

On March 28, 2011 the Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Spring-Ford Area School District was called to order at 7:50 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Spring-Ford High School with the following in attendance:

Region I: Bernard F. Pettit and David R. Shafer
Region II: Clara M. Gudolonis, Julie A. Mullin and Donna L. Williams
Region III: Mark P. Dehnert and Thomas J. DiBello
Presiding Officer: Joseph P. Ciresi
Superintendent: Dr. Marsha R. Hurda
Business Manager: Timothy Anspach
Solicitor: Marc Davis, Esq.
Student Rep.: Taylor Daily

Board President, Mr. Ciresi, opened the meeting with the call to order, roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Ciresi informed the public that the Spring-Ford Area School District will present a program called "Healthy Relationships: Recognizing Teen Dating Violence" on April 14 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the 9th Grade Center. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for registration and light refreshments. The program will focus on exploring the dynamics, patterns and red flags of unhealthy relationships, the legal aspects of teen dating violence, and information about local programs and services offering help to victims of abuse. Mr. Ciresi invited Spring-Ford Area School District residents concerned about budgetary concerns to reach out to area lawmakers about our crisis. A form letter has been drafted and posted on our website, www.spring-ford.net. Residents will be able to download the letter, sign it and send it to their area lawmakers to make sure our voice is heard in Harrisburg. Mr. Ciresi stated that we have a lot of people present this evening and the Board would like to get everyone's comments in who would like to comment. He asked that those choosing to speak limit their comments to 2-3 minutes and keep them as civil as possible.

I. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mr. Pettit asked if the Board could take New Personnel, Letter "I" out of turn so that he could make a motion to table this item, Mrs. Mullin seconded the motion. The motion to table Letter "I" did not pass by a vote of 3-5 with Mrs. Williams, Mr. Dehnert, Mr. Shafer, Mr. DiBello and Ms. Gudolonis voting no.

Kathleen Bryant, Upper Providence Township, stated that she has been coming to Spring-Ford Board meetings since the mid 1980's, spent over 15 years as a reporter for the Collegeville Independent and all of that time as an interested resident and parent of soon to be 22 and 25 year old young men. Ms. Bryant stated that what is happening right now in the district very much concerns her very much as a person who truly believes in public education. Ms. Bryant commented that there are 55 names on the agenda tonight, 55 families who will

be directly affected whether the Board votes tonight or next month and she finds this extremely troubling. Ms. Bryant stated that the retirements of Dr. Hurda and Dr. Donahue are a tremendous loss to the school district. Ms. Bryant said that the school district is paying a firm based in St. Louis, Missouri to find another superintendent and this is a waste of money. Ms. Bryant said the cuts tonight are in regards to custodians and classroom aides. Ms. Bryant stated that any aides cut from the classroom not only affects special education students but also children in regular education as well in terms of learning and behavior and she feels this is a mistake. She urged every resident of Spring-Ford to start looking at the minutes of the meetings to see what has been discussed over the many months. Ms. Bryant said so much time is wasted talking about subjects such as keeping a former school board member from running on our track. Ms. Bryant stated that more time has been devoted to that ridiculous, stupid subject than the imminent cuts we face in our district and that is wrong. Ms. Bryant asked one of the police officers present tonight if they had a problem with the person running on the track and they said no so if they do not have a problem with it, if the gym teachers do not have a problem with it, it's not a problem. Ms. Bryant stated we need to talk about the real problems affecting our children in this district and that is the loss of their educational chances as this is what is going to happen if you cut classroom aides, if you hire outside day laborers to come into your school and clean our schools. Ms. Bryant said this is a mistake and she is certain that Dr. Hurda and Dr. Donahue do not want that to happen so let us instruct our school board members that we voted for to do what is in the best interest of the parents, the families, the retirees, and the renters in this district instead of arguing about petty nonsense and people running on the track.

Dr. Hurda responded that she does not think there has been a more difficult time in our district than what we are experiencing now. We have a near \$12 million deficit and that is a huge gap that we need to find a way to fill. Dr. Hurda stated that she has been in the district 12 years and in looking out over the audience she knows almost every person and their families and it is never a pleasant thing when you do anything that involves personnel which ultimately involves families and a major change in people's lives. Dr. Hurda commented that we are however dealing with the largest deficit we have ever faced. We have talked about the reasons over and over again, the major one being the loss of revenue due to reassessment of major commercial properties and this is money that is gone and will never be made up. Dr. Hurda said that no matter what the decisions are they will be and they are extremely painful not only for those in the audience but for everyone sitting around the table as well. Dr. Hurda stated that no one wants this situation and if we could wish it away we would but it is what it is and we have to make some tough decisions. Dr. Hurda commented that having said that, this is not something we want to recommend, it is something we may have to do in order to get through this crisis. Dr. Hurda stated that in response to Ms. Bryant, her decisions and recommendations have been and will continue to be about what is in the best interest of kids.

Jennifer Riordan, Spring City Borough, stated that she is concerned with the program cuts on the agenda, particularly Personnel, Letter F concerning the demotion of an administrator. Ms. Riordan stated that it is her understanding that this motion concerns the Spring City Principal, her duties as the Staff Development Supervisor and her time at Spring City being cut down to 2.5 days per week. Dr. Hurda replied that last week we talked about this motion and the fact that the word demotion is totally misrepresentative of what is actually occurring as Dr. Morrill has done a fine job. Dr. Hurda stated that Dr. Morrill will serve as a part-time principal at Spring City Elementary and we are working on a plan that will ensure that the population of Spring City Elementary will be covered during the times that she is not present in the building. Dr. Hurda added that she can assure everyone that we will not and have not

ever had any building not covered by another principal during the absence of the sitting principal. Ms. Riordan stated if there is no plan at this time then she would like to see the motion tabled until there is a plan in place. Ms. Riordan said there are other things that can be cut before personnel and the programs that are listed on the attached resolutions 2011-06 through 2011-10 as these would affect all of the students and she implores the Board to try to keep these programs and find other areas to cut. Ms. Riordan stated that personnel and programs should be the last thing to be cut and suggested cutting bussing and after school extra-curricular activities. Ms. Riordan added that as far as classroom assistants and custodians are concerned, she knows that Spring City needs them as they are a big help to the Home and School Association. She asked that the Board please reconsider tabling these motions.

Mr. Ciresi asked Dr. Hurda to explain the program curtailments and alterations. Dr. Hurda explained that anytime there is a belief that you are going to alter or curtail a program you need to first bring it forward to the school board for approval. The school board has to approve that action which then gets sent to PDE for review and only then if approved can the program be altered. Dr. Hurda stated that after reassessing how we could alter some of the programs we looked at the Environmental Education piece which will now be incorporated into the K-4 Science Program, the Family Consumer Science (FCS) Program will be cut down to one teacher and therefore altered and not eliminated, and the 8th Grade Art Program which currently has two teachers will now have only one teacher so each 8th grade student will still receive FCS and Art instruction. The Literacy Coaching Program and the Math Coaching Program which had been funded through a grant by PDE is no longer funded so these Programs will be eliminated but the direct impact of this curtailment would be on teachers not students

Virginia Metzger, Spring City, questioned the Supervisor of Staff Development responsibilities and whether they were reassigned to someone else or have they been eliminated and Dr. Hurda replied that they have been eliminated. Ms. Metzger asked that all pay and benefits of all Spring-Ford personnel be available to every taxpayer as she does not have any idea what anyone's salary, perks, benefits, or their retirement is. Ms. Metzger stated that she feels that the community really needs to be informed before they can make a suggestion as to what they want to see in cuts of programs or positions. Ms. Metzger stated that the Board has to know that the district's tax base consists of an awful lot of retirees and unemployed. Ms. Metzger stated that she cannot support someone making \$140,000 - \$150,000 per year. Ms. Metzger questioned whether the Board had ever considered a volunteer program where those individuals work towards a tax credit which would help them somewhat with the tax base. Ms. Metzger stated that the deficit is out of hand but so is the state's deficit, the federal deficit and every other school district's deficit. Ms. Metzger commented that she does not feel that this can be brought to an acceptable solution to this insurmountable deficit until all salaries, benefits, retirements, etc., are brought to reasonable amounts. Ms. Metzger stated that the unions must relent or they need to be done away with and if anyone employed in the district demands or says that they are entitled to or threaten to strike then they must go somewhere else because the community cannot afford it.

Mr. Ciresi shared that Dr. Hurda had mentioned the \$12 million deficit that we have and our governor has given us a lot of the deficit we handle this year. Mr. Ciresi stated that education was decimated and it came on the back of everybody in this room including the Board Members sitting at the table who are all taxpayers and got on the Board for the reason of making sure every child had a fair education. Mr. Ciresi stated that SmithKline is asking for \$5.5 million back from the district but gave \$5 million to the children of Philadelphia. Mr.

Ciresi reported that the Board contacted the local press and even went as far as contacting the press in London to make sure the story ran there as that is where the SmithKline CEO comes from. Mr. Ciresi stated that Spring-Ford as a result of this assessment appeal stands to lose \$5 million and another \$1.9 million per year in taxes forever when that company is building a \$300 million facility in Philadelphia and telling us that our kids are not worth that \$1.9 million. Mr. Ciresi reported that the district offered to meet SmithKline part of the way on their assessment and asked them for forgiveness on the back taxes and they basically told us they would see us in court. Mr. Ciresi stated that this is one company out of all of the companies in Spring-Ford and there are others who are large companies and having been coming forward little by little with assessment appeals.

