeframe and strategies for each objective. The Board requested an RtI Plan update from administration at some point in the near future.

### NMS Principal

Mr. Molitor spoke about the increased communication occurring between the middle school and the high school; most recently, articulation between Counselors and Science teachers from each building. Articulation between Social Studies teachers in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade is presently taking place. Next will be a focus on Math.

### Special Education Coordinator

Mrs. May-Zelle explained that we have had both an A.M. and a P.M. ECE classroom in past years. The 2008-09 school year began with an A.M. class only. Enrollment has made the addition of a P.M. class now necessary.

### Student Board Member Report

Mr. Swanson spoke of the following upcoming student activities:

- January 8<sup>th</sup> Water Park trip
- Freshman Orientation for 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- 6-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Geography Bee – Graysen Filko, Winner; and Jeremy Hartwick, Runner Up
- Valentine's Day Dance, February 13<sup>th</sup>
- Spelling Bee, January 28<sup>th</sup>.

### Old Business

None

### New Business

#### Architect Services Agreement

Negotiations are in progress between Green and Associates and District Counsel. The expectation is to have an agreement for recommendation at the February Board meeting.

#### School Calendar FY2009-10

The draft FY2009-10 School Calendar was presented to the Board reflecting the current calendar. A committee meeting took place on January 7. One item being considered is to have a non-attendance day on the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving in lieu of the day off for Casimer Pulaski Day. Additional input will be gathered from staff and the committee with a final recommendation for Board consideration at the February Board meeting. A question was asked about the early start to the school year. Dr. Oest reminded Board

members that results of the calendar survey overwhelmingly supported alignment with the High School calendar.

### Board Policy 2:70 Vacancies on Board of Education - Filling Vacancies

Current Board Policy upholds that candidate interviews held prior to an appointment by the Board to fill a vacancy must be conducted in a duly Closed Session meeting. Request has been made to hold the interviews in an open forum. The timeframe does not allow for a change to the policy, though temporarily suspending the policy is permissible.

The proposal was made to conduct interviews in Open Session and return to Closed Session to deliberate and select the replacement. A lengthy discussion ensued with the following points and comments made:

- Question about the suddenness and the rationale for the change.
- Statement that it is an elected position and would have a public forum if on the ballot.
- Concern was expressed that the Policy Committee's first knowledge of this was less than a week ago.
- One Board member has had questions asked and interest expressed about holding interviews in a public format.
- No calls were received by the District Office regarding this issue.
- Concern was expressed about the unwillingness of all but one of the candidates applying for the vacant position to run for the elected positions available in April.
- The issue of the local library's change in practice for filling vacant positions was used as a reason for District 2 to do the same.
- Concern was expressed about making decisions that go against current policy based on what other governmental bodies have done.
- More research should be done before making a change.
- Mrs. Anderson read an excerpt from "The Effective School Board Member" regarding credibility. "A board that does not follow its own policies is saying one thing while it does another."
- Concern was also expressed about administrator time and legal expenses when issues become litigious and rushed.
- The question was raised about the "value of people who don't run" for election and "get in through the back door."

Mrs. Anderson called for a consensus to hold the interviews in Open Session using "thumbs up" for yes and "thumbs down" for no. Two Board members were supportive of the change and four were opposed. The Policy will stand as is. All six Board members expressed interest in further examination of the current policy at a later point.

A review of the questions to be asked of the Board candidates took place. A lengthy debate ensued about the rationale of including questions #9, 10, and 12. The questions addressed possible conflict of interest if the candidate appointed to the Board had a connection to a relative involved with education. Concern was raised about the validity and legality of that question in terms of the possible exclusion of a large sector of the community and of possible legal action. Dr. Oest explained that the questions had been reviewed by legal counsel, and rewritten in a more defensible way. Mrs. Anderson concluded the discussion by suggesting that the list of questions remain as presented, since at least one board member needs the answer to these questions to be able to vote for a candidate to fill the vacancy.

**Public Input 2**

Erin Godonis – supported a change to the policy discussed to allow for interviews to take place in Open Session. Mrs. Godonis urged the Board not to make an appointment of a candidate who had not been to a Board meeting. She also mentioned that she had complained about this issue via email when Mrs. Bianchini was appointed.

John Puleo – commented on the Board’s discussion of policy suggesting that some may have thought it funny, while he thought it interesting. He also stated that the 25 minute discussion had been a “circus.” Transparency is key.

Burt Irslinger – suggested that as well as transparency, the interview process should also be an impersonal process. The process and questions should not be focused on a specific group of people such as educators and non-packet pullers.

Mark Godonis – asked if the appointed Board Member would be required to file an economic interest statement. (The answer was yes.) He also added that if the perspective candidates weren’t informed about the setting of the interviews, they would have the option to withdraw if the policy were changed. If the former governor had been more transparent, he wouldn’t have the problems he has now.

**Closed Session**

Motion by Offerman and seconded by Bushing to enter into Closed Session at 8:25 P.M. to consider information pertaining to the appointment, employment, dismissal, performance, discipline and compensation of employees, and Collective Bargaining matters.

Roll Call

Ayes: Bianchini, Maurer, Samuel, Bushing, Offerman, Anderson

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 6 - 0

**Return to Open Session at 8:55 P.M.**

**Adjournment**

Motion by Offerman and seconded by Bianchini to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the District 2 Board of Education at 8:58 P.M.

Roll Call

Ayes: Bushing, Bianchini, Maurer, Samuel, Offerman, Anderson

Nays: None

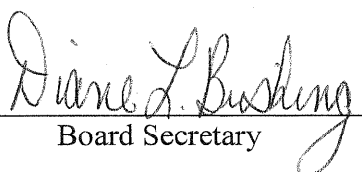
Motion Carried: 6 – 0


Next Regular Meeting, February 24, 2009

Board of Education of Nippersink

School District #2

ATTEST:

  
Board Secretary

 February 24, 2009  
Board President