

The Work Session of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on October 9, 2014 at the HS/MS Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by Board President, Mr. Wolak.

Present on roll call were Bernadette Cuccaro, William Dibble, David Hasenkopf, Ira Krauss, and John Wolak. Also present were Dr. David Miceli, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Deborah Feinberg, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services; James E. Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; Sandra Searing, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision, and 8 people from the public.

Mr. Wolak led in the salute to the flag.

Mr. Wolak read the following statement:

This is a public meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with PL 1975, Chapter 231 in that an annual notice was made in conformance with Section 13 of the Act.

This work session is a public meeting of the Board of Education and no Board action will be taken. The Board will convene to Closed Session no later than 10:00 p.m.

Comments

Mr. Wolak is looking forward to Mr. Maciag's presentation.

2014 College Visitation Presentation

Mr. Maciag started his presentation by thanking the Board for giving him a couple of minutes to give a short recap of his college visits.

Mr. Maciag commented about his aggressive schedule, saying, perhaps a little too aggressive, with 48 colleges on his initial list. He was able to schedule appointments for 42 colleges. He commented that there really were no other days for him to schedule anymore visits, he "simply ran out of days". Mr. Maciag's visits covered 5 states, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and North Carolina including places such as: Cornell, Duke, Muhlenberg, Lehigh, Johns Hopkins, Bloomsburg, Kutztown, Loyola, Villanova and Ithaca, as well as institutions such as Campbell, Louisburg, Methodist and Gwynedd Mercy. There were a variety of institutions on his list. The Programs included group and individual visits. He noted that days were long and included weekends and evening travels.

He suspected that as he continues this endeavor, the average number of college visits during the summer will begin to level out in the high 20's- to low 30's depending on the school calendar. He wanted to note that building relationships with the colleges is not just about the summer visits, but also about the conscious decisions and efforts by the entire department to attend counselor programs offered by colleges and institutions throughout the year.

Mr. Maciag commented that the visits this summer led him to some life lessons and adventures. He was in Syracuse when a tornado hit, although he didn't see the funnel cloud, there were power outages and people were caught in an elevator for a couple of minutes. He noted that the storm impacted the college visit the next day and as a science and weather person it was an intense 15-20 minutes.

Mr. Maciag shared experiencing the joys and challenges of the NYC subway and its many fascinating and interesting people. He even helped an international visitor find her way into the subway even when he was almost as lost as she was.

He commented in participating in a simulated nursing student experience, helping deliver a Sim baby (realistic mannequin), performing the APGAR test (**A**ppearance, **P**ulse, **G**rimace, **A**ctivity, and **R**espiration) and a few other things. He notes as much as he is a science person, he will stick with counseling and will not see himself applying to any medical school anytime soon.

He reported that according to the unofficial college tour counselor Fitbit poll, the average distance walked on any given day of a tour was about 5 miles.

Lastly, he noted that it is possible to still make a wrong turn even with a GPS.

Mr. Maciag shared that through his interactions with admissions and fellow school counselors, the visits reassured him about how we provide guidance services. When he learned about one single parent meeting instead of individual junior conferences or no intentional interaction between student and counselor during a year, it brought him a greater appreciation of the value that is placed on the guidance services and activities our district offers.

One of the additional joys in participating in various group programs he noted, is getting to meet counselors from all over the country. As he shared his plans for the summer with other counselors, they reacted with amazement and awe that he had the support of the Board and this was part of his summer responsibilities. Through these exchanges many of the other counselors wished their districts would support visits in the same way so much so that some jokingly and some not so jokingly wanted to know if we had any openings.

Mr. Maciag shared this information not only to express his personal appreciation for this opportunity but also the wonderful position the Board put him in by supporting the program. He also wanted to demonstrate as a professional, the importance placed on these visits.

Mr. Maciag reported that in terms of applications, one very well known competitive institution willingly shared that minor variations in academic performance will not make or break a college application. He noted that in many cases the meaningful differences in an application are not quantifiable or tangible. It is the passion or voice of the essay, the personal statement, or something on the activity sheet. Colleges continue to encourage "depth over breath" in all aspects of the college application, he expressed their concerns about online applications, students not editing, or putting more effort in them.

He commented that our district has been complimented for a clean crisp, organized, easy to read document, as compared to some that are crowded, overwhelming and difficult to read. One of the items that became clear this summer through his visits was the need to add the

ACT scores to our school profile. He noted that this is a work in progress and will continue throughout the year. He also noted that he already formulated ideas and possibilities and is looking at options.

Mr. Maciag commented on the similarities to last year's college visits. One is that all of the institutions were appreciative of the time and value invested in making sure he was able to have a first hand experience and they wanted him to relay their thanks back to you.

Like last year, some colleges were more receptive than others. One college set up meetings with two vice presidents and wanted him to stay all day. They asked for his help to look at how to better communicate and reach out to counselors, while other colleges gave minimal time and just sent him out on student guided tours and information sessions.