Mr. Dehnert commented that in front of every Board Member tonight is a letter he drafted which appeals directly to the CEO of GlaxoSmithKline and tells him the impact he has directly on the school district which not only affects the taxpayers here but the children and also the employees of GlaxoSmithKline who may have children in the district. Mr. Dehnert stated that he feels we must make a personal appeal to him so that he understands what is taking place because he may not be aware of what SmithKline is doing to the district. Mr. Dehnert commented that if SmithKline is willing to give \$5 million to Philadelphia then they should be willing to give to Spring-Ford as well.

Mr. Ciresi informed the public that there will be a letter on the website for residents to send out to local corporations who have requested reassessments as well as the addresses of the CEO's of those companies. Mr. Dehnert asked if all the Board was in favor of signing the letter and everyone indicated their approval.

Jill Dreibelbis, Spring City, commented that there is a lot going on that seems out of our control. She stated that in all of the businesses she has worked for she has found that corporations work better if the person at the top sets the example and she is disappointed that a raise was accepted by Dr. Hurda at the end of last year. Mr. Dehnert replied that Dr. Hurda turned down the raise and Dr. Hurda confirmed that she had given the raise back the past two years. Ms. Dreibelbis apologized and thanked Dr. Hurda for setting that example.

Nancy Birch, Royersford, reported that last year SmithKline's gross income was approximately \$28 billion and their net income was approximately \$1.6 billion. Ms. Birch stated that she was so shocked by these numbers that she actually had to call her stock broker to find out that there were in fact six zeroes at the end. Ms. Birch stated that this is gluttony at a whole new level and it will affect everyone in the room. Ms. Birch commented that she likes the Board's suggestion of protesting to let them know how we feel especially since they have not dropped their drug prices but want us to drop their real estate prices. Ms. Birch stated that she is an instructional assistant and has worked here for 13 years but the district cannot close the budget on the backs of the people who work for the district. Ms. Birch commented that district buildings that look like the Taj Mahal are very upsetting as is the resurfacing of tennis courts. She indicated that we need to get back to basics and if that means we have to stop some of the grandiose things going on in the district then it is time to stop. Ms. Birch stated that education is about educating and right now we might have to step back and say that we cannot afford all of the extras and maybe hopefully someday soon we will be able to again.

Mary Dehnert, Limerick, asked for clarification for the public on what the amount of money that is in the Capital Funds could be used for as well as the money in the rest of the budget as prior to about 2 years ago she thought all money could be used for anything we needed it for. Mr. Davis clarified that there are a number of different capital funds and there is not a

simple answer but essentially there are two sets of significant capital funds. The first is the money left over in the bond fund from the high school project and those funds can be used for capital projects. Mr. Davis explained that capital projects are those that have a life expectancy longer than the bond which is about 10 years so you would have to have a life expectancy in a capital project of 125% - 150% on average. Mr. Davis reported that there was also a fund created in 1990 and modified 1994 by the School Board which Mr. Davis called a statutory capital reserve fund and this fund is limited in expenditures essentially for capital items including school busses and deferred maintenance. Mr. Davis stated that lastly there are other reserve funds that are not pure capital funds and any money held in reserve can be used for any purpose the School Board deems appropriate and necessary. Mr. Davis summarized by saying the general rule is that capital funds must be used for capital projects.

Carol Wetzel, Limerick Township, stated that with regards to the instructional assistant positions that are being eliminated some are classroom assistants and some are one on ones and she questioned how is the district is going to replace some of those people if the staff is no longer here. Dr. Hurda responded that the special education supervisors have reviewed the IEP's of all the students who require assistants and have certainly looked at a way that they will be able to continue to provide that assistance as per anyone's IEP. Dr. Hurda stated that there are classroom assistants and library assistants included in the list so the reduction of 34 positions will certainly require our special education supervisors to restructure the way the total group has been used. Dr. Hurda continued by saying that any student that has one on one assistance in their IEP we will certainly continue to support this as it is something that is mandated by federal and state law. Ms. Wetzel asked about co-teaching saying she thought that the assistants were used more with this and Mrs. Frankel replied that they were always in the classrooms for six class periods a day so they are not necessarily being used more but rather in a different way. Ms. Wetzel asked if this reduction in staff would mean that the class would lose the extra help that they were getting and Dr. Hurda replied that she suspects that what will happen everywhere is that we will be doing more with less.

Carol DiFrancesco, Limerick Township, said that she understands it is a difficult job and wonders how it will be possible with less staff to stay in compliance with student IEP's. Dr. Hurda replied that IEP's are state mandated and she would never advocate that we do anything that would violate federal or state law. Dr. Hurda said she has total and complete confidence in the three special education supervisors who have met and spent countless hours looking at all of this and there has not been nor will there be, through July 15th when she is no longer here, any discussion about doing anything that will not meet the letter of the law. Dr. Hurda commented that we will be doing more with less and the special education supervisors will have to come forward with a plan on how to do that. Ms. DiFrancesco asked if the board knows what is involved here and stated that she feels like the assistants and the teachers are needed and this is a big mistake as the children will be the ones to suffer, this is the time that they need all the assistance they are getting. Ms. DiFrancesco asked if the Board has discussed this and if they understand it and IEP's. Ms. DiFrancesco stated that the last place to make cuts is with the staff.

Brenda Johnson, Spring City Borough, stated that she was curious with all the names on the agenda why the motion for Resolution 2011-05 regarding the demotion of an administrator does not show Dr. Morrill's name. Dr. Hurda replied that the motion is regarding Dr. Morrill and we are following what we need to do by law and Dr. Morrill's name is indicated in the resolution. Ms. Johnson pointed out that the agenda on the website does not include any attachments so she believes that Dr. Morrill's name should have been a part of the motion.

Ms. Johnson stated that she understands that Dr. Morrill may be there 2.5 days and a principal from another school may be there the other 2.5 days so there may be a different principal on Monday than on Tuesday and she feels that it is hard to have pride in a school as well as a good relationship between the principal and the parent. Ms. Johnson stated that she believes this is really going to affect the school and it sends a bad message to all the other bigger elementary schools in the district. Ms. Johnson asked how it was determined to eliminate one art teacher at the 8th grade level as opposed to another grade level and Dr. Hurda replied that they looked at the 7/8 grade art programs for consistency and determined that there was one 7th grade art teacher and two 8th grade art teachers and it was felt that we could curtail or alter the programs so that they mirror one another. Ms. Johnson asked if every student has the opportunity to participate in art and Dr. Hurda replied yes. Ms. Johnson expressed her concerns over the number of students in the art classes if there is only one teacher and stated that she feels that once something gets cut it will be much harder to get it back. Ms. Johnson said that she knows the staff and they have so much pride in their job, their building and their community. She commented that the schools are very clean and the custodians are very helpful and she wonders if the new company coming in will have the same pride. Ms. Johnson also expressed her concern over whether the outside contractor would have their clearances and have to jump through the same hoops that she does in order to be inside of the buildings.

Allan Schultz, Custodian, stated that he was just informed last week that he will be laid off as of June 30th but the agenda shows June 16th, Dr. Hurda clarified that the date is June 30, 2011. Mr. Schultz asked if they are laying-off by seniority with no recall rights why can they not have the opportunity to bump into another position if they have seniority. Mrs. Leiss replied that as far as positions they would bump into in terms of other support staff classifications instructional assistants need to be highly qualified as per PDE regulations and must receive training, the custodial staff is also trained in certain skills on the proper way of doing things as is the food service employees who must be trained as well. Mrs. Leiss stated that we cannot simply do a straight support staff seniority list and have people bumping all over the place so unfortunately what we needed to do was to go through each job type and go based on seniority that way. Mr. Davis apologized for the interruption and stated that it sounds like the questions deal with individual issues that might be better addressed one on one. Mr. Schultz stated that he was speaking for the whole custodial staff and his questions were about his benefits and his sick days and Mr. Davis replied that he understood but thought that it would be better to discuss this in a meeting with Mrs. Leiss. Mr. Ciresi asked if the questions are based on benefits, vacation and sick days and if he is eligible to receive them and Mr. Schultz replied yes and how does he receive them. Dr. Hurda responded that Mrs. Leiss has been working on a plan and she would like to talk to the Board about the distribution of sick days so don't think that they are not looking into this. Dr. Hurda stated that she hopes that within the next few days Mr. Schultz will be able to get some direction but she does not feel that Mrs. Leiss would be comfortable sharing that this evening since she has not discussed it with the Board as of yet. Dr. Hurda assured Mr. Schultz that Mrs. Leiss is trying to find a way to make sure that people are treated as fairly as they can possibly be. Dr. Hurda asked Mr. Schultz to trust her that this is in discussion and hopefully he will hear something not on June 30th but in the next couple weeks. Mr. Schultz stated that he was fine with this but his concern was that a lot of custodians have a lot of sick days to use up.

