

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF PLAINFIELD
IN UNION COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MINUTES of a **WORK & STUDY** Meeting of the Board of
Education Held on Tuesday, August 11, 2009

A **WORK & STUDY** Meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Plainfield was held this day in the Plainfield Board of Education Administration Building, conference room. Notice had been provided to Board members and to the Courier-News, Star Ledger, Public Library, City Clerk, Plainfield Police Department, and posted in all Plainfield Public Schools and on the Plainfield Public Schools' website. Mrs. Roslyn Mathis, Confidential Secretary, called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. and the following action took place:

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. WELCOME

WELCOME to a Work & Study Meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Plainfield. Members hope you will find the meeting interesting and informative. We thank you for taking the time to attend. Please be advised that this and all meetings of the Board are open to the media and public, consistent with the OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT (Ch. 231 Laws of 1975), and that advance notice required therein has been provided to the Courier News and the Star Ledger on Monday, August 3, 2009 for advertisement on Wednesday, August 5, 2009.

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Ms. Bridget Rivers, President
Mrs. Wilma G. Campbell arr. @ 7:55 p.m.
Mr. Martin P. Cox
Mr. Christian Estevez
Mrs. Brenda L. Gilbert
Ms. Katherine Peterson

ALSO PRESENT

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Superintendent
Dr. Garnell V. Bailey
Ms. Angela Kemp
Mrs. Roslyn P. Mathis
Ms. Kalimah H. Ahmad, Esq.

Ms. Patricia I. Barksdale absent
Mr. Agurs Linward Cathcart, Jr. absent
Mrs. Lisa C. Logan-Leach absent

The following resolution was moved by Mr. Estevez, seconded by Mr. Cox, and unanimously approved by the Board:

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, the Board of Education adjourned to closed session to discuss:

- personnel and legal

and be it

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

The Board of Education adjourned into its executive session at 6:55 p.m.

The Board of Education resumed the public session of its Work & Study Meeting at 8:19 p.m.

IV. REMARKS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

None.

V. REMARKS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

There was extensive discussion regarding curriculum, curriculum guides and textbooks.

Dr. Gallon said they are preparing to transition out of their Plainfield Passport to Summer Learning. This has been a successful and challenging endeavor. They are very proud of the enrichment they provided to their students. One caveat, the students involved in remediation and promotion will have their summer leaning end on the 19th of August. The regular students participating in enrichment terminating this Thursday, but in order to comply with the students' requirements resulting in promotion for graduation it has to be a minimum of 60 contact hours. They wanted to maximize the number of students for graduation. The summer school programs will be three days longer. They will continue through next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Appropriate notification is being made to parents and teachers.

VI. REMARKS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Mr. Cox moved the Human Resources Agenda to the Business Meeting.

Mrs. Campbell, who didn't think she would get to the meeting on time and asked Ms. Peterson to stand in for her, yielded to Ms. Peterson. Ms. Peterson said there were no questions received regarding the Curriculum & Instruction Agenda and moved it to the Business Meeting. Ms. Peterson's question that she had concerned the resolution regarding the approval of class trips. She didn't see any connection in going to Strike & Spare Bowling alley and United Skates as academic improvement for students.

Dr. Gallon replied he'll take that as a question and have a response in writing regarding how the teachers have been able to incorporate that. When they make a connection it has to connect with the academic component.

Mr. Estevez said that in the past they used to provide a packet with a sheet filled out that gave all of that information. Dr. Gallon replied that he can't speak to what was done in the past with respect to that, but from his purview that will be part of the day-to-day decision of the assessment and as the educational leader they have to be in a position to now and then respond. If they start opening a Pandora's Box, open up the administrative work, it would inundate this packet, make it very thick. He is very documentation heavy; they do a lot of documentation. He tries to limit and not inundate the Board members with information, but he stands ready and able to respond to answer all questions.

Mrs. Gilbert asked if this particular resolution is establishing a list of approved trips.

Mrs. Campbell said what Mr. Estevez talked about earlier, the documentation, that's something she has talked to Ms. Kemp about all the time. She doesn't find it as being more than minimizing the questions that come up after they've read the information. It's a very simplistic form; this is the activity, this is the goal, this is how it's going to roll out. She found that form eliminated a lot of questions. She finds herself asking questions that this form provided the information for.

Dr. Gallon said they provide a plethora of information relative to those kinds of questions. He hoped that an abatement of questions has been the result of them answering those questions within the content of the items. If you look at the items from a year ago, the items that they have right now are much more explicit. What they have tried to do is incorporate the information that was on that sheet into the item itself.

Mr. Estevez asked if once a designation gets on an approved list they still have to get Board approval for what is on that list. Dr. Gallon replied that it is pre-approved pursuant to policy and State statute.

Mrs. Campbell didn't see a dollar amount in item A. Are they okay just doing a broad approval without a dollar amount? Dr. Gallon replied that in terms of what this item reflects is basically a list of trips that are pre-approved. The purpose of this is that the Board will just have to approve the expenditures. The items in the C & I Agendas are dominated by field trips. This will shift some of the work load.

Mr. Cox, who was standing in for Ms. Barksdale, reminded Board members they have to abstain on resolutions that contain their name. The Finance Agenda was moved to the Business Meeting.

Mr. Estevez moved the Policy Committee Agenda to the Business Meeting.

Mrs. Campbell shared a discussion she had with Dr. Gallon about a back-to-school welcome. She thought it would be good if Board members would recruit 10 people to come and welcome the students on the day school opens, on September 3rd, and form a line and cheer them on. She thought that would be a good activity. She had a draft of a flyer, to get it on the website and get people to sign up who are willing to do that on September 3rd.

Dr. Gallon said they talked about that and he concurred with Mrs. Campbell. They talked about that being a conduit, but sustaining their involvement throughout the school year.

Mrs. Gilbert said they should do all of the schools.

Dr. Gallon said they would have to work out the nuts and bolts. He would not do anything without including the Principal of the school site.

Money is allotted for the charter schools for their enrollment only. If they don't meet their projected enrollment, that money comes back to the district.

Mr. Estevez moved, seconded by Mr. Cox and unanimously approved by the Board, to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Recorded by:

Roslyn P. Mathis, Confidential Secretary