



**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**November 4, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Albany High School**

**PRESENT:** Barbara Gaffuri, President  
Melissa Mackey, Vice President  
Judy Doesschate, J.D. Secretary  
Dr. Mark Barth  
Rose Brandon  
Daniel Egan  
Wayne Morris

Dr. Raymond Colucciello  
Dr. Tresa Diggs  
Bill Hogan  
Linda Jackson-Chalmers  
Linda Rudnick

**EXCUSED:** None

**Call to Order:**

- Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- All present were asked to observe a moment of silence in memory of Omari Courtwright, a student at Stephen & Harriet Myers Middle School who passed away last Wednesday, and for Joseph Stracuzzi who taught Industrial Arts & Technology in the district for 40 years. Joseph passed away on October 25, 2009.
- Members of the audience were welcomed and thanked for taking the time to attend the meeting.
- The Mission Statement was read.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- Results of the general election items related to the school district were read as follow: Board members Judy Doesschate and Barbara Gaffuri ran unopposed. Final vote count was Ms. Doesschate 5,460. Mrs. Gaffuri 5,934. Congratulations to Ms. Doesschate and Mrs. Gaffuri. Terms will commence on January 1, 2010 and end on December 31, 2013. Referendum to approve the sale of 27 Western Avenue received 8,063 yes votes and 1,763 no votes. Referendum passed.
- Dr. McCalla, Principal of Albany High School, and Kathy Ryan, Director of Athletics introduced coaches and students involved in the boys & girls soccer teams, who won the Big 10 Championship. The boy's team finished the season 12 - 5. The girls finished the season 14-1-3. Congratulations to the staff and students.
- Albany High School Theatre will present "The Laramie Project" November 19-22, 2009. Panel discussions will follow each performance. Tickets area \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors.
- Four Albany High seniors have been recognized in the National Merit Scholarship Program, ranking them among the top 5% of more than 1.5 million students nationally. Owen Daniels, Benjamin Miller, Lauren Shaefer and Matthew Wu. Congratulations to each of these students.

- The Albany Public School Teachers Association (APSTA), led by Cathy Corbo, will partner with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) in implementing the AFT Innovation Grant Fund proposal, *Improving Teacher Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)*. This is a two year grant. The first year is for planning a peer assistance and review program. The second year is for the implementation of the plan. The goal of the project is to develop a researched-based PAR model designed to improve teacher effectiveness by linking three critical components: teaching standards, teacher evaluation and differentiated professional development.

Mrs. Gaffuri asked for a motion to amend the agenda to add a resolution for the sale of 27 Western Avenue under Action Items. Dr. Barth made a motion for approval. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The Board voted (7-0) to amend the agenda.  
Motion passed.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Student was not able to attend the meeting this evening.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Rev. Edward Smart addressed the board relative to the use of 27 Western Avenue, describing a program to provide a community faith based educational training center, job training center and on site job experience that will ensure success for the youth in Albany.
2. John Amidon presented information on the opportunity for free admission to view the movie "The Good Soldier" on November 11, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at Proctor's Theatre in Schenectady. This is a community service offered by Veterans for Peace. Student will need to present valid school identification card for free admission.

### **FACILITIES PROJECT**

#### **Action Items Related to the Facilities Project**

#### **Approval of Change Orders**

Change orders for Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science & Technology, Giffen Memorial Elementary School and Arbor Hill Elementary School were presented for approval. Ms. Mackey made a motion to approve change orders. Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

#### **Contract Award**

A resolution to approve a contract with Liquid Propane Services for the provision of liquid propane services for temporary heat at Arbor Hill Elementary School during renovations. Mr. Egan made a motion to approve the resolution, Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

**INFORMATION ITEM**

**Elementary School Assessments**

Principals from Albany School of Humanities, New Scotland Elementary School, Pine Hills Elementary School, Schuyler Achievement Academy and Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science & Technology reviewed their assessment results, data and their vision for their schools. Principals reported on ELA results as well as Mathematics, Social Studies and Science information, Information related to attendance and suspension rates were discussed as well as some of the primary initiatives that are ongoing in the community.

- Is this data being shared with staff and faculty in the schools?

Principals indicated that this information is shared with staff and building leadership teams and also how this information is utilized in analysis and evaluation. Collegiality among principals related to sharing information is also very helpful in achieving success. Also, interval assessments are now on line which provides instant results.

- Think about how extended day and additional assistance for students be accomplished through the use of volunteers in the district?