Mr. Maciag commented that more than a few counselors shared that the biggest expense in the admissions office is the travel of its counselors. Colleges are becoming more and more selective about where they visit, so the value of his visits can result in getting colleges to visit NPHS. Many of the colleges stated that because of his visit they in turn try to add our school on to their visitation list. This year so far we will have up to 96 institutions coming to visit NPHS. Although this continues to create issues, it is a good one. He noted that as a department, they continue to seek out a way to make a representative's visit to NPHS more memorable and stand out above the rest.

Mr. Maciag commented that the turnover of college admissions office counselors will continue to be a factor. He noted that in a handful of cases, our area was without a counselor and in one situation it was the counselor's last day. He stated that this is an issue that will never go away, but as with other things information is communicated between outgoing and incoming counselors. He assured that this does not discourage; it motivates him to figure out a way to make the conversation with the admissions counselor more meaningful.

Mr. Maciag commented that one shift at the college level that was continually mentioned throughout the summer was the focus on career development starting freshman year. Many colleges are now giving students increased exposure to the career services office starting with their first semester and concluding with their freshman seminar or class. This seems to be the trend. Mr. Maciag commented will look into the possibility of implementing it in the High school as an opportunity to help students prepare for their college careers.

Mr. Maciag reported that he started developing his initial list for next year which tentatively includes places such as Middlebury, Stockton State, Towson, Salisbury. He is also planning to again participate in the North Carolina program which is run in a three year cycle, each year focusing on a different part of the state. Next summer, may be the summer where he will start to see repeat colleges.

In the two years, he visited 61 colleges including 6 of the 8 Ivy League schools. Mr. Maciag believed the time and energy that he put into these visits has made a better guidance department and for himself, a better educational leader for the counselors and the department. He graciously thanked the board and administrators for their time and support.

Mr. Smith entered the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Comments

Mr. Krauss asked if there were any instances where Mr. Maciag's visit directly affected our students.

Mr. Maciag replied that the college's admissions criteria do not change, but it does change the awareness of the college of our school. They know what to expect from the students, what our expectations are and so therefore, he believes that it has an affect on their decisions.

Mr. Krauss wanted to know if it had an affect on a student's decision to apply or go to the college.

Mr. Maciag replied that there was one instance that it had an affect on a student.

Mr. Hasenkopf asked with 66 schools, did any of the colleges have any sense of "brand" New Providence is, what did they think?

Mr. Maciag replied, a very positive brand. Before his visit they checked our data, how many applicants from our school, the past decisions made and what has changed. The college know the level of students. Mr. Maciag commented that the counselors were amazed that he comes to them to promote our high school.

Mr. Wolak asked if the programs were individual programs or group tours.

Mr. Maciag answered that some schools have programs like the North Carolina programs where 35 counselors go together from all over the county and visit 13 colleges during the program and also they cover the meals and lodging. It's a good program because of the dialogue we have with each other, what students fit and the criteria the schools have.

Mr. Wolak asked if there were any repeat colleges this summer.

Mr. Maciag replied no, but for next summer there will be because of the turnover of college admissions counselors. He commented that he has a list of dozens of new visits. The college counselors have a tough time getting to New Jersey because of funds and they do not control their visits, the directors do. Our visits can make an impact on the decision because of our visits to them.

Mr. Dibble asked what college had the nursing program he visited.

Mr. Maciag replied that it was Campbell Nursing program. They had the most hands on program and the most experience he had with a college during his visits.

Mr. Wolak asked what the biggest impact of the visits for our students.

Mr. Maciag replied that the level of expectation and quality of our students when they see the application is familiar. When they come to visit us, the colleges have a comfort level when they get here and is good for our students to see.

Mr. Wolak asked if there were any deficiencies in our admissions profile.

Mr. Maciag commented that we need to add the ACT scores on the profile. The colleges also expressed issues due to electronic applications, the students do not devote time to cleaning their essays. Grammatically, the essays have been poor. He commented that the guidance department will suggest for the students to edit their essays more and make sure the applications are addressed specifically to the college that they are applying to.

Mr. Wolak thanked Mr. Maciag and expressed that the two years of visits to colleges have been substantial to the school and that he appreciates the hard work he has done on behalf of the students.

Review of October 27, 2014 Agenda

The board reviewed the October 27, 2014 Agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING

There being no other comments from the public, Mr. Wolak declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 8:18 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Mrs. Cuccaro moved to adopt the following resolution:

This body shall on October 9, 2014 at 8:19 p.m. in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, specific matters which may generally be described as follows:

- Personnel
- Student Matters
- Litigation Case #1121440

The minutes of the discussion in closed session of the aforementioned matters may be disclosed to the public after final determination of action has been reached.

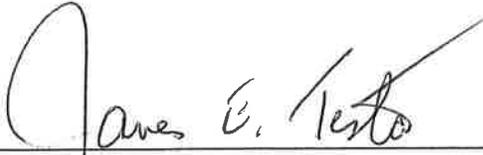
Mr. Krauss seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board reconvened to public session at 9:02 p.m. Mr. Wolak called the Board to order.

Members present were Bernadette Cuccaro, William Dibble, David Hasenkopf, Ira Krauss, Adam Smith, and John Wolak.

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Dibble, the President declared the meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James E. Testa". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

James E. Testa
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
10/9/14