

**MINE HILL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**MINUTES**  
**CONFERENCE/ACTION MEETING**  
**March 8, 2010**

Opening Statement:

The Conference/Action Meeting of the Mine Hill Township Board of Education was called to order at 7:32 PM on March 8, 2010 by Board President Mary Jo Walilko. Adequate notice of the date and time for this meeting was advertised in the Daily Record on April 28, 2009, in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mary Jo Walilko led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present:**

Caryn Battaglia, Patricia Hernandez, Steve Hoh, Margo Maher, Bridget Mauro and Mary Jo Walilko.

**Absent:**

Anthony Novelli

**Also Present:**

Julia Coyne, Nancy Gulley, David Jimenez, Sam Morris and Ernest Palestis

The Board is aware of Anthony Novelli's absences to this point.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Margo Maher, the Board accepted the closed session minutes of the Regular monthly meeting held on February 22, 2010.

Roll Call Vote- All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

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Roll Call Vote- All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

Correspondence

- A thank you note from VA NJ Health Care System for the Valentine's for Veterans donation was read by Mary Jo Walilko.
- Letter from Maher Family
- SEMI Waiver Letter

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Palestis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- Dr. Palestis indicated that his report would be focused on budget and some important dates related to the same. Dr. Palestis informed everyone that on March 16th Governor Christie will present his budget. On March 18th the state aid figures will be received. On March 22nd the Board will have a meeting to discuss the draft of the 2010-2011 school budget. Lastly, on March 29th the Board will formally present the completed budget to the public.
- Dr. Palestis asked the Board to support his decision to contact state officials prior to the release of the state aid figures and outlined the points made in his document titled “An Incentive-Based Approach to Encourage Shared Services Among New Jersey School Districts.”(see attached) The Board gave their full support.
- Dr. Palestis stressed the fundamental issue is that teaching positions cannot be lost. Exploring different avenues to cut spending, such as sharing services, could have the potential to save teaching positions.

#### Board Discussion/Reports

- The Board asked Sam Morris to follow up with the town council in regards to correspondence to state officials in support of Dr. Palestis’s proposal.
- Mary Jo Walilko indicated that she will follow up with a letter to the parents of Canfield Avenue School encouraging them to contact state officials. This letter will be distributed via Friday Folders.

#### Presentations-None

#### Business Administrator’s Report-None

#### Public Discussion

- Nancy Gulley reminded the Board that this weekend Dover High School will be presenting the play “You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown.” She also informed the Board that the Dover Middle School play has been postponed until May due to the bad weather experienced in recent months.
- David Jimenez asked about the two finance resolutions on the agenda. Dr. Palestis indicated that the resolutions will be considered for approval at tonight’s meeting. Mr. Jimenez also inquired about examples of shared services. Dr. Palestis replied that along with the services the Mine Hill Township school district currently shares additional services could include food services and transportation.
- Sam Morris asked the Board if they would be willing to speak to state officials if he was able to obtain a meeting in the near future. The Board was in full support. He also inquired about the status of installing the new AR system donated by the Mine Hill Educational Foundation. The Board indicated that it should be up and running within the week. Mr. Morris offered additional IT support funded by the Mine Hill Educational Foundation if needed.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the following resolution for **suspension of 2010 school budget elections**:

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2010, Governor Christopher Christie issued Executive Order 14, which froze current-year state aid payments in more than 500 local school districts, including Mine Hill Township School District; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 14 sets out a process whereby affected school districts would use their excess surplus and portions of reserve accounts to make up for the loss of current-year aid, a strategy that will have an uncertain impact on next year's (2010-2011) school budgets; and

WHEREAS, local school districts have been advised of four possible scenarios concerning their 2010-2011 state aid allocations, adding to the uncertainty over future school finances; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's annual budget message, through which official state school aid amounts for 2010-2011 will be released, has been postponed until March 16; and

WHEREAS, local school boards must finalize proposed budgets for placement on the election ballot by April 3, a span of less than three weeks; and

WHEREAS, the lack of complete information about state school funding and the compressed budget timelines will pose a burden to local school districts in developing intelligent, responsible budgets; and