- What else would you want if there were no budget restrictions on the district?

Activities to put the fun back into school, i.e. family nights where parents can join in children to enjoy activities. Physical activities in the morning before students go into the classroom.

Additional programs before and after school for the students. Late transportation for students who stay after school so they can get home.

**ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS**

Routine Consent Items were presented as follow: Appointments (Probationary Appointments, Regular Substitutes, Civil Service, Miscellaneous, Itinerant Substitute Teachers 2009-2010, Tenure; Leaves of Absence; Transfers; Corrections; Resignation; Abolishment of Position; Creation of Position; Attendance at Conferences; Treasurer's Report; Revenue Status Report 09/30/09, Appropriation Status Report 09/30/09, Extra Classroom Activity Fund, Budget Transfers under \$10,000, Budget Transfers over \$10,000, Real Property Tax Adjustments; Award of Bids; New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Membership Dues; Authorization to Enter Into Contracts; Out of State Field Trips. Mrs. Gaffuri set aside Itinerant Substitutes 2009-2010 and corrections 9-01-09. Mr. Barth set aside NYSSBA Membership Dues. Mr. Egan set aside Extra Classroom Activity Fund. Dr. Barth made a motion to approve routine consent items absent those set aside. Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Dr. Barth made a motion to approve Itinerant Substitutes 2009-2010 and corrections 9-01-09. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion. Mrs. Gaffuri advised she would be abstaining on this vote because her daughter is included in the listing.

The board voted (6-0-1) to approve the motion. Mrs. Gaffuri abstained

Motion passed.

Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve the Extra Classroom Activity Report. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion. Mr. Egan noted the Audit Committee requested the listing be reviewed to remove inactive clubs and to review the activities with stipend being paid to staff members.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve NYSSBA Membership Dues for 2010. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. Dr. Barth advised he attended the NYSSBA Convention last month and encouraged the district to take advantage of programs and services offered by NYSSBA.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **Food Services Contract**

The district reviewed bids in response to the Child Nutrition Invitation for Bid, which encompassed breakfast, lunch and snack programs within all district schools. The Request for Proposal (RFP) was structured for the food service management companies to submit a quotation for providing the management of the operation of food services as well as the purchase of the food and supplies required for the program. There were four respondents to the invitation for bids. The board is being asked to approve a contract with Whitson's School Nutrition Corporation, which is a family owned company based on Long Island with various size school districts in New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey. Management positions will be provided by Whitson's. All other food service employees will remain as APSUE district employees. Whitson's will be producing improved meals with an improved menu, along with professional staff training and better food quality. They will be serving food teenager would like to eat. The district expects to improve the financial performance of food services \$500,000 per year. The only two employees that they will bring in are the food service manager and assistant food service manager. All other employees in food services will be district employees. Mr. Hogan asked if the board would consider acting on this item this evening. Mr. Egan made a motion to act on the following resolution. Dr. Barth seconded the motion. Mr. Hogan presented the following resolution for the provision of food services to the district:

#### **FOOD SERVICES CONTRACT**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the City School District of Albany hereby approves the contract with Whitson's Culinary Group for the provision of food services management and food for student meals and snacks throughout the district from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010. The cost of management services and food shall not exceed \$0.922 per meal for breakfast; \$1.121 per meal for lunch, and \$0.505 per snack. The Superintendent is authorized to execute the contract as outlined.

The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

#### **Board Member Requests**

Board members discussed requests made to the superintendent and cabinet members in terms of the number of requests and the amount of time administrator spend in responding to these requests. Mrs. Gaffuri brought forward the Leadership Team Essential Operating Procedures that were developed by the board members with the assistance of the New York State School Boards Association. Mrs. Gaffuri referred to pages 23 that addressed this issue. During the development of the budget, district staff will be very involved in gathering information for the board so that they are able to make informed decisions related to the budget. The board also has the decision related to the superintendent position. With these two major issues before the board, a suggestion was made to consider this before making requests of extensive data and/or information from staff by following the guidelines developed by the board.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Approval of Policies – Series 0000**

Policy Series 0000 was presented for approval. Policies were reviewed by the Policy Committee and board members at the 10-15-09 board meeting. It was decided at that meeting that policy 0200 would be tabled. Ms. Doesschate made a motion and Ms. Mackey seconded the motion to approve the policies listed below. Dr. Barth requested that policy 0300 also be table. Motion was amended to table policy #0300 along with #0200.

