

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, May 10, 2011

A **WORK & STUDY** Meeting of the Board of Education of the City of Plainfield was held this day in the Plainfield High School Media Center. 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. Mr. Gary L. Ottmann, Board Secretary, called the meeting to order at 6:50 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 Thursday, April 21, 2011 for advertisement on Saturday, April 30, 2011.

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mrs. Renata A. Hernandez, President
Mrs. Wilma G. Campbell, Vice President
Mr. Rasheed Abdul-Haqq
Ms. Patricia I. Barksdale
Mr. Alex O. Edache
Mrs. Brenda Gilbert
Mr. Dorien Hurtt
Ms. Jameelah Surgeon

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs. Anna Belin-Pyles, Interim Superintendent
Mr. Gary L. Ottmann
Mr. Robert Pickett, Esq.
Mr. Charles Craig, Esq.
Mr. Gaylan Medley, Esq.

Mrs. Lisa C. Logan-Leach, absent

The following resolution was moved by Mrs. Gilbert, seconded by Ms. Barksdale, 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 6:51 p.m.

The Plainfield Board of Education resumed the public session of the Work & Study Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

IV. REMARKS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Mrs. Hernandez apologized for the delay in starting tonight's meeting. The Board held a moment of silence in honor of Theodore Hall, Hubbard custodian who recently passed.

She indicated that she is starting the use of a "board member" scorecard in an effort to instill accountability. She is also introducing "board briefs" to highlight agenda items prior to minutes being adopted.

She also would like to see a community "bulletin board". She wants to institute a video cast of the president and vice president.

V. REMARKS FROM THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs. Belin-Pyles attended a "dance ensemble" event at Plainfield High School last week – it was quite wonderful.

She also attended the ROTC "military ball" and she thoroughly enjoyed it.

She indicated that a parent meeting for parents of both Maxson and Hubbard students will be scheduled shortly.

Administration gave a presentation on the planned school restructuring.

Mrs. Belin-Pyles indicated that we will be requesting an extension of the submission due date for the plan to NJDOE.

VI. REMARKS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Mrs. Campbell had a number of questions about parent involvement in the development of the plans. She also wondered why more Maxson staff wasn't present at the meeting tonight. She also inquired about successful models that have been used by other Districts throughout the state.

Mr. Abdul-Haqq feels it's important to figure out how to motivate both students and teachers.

Mrs. Gilbert congratulated everyone who worked on the restructuring plan. She feels that public education needs to be scrapped and started over.

Ms. Barksdale emphasized that she appreciated everyone coming tonight. It's important to highlight the good things that are going on in the District. One of our biggest challenges is inconsistency.

Mrs. Hernandez is optimistic about tonight's presentation. She also indicated that the Board has to "own" some of the inconsistency that has occurred in the District. A new corporate model is to play to one's strengths and that's what we should do.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lindsay Council expressed concern that elementary parents are just learning now that 6th grades are being moved to the middle schools.

Marlene Figueroa cautioned that with school choice, parents can now place their children in other districts.

Kwame Asante suggested that we look at schools with 5/6 and 7/8 grade configurations as options – We need to think “outside of the box”.

The Board moved committee agendas to the business meeting agenda.

Mrs. Campbell moved, seconded by Ms. Barksdale and unanimously approved by the Board, to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

Recorded by:

Gary L. Ottmann, Board Secretary
GLO/bsc