Chris Krumenacker, Limerick Township, asked for clarification on a few numbers, the first being the amount of the budget deficit, Dr. Hurda responded that the amount right now is \$11.8 million. Mr. Krumenacker asked if the SmithKline \$1.9 million is part of that deficit and Dr. Hurda replied yes and the back taxes we owe them although they are not included in the

budget numbers have been set aside because we will have to pay them once the litigation is settled. Mr. Krumenacker asked how much funding the state cut and Mr. Anspach replied \$2.155 million. Mr. Krumenacker asked what the School Board's plan is for making up all those deficits and Mr. Ciresi replied that tonight is the start of the beginning of the process of looking into what cuts can be made. Mr. Ciresi stated that the Board is looking into what money may be able to be transferred out of the reserve account into the budget to help balance it, the option of raising taxes which no one wants to do but it may be a necessary evil, and possibly instituting a pay to participate fee which is being addressed at the Extracurricular Committee meetings. Mr. Ciresi commented that the town hall meeting addressed some of this and as the Board moves along with the Finance Committee meetings they will be addressing these issues. Mr. Ciresi asked everyone to remember that the former Pennsylvania Governor never gave us a budget on time and last year a representative group from the district travelled to Harrisburg along with a few other districts to speak on behalf of the school districts in the state and as a result we ended up with an extra \$425,000 in the budget last year which will definitely be gone this year. Mr. Krumenacker asked if it was correct that the taxes would be going up 4.5% and Mr. Ciresi responded no that is not known as of yet. Mr. Ciresi replied that the tax index for this year is 1.4% and anything beyond this the district must apply for and be approved for exceptions and with those exceptions we could raise taxes up to 7.6% if we chose to. The state told us that we were not approved for all of the exceptions and as a result we can only raise taxes to 4.9% which will make up \$4 million in our budget deficit. Mr. Krumenacker stated that the district still has a deficit and serious cuts and Mr. Ciresi replied yes we still have a massive deficit.

Nancy Christman, commented that she works for the Early Intervention Program so she does IEP's for infants and toddlers. She stated that there are a lot of children with special needs heading this way and she asked how with the cuts to aides the district will be able to meet the needs of these students as well as help the teacher and the other students in the classroom. Ms. Christman stated that the aides are already shared right now as it is and she is not sure how much more you can stretch these aides. Ms. Christman commented that one of the things that is very upsetting is to look at some of the wasted resources we have and she does not want to say that one aide is worth more than another but how was it determined who was going to be cut. Mrs. Leiss replied that the decision was based purely by seniority. Ms. Christman asked if it had to be done that way and Mrs. Leiss replied at the advice of our solicitor that was how it was done. Ms. Christman stated that it is frustrating as a parent to have resources dwindle away as we have an instructional aide who is a certified teacher but is being paid as an instructional aide. This aide has been trained in a reading program and after years of trying to find a program that will work for her son they have finally found one. The school district already has something invested in this aide and the program being implemented is a program that has been found to be extremely effective with certain children and she has been told that the district would love to use this program with other children. Ms. Christman asked if the names on the list are set in stone or will there be changes or additions and Mr. Ciresi replied that until the Board votes there is nothing set in stone but once they are voted on then those names will be set but if an opportunity were to open up if someone were to retire or leave then this is the list we would go to for a replacement. Dr. Hurda commented that she understands what Ms. Christman is saying and she knows that we will be seeing an increase in Early Intervention students but the unfortunate part is that our special education subsidies from the state have remained flat which is really a loss of revenue because our special education costs have continued to increase. Dr. Hurda advocated for the community to talk to our legislators because this is certainly an area that needs to be addressed. Dr. Hurda reported that she testified at a legislative hearing with the Education Committee last year on this particular issue. Dr. Hurda reported that our Federal

IDEA Funds continue to be diminished so we are really between a rock and a hard place. Dr. Hurda stated we have to make a decision at some point and this is now March and there are many things that remain to be seen good, bad or indifferent between now and the time the budget has to be passed by June 30, 2011. Dr. Hurda added that the situation right now is not positive and on Friday she had an opportunity to talk to 2 of our state representatives who told her quite honestly that there will not be any more money coming from the state, it is what it is so, we must plan for that. Ms. Christman stated that as a parent it is frustrating because you have a program that a teacher is trained in and it has been found to help children on the spectrum and if you find a program that works it is sad to see that the teacher who has been trained on this is now being cut.

Mr. Ciresi added in regards to programs being cut we have been working towards a Keystone Exam System because the state told us that students would have to take a Keystone Exam and hit certain standards by a certain period of time. We are now being told that program will no longer exist under the current government after we have already invested money into this program. Mr. Ciresi stated that there has been a lot of money invested in areas that could have been invested in other areas.

Steve Henry, Upper Providence, questioned that on the agenda this evening is a lawsuit where we are paying a settlement which no one but the School Board knows what was paid out and then we are cutting all these aides so are we now opening the door for more lawsuits due to the cuts. Mr. Henry stated that his son has an IEP for an aide and that aide's name is on the agenda to be cut so he does not see how the Board can say we are getting rid of aides when students have IEP's. Dr. Hurda responded the special education supervisors will be making sure that any student who requires assistance in their IEP receives that assistance. Mr. Henry said his son has a one on one aide who is being cut so does that mean he will not have a one on one aide and Dr. Hurda replied no it does not mean that, it means that the one particular one on one aide may not be the one he has. Dr. Hurda repeated that if it is in a student's IEP we all realize it falls under state and federal law and Dr. Mason, Mrs. Frankel and Mr. Currie will make sure that students who have this in their IEP will receive it. Mr. Henry stated that many of the names on the agenda were working with students who have IEP's so what is going to change and Dr. Hurda replied that we did not eliminate all of our instructional assistants. Mr. Henry said he is making a point that he hopes the district does not have a whole lot of additional lawsuits next year.

Bryan Ewing, Upper Providence Township, asked how much the district will be saving with these cuts and Mr. Anspach replied on the custodial side you are saving \$1 million per year. Mr. Ewing asked if that amount included the contract for \$800,000 that you would be paying to the Philadelphia based company and Mr. Anspach answered yes. Mr. Ewing stated that you still have \$11 million to go and then asked why the district would be using an outside company and laying off people who are members of the community, whose children go to our schools and actually pay their taxes in this community. Mr. Ewing stated that Mr. Ciresi made a very passionate comment earlier about SmithKline donating \$5 million to Philadelphia Schools and not caring about Spring-Ford Schools but by paying an outside Philadelphia based company \$800,000 a year we are giving them \$1.6 million of our money that could be spent on our people, our community and our kids.

Sean Riegel, Limerick Township, commented that the mission statement says "committed to providing academic excellence in a safe learning environment, recognizing the diverse needs of all students" and he wondered why one of the first things cut was in special education when they are the kids who need it the most.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Mullin made a motion to approve Items A-B and Mr. Pettit seconded it. The motion passed 8-0.

A. The Board approved the February 14, 2011 Work Session minutes.

B. The Board approved the February 22, 2011 Board Meeting minutes.

III. BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Relations Joe Ciresi (As Needed)

Mr. Ciresi reported that the Community Relations Committee met on February 23, 2011 and discussed the format for the Town Hall Meeting, the format and schedule for the Board television program entitled "On Board", and the President's Council which is a meeting of all of the Home and School Presidents and Vice Presidents and the Booster Organizations to come together and discuss some of their concerns and how we can all work together. Mr. Ciresi informed everyone that another President's Council meeting will take place on March 31, 2011 here in the high school. Mr. Ciresi invited everyone present to come up to the podium at the end of the evening and sign the letter for SmithKline.

Curriculum Julie Mullin 2nd Mon. 7:30 p.m.

Mrs. Mullin reported that the Curriculum Committee met on Monday, March 14, 2011 and discussed textbooks which considering the budget restraints we are under it was agreed that the most dire need for books is for the Algebra textbooks so the decision was made to cut the textbook budget from \$327,000 down to \$50,000 which is needed for the Algebra course. Mrs. Mullin reported that the Committee also discussed the one year pause in the Keystone Exams which Mr. Ciresi alluded to earlier. The Committee talked about the Virtual Learning Network and that Spring-Ford teachers are working on templates so we can offer our own cyber-courses where students could earn a Spring-Ford diploma by participating here in our district and the cost would be significantly less than what we pay to send them out to other cyber-schools. Mrs. Mullin commented that the district has a partnership with Arcadia who will be offering courses to Spring-Ford and Perkiomen Valley Teachers at a reduced tuition for our staff in return for the classes being offered here at one of our facilities. The Committee also discussed the homework policies regarding holidays and making up work with regards to making sure there was a district-wide policy as opposed to building to building or teacher to teacher policies. Dr. Hurda expressed her thanks to Mrs. Mullin for being such a tireless advocate for doing what is right for students and her commitment to replacing textbooks and materials and she knows that it was painful for Mrs. Mullin to make the decision that at this point and time to scale back the purchase of new materials. Dr. Hurda stated that it is also important to note that it is prudent for us as a district to pause too because so much is changing in Harrisburg right now that we could literally purchase books that would be reflective of what students need to know for the Keystone Exams and we have no idea what is going to happen to those exams. Dr. Hurda again thanked Mrs. Mullin for being a strong advocate on behalf of student materials and unfortunately very difficult decisions that have to be made.

Extracurricular David Shafer 2nd Mon. 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Shafer reported that the Extracurricular Committee met on Monday, March 14, 2011 and there was only one item on the agenda which was activity fees. Mr. Shafer reported that Mr. McDaniel gave an updated report on what if any area school districts were utilizing activity fees and found that not a lot of significant number of Pennsylvania School Districts that to date have engaged in using an activity fee as a way to offset costs for extracurricular

activities. Mr. Shafer stated that several viable suggestions were made; one was to explore the possibility of having one fixed annual fee per family or perhaps per student for grades 7-12. Mr. Shafer clarified for the Board and the public that there are a lot of logistics that need to be discussed on making a decision like this and that is precisely what the Committee is focused on. Mr. Shafer stated that Mr. McDaniel attended the State Athletic Director's Conference last week and he will be reporting back to the Committee at their next meeting on this pay to play topic as it is anticipated that this will be a discussion item at that conference. Mr. Shafer advised parents and community members that their next meeting will be held on April 11th at 6:00 PM where this will topic will continue to be discussed.