- 0000 Mission Statement
- 0100 Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity
- 0100R Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Regulations
- 0110 Sexual Harassment
- 0110R Sexual Harassment Regulations
- 0150 HIV/AIDS Policy
- 0310 Board Self-Evaluation
- 0320 Evaluation of Superintendent (include cross reference to procedure #14, pg. 15 Leadership Team Essential Operating Procedures)

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

**Volunteer Policy**

Ms. Jackson-Chalmers provided several options to board members related to the position of volunteer coordinator for the district. Following discussion of choices (1) a part-time paid position for a current staff member (2) a part-time paid position with a new employee (someone from the community) (3) a volunteer to serve as the volunteer coordinator for the district. A job description has been completed along with the guidelines for the school volunteer program. These documents will be provided to board members. The majority of the board, in consideration of recommendations from administration, agreed the position should be filled by a new part-time (.5) position. Ms. Jackson-Chalmers will follow up in filling the position.

**Resolution to Sell 27 Western Avenue**

The following resolution was presented for approval.

**RESOLUTION**

**APPROVAL TO SELL PROPERTY AT 27 WESTERN AVENUE**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Albany City School District Board of Education hereby approves the sale of the real property located at 27 Western Avenue, Albany, NY and authorizes the President of the Board to execute any and all documents necessary to consummate such sale, including a contract of sale with a purchase price of \$425,000, less any and all customary closing costs, and specifically approves the agreement with Fairbanks Properties, LLC, dated November 4, 2009, a copy of which shall be attached to the minutes of this meeting. Mr. Egan made the motion. Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

Board members voted 6 ayes-0 nays and 1 abstention. Ms. Mackey abstained.

Motion passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri requested a motion to amend the agenda to include a resolution to send attendees to the Harlem Children Zone Convention in New York City. Ms. Doesschate made a motion to amend the agenda. Mr. Morris seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

### **Harlem Children's Zone Resolution**

The following resolution was presented for approval.

#### **RESOLUTION**

#### **HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Albany City School District will partner with the Family Education Alliance to take part in a national conference regarding the Harlem Children's Zone. The conference is scheduled for November 9–10, 2009, at the Sheraton Towers in New York City. The Family Education Alliance will fund expenses for seven community members and the School District will fund expenses for two administrators and the cost of registration for one member of the community. The registration fee for each participant is \$350. The cost of accommodations for two District administrators is \$259/person/night. Expenses for meals and travel are not to exceed the established District reimbursement rates.

The two district administrators attending are Rozalyn Gaines-Harrell, Principal of Arbor Hill Elementary School and Maxine Fantroy-Ford, Principal of Giffen Memorial Elementary School, who will be representing the district. Dr. Bert Malerba is the community member representing the parent community member. In total there will be seven community members attending. Ms. Mackey made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

### **Board Committee Reports**

Mr. Egan advised the Audit Committee met last week. Discussion included union contracts and possible creation of a budget committee. The recommendation is to have the Audit Committee take on some additional budget responsibilities and to try to get budget information out through as early as possible and as many avenues as possible. Ms. Mackey added the possibility of the Audit Committee expanding its function to drill down into the budget itself and to act as a resource for other board members in helping to explain some of the more complicated issues the district is facing. Another conversation will take place regarding this at a future meeting.

Mr. Egan advised the Alternative Education Think Tank group met yesterday. It was a good organizational meeting. The group agreed to start with a smaller group, a steering committee structure headed by Ray Schimmer of Parsons. The group identified approximately 29 members for the full committee. They will be getting letters inviting them to participate. The group is tentatively scheduling a meeting November 30. The group is looking at a two-phase project with the first part sort of an inventory and evaluation of all the alternative education programs currently in operation and the second a set of recommendations about what the district ought to be doing in the future. The group is looking preliminary recommendations in the spring time for this coming budget cycle, understanding that it would be difficult to get a full set of recommendations out by that time. A final report is anticipated for the summer. Membership information will be forwarded when it is final.

Ms. Mackey advised the Gun Violence Task Force met last week. Brandon Cox, representative from the Albany Police Department was able to share the mapping that their crime analyst has done about shots fired, confirmed shootings and homicides throughout the City over the last three years. That information was discussed by the group. Members requested additional information regarding the age of the offenders and victims in those confirmed shootings. The other thing that was requested, which speaks to what Ms. Davis was referring to, is to have our schools coded on top of that also. Our students are experiencing secondary trauma due to the visual representation of what is going on their neighborhoods that they do have to cross through. The group will begin to divide into sub-groups to begin addressing specific recommendations. There are certain things that the City is going to do and certain things the task force is doing. Ms. Mackey will continue to keep the board informed about this matter.

