



# School Board Update



Summaries of School Board Committee Meetings for **September 2011**

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The public is warmly invited to all Committee meetings.

## Education Committee, Chair: Betsy Fadem

Prepared by: Committee Chair

The Education Committee held its first meeting of the school year on September 13<sup>th</sup> and the first item of business was to review the calendar options for 2012-2013 school year. The administration distributed two versions for the Committee to consider; Draft A with a student start date prior to Labor Day, and Draft B with a student start date after Labor Day. The administration pointed out the specifics and educational benefits of each version. The Committee noted that Draft B with an after Labor Day start also allowed for a student end date before June 15<sup>th</sup> because most of the teacher in-service days are scheduled after the students leave in June. It was concluded that Draft B was the version that the Committee wanted to pursue and asked the administration to present some additional options for the mid-year teacher inservice day at the October Education Committee Meeting.

The next agenda item was a report on the status of the Keystone Exams. The administration indicated that the State has issued a one year moratorium on all Keystone Exams and that all students enrolled this year in Keystone Exam courses will be considered proficient without having to take the related exams. Continuing, the administration noted that the State intends to restore the Biology, Algebra 1, English Literature and English Composition exams in 2012-2013.

Next, the administration continued the meeting with a presentation of the results of the Algebra 1 Keystone Exams that were given in May 2011. In our District, 293 students took the Exam and approximately 87% of these students demonstrated proficiency compared with only 39% of the students across the State.

The final item of business was an update concerning the District's preparations to accommodate President Obama's back to school speech. As our policy indicates, the District will attempt to broadcast the speech in a live environment. As of the date of this Education Meeting, no further details concerning the speech were available from the White House and the date of the speech had not yet been confirmed.

## Facilities Committee, Chair: Pete Motel

Prepared by: Administrative Liaison

The Facilities Committee met on Friday August 26, 2011. The Committee heard a report on the status of the District's summer construction projects. All of the projects have been completed as scheduled. The new boiler at Conestoga High School project is on schedule to be completed this fall. The Committee was also updated on the status of the radon and lead water testing plan with favorable results.

The Committee discussed the proposed changes to the facilities use regulation and user fees for the 2011-12 school year. The Committee decided that more work needs to be completed on the user fee schedule and recommended that the District continue to use last year's fee schedule for the 2011-2012 school year. The Committee will continue working on the regulation and fee schedule with plans to complete and inform users by March 2012.

Finally the Committee heard a report from Dr. Waters concerning the preparations that have been made in anticipation of the hurricane that is predicted to hit the area over the weekend. Dr. Waters also discussed the District's plan for missed school days as a result of the storm.

## Finance Committee, Chair: Kevin Mahoney

Prepared by: Administrative Liaison

The Finance Committee met on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The Committee heard the opening of school transportation report from the District Transportation Manager. The report included a review of the budget strategies implemented resulting in two fewer buses, the green initiative using biodiesel fuel and the bus contractor's background check process. The Transportation staff was congratulated by the Committee for a smooth start to the school year.

The Board Treasurer presented the results of the July and August Treasurer's report. Both actual revenues and expenditures are within the budgeted amounts for the period. The Committee heard a report from the administration about the reinstated State revenues that had been cut in the Governor's preliminary budget. The final State budget approved on June 30, 2011, reinstated \$1.3 million and will be distributed to the District this fiscal year. It was noted that these monies did not fully restore state funds to the level

received in the prior fiscal year by almost \$300,000. This additional revenue may possibly lead to the use of less than planned reserved fund balance needed to close out the fiscal year. The Committee authorized the Superintendent to restore education cuts made in the 2011-12 budget.

The administration led a Committee discussion on the budget calendar for 2011-2012. The Committee noted all of the significant due dates on the Calendar and discussed the importance for the EIT Tax Study Group to have their research completed and presented in time for the Board to take action if necessary.

The Facilities Committee chair reported to the Committee on the successful completion of the summer construction projects and the associated costs. Overall, the projects were completed under budget.

Finally the Committee agreed to the assignment of a portion of the District's ending fund balance to a medical rate stabilization fund. The specific amounts of all fund balance assignment will be discussed when the single audit is completed and presented to the Committee.