Policy Donna Williams 1st Weds. 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Williams reported that the Policy Committee met on Wednesday, March 2, 2011 and there are 5 policies on the agenda this evening as a first reading all dealing with Programs and instruction, adoption of textbooks and graduation requirements. Mrs. Williams stated that with the advent of Kindle and children bringing in various things the Committee is going back to look at the electronic devices policy to rewrite it and then bring it back to the committee with recommendations from the administration next month. Mrs. Williams reported that they also looked at Policy 109, 110, 111 which deal with resource materials, instructional supplies and lesson plans and Mrs. Weller will review them and bring it back to the Committee with recommended changes. Mrs. Williams said that the Committee also looked at policies 112 and 113 concerning guidance counseling special education which come from the Department of Education and they will discuss these policies next month. The policy concerning the behavior support for students with disabilities will need to be revised so administration will get back to the Committee on this. The Committee did not have a chance to discuss Policy 707 regarding the use of facilities due to time constraints so this will be taken up at next month's meeting. The Committee will also look at Policy 707.1 concerning the community use of school grounds and playgrounds will be reviewed and discussion took place regarding who will enforce this policy. A recommendation was made for administration to obtain sample policies from PSBA on what type of usage other districts have during the day and bring this information back to the entire Board.

Property Tom DiBello 1st Weds. 6:00 p.m.

Mr. DiBello reported that the Property Committee met on March 2, 2011 and discussed the maintenance that is going on at the current ballfields which include the JV Boys' Baseball Field, and the High School Varsity Girls' Softball Field and the improvements that were discussed at previous meetings are either underway or will be underway once spring arrives. The Committee discussed the JV Softball Field at the High School and the waterline will be completed in the spring of 2011. Evans Elementary multi-purpose soccer field will be top dressed and overseeded to reestablish a playing surface and this field will be closed from the spring of 2011 until the spring of 2012. The High School Renovation Project was discussed and most of the work is done with the exception of the adjustment of some equipment and some punch list items. The 9th Grade Parking Lot Phase 2 drawings and approval have been completed and are being taken to the county for recording which allows us to enter into a contract to complete the work. Mr. DiBello stated that at this point we will get a schedule from the contractor so we will know the start date and all work will be coordinated with school district operations. There was previous discussion on purchasing two curtains for the main gym at the high school but in order to reduce some of the cost it was decided to purchase only one curtain for the middle of the gym so that the gym space could be better utilized during the school day. The Committee also discussed the replacement of the current scoreboard since it is coming to the end of its life and with the required maintenance cost it was decided to use some of the savings from the curtain project to purchase two new wall boards smaller in dimension that would be placed at the two ends of the

gym and utilized during games. The High School Chiller design process is complete and was sent out to bid with the work to be completed over the summer months. The Tennis Court resurfacing project will begin in the summer of 2011 in the warmer temperatures. The Committee also discussed possibly replacing the current High School sign with an LED sign but the goal is to try and find sponsorships for this before moving forward. Oaks Elementary School Automatic Temperature Control System Phase 1 punch list is about 90% complete and Phase 2 will start shortly. The Royersford Chiller bids are on the agenda for approval with the chillers being placed on the roof during spring break. Spring-Ford Youth Athletic Baseball drawings have been received by the district and the work on reconfiguring the land out by Spring City Elementary has been started. As per the Board's request a few meetings back each Board Member was given a packet of information for their review detailing all of the options for the 10th Avenue Project but at this point no other action is planned. Mr. DiBello reported that the Committee is looking at different options for the old district office and one option was to look into demolishing the building and then giving the contractor the rights to sell all the materials found within the building such as the bricks, copper and metal. Mr. DiBello stated that they also want to contact Upper Providence Township to see if they are interested in the building and he spoke with Bob Fieo, a Township Supervisor, and he is going to reach out to his board to see if there is any interest in the building. The district is still looking at solar panels and Mr. Cooper has been talking with 3 companies who are interested in working with us and each company has several different options for the district to consider such as utilizing the roof or the ground around the building including the parking lots. Mr. DiBello added that it is anticipated that the district could see a 10%-20% reduction on the electric bill from the building where the panels are installed. Mr. DiBello reported that there was conversation on what signs are posted and where at the various district buildings and Mr. Cooper brought his sign book which details every sign in the district and there was some concern brought up that some buildings did not have signs with "No Trespassing" verbiage so it was decided that every building will make sure that the signs are installed with the proper verbiage with the Board Policy as it reads today. Spring-Ford Youth Football who utilize the field over at the 7th Grade Center have put on hold the topsoil and reseeding project due to the winter but it is anticipated that this project will be started again in the early spring.

WCTS **Ciresi, Dressler, Mullin** **1st Mon. 7:00 p.m.**

Mr. Ciresi reported that the JOC Committee is hoping that there is progress on fixing the drainage issue at Sunset and Graterford Roads. Mr. Ciresi stated that they received the final agreement that was needed and it is supposed to be finished by May. Mrs. Williams reported that this afternoon a huge caterpillar was unloaded on Graterford Road in front of her house along with pipe so it appears they are getting ready to move forward with this.

IV. PERSONNEL

Mr. Ciresi asked that the Board vote on Items A-H leaving out Item I for right now. Mr. Ciresi pointed out the addition of Item A9, the resignation of Shirley Rhoads. Mr. Ciresi commented that Mrs. Rhoads will be retiring and has been a wonderful Assistant Business Manager. He stated that for the time he has been in the district as a Board Member she has been great to work with, a straight shooter, will be missed from the Board perspective and he knows that Mr. Anspach will miss her dearly. Mr. Ciresi said that Mrs. Rhoads will have time to spend with her family which he knows she is looking forward to but he is sure that she will visit.

A. Resignations:

Mrs. Mullin made a motion to approve items A-H and Mr. Pettit seconded it. The motion passed 8-0.

1. **Kathleen Anderson**, Brooke; Food Service, effective March 25, 2011.
2. **Denise Johnston**, High School; Assistant Lacrosse Coach, effective February 28, 2011.
3. **Joseph D'Orazio**, 7th Grade Center; 7th Grade Baseball (.5 contract), effective February 24, 2011.
4. **Michael Kalinowski**, Brooke; Support Technician, effective March 25, 2011.
5. **Margaret Paladino**, 5/6th Grade Center; Elementary Teacher, for the purpose of retirement, effective June 30, 2011.
6. **George Powell Jr.**, Brooke Elementary School; Head Custodian, for the purpose of retirement, effective February 23, 2011.
7. **Adam Swavely**, High School; 7th Grade Baseball (.5 contract), effective February 24, 2011.

New Resignation:

8. **Judy E. Kuhns**, District Office; Technology Integration Specialist, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective with the last work day, June 30, 2011.
9. **Shirley A. Rhoads**, District Office; Assistant Business Manager, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective with the last work day, June 30, 2011.

B. Leaves of Absence:

1. **Kelly A. Artzerounian**, High School; Mathematics Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective tentatively May 14, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.
2. **Courtney J. Briddes**, Upper Providence Elementary School; Instructional Assistant, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective March 22, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.
3. **Julie R. Davidheiser**, 5/6th Grade Center; Elementary Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective March 17, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.
4. **William Franz**, Upper Providence Elementary School; Custodian, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective February 10, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.

5. **Shelley Glossner**, 7th Grade Center; Science Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective tentatively May 25, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.
6. **Angela Grube**, Oaks Elementary School; Kindergarten Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective tentatively April 28, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.
7. **Kevin J. Murphy**, 5/6th Grade Center; Instructional Assistant, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective January 14, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.

New Leaves of Absence

8. **Mary Kae Coy**, Limerick Elementary School; Instructional Assistant, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective March 8, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve weeks.
9. **Brigitte Diaz**, Oaks Elementary School; Elementary Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective tentatively June 22, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve weeks.
10. **Stephanie Frantz**, Evans Elementary School; Elementary Teacher, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective March 7, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve weeks.
11. **Ellen T. Grecco**, Oaks Elementary School; Instructional Assistant, for a Leave of Absence in accordance with Board Policy, effective March 3, 2011 for up to a maximum of twelve weeks.

C. Extra-Curricular Contracts: High School

1. **Meghan Noecker**, Assistant Track Coach, \$3,991
2. **Amy Short**, Head Lacrosse Coach, Girls, \$5,322
3. **Ryan Souder**, 9th Grade Head Baseball Coach, \$3,186
4. **Kaycee Wilkie**, Assistant Cheerleading Coach (Winter) \$2,555

New Extra-Curricular Contracts: High School

5. **Joseph Perry**, Theater Orchestra Director, \$1,104
6. **Elaine Ruppert**, Assistant Lacrosse Coach – Girls, \$3,991

D. Professional Staff Substitutes:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Katie Hennessey | Early Child and Elementary Education |
| 2. Melissa Hilbert | English |
| 3. Angela O'Donnell | Elementary |
| 4. Blake Sim | Social Studies |
| 5. Lauren Witts | Elementary and Special Education |

New Professional Staff Substitutes:

- 6. **Lauren Grevera** Elementary Education
- 7. **Ryan McGee** Health & Physical Education

E. Support Staff Substitute:

- 1. **Lori A. Hoffecker** Food Service

F. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-05** regarding the demotion of an administrator, effective at the close of business on June 30, 2011.