### **Board Member Items**

Mrs. Brandon requested information regarding late buses for the elementary schools. Only grant funded transportation is provided to the elementary schools. This needs to be confirmed.

Mrs. Brandon described a board meeting at another school district where students who received a 4 on their state tests were awarded a certificate at the board meeting in recognition of their achievements. The process is completed in 3 board meetings, elementary, middle and high school. Mrs. Brandon asked for consideration of this practice at some point in the future.

Ms. Mackey was in support of this idea. In view of the transportation issue, Ms. Mackey suggested as the board travel for round table meetings, perhaps this activity could take place in that forum.

Dr. Barth announced that he is having a hard time remaining on the board and finishing his term. Dr. Barth noted the demands of his work have increased and he does not feel he is doing justice to board preparation. The stress of the combined responsibilities has taken some toll. Ideally, he would want to convert his service somehow to something of a project where he could concentrate and stay in as opposed to this incredible work board members do, which is a mile wide and in some places it's only an inch deep. Other people have the tenacity to go deeper. I know how upsetting it has been to replace a board member in the middle of their term. He would like to work on that with everybody to find a way to make a transition.

Ms. Mackey asked if Dr. Barth was stating that he is resigning. Dr. Barth confirmed that he would aim for the end of December or soon thereafter. Mr. Morris acknowledged that this is a difficult decision. He admired the fact that Dr. Barth acknowledged that he can not do justice to both, know that the budget and the superintendent search are coming up. Mr. Morris acknowledged the wonderful job Dr. Barth has done during his tenure on the board.

Dr. Barth also noted the Jack McEneny is going to introduce legislation to change the election of our school board members to May, along with the school budget vote.

Mrs. Gaffuri advised she, along with the superintendent, Mr. Ken Cioffi, principals from the middle schools met last week with there is an initiative from the federal government "Lights Out After School". They don't provide money, but they provide support services assisting cities identify what can be done after school. Mr. Cioffi advised the district has been working with the City. The federal grant is a planning grant to coordinate all the after school activities that are happening around the City to bring not only the school district and every community based organization together to take a look at all the programs to determine if there is a connection and

how after school programming can be extended not only in our school but in the community based organizations with the idea that this would eventually also expand into program that would extend the school year. This is based on the Pasa Model used in Providence, Rhode Island where they have about 25–30% of their middle school population are in after school program. The idea of the program is to take all the resources in the community and join them together to work toward a more comprehensive approach to after school programming.

A meeting with Judge Duggan, Judge Walsh and Judge Maney took place last week. Mrs. Gaffuri, along with Dr. Barth and the superintendent attended the meeting. Discussion included PINS Petitions, delinquency and what can be done for our youth so that they are not brought before three judges as a result of criminal actions. Mrs. Gaffuri presented the district Strategic Plan, referencing the Think Tank and Social, Emotional Development. They were very interested in the document.

Ms. Mackey noted in light of what Dr. Barth has said regarding the tremendous amount of time participation on the board demands, as someone who also has a child in high school, having been through a similar situation when Ms. Frost felt that she couldn't meet her obligations here, as a board we need to look at what we expect of each other. This is a very new board. The majority of members are in their first term. It says something that a lot of people don't go for a second term on the board. The turmoil and upheaval this causes the board to adjust when we get and when the board has members who step away. We need to look at what our expectations are of each other and how we can better work together to get work done that we need to without grinding at each other. I respect that Dr. Barth stood up. I respect your decision. I wish there is something more that we can do to make it amenable to you to stay on. I know you have the passion to do that, but I really feel we need to look at that. How we can be effective without putting so much pressure on each and every one of us so that we can get the work done and not have to give so much of ourselves in it.

Ms. Doesschate noted she wholeheartedly agrees. I want to share with board members that when I first came on the board, Teresa Swidorski, who had been on the board for several terms. She was well respected. She said you just need to pick those areas that are your priorities and you need to let go of a lot of stuff and that other board members will pick up on some of the things that are not as much your priorities. I think that that is terrific advice.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Mackey made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Barth seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.