WHEREAS, the scheduling of the school budget referendums on April 20 precludes the allotment of additional time needed for budget development; and

WHEREAS, proposed school budgets are controlled by a tax-levy cap and undergo thorough review by the state's Executive County Superintendents, thereby ensuring efficient and responsible use of taxpayer funds; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Mine Hill Township Board of Education urges Governor Christopher Christie and the state Legislature to take necessary action to suspend the 2010 school budget elections; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mine Hill Township Board of Education also urges state lawmakers to permit certification of school tax levies based on the budgets approved by local boards of education following the public hearings required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A: 22-10 et seq.; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mine Hill Township Board of Education also urges state lawmakers to adjust the school budget calendar to extend timelines for the budget development, hearing and adoption process, thereby enabling school districts to develop responsible budgets necessary to meet state and local education goals; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to Governor Christopher Christie, Acting Commissioner of Education Bret Schundler, Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver, state Senator Anthony R. Bucco and Assembly Representatives Anthony M. Bucco and Michael Carroll; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the following resolution for **restoration of 2009-2010 State School Aid Cuts:**

WHEREAS, the Mine Hill Township Board of Education recognizes that sound financial management is necessary to support the school program; and

WHEREAS, the Mine Hill Township School District bases its budget on academic goals, current needs and data collected through a long-range planning process; and

WHEREAS, the district's prudent expenditure practices have resulted in an excess surplus of \$129,711 during the current fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, current state law requires districts to apply these excess funds toward the 2010-2011 school budget in order to control local property taxes;

WHEREAS, through its policy of sound fiscal management, the Mine Hill Township Board of Education has placed in reserve for the current school

year \$83,001 to ensure that maintenance and facility renovations do not affect its financial stability; and

WHEREAS, under Executive Order 14, the Governor has frozen the Mine Hill Township school district's current-year state aid in an amount equal to its excess surplus and 25 percent of its capital reserve and other reserve accounts; and

WHEREAS, the aid cut unfairly targets the Mine Hill Township School District and others that accumulated additional surplus and/or put aside reserve funds as the result of sound financial practices; and

WHEREAS, by forcing the expenditure of these surplus funds in the current school year, the Mine Hill Township district will not have them available to control next year's school property taxes; and

WHEREAS, replenishment of reserve accounts next year will divert limited resources from the classroom; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 14 will have a negative impact on property taxpayers and the education program in the Mine Hill Township School District in 2010-2011. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Mine Hill Township Board of Education urges the state Legislature and the Governor to pursue other means to resolve the state's current-year budget gap without jeopardizing school programs or penalizing property taxpayers in the future; and be it further

RESOLVED, that such an alternative should leave in place school districts' excess surplus, as well as their capital reserves; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to Governor Christopher Christie, Acting Commissioner of Education Bret Schundler, Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver, state Senator Anthony R. Bucco and Assembly Representatives Anthony M. Bucco and Michael Carroll; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Roll Call Vote-All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

Consider approving the following **requests for services:**  
(Attachment 1 and 2)

Student ID	Service	Provider	Date(s)	Cost
1441575128	Personal Aide	TBD	Remainder of the 2009-2010 school year effective February 19, 2010	\$15 per day for 75 days for a total of \$1,140.00
8907225185	Occupational Therapy Evaluation	PG Chambers	TBD	\$385.00

**Note:** These are Dover requests.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the **rescinding of Chelsea Maher** as the Board of Education paid tuition student to attend Roxbury High School from September 2010 through June 2014.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the **placement of Alexis Lutton**, the first student on the Waiting List to attend Roxbury High School, as the Board of Education paid tuition student to attend Roxbury High School from September 2010 through June 2014.

