

DOWNINGTOWN AREA BOARD OF EDUCATION
Administrative Office, James E. Watson Staff Development Room
Thursday, August 12, 2021
6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING NOTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Bertone called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

President Bertone
Director Blust
Vice President Britton
Director Ghrayeb
Director Gibson
Director Houghton
Director Kring
Director MacNeal
Director Wisdom

D. ACTION AGENDA

Mr. Matyas reviewed a PowerPoint presenting a Student Population Growth and Construction Update. Included was a review of actual and projected enrollment, 2020-2021 budget results, due diligence examination of the Bradford Heights Elementary property reviewed by Mr. Lauver, Gantt timelines for 5/6 construction and high school construction, reviewed staffing costs of opening a new 5/6 center and full day kindergarten staffing, and tax increase projections with a 5/6 center.

Board requested administration ask WCASD if parochial and private kindergarten students returned when full day kindergarten was started and if they left again after kindergarten.

Board asked that 2024-2025 estimate be reworked since a 5/6 center would not open until 2025/2026 (page 35).

President Bertone proposed a plan:

- A new Brandywine Wallace built on the McCausland property
- Beaver Creek students would go to the old Brandywine Wallace
- Beaver Creek would be enlarged or rebuilt
- Enlarge West Bradford
- Enlarge Bradford Heights

Plan may help reduce recurring operating costs of a new 5/6 center.

Additional questions:

Can McCausland property take an elementary school?

How many seats can be added so that full day kindergarten can be implemented quickly?

Board asked for a quick response to cost, timeline, efficacy, busing, and number of seats for the proposal presented by President Bertone.

President Bertone stated she would meet with Mr. Lauver regarding the new proposal.

It was agreed that administration will consult with KCBA Architects for help with this information.

Additional Board questions should be forwarded to President Bertone by Monday.

A gantt chart was requested for the high school courtyards with the addition of classrooms.

E. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT REQUIRE THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD

- F. VISITORS** – The Downingtown Board of Directors encourages public comment from its citizens. Each community member may speak for a period of no longer than 5 minutes (per BP# 903). Please understand that this is not a time for dialogue with the board; rather the board will listen to all comments and consider them in further deliberations. Our individual e-mail addresses are on the website if you'd like to contact your individual board representative. We ask that you please direct complaints of a personal nature regarding an individual employee directly to the superintendent.

Anna Martinez (West Bradford) – Suggested perhaps the district should have been increasing taxes over the past 8 years and the proposed tax increases discussed this evening would not be so large. Asked for review of busing particularly in light of the proposed changes and future growth. Asked for feminine products in the bathrooms. Suggested classes outside with masks off could help students with mental health. Suggested partnering with Girls Who Code, a nonprofit, to offer programming for girls. Suggested the district look at more diverse books from other countries. Many countries have classics in world literature.

Rita Eng (East Caln) – Thanked the board for considering alternatives and considering the big picture. Sometimes taking a step back may help save money/taxes.

G. INFORMATION

1. School Board Meetings

The next Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for September 1, 2021 starting at 6:30 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room of the Administrative Office.

The next regular School Board Meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021 starting at 6:30 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room of the Administrative Office.

H. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Director MacNeal, seconded by Director Kring, the Board, on a voice vote, unanimously agreed to adjourn at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia B. Warihay
School Board Secretary