

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
BUDGET MEETING
JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
APRIL 8, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Steven Cerne, Mr. Michael Breeden, Mr. Michael Byrnes, Mr. Colin Campbell, Mr. Scott Henderson, Mrs. Kristen Pinker

ABSENT: Mrs. Barbara Henry

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mrs. Sandy Anzalone, Superintendent; Mrs. Loraine Ingrasci, Interim Director of Finance; Mrs. Barbara Thomasulo, District Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Marisa Fallacaro, Director of Athletics; Mrs. Shawn Johnson, Director of Pupil Personnel; Mrs. Lucinda Karstedt, Director of Information Technology; Miss Patricia Menkiena, Jr./Sr. High School Assistant Principal; Mr. Richard Schaefer, Eden Elementary Principal

At 7:08 p.m., Mr. Cerne called the meeting to order and asked those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Call to
Order**

At 7:09 p.m., Mr. Cerne asked for comments from the public present.

Comments

- ◆ Ms. Karen Fuller, resident, stated that the district is 17% overstaffed, her taxes have increased 100%, yet staff has not decreased with the decline in enrollment. She asked how the Board will reduce staff.
- ◆ Kathy Klopp, teacher, addressed the comments made by Ms. Fuller. She stated that two PE/Health positions were slated to be cut. She is concerned with the risks associated with fewer activities for the students. If they aren't doing something they love, they will be at risk.
- ◆ Olivia Doctor, teacher and life-long resident, is concerned that the Jr. High is often overlooked. Cuts to Math and English would affect students and the high standards the district is trying to achieve.
- ◆ Mike Best, bus driver and resident, spoke on behalf of the transportation department. The transportation department has been consolidating runs and cutting driver time. There is anxiety in the department over rumors of contracting out. The transportation department is willing to help with cost cutting.
- ◆ Amy Francisco, teacher, stated that the district does not meet New York State Education Department requirements for physical education. She feels that cutting PE teachers would be detrimental to a quality education. In addition, she feels that asking classroom teachers to teach PE is not in the best interest of the students for many reasons, including loss of instruction time, responsibility for grading students, and classroom teachers not being educated and certified in skills and sports development.
- ◆ Ellen Kindley, teacher and resident, agreed with Ms. Francisco that classroom teachers are not qualified to teach PE. It would take time away from what they are qualified to teach. It is not beneficial to

academic or instructional time.

- ◆ Rachel Danvir, Physical Education teacher, also agreed that classroom teachers should not be teaching PE. There are state mandates regarding PE and that is why other Districts do not have classroom teachers teaching PE. It comes down to providing a high quality education, which cannot be accomplished with non-certified teachers.
- ◆ Shawn Johnson, Director of Pupil Personnel, spoke on behalf of Miss Menkiena's position as Assistant Principal. Any administrative cuts at this point will have an impact on the children, families and teachers. There would be a direct impact on the students.
- ◆ Rodney Pierce, resident, did not agree with the calculations suggested by Ms. Fuller. He asked about average class sizes, whether they have increased, remained the same or become smaller. He also felt that PE should not be taught by a classroom teacher, as he had teachers who were not certified in some subjects but had to teach them. The quality was not there. Mr. Pierce feels the priority of money vs. quality is askew.
- ◆ Ronald Uhlman, teacher, asked where the District will stand in their goal to be a top ten school after all the proposed cuts take place.
- ◆ Jen Horschel, parent, stated she has embraced the Eden educational community. The teachers are wonderful. She encouraged people to read the Common Core standards and asked everyone to keep an open mind to make the best decisions for the children.

Budget Review

- ◆ Mrs. Ingrasci reviewed draft 5 of the budget. Major changes from the 2012-2013 budget are: adding a second grade teacher, replacing the retired Elementary Teacher, reducing five FTE faculty from the Jr./Sr. High School, eliminating the 5 pm bus runs, updating new contract costs and an increase of \$231,801 in State aid. The current budget gap is \$1,279,635 without the use of reserves.
- ◆ Mr. Cerne stated that he had asked the ETA for a pay freeze, but they declined. He suggested looking at the NY44 Health Trust, which is as good as or better than the current health plan. Switching to this plan could save the district about \$400,000.
- ◆ Mrs. Anzalone stated that a representative from the NY44 Health Trust will be coming to the district to speak to employees about it. The plan cost less, has no co-pays for normal visits and no prescription co-pays for Tier I medicines. There are free supplements for diabetics; and activities, such as gym memberships and golf tournaments, encourage wellness.
- ◆ Mr. Byrnes inquired about using reserves to offset the budget gap. Mr. Cerne stated that using reserves would be a short term fix – one time only.
- ◆ Mrs. Pinker suggested keeping music lessons for 4th graders. Mr. Breeden, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Campbell agreed. Mr. Cerne said to remove that item from the list of potential cuts.
- ◆ The Gifted and Talented position was discussed. It was decided to reduce this position to a .4 FTE.

- ◆ The Librarian position at the Jr./Sr. High School was discussed. The State Education Department requires a full time Librarian in Grades 7-12 where there are 700 or more students enrolled. There is no requirement in the lower grades.
- ◆ Non-mandated budget areas were discussed. Mr. Cerne suggested a 10% cut in athletics and clubs. Mrs. Anzalone suggested restructuring the department chairpersons' stipends. Ms. Fallacaro suggested cutting all non-league games and tournaments, which would trim about 5% from the athletic budget. The teams could do some fundraising. Mr. Cerne agreed to a 5% cut from sports. He would still like to see 10% in other non-mandated areas. Mrs. Anzalone suggested sharing department chairs.
- ◆ Transportation was discussed. Mrs. Pinker stated it would be a safety issue to cut the 7-12 transportation within a 1 – 1.5 mile radius of the school. The savings would not be worth the compromise in safety. Ms. Heckathorn ran the route report for 1.5 miles. She will re-run the report for a 1.0 mile radius.
- ◆ The buildings and grounds cleaner position was discussed. GLP staff voiced concern over losing a cleaner. They do not want the cleanliness of the building to suffer. Mr. Campbell suggested that the administrators make a recommendation.
- ◆ An administrative position reduction was discussed. Mr. Cerne asked for thoughts regarding eliminating the Assistant Principal position. Mrs. Pinker asked what the plan was to make that work continue. Mr. Cerne asked the Board to put more thought into how to make it work.
- ◆ Reducing the health insurance will help to close the gap. Other ideas centered around transportation, possibly increasing taxes by 2.9%, eliminating five teaching positions at the High School – one Social Studies, one English, two PE/Health and one to be determined. If the gap can't be closed, more cuts will have to be made.
- ◆ The district did receive an additional \$231,801 in State Aid.
- ◆ Another budget meeting will have to be scheduled.

Mr. Cerne made a motion, seconded by Mr. Breeden to adjourn. Carried **Adjourned**
unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Thomasulo

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District Clerk