NEW PERSONNEL ITEMS

G. Extra-Curricular Contracts: Middle School

- 1. **Joseph D’Orazio**, 7th Grade Head Baseball Coach, \$2,772
- 2. **Nick Lemuell**, 7/8th Grade Assistant Track Coach, \$2,772
- 3. **Adam Swavely**, 8th Grade Head Baseball Coach, \$2,772

H. Professional Staff Substitutes

- 1. **Jennifer Schulze** Elementary Education
Special Education, Reading Specialist
- 2. **Hayley Joiner** English
- 3. **Courtney White** Elementary Education
Mid-Level Mathematics, Mid-Level Science

Dr. Hurda corrected Letter I saying the date for the custodial staff would be June 30, 2011 and the date for the instructional assistants would be June 16, 2011. Mr. Dehnert made a motion for Letter I and Mrs. Williams seconded it.

Mrs. Mullin stated that she just wanted to make it clear that motion for the names on the list has nothing to do with job performance. Dr. Hurda said she is glad that Mrs. Mullin brought that up and she thinks that one of the most difficult things we have to do as part of this process is to look at everyone in the same way and every single person here is, has been and will continue to be a valued employee. Dr. Hurda said it is with great difficulty that we made this motion and she believes she shares the Board’s feelings when she says this.

Mr. Pettit said he understands the situation with the district as we are on really hard times but with that being said he is totally unhappy that this is coming down to custodians and the assistants in the classroom. He wished there were other ways to do this and he cannot agree to this because they are the backbone of this district.

The motion passed 5-3 with Mr. Pettit, Mrs. Mullin and Mr. Ciresi voting no.

I. Effective as of the close of business on June 16, 2011, the following positions shall be eliminated and the following individuals shall be terminated:

- George M. Versak – Custodian
- Leonard Young – Custodian

Natividad Salamone – Custodian
Clyde Kring – Custodian
Mary E. Fletcher – Custodian
June M. Perry – Custodian
Glenn A. Helmbold – Custodian
Michael T. Heimbach – Custodian
Tina Natalie – Custodian
Brad Armentrout – Custodian
William H. Rowe, Jr. – Custodian
Sally Ann Whitton – Custodian
Karl A. Shoemaker – Custodian
Alan T. Schultz – Custodian
Laura M. Mohn – Custodian
Anthony Vassallo – Custodian
Anthony L. Mungin, Jr. – Custodian
Kenneth F. Hemerka – Custodian
James Brobst – Custodian
Ronald Shankweiler – Custodian
Elaine Leeser – Custodian
Arnold M. Koehler, III – Custodian
Ralph N. Finkbinder, Jr. – Custodian
John C. Evans – Custodian
Rachel Weller – Instructional Assistant
Patricia A. Young – Instructional Assistant
Cynthia T. Watras – Instructional Assistant
Kevin Murphy – Instructional Assistant
Alicia M. Spatzer - Instructional Assistant
Timothy J. Hunsberger - Instructional Assistant
Joan Clare Callow - Instructional Assistant
Debra Anne Swahl - Instructional Assistant
Tiffany M. Landis - Instructional Assistant
Randall W. Seip - Instructional Assistant
Melanie A. Pierce - Instructional Assistant
Lori A. Tornetta - Instructional Assistant
Marilyn E. Rodgers - Instructional Assistant
Robin L. Riegel - Instructional Assistant
Audrey S. Mast - Instructional Assistant
Kathleen Lampmann - Instructional Assistant
Randy Tobin - Instructional Assistant
Lori Tusavitz - Instructional Assistant
Colleen Kriebel - Instructional Assistant
Kira T. Popky - Instructional Assistant
Teresa W. Poling - Instructional Assistant
Janet T. Copenhaver - Instructional Assistant
Amanda Tamaki - Instructional Assistant
Wendy Monte - Instructional Assistant
Debra V. Liney - Instructional Assistant
Angela DeRosato - Instructional Assistant
Kathy Deery - Instructional Assistant
Bruce Cartwright - Instructional Assistant
Matthew Scott Armentrout - Instructional Assistant

Steven J. Anspach – Instructional Assistant
 Jeannie Funk - Technology Support Assistant

V. FINANCE

Mr. DiBello asked that Item M9 be separated. Mr. Dehnert made motion to approve Items A-P with the exception of M9 and Mrs. Mullin seconded it. The motion passed 8-0.

***DENOTES NEW PAYMENTS SINCE THE WORK SESSION**

A. The Board approved payment for the following invoices for the month of **MARCH** in connection with the **SERIES A of G.O.B. 2007:**

1. SENIOR HIGH- ALTERATION & ADDITIONS

AAA Sheet Metal Inc.	Backdraft Dampers (3)	\$	792.00
A.G. Mauro Company	Hardware	\$	58.75
A & L Doors Inc.	Supplies	\$	100.00
Anixter Inc.	Miscellaneous Supplies	\$	55.62
Berkshire Systems Inc.	Professional Services	\$	500.00
EI Associates	Professional Services	\$	36.33
Goshen Mechanical Inc.	Applic. #20- HVAC Contractor	\$	27,376.15
Goshen Mechanical Inc.	Applic. #21- HVAC Contractor	\$	8,196.60
iSIGN	Signage	\$	100.00
MBR Construction Ser.	Applic. #21- Electric Contractor	\$	55,534.00
Precision Door Company	ERG-10 Security Gate	\$	7,200.00
Recreation Resource Inc.	Sports Cover/Pads-Safety Issue	\$	189.00
Al Swanson Ceramic Tile	Install Base in Hall	\$	350.00
UPS Store	Drawing Copies (2 Inv.)	\$	317.50
*APEX Plumbing & Heat	Applic. # 15- Plumbing Contr.	\$	53,231.88
*Comstar Supply, Inc.	Supplies (2 Inv.)	\$	368.00
*Denney Electric Supply	Misc. Supplies	\$	771.33
*Fresh Metered Concrete	Sidewalk/Band Room Door	\$	560.50
	TOTAL	\$	155,737.66

2. 9th GRADE CENTER PARKING LOT

Bursich Associates	Professional Services	\$	1,263.65
Limerick Township	Professional Services	\$	70.50
	TOTAL	\$	1,334.15

3. SENIOR HIGH – CHILLER PROJECT

Desmond Baker & Assoc	Professional Services	\$	4,050.00
	TOTAL	\$	4,050.00

4. *UPPER PROVIDENCE ELEMENTARY – DISHWASHER REPAIR

*Clark Food Service Eq.	Booster Heater/Dishwasher	\$	2,489.30
	TOTAL	\$	2,489.30

B. The Board approved payment for the following invoices for the month of **MARCH**, in connection with the **CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT – Fund 22:**

1. SUKONIK/GREENSTEIN CONDEMNATION

Fox Rothschild LLP	Professional Services	\$	962.00
	TOTAL	\$	962.00

- C. The Board approved next month's payroll, taxes, all benefits, transportation contracts, IU contracts, Vo-Tech payments, debt service payments, utility bills, maintenance agreements, copier leases, equipment maintenance, Federal grants, insurance, and discounted invoices.
- D. Checks:
- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. <u>Weekly Checks prior to Work Session</u> | |
| <u>February</u> | |
| Check No. 140660 – 140707 | \$ 180,443.67 |
| <u>March</u> | |
| Check No. 140708 – 140951 | \$1,319,964.66 |
| 2. <u>Weekly Checks prior to Board Meeting</u> | |
| Check No. 140952 - 140955 | \$ 3,877.31 |
| Check No. 141057 – 141148 | \$ 196,440.25 |
| 3. <u>Board Checks held for approval</u> | |
| Check No. 140956 - 141056 | \$ 167,524.45 |
| 4. <u>Athletic Fund</u> | |
| <u>February</u> | |
| Check No. 303285 – 303336 | \$ 23,627.38 |
- E. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-01** regarding the **Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Administrative Services Budget** for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012.
- F. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-02** regarding the **Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development Services Budget** for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012.
- G. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-03** regarding the **Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Technology and Information Services Budget** for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012.
- H. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-04** regarding the **Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Legislative Services and Grant Development Budget** for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012.
- I. The Board approved a confidential settlement and release agreement with the parents of a special education student and the authorization of payment #2011-01 in full satisfaction of claims, attorney's fees and costs.
- J. The Board approved a five (5) year transportation contract (2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16) with Levy School Bus Company based on a Request for Proposal (RFP) and additional follow-up negotiations. The overall aggregate cost increase for the five years is \$362,146 or an average change of 1.62% over the five years.

