

**DERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
Work Session on Board Operating Guidelines Minutes  
Monday, September 24, 2012**

Board Members present: Mr. Chris Barrett, Dr. Donna Cronin, Dr. Hank Donahue, Mr. John Grab, Mr. Bruce Hancock, Mr. Chris Morelli, Dr. William Parrish, Mrs. Maryellen Sheehan, Mrs. Ellen Sheffey

Administrators present: Dr. Richard Faidley

## **II. Review of Current Structure**

A recommendation was made to review the current structure prior to public comment.

Mr. Barrett shared his experience as a board member when he first joined the board almost 15 years ago. At that time the board operated as a committee of the whole. The meetings were very long and met every Monday. A decision was made to utilize the committee structure. The original committees were: Human Resources, General Services, Finance, Curriculum and Policy. Four years ago the Communications committee was added. The Executive Council, President, Vice President and Treasurer, met with the Superintendent to set the agenda for board meetings and to advise on committee meetings.

Mr. Barrett pointed out that while this structure proved to be a real time saver, it requires trust to work. This structure has been utilized for the past 14 years, without review or reaffirmation. A recommendation was made to review and reaffirm the board operating structure each year at the first meeting in January.

## **I. Public Comment**

A recommendation was made to permit public comment throughout the meeting to allow greater community input.

## **III. Role of Board Officers**

The Board reviewed PSBA's recommended board operating guidelines regarding duties of board officers and Board Policy 005. A recommendation was made that any board member interested in a leadership position announce their intention at the Board's reorganization meeting in December. The interim president would lead the discussion. It was also decided that committee and delegate assignments would be discussed and voted on at the first board meeting in January. The board president would be responsible for making the recommendation after input from the full board. It was recommended that the elected board leadership meet monthly with the Superintendent to finalize the agenda taking into consideration board member input. An item will be added to the regular agenda seeking board member input for future agenda items.

#### **IV. Standing Committees**

The Board agreed that we should continue to utilize the committee structure. The Board reviewed two PSBA recommended board operating guidelines and Board Policy 006.

PSBA's recommended board operating guideline for board standing committees – As mentioned above, it was decided that the Board would discuss and approve committee assignments at the first meeting in January with Committee Chairs being elected by the committee. There was a discussion about when committee meetings should be held. Finance and General Services will continue to utilize the 5PM Monday time. Policy meetings have been advertised for the school year to be held the first Thursday of the month at 8:45. Communications meetings have been advertised alternating morning/evening meetings. All committee meetings will be held in the board conference room and will follow the same protocols as our regular board meeting. Each committee will have citizen advisors as per Board Policy 905. The Human Resources Committee will review citizen advisor applications and will make a recommendation to the full board after consulting with each Committee Chair. Ad Hoc Committees will be formed and approved by the board as necessary.

PSBA's recommended board operating guideline regarding functions of standing committees - A recommendation was made to form an athletics/student activities committee. The Board was unanimous in its support for such a committee but it was decided that the roles and responsibilities of the committee be determined prior to formally adding it to our committee structure. At the next CAIU board meeting Mrs. Sheffey will ask which districts have an athletics/student activities committee.

#### **V. Board Member Communication**

PSBA does not have a recommended board operating guidelines for this agenda item. Both external (board to community) and internal (board member to board member and administration) communications were discussed.

External communications – Dr. Faidley pointed out that there are two systems in place for the community to communicate with the district. This is challenging for the administration and he recommended that the district utilize the 'contact us page' on the website and eliminate the board email. It was pointed out that the 'contact us page' does not work for all operating systems and that we should not eliminate the board email until that problem is fixed. Dr. Faidley also recommended that administration provide a summary of the 'contact us page' board report at the first meeting of every month.

Internal communications – Two types of board member requests for information were identified: information regarding board issues and information regarding district operations. It was recommended that board member requests regarding board issues be directed to the appropriate Committee Chair and requests regarding district operations be directed to the Superintendent. All requests will be prioritized based on need to know (information regarding pending votes will be given top priority) with a response provided

prior to the next board meeting. It was pointed out that email should not be used for deliberation.

## **VI. Board and Committee Meetings**

The Board did not discuss this agenda item. Under agenda item III it was decided that an item will be added to the regular agenda seeking board member input for future agenda items. Board minutes were not discussed.