## **Policy Committee, Chair: Kevin Buraks**

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Prepared by: Administrative Liaison

The Policy Committee began with a discussion of a possible **new advertising policy** since the District has been examining the feasibility of advertising as a strategy to increase revenues to close projected budget gaps for 2011-12 and beyond. The Committee received a report from Art McDonnell, Business Manager, on the response from Masterpiece Multimedia, LLC to the District's Request for Proposal (RFP) for marketing revenue services. The Committee charged Art McDonnell with again contacting Market Street Sports Group, whose representatives presented at the April 25, 2011 meeting of the Board on advertising opportunities for the District.

The Policy Committee continued its review of **Policy 3100: Budget Development Process**. The Committee reviewed revisions since its June meeting. Following a detailed discussion, the Committee asked the District solicitor to make additional modifications as suggested by Committee members. Discussion will continue at the next meeting scheduled for November 10, 2011.

The Committee turned its attention to **Policy 5401: Student Discipline and Policy 5420: Unlawful Harassment**. The Committee received a report from Delvin Dinkins which included procedures for reporting and resolving complaints

about bullying and unlawful harassment. After discussion, minor grammatical changes were made to Policy 5420: Unlawful Harassment and committee members directed that a new review date be added to this policy. Policy 5401: Student Discipline was then discussed and several changes were made. Committee members then recommended sending revised Policy 5401: Student Discipline to the Board of School Directors for a first reading.

The next item of business was a review of **Policy 4041: Obligation to Report Criminal Offenses**. The Committee reviewed the existing policy and recommended adding the phrase, "as required by law." This change is consistent with a new PA statute. This policy was then recommended for a first reading before the Board of School Directors at their September 26, 2011 meeting.

The Committee then considered the need for additional policy language related to outside vendors and agencies. A recommendation was made that a policy and accompanying regulation be developed to address donations to athletic teams including team sportsmanship. The Committee also recommended that language be added to existing policy to regulate contact with students by outside vendors during schools hours. Mr. Roos will share policy and/or regulation revisions at the next meeting. In addition, the repeal of **Policy 4100: Relations with Other Governmental and Educational Agencies** was recommended for a first reading before the School Board at their September meeting.

In the 1100 policy series, the Committee made no changes to **Policy 1111: Compliance with NCLB Reporting Requirements and Policy 1125: Complimentary Admission to Events**. A review date was added to each policy, however. The Committee then turned its attention to **Policy 1121: Video and Audio Recording of School Board Meetings by the Public**. Following Committee discussion and minor editing, Policy 1121: Video and Audio Recording of School Board Meetings by the Public was recommended for a first reading before the Board of School Directors at their September 26, 2011 meeting.

The Committee also returned to **Policy 6111: School Calendar** and received a report from the administration. Additional modifications were made to the policy. The Committee will review it again at its November meeting.

The Committee recommended **Policy 9330: Formation of New and Revision of Existing Board Policies** for a second

reading before the Board of School Directors at their September 26, 2011 meeting.

Finally, as an information item, the Committee received comments from Art McDonnell concerning **Regulation 3185: Fund Balances Management**. After brief discussion, the Committee suggested minor revisions.

**Public Information Committee,  
Chair: Debbie Bookstaber**

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Prepared by: Administrative Liaison

The Committee reviewed a list of open records requests from District residents between April-September 2011. The Committee did not see a need to post any new information on the web site in response to the list of open records requests.

The administration presented information on the use of non-District media photos of students on-line. While the District has no control over photos taken of students in public locations or by outside photographers at events that are open to the public, the administration has developed media guidelines to help communicate the District's expectations to members of the press when on school property. The Committee made suggestions to the guidelines, which will be distributed to members of the local media. The Policy Committee may also review the topic of photographs taken by non-District personnel.

The Committee discussed the District's practice for participating in commercial publications' surveys. The Committee agreed that the District will complete surveys from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report*. Any other surveys that the District receives will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The District will not be responsible for surveys that it does not receive or that are sent to individuals not listed on the Media Inquiries page of the District web site. The administration also noted that *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report* have used data that was collected publicly and not supplied by the District in the past and that the District could be included in surveys without its consent or knowledge.

The Committee discussed topics for the upcoming fall T/E Board Talk program. The program will include a segment on District finances, including an announcement about the November 3rd Tax Study Group presentation and the budget calendar; the T/E Middle School "Above the Influence" program; Devon Elementary School's "Peace Day"; and an update on the Conestoga High School "Manifest" program.