Roll Call Vote-All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

**OPERATIONS** Margo Maher, Mary Jo Walilko

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the **Second Reading of Policy 5119 Waiting List For Roxbury.**  
(Attachment 3)

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board approved the **Second Reading** of the following Policies and Regulations:  
(Attachment 4)

- 3351 Healthy Workplace (new)
- 4351 Healthy Workplace (new)
- 5338 Diabetes Management (policy and regulation)
- 5512.01 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- 5533 Pupil Smoking (policy and regulation)

6360	Political Contributions
6660	Student Activity Funds
7434	Smoking on School Grounds
8461	Reporting Violence, Vandalism, Alcohol, and other Drug Use
9700	Special Interest Groups
0142.1	Nepotism
0174	Legal Services
0177	Professional Services
1570	Internal Controls
1620	Administrative Employment Contracts
6111	Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program (policy and regulation)
6471	School District Travel (policy and regulation)

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Bridget Mauro, the Board approved the **appointment of SSP Architectural Group** as their architect of record.

Roll Call Vote-All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

PERSONNEL

Patricia Hernandez, Steve Hoh

New personnel employment appointments are contingent upon the required state and federal criminal history background checks in accordance with N.J.S.A. 116, P.L. 1986.

And be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board submit to the County Superintendent, as required, applications for emergency hiring and the applicant's attestations that they have not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A.18A:6-7.1 et.seq.,N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et. seq.,or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et.seq., on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board approved **Lisa Lardieri as a Substitute Classroom aide**, as needed, at a rate of \$65.00 per full day and \$32.50 for half day, effective March 9, 2010.

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board approved the following list of **Title I teacher(s)** by Full Time Equivalent and salaries:

Name	Assignment	FTE	Salary
Margaret Strittmatter	Basic Skills	0.24	\$21,000.00

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board approved the following **appointment of new Substitute Teachers** for the 2009-2010 school year:

Peter M. Rathjens	\$75 per day, \$85 after 10 days
Diedric Meintsma	\$80 per day, \$90 after 10 days

Motion by Mary Jo Walilko and seconded by Caryn Battaglia, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board approved the **payment to Cindy Pyrzynski** of \$ 5,642.00 from the 2008-2009 school year due to hours worked in excess of contractual obligation.

Roll Call Vote-All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS Caryn Battaglia, Anthony Novelli

- Mrs. Battaglia will be attending the senior citizens meeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2010. At that time she will extend an invitation for them to attend the March 29<sup>th</sup> budget hearing.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS Bridget Mauro, Caryn Battaglia

- The Buildings and Grounds Committee met on March 5, 2010. They discussed the sidewalk issue and the re-ordering of the school vehicle.

Dover Report Bridget Mauro

- Mrs. Mauro reported that the last Dover Board of Education meeting was cancelled. Dover High School has submitted the paperwork to become Title I.

## MHEF Report

Margo Maher

- Mrs. Maher reported that the Drama Club will begin again this spring and summer.
- The computer class for senior citizens will begin shortly.
- The Chess Club was a great success and the winners of the tournaments will be recognized at the next Board of Education meeting.

## Old Business

- The flyers from the Growing Stage have been distributed via the Friday Folders after receiving the proper paperwork indicating that they are a non-profit organization.

## New Business

- Mrs. Hernandez indicated that the school web page needs some attention. Some of the printouts are in need of updating. Ernest Palestis will follow up.

## CLOSED SESSION

On the motion of Mary Jo Walilko, seconded by Steve Hoh at 8:34 PM, the Board approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A.10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss: (select one or more)

- 1) *a matter rendered confidential by federal or state law*
- 2) *a matter in which release of information would impair the right to receive government funds*
- 3) *material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy*
- 4) ***a collective bargaining agreement and/or negotiations related to it***
- 5) *a matter involving the purchase, lease, or acquisition of real property with public funds*
- 6) *protection of public safety and property and/or investigations of possible violations or violations of law*
- 7) ***pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation and/or matters of attorney-client privilege***
- 8) *specific prospective or current employees unless all who could be adversely affected request an open session*
- 9) *deliberation after a public hearing that could result in a civil penalty or other loss;*

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

*Note: This closed session will include items in categories 4 and 7. It may be adjourned while business is conducted in public then reconvened after public business has been completed.*

#### RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

On the motion of Mary Jo Walilko, seconded by Caryn Battaglia at 8:51PM, the Board returned to the regular session meeting.

Public Discussion-None

#### ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mary Jo Walilko, seconded by Caryn Battaglia, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:53PM.

Roll Call Vote-All Present Voting Yes-Motion Carried