- K. The Board approved entering into a five-year contract with IKON to provide an on-site service specialist at the district's duplication center located in Upper Providence Elementary School. In addition, a software solution called TRAC Solution (Trend Reporting, Analysis & Communication System) will be utilized to improve the workflow and optimize costs from the current manual forms approval to a digital tracking system. The cost per month commencing on April 15, 2011 will be four thousand three hundred thirteen dollars (\$4,313.00) and will increase 3% every year. The total cost for the first year will be fifty-one thousand seven hundred fifty-six dollars (\$51,756.00).
- L. The Board approved the **Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Special Education Cost Plan** for the 2011-2012 school year for the Spring-Ford Area School District in the amount \$982,073.47. This represents a decrease of \$127,665.90 from last year's plan.
- M. The Board approved the following **independent contracts**:
1. **Bon Homie Daily Living Center – Limerick, PA.** Provide transition services for a special needs student as per the IEP. Services will be provided for seventeen (17) days at a rate of fifty-seven dollars (\$57.00) per day. Funding will be paid from the 2010-2011 Special Education Budget and shall not exceed nine hundred sixty-nine dollars (\$969.00).
 2. **Gateway Employment Resources, Inc. – Limerick, PA.** Provide community based transition work assessment services for a special needs student as per the IEP. Services will be provided for sixty-five (65) hours at a rate of fifty-five dollars (\$55.00) per hour. Funding will be paid from the 2011-2012 Special Education Budget and shall not exceed three thousand five hundred seventy-five dollars (\$3,575.00).
 3. **Ken-Crest Services – Plymouth Meeting, PA.** Provide transition workshop experiences for two special needs student as per their IEPs. Services will be provided for a total of forty-five (45) days, fifteen (15) days for one student and thirty (30) days for the other student, at a rate of one hundred nine dollars and ninety-two cents (\$109.92) per day. Funding will be paid from the 2010-2011 Special Education Budget and shall not exceed four thousand nine hundred forty-six dollars and forty cents (\$4,946.40).
 4. **Art's Alive – Spring City, PA.** Provide an "Artist in Residence Program" at Limerick Elementary School for third grade students. Students along with a professional artist in residence will design and create two artistic panels for Limerick's outdoor classroom. Funding will be paid from EITC Grant Funds (\$1,800.00) and the Limerick Home and School League (\$200.00) and shall not exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00).
 5. **Steven Conway/Montgomery County SPCA – Conshohocken, PA.** Provide assemblies on April 4 and April 6, 2011 entitled "Basic Pet Care" for kindergarten students at Upper Providence Elementary. There is no charge to the district for these assemblies.
 6. **Magic by Taddo, LLC – Huntingdon Valley, PA.** Provide two (2) assemblies entitled "The Magic of Nutrition" for students at Royersford Elementary on April 19, 2011. Funding will be paid from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Grant and shall not exceed nine hundred dollars (\$900.00).

7. **John McGranaghan – Flourtown, PA.** Provide three (3) assemblies in conjunction with “Author Day” for students at Evans Elementary School. There is no charge to the district for these assemblies.
8. **Link Davis – Schwenksville, PA.** Provide thirty (30) presentations for the second grade classes at all district elementary schools in conjunction with each school’s completion of the butterfly unit. Funding will be paid from the 2010-2011 Elementary Science Budget and shall not exceed sixty dollars (\$60.00) per session for a total of one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1,800.00).

Mr. DiBello asked that Item M9 be tabled so that the Board can evaluate other options. Mrs. Williams seconded the motion. The motion to table passed 8-0.

9. **Jani-King – Philadelphia, PA .** Provide contracted custodial services to clean buildings and ensure that they are ready to open the next school day. This contract will be for a two year term with the option of a third year and will result in a reduction in staff of approximately 25-30 custodians to be based upon seniority. Funding will be paid from the 2011-2012 General Fund and shall not exceed seven hundred ninety-five thousand two hundred twelve dollars (\$795,212.00) per year for the first two years.

NEW INDEPENDENT CONTRACTS

10. **TheraPlay, Inc. – West Chester, PA.** Provide Extended School Year services for a special needs student as per the IEP. Speech Therapy services will be provided for twelve (12) sessions and Physical Therapy services will be provided for six (6) sessions at a rate of eighty-five dollars (\$85.00) per session. Funding will be paid from the 2011-2012 Special Education IDEA funds and shall not exceed one thousand five hundred thirty dollars (\$1,530.00).
11. **HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy – Philadelphia, PA.** Provide Extended School Year services for a special needs student as per the IEP. Services will be provided for twenty-four (24) days at a rate of four hundred forty-eight dollars (\$448.00) per day. Funding will be paid from the 2011-2012 Special Education IDEA funds and shall not exceed ten thousand seven hundred fifty-two dollars (\$10,752.00).
12. **Academic Entertainment, Inc. – Snohomish, WA.** Provide an assembly entitled “Got Character” for students at Evans Elementary School. Funding will be paid by the 2010-2011 Evans Elementary Home and School Association and shall not exceed six hundred forty-five dollars (\$645.00).
13. **Art’s Alive – Spring City, PA.** Provide an “Artist in Residence Program” at the 7th Grade Center for the art classes. Students along with a professional artist in residence will design and create a mosaic wall mural to surround the hallway door opening off the front lobby. Funding will be split between the Middle School Home and School Association (\$3,240.00) and the 7th Grade Activities Account (\$3,240.00) and shall not exceed six thousand four hundred eighty dollars (\$6,480.00).

- B. The Board approved a district speech therapist to conduct pre-tests for approximately twenty-five (25) students as required by the Fast ForWord 2011 Summer Program. The therapist will be paid at the contractual rate of thirty dollars (\$30.00) per hour. Funding will be paid from the 2010-2011 Special Education IDEA Funds and shall not exceed seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00).
- C. The Board approved the Fast ForWord 2011 Summer Program to be held at the Intermediate 5/6 Center for twenty-four (24) days beginning Monday, June 27 through Friday July 29, 2011 (no classes Monday, July 4, 2011). The cost to students not utilizing Fast ForWord as part of their ESY Program will be \$150.00. Two (2) additional days for the teachers and instructional assistants will be needed for training and preparation before the start of the program and for completion of reports after the program. Funding will come from the tuition collected and supplemented if necessary from the 2011-2012 Curriculum and Instruction Budget. Total costs shall not exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00).
- D. The Board approved the Cool School Program. This program will be held at Upper Providence Elementary School from June 27 through July 1 and July 11 through July 22, 2011. This program is open to all elementary students. Two sessions will be held each day from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. The reading and math classes will operate from June 27 through July 8 and July 11 through July 22, 2011. Approximately 40 teachers will instruct the courses and their reimbursement will be at the contract-established rate of \$30.00 per hour. **There will be no cost to the district** as all expenses will be covered by the student tuition fees of \$65.00 per course for residents and \$75.00 per course for non-residents.
- E. The Board approved the Summer Instrumental Program for grades 4-12, under the direction of Ms. Kris Noel Jennings, Music Department Chair, to be held at the Intermediate 5/6 Center. The program would run for 5 weeks, in conjunction with the district's summer school program, from Monday, June 27 through Friday, July 29, 2011 (no classes Monday, July 4, 2011). Weekly lessons will be offered to students on a tuition basis, **there will be no cost to the school district**. The cost would be \$16.50 per half hour private lesson. All tuition money that is collected would be submitted to the Business Office and the teachers would be paid at the current summer school salary rate of \$30.00 per hour plus benefits.
- F. The Board approved the Summer Strings Program to be held at the Intermediate 5/6 Center for grades 4-10. The program would run for 5 weeks, in conjunction with the district summer school program, from Monday, June 27 through Friday, July 29, 2011 (no classes Monday, July 4, 2011). Weekly lessons will be offered to students on a tuition basis, **there will be no cost to the school district**. The cost would be \$16.50 per half hour private lesson. All tuition money that is collected would be submitted to the Business Office and the teachers would be paid at the current summer school salary rate of \$30.00 per hour plus benefits.
- G. The Board approved Camp Invention. Camp Invention is a hands-on, creativity and science summer camp for elementary students that will run from 6/27/11 – 7/01/11. This camp will be held at Brooke Elementary School. These programs will be run at **no cost to the district**.

New Programming and Curriculum

- H. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-06** regarding the **Curtailment of the Elementary (K-4) Environmental Education Program** effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2011 pending official approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- I. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-07** regarding the **Alteration of the Middle School (7-8) Family Consumer Science Program** effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2011 pending official approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- J. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-08** regarding the **Alteration of the Middle School (8) Art Program** effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2011 pending official approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- K. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-09** regarding the **Curtailment of the Literacy Coaching Program** effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2011 pending official approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- L. The Board approved **Resolution #2011-10** regarding the **Curtailment of the Math Coaching Program** effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2011 pending official approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.

VII. PROPERTY

Mr. Dehnert asked that Item G be separated. Mrs. Mullin made a motion to approve Items A-F and Mr. Pettit seconded it. The motion passed 8-0.

- A. The Board approved a **DEDUCT** Change order H-1 (High School Addition Project – Goshen Mechanical, Inc.) in the amount of **(\$18,136.00)** for unused equipment.
- B. The Board approved awarding a contract for the HVAC – 280 Ton Microprocessor Controlled Liquid Chiller at the High School to the lowest qualified Bidder, Tozour Trane, rejecting all other bids. Funding will come from the High School Construction Account and shall not exceed \$225,000.00.
- C. The Board approved awarding a contract for the installation of a center drop curtain in the main gym at the High School for a cost not to exceed \$11,200.00 to the lowest qualified bidder, Knight Athletics, rejecting all other bids. Two Datkronics Scoreboards will be installed for a total cost not to exceed \$9,895.00. Funding will come from the High School Construction Account and shall not exceed \$21,095.00.
- D. The Board approved seeking bids and awarding a contract for filters to maintain indoor air quality throughout the school district. Funding will come from the 2011-2012 General Fund – Maintenance Budget.
- E. The Board approved seeking bids and awarding a contract for miscellaneous concrete, paving, curbing and sidewalk repairs district-wide to the lowest responsible bidder, based upon a per square yard price. Funding will come from the 2011-2012 General Fund – Maintenance Budget.

- F. The Board approved entering into an agreement with Clark Food Service Equipment for the purchase of a Booster Heater needed for the dishwasher at Upper Providence Elementary School. Funding will come from the High School Construction Account and shall not exceed \$2,489.30 (DGS State Contract).

New Property

Mrs. Mullin made a motion to approve Item G and Mr. Pettit seconded it.

Mr. Dehnert said that based on the hard economic times and the fact that we had to layoff so many people he cannot in good conscience vote to spend money on tennis courts.

Dr. Hurda commented that this is clearly a safety issue. Mr. Cooper stated that the tennis courts were put in back 1996-1997 and they are starting to crack and we have gotten complaints from the visiting teams. Some of the cracks were filled in the best they could be and were patched up but this is going to have to be done every year which is going to add significant costs to the project as it goes along and if the total base goes we are looking at a total project cost of \$300,000 - \$400,000.

Ms. Gudolonis asked how many good tennis courts we currently have and Mr. Cooper replied that we have five at the 9th Grade Center, five at the High School 10-12 Grade Center and two brand new ones at the High School 10-12 Grade Center. Ms. Gudolonis asked if we could get by with those new courts and Mr. McDaniel replied that the physical education classes use the courts during the day as well as 36 students involved in boys' tennis and about the same involved in girls' tennis. The tennis teams use all twelve courts for their matches. Mr. McDaniel reported that the community uses all the courts as well.

Mr. Ciresi explained that the \$138,000 would not come from the operation expenses of the district but from the \$9 million left over from the High School Renovation Project which is the money that the taxpayers are already paying for and would not be an additional fee. Mr. Ciresi stated that the \$9 million may not be used for anything but capital expenditures. Mrs. Mullin reiterated that we are already paying taxes for that \$9 million.

Mr. Dehnert stated that he did go to Representative Quigley regarding whether we could get a waiver to use that \$9 million to make debt service payments and he was told that it was not a statutory requirement for using the leftover funds for that purpose as it depends on the language that is in the bond itself. Mr. Dehnert said if the language in the bond prohibits that use we could go to the bond holders and ask them to change the language to allow us to use the money to make debt service payments. Mr. Dehnert stated that he feels this is something we should investigate rather than spend that \$9 million. Mr. Ciresi said that he knows this has been discussed and Mr. Davis gave us a letter ruling on how we cannot do this as it must be put into escrow until we can call the bond. Mr. Ciresi stated that if Mr. Quigley thinks he can move this through the state then he would applaud him all the way because he feels the same way and that the \$9 million should go back as we are paying an enormous amount of money into debt service in this district. Mr. Dehnert said this is not a state issue but it is the language in the bond and it is possible to get the bond holders to approve the language change to expand the use of the money. Mr. Davis warned losing sight of the sub-category that if you can close out the project you can take the interest and pay the current debt service. Mr. Dehnert stated that using the interest would only be a small amount and he would like to use the whole \$9 million to pay off the debt service in increments. Mr. Davis replied that it was agreed that this could not be done and Mr. Dehnert responded that was correct but they could attempt to get the language changed that would

permit this. Mr. Davis said that he is not the registered bond counsel but he will certainly go back to the bond counsel to find out if this can be done. Mr. Davis added that it does strike him that to go to every bond holder and get their consent to change the language may not be realistic but he will certainly have the bond counsel look into it. The motion passed 7-1 with Mr. Dehnert voting no.

G. The Board approved awarding a contract for the resurfacing of the five (5) existing tennis courts at the High School 10-12 Center to the lowest qualified bidder, American Tennis Courts, Inc., rejecting all other bids. Funding will come from the High School Construction Account and shall not exceed \$138,135.00.

VIII. CONFERENCE/ WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Mrs. Mullin asked that Item J be separated. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve Items A-I and Mr. Shafer seconded it.

Mr. Ciresi commented on Item A saying that you will see that a lot of our administrators and teachers who are going to conferences are paying for themselves so that the district is not incurring any costs. Mr. Ciresi thanked everyone who is doing this especially in these times. Mrs. Mullin pointed out that Dr. Patschke is paying her own way as well. Dr. Hurda corrected this saying that Dr. Patschke's conference was being paid for by NAESSP where Dr. Patschke serves as a representative at both the state and national level.

The motion passed 8-0.

The following individuals were approved for attendance at the following conferences and workshops:

CODE: 580 Account: Conference/Training, registration, food, and accommodations

HIGH SCHOOL

- A. **Michael McDaniel**, Director of Athletics, to attend "*Pennsylvania State Athletic Directors Association*" in Hershey, PA from Tuesday, March 22 through Saturday, March 26, 2011. There is no cost to the district for this conference as Mr. McDaniel is paying all expenses. No substitute is needed.
- B. **Mary Ann Group**, Teacher, to attend "*Standards Aligned System: Developing Keystone Exam Project Alternatives*" in Harrisburg, PA on April 8, 2011, May 3-5, 2011 and potentially 2-3 additional days if necessary. PDE is paying all expenses and will reimburse the district up to \$100 per day for a substitute. The total cost to the district will be a maximum of \$350.00 which would be the remaining cost for a substitute for the maximum of possibly 7 days.

7TH GRADE CENTER

- C. **Ashley James** and **Devon Jarvie**, Teachers, to attend "*Building a System of Effective Academic Vocabulary Instructional Practices*" at PaTTAN in King of Prussia, PA on March 29, 2011. The total cost of this conference is \$331.60 - \$31.60 for mileage from the 580 account and \$300.00 from the substitute account.

EVANS

- D. **Laura McNeil**, Certified School Nurse, to attend “*Skyward 2011 Keystone State User Group – Health Module Update*” in Harrisburg, PA on April 29, 2011. The total cost of the conference \$230.90 which includes the substitute is being paid from the 2010-2011 Health and Wellness Grant.

LIMERICK

- E. **Elise Reiter**, Speech Therapist, to attend “*Reading Comprehension – Beyond the “Wh” Questions*” at PaTTAN in King of Prussia, PA on April 19, 2011. The only cost for this conference is \$8.57 for mileage as all other expenses are being paid by the employee. No substitute is needed.
- F. **Elise Reiter**, Speech Therapist, to attend “*Straight Talk About Autism*” in King of Prussia, PA on May 17, 2011. The only cost for this conference is \$7.22 for mileage as all other expenses are being paid by the employee. No substitute is needed.
- G. **Caren Yucha**, Speech Therapist, to attend “*Childhood Apraxia of Speech: Practical Assessment and Treatment Methods for Developing More Intelligible Speech*” in Frazer, PA on March 25, 2011. The only cost to the district is \$75.00 for a ½ day substitute as all other costs are being paid by the employee.

UPPER PROVIDENCE

- H. **Dr. Melissa Patschke**, Principal, to attend “*NAESP Annual Convention and Exposition*” in Tampa, Florida from Thursday, April 7 through Monday, April 11, 2011. There is no cost to the district for this convention as all costs are being paid by Dr. Patschke. No substitute is needed.

DISTRICT-WIDE

- I. **Joseph Nugent**, HVAC Specialist, and **Denise Whitmore**, Lead/Head Custodian, to attend “*Johnson Controls Institute*” in Baltimore, MD from Monday, May 16, 2011 through Friday, May 20, 2011. There is no cost for this conference as all costs are being paid by Johnson Controls.

Mrs. Williams made a motion to approve Item J and Mr. Shafer seconded it. Mrs. Mullin questioned why we would be sending Mrs. Kuhns to a conference when she is retiring as of the end of June. Dr. Hurda replied that Mrs. Kuhns did not put in for any expenses when the request was submitted as she was paying these on her own and since that time she gave us her retirement notice so her intent always was to cover her own expenses. Mrs. Mullin clarified that there is no cost at all then for Mrs. Kuhns and Dr. Hurda replied that was correct. The motion passed 8-0.

- J. **Steve Reynolds**, Director of Technology, **Susan Gallagher**, Software Field Technician, **Judy Kuhns**, Technology Integration Specialist, **Sarah Sacks**, Software Specialist, and **Mary Quintrell**, Bookkeeper, to attend “*Skyward 2011 Keystone State Conference*” in Harrisburg, PA on April 28 and April 29, 2011. The total cost to attend this conference is \$827.00 from the 580 Account. No substitutes are needed.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

A. The following policies are submitted as a first reading:

1. Policy #105.2 – PROGRAMS: Exemption from Instruction
2. Policy #106 – PROGRAMS: Guides for Planned Instruction
3. Policy #107 – PROGRAMS: Adoption of Planned Instruction
4. Policy #108 – PROGRAMS: Adoption of Textbooks
5. Policy #217 – PUPILS: Graduation Requirements

Mrs. Williams made a motion to approve Items B-D and Mr. Dehnert seconded it. Mr. Ciresi thanked Spring City Elementary for the gift as mentioned in Item D. He thanked all the home and school parents and booster organizations for the fundraising that helps support the district as it is an enormous help to us especially in this tough economic time.

Dr. Hurda commented that once the Board votes to approve the calendar and graduation then the graduation date will be June 14, 2011 with a raindate of June 15, 2011. The final student calendar day for the 2010-2011 school year will be June 14, 2011 and the last teacher day will be June 16, 2011. This is all depending on the district not requiring the use of any additional snow days which Dr. Hurda stated she feels confident we will not have.

The motion passed 8-0.

