

Chesterfield Township Board of Education
Special Joint Meeting with Chesterfield Township Committee
Wednesday, February 21, 2018
MINUTES

The special joint meeting of the Chesterfield Township Board of Education and the Chesterfield Township Committee was opened at 7:00 p.m., by President Jignesh Shah, with a flag salute and moment of silence.

Welcome to this special joint meeting of the Chesterfield Township Board of Education and the Chesterfield Township Committee. If you would like to comment on the agenda item, please do so during the portion of the agenda entitled, "Public Comments – Agenda Item Only".

During "Public Comment – Agenda Item Only" section, please state your name and address and limit your comments to three minutes. The total length of time for public comment is unrestricted unless a time limit is imposed by the Board President. Please refrain from comments that are likely to invade an individual's privacy rights or are not related to matters before the Board. They will not be permitted.

Roll Call

Board Members present:

Mr. Jignesh Shah, President
Mrs. Laura Bond, Vice President
Dr. Terran Brown
Ms. Christina Hoggan (arrived 7:18 p.m.)
Mrs. Amy Jablonski

Other Administration present:

Mr. Scott Heino, Superintendent
Mr. Patrick Pisano, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Michael Mazzoni, Principal

Roll Call

Chesterfield Township Committee present:

Rita Romeu, Mayor
Jeremy Liedtka, Deputy Mayor
Samuel Davis
Andrea Katz
Denise Koetas-Dale

Open Public Meetings Act Notice

The Chesterfield Township Board of Education has given public notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, in the following manner on February 18, 2018:

- Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Chesterfield Township School.
- Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times and Trenton Times newspapers.
- Filing written notice with the Clerk of Chesterfield Township.
- Filing written notice with the Secretary of this body.
- Mailing written notice to each person who has requested copies of the regular meeting schedule and who has prepaid any charge fixed for such service.

2018-2019 Budget Presentation and School Funding

Mr. Heino and Mr. Pisano presented the 2018-2019 Budget through a power point slide show. Mr. Heino noted that there has been a change to the budget that was previously presented.

Mr. Heino explains school funding in New Jersey through a power point slide show.

School Funding Discussion with Chesterfield Township Committee

Mrs. Katz talked about adequacy and educating the public.

Mr. Shah read a statement about fair funding, important dates and joining the litigation of fair funding.

Mayor Romeu made a statement about fair funding.

Assemblyman Dancer spoke regarding fair funding and continuing the fight we started last year. Last year Chesterfield's funding was almost doubled and we need to continue the process. We want to see the governor succeed.

Mr. Singