

GREATER JOHNSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education
Discussion/Business Meeting
January 5, 2005
Glebe Street Elementary Library

I. Called to order by Board President at 6:00 PM.

ATTENDEES:

Peter Cinelli	Russell Martin	John David Praught
Joanne Freeman	Richard McGuire	William Pollak
Kathleen Leo	Brian Miller (arrived 6:01 PM)	

ABSENT:

Christopher Swatt

OTHERS:

John S. Whelan Katherine Sullivan

II. **SUPERINTENDENT'S/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS**

- Mr. Whelan advised that the presentation to be made by Communications Specialist Erin Sands has been moved to the January 19th Board of Education meeting. Mr. Praught asked when the new website will be finished and was advised it will be up on January 19th, with a demonstration to be given at the next meeting.
- Mrs. Sullivan discussed the New York State Student Identification System (NYSSIS). This is a mandatory single statewide accountability system to collect individual student results for the State testing program and to track the academic progress of students through their school careers. Twenty-three pieces of data must be inputted to uniquely identify each student. Mrs. Sullivan indicated there are some glitches to be worked out by the State, as although we have inputted data correctly and submitted it to the Regional Information Center, it has not been returned to us correctly. Mr. Cinelli asked what some of the pitfalls might be and Mrs. Sullivan mentioned that if a student's name is entered with two different spellings, the computer identifies two separate people. Mrs. Freeman expressed concerns over the collection of so much personal information and possible identity thefts or confidentiality issues. Mrs. Sullivan explained that the District and the State have always had access to this information in some format, this is just a new means of tracking it.
- Mr. Whelan commented that the District is still looking at various sites for the proposed bus garage facility. He advised that this can be a long process and that it will not be possible to submit the package to SED until all of the pieces are in place, which means there may not be a Bond vote until June instead of March. Mr. Cinelli asked if there are prospects and Mr. Whelan indicated there are sites in close proximity and some on the outskirts and that we want to pick one that will not cause controversy, so we are still accumulating information. Mr. Cinelli asked if a commercially zoned area with water and sewer is the best choice and Mr. Pollak indicated it should be in an industrial zone. Mr. Whelan said some people had misinterpreted information provided at the last meeting with regard to how much money the District is going to spend for land. He stated that while the District may spend the sum of \$900,000 for land and site work, the land by itself will only be 1/10th of that cost. The floor was turned over to Architects Dave Binacci and Dante Fellini, who discussed the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) process. It was indicated that the Board may need to pass a resolution at the next meeting designating the District as the Lead Agency for a SEQRA review. Mr. Pollak asked why the County Planning Department wouldn't be the Lead Agency and was advised that if the District handles it, meetings can be more conveniently scheduled and the review time will be shorter.

Mr. Fellini speculated that once the completed package is submitted to SED, the construction process will take twenty-four months from start to finish. Mr. McGuire inquired as to whether the bus garage should be separated and submitted as a separate package so as not to delay things. Mr. Binacci replied that it would be best not to have two proposition votes. Mr. Pollak asked that people remember that this facility will not be used to house buses, but rather will be a bus maintenance facility and a District-wide storage facility. He also mentioned that the cost of our project at \$11 million is fairly modest when compared to Niskayuna's which is \$115 million.

III. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

None

IV. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Academic – R. Martin announced the next meeting will be held on February 2nd @ 5:00 PM at Warren Street. He indicated a statement regarding the Academic Code will be given at the January 19th Board meeting and that the Extra-Curricular Code is currently under review by Mr. Beatty and others. It was mentioned that Graduation will be on a Tuesday this year.
- Capital Projects – In Mr. Swatt's absence, Mr. Pollak and Mr. Cinelli advised that Mr. Binacci had covered this subject already this evening.
- Restructuring – In Mr. Swatt's absence, Mr. Praught advised that the committee had not been able to meet over the holidays and the next meeting would be announced on January 19th.
- Buildings & Grounds – Mr. Pollak advised that a meeting would be scheduled with E.J. Maye as soon as the new Business Manager is available.
- Finance – Mr. Miller advised that we are waiting for the new Business Manager to start.

V. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR FOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

"In accordance with its practice, the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District does not permit oral comments from the public relating to specific personnel decisions regarding individuals employed by the District during the portion of its business meeting where the Board permits the public comment on agenda and non-agenda items. The Board will accept written comments from the public on this subject matter and all other agenda and non-agenda items."

- Dick Baker asked if a new Business Manager had been chosen and if so, when that person would start as there was nothing on tonight's agenda. It was indicated that someone has been selected to fill the position and will be in place by January 19th.
- Mr. Praught asked why graduation will be on a Tuesday as parents have been questioning him and he has no explanation. Mr. Miller provided a copy of a memo from Mr. Beatty covering this subject. The last day scheduled for regents exams is Thursday, June 23, with Friday June 24th being a regents rating day. Some of these exams determine graduation or what type of diploma will be received, so sufficient time for grading is needed. It was pointed out that graduation has occurred on Wednesday and Thursday evenings several times in the past few years. Mr. Martin indicated the Academic Committee will look into this further.
- Robert Salamack asked whether the District is actively searching for a permanent replacement for the Principal's position at Glebe Street. Mr. Whelan advised that advertising will probably commence next week.
- Mr. McGuire noted that in the Queensbury School District, there is a huge display case with professional photos of students honored as Student of the Month in every discipline. He feels Johnstown is really dropping the ball in this area. Mrs. Freeman noted that all of the elementary schools and Knox have Students of the Month, it is only the high school that does not. Mr. Whelan indicated that Mr. Beatty has spoken to the coordinators regarding the

Board's concern, but this is not a staff requirement. Mr. Martin stated this appears to be another item for the Academic Committee to address.

- Mr. McGuire noted that Gloversville had received publicity for awards to their student athletes for achieving a 90% scholastic average. Mr. Martin said Johnstown had this for spring sports, but it never made it to the paper. Mr. McGuire replied that Johnstown gets very little positive publicity from the Leader Herald and we should make a fuss. Mrs. Sullivan advised that these types of awards and recognitions will be posted on our new website.

VI. BUSINESS ITEMS

- Warrants
- Vendor Additions
- Budget Transfers
- Treasurer's Reports
- Cooperative Canned & Snack Food Bid #05-09 (paperwork to follow)

VII. EDUCATION ITEMS

- Establishment of Choral Ensemble Co-Curricular Group with Unpaid Advisor
- Establishment of Winter Percussion Co-Curricular Group with Unpaid Advisor

VIII. BOARD OF EDUCATION ITEMS

1. **First Reading of Policy 5570, Financial Accountability: Allegations of Fraud**

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

January 19, 2005	Business Meeting	6:00 PM Public Session Johnstown High School
February 2, 2005	Discussion/Business Meeting	6:00 PM Public Session Warren Street Elementary

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Cinelli to adjourn at 6:56 PM.

VOTE: 8 Yes 0 No

Respectfully submitted,

Larraina Carpenter
District Clerk