- B. Administration recommends approval of the final student calendar for the 2010-2011 school year. The original calendar reflected 184 student days and 195 teacher days. To date the district has found it necessary to cancel school on 4 occasions due to inclement weather. The final calendar now contains 180 student days. The last student day will be Tuesday, June 14, 2011; the last teacher day will be Thursday, June 16, 2011. The approval is based upon the district not requiring the use of any additional snow or emergency days between the date of approval and the last student day. Should snow or emergency day(s) occur, the calendar will be revised to reflect 180 student days.
- C. Administration recommends approval for the Spring-Ford Area School District Graduation Commencement to be set for the evening of Tuesday, June 14, 2011 in Coach McNelly Stadium. The rain date for graduation will be Wednesday, June 15, 2011.
- D. Administration acknowledges the acceptance of the donation of playground equipment to Spring City Elementary School. The total amount of this donation will be \$2,686.80 and will be funded by the Spring City Home & School Association. This amount includes shipping, installation, and the standard 20% district fee, as per Board Policy #702, for the maintenance of new equipment.

X. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

There was no report.

XI. DISCUSSION ITEM

Dr. Hurda explained the two options for the 2011-2012 school calendar saying that the first option shows the calendar as it has been every year and reflects that the Monday prior to Thanksgiving is used as a staff in-service day with conferences in the evening. Dr. Hurda said the second option does not show this as a staff in-service day but rather as a regular teacher day. The other difference has to do with the Monday after Easter as one version

show this as a day off and the second version does not. Dr. Hurda reported that she presented both options to the officers from the Teachers' Association last week as we always provide them with an opportunity to provide us with some feedback. Dr. Hurda stated that we should be coming back in April to decide on a calendar so this gives us a month to talk about these two options or add a third option is necessary.

Ms. Gudolonis added that option two also has September 29th and September 30th off whereas option one only has September 29th off. Dr. Hurda thanked Ms. Gudolonis for pointing this out.

Mrs. Mullin questioned April 9th which is the Monday after Easter saying that it appeared that both versions show this as a day off. Dr. Hurda stated that she may have mis-spoke and she will have to go back and check on this.

Mr. DiBello asked what other districts in the area are doing for Veteran's Day because there are a lot of days off recognizing different holidays and he would be interested in knowing what other districts are doing. Mr. DiBello stated that if it were not for our Veterans then none of us would be able to do a lot of what we are doing today. Dr. Hurda replied that we can gather that information.

Mr. Dehnert commented that we have been doing a lot of talking about partnering with business for alternative sources for revenue. Mr. Dehnert suggested that the Board appoint an Ad-Hoc Committee to explore this. Mr. DiBello asked what they would be exploring and Mr. Dehnert replied they would explore developing ways we can go about getting alternative sources of revenue and partnering with businesses. Mr. Ciresi commented that we had someone on staff for a while who did this and then we reassigned the position due to budget issues. Mr. Ciresi stated that he is fine with this and they could meet on a Community Relations Committee night or Community Relations could take this topic up and work on it.

A. 2011-2012 School Calendar

XII. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Ciresi thanked the public for being at the meeting tonight and he welcomed them to attend every meeting.

Mary Moore, Limerick Township, commented that Channel 6 ran a news story on the Pennsbury School District has a deficit of \$7 million and they are looking into promoting ads around the school using empty space to promote healthy choices, safety, nutrition and education. The report indicated that it could potentially bring in \$500,000 per year. Ms. Moore thought this might be useful information since the Board discussed looking at alternative sources for funding.

Janet Stokes, Limerick Township, commented that the community has a real mess on its hands and placing blame on SmithKline, the governor or the government does not change the hand that we have been dealt. Mrs. Stokes stated that the terminations tonight are really the tip of the iceberg when you look at the budget because if we are \$12 million in the hole and you look at saving \$1 million with the custodian layoffs then we still have a long way to go. Mrs. Stokes said she knows that personnel costs are 70% - 75% of the budget and she wondered if hypothetically all district employees from the superintendent down to the playground aides would take a paycut of 5%, 7%, 10% or whatever it would take to balance a budget. Mrs. Stokes questioned what it would take to share the sacrifice, not impact our kids

and balance the budget. Mr. Ciresi asked what the district pays in salaries and Mr. Anspach replied \$80 million in salaries and benefits. Mrs. Stokes stated that it would take a big cut but businesses across the country do this all the time. Mrs. Stokes commented that she knows the Board is dealing with unions and agreements but if you really looking out for kids and want to share the sacrifice then that is where she would start.

Brooke Marine, High School Student and resident of Upper Providence Township, stated that she looks out and sees many faces she recognizes from teachers, music educators, custodians, assistants and all of these people are a part of the community just as she is. She asked why we are \$12 million in the hole and cutting custodians and special education positions when they are the ones who are really supporting the school district as the staff is the glue that keeps the schools together. She asked why the district is spending money for a basketball scoreboard for students who do not deserve it after showing up at the Winterball, a dance for 9th and 10th graders, under the influence. Mr. Ciresi interrupted Ms. Marine saying that this is not something we can discuss in public. Ms. Marine questioned why we would spend money for that instead of putting it back into the staff. Mr. Ciresi stated that there are a couple things we do not understand from a state perspective and one is that in order to reduce staff we have to reduce programming so every time someone comes to the podium and says get rid of ten teachers in order to do that we must get rid of ten programs and then our superintendent and assistant superintendent must write a letter saying why this is good for education. Mr. Ciresi stated that everyone knows that reducing programs and saying that this is a wonderful thing is not a wonderful thing. Mr. Ciresi said he understands what Ms. Marine is saying and the scoreboards are just something being discussed not something we are necessarily doing. Ms. Marine stated that she understands what Mr. Ciresi is saying and knows that the Board may have a lack of control there but she does not see our students going to the NCAA Championship or the NBA and the actions they performed really do not deserve that sort of reward. Mr. Ciresi cautioned that we should not lump every athlete or every musician in that category. Ms. Marine added that she understands this. Dr. Hurda complimented Ms. Marine saying that she represents the culmination of a lot of hard work by a lot of staff members by the fact that she as a student had the courage of her convictions to stand up and speak. Dr. Hurda said she applauds Ms. Marine and feels that she represents us very well whether everyone agrees or disagrees she had the courage to do that and she is an example of what the district does every day.

Mr. DiBello commented that tonight was probably one of the hardest decisions he has had to make since joining the Board last year. He stated that he has not slept more than 3-4 hours over the past weekend because of the lives he knows he will be affecting and he is not happy at all with the decisions the Board has had to make. Mr. DiBello reported that he wanted to table the custodial staff outsourcing motion because he is hoping that over the next month or so we will still be able to get creative enough to make some other decisions. Mr. DiBello said he is also concerned that what was not discussed tonight is that if anyone thinks this is over with the state it is not because come June or July we may find out that we are losing another \$1 million in allocation. Mr. DiBello commented that on April 4 or April 5 the state is pushing through a bill called SB 1 which is called School Vouchers for School Choice. Mr. DiBello stated that he is totally for school choice but as this progresses through and becomes a reality, everyone sitting in the room will be responsible for picking up the costs because within 3 years the cost to the state for the vouchers is going to be \$1.6 billion. Mr. DiBello stated that this has nothing to do with anyone sitting at the Board table but in three years, for those members of the Board who are still fortunate enough to be representing the public, they will be sitting there telling the public about the \$1.6 billion that will be falling on the backs of the taxpayers. The state will be taking more allocation from the local districts to cover that

\$1.6 billion. Mr. DiBello indicated that member of the Board have talked to many legislators and questioned how this bill will be funded and their response is that they have not figured that part out yet. Mr. DiBello said the Board sits here making very unpopular decisions and no one is leaving here happy and this is not something he signed up to do but unfortunately they are charged with making the best decisions for the district and at this point tonight he must support the decision he has had to make even though he is not happy. Mr. DiBello stated that the Board is currently in contract negotiations with the teachers and that will continue for the next few months. Both the Board and the teachers each have proposals on the table and depending on the outcome the deficit could either grow or it might be less. Mr. DiBello said he agrees that he would like for the Board to turn to everyone in the district to help through these tough times for the next two or three years and try to take a reduction in salary to help offset the losses. Mr. DiBello reported that the tax increase index for next year will most likely be less than 1% with no exceptions which will not cover one aspect of the budget which is healthcare. Mr. DiBello stated that if the Board were to raise taxes 4.9% which is a \$4 million increase to the district that would just cover the healthcare and PSERS pension increases. Mr. DiBello commented that this is why the Board is forced to make the decisions they are making and he is not sure where we are going to get the \$8 million but the Board is trying to be very creative by looking at ways of using some of the reserve money that was put away to keep the buildings functioning. Mr. DiBello said this is like robbing Peter to pay Paul and we might be able to sustain that for a few years but beyond that he does not know what the district is going to do. Mr. DiBello stated that he is not placing the blame on any individual or any group because it is reality and you cannot go back and change decisions or the Governor's Budget, it is what it is, that is the reality of it and we are all forced to make decisions that no one is happy with.

Mr. Ciresi reported on the Superintendent Search saying that the Board has met with and interviewed 6 very qualified candidates and the Board is discussing some of their options. Mr. Ciresi stated that the Board is very pleased with those individuals that were interviewed. He stated that he will be providing an update in the next couple of weeks and they are on target for what they hoped to do which was name a new superintendent sometime in April. Mr. Ciresi reported that the Board met in an Executive Session dealing with personnel issues.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Mullin made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Pettit seconded it. The motion passed 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Fern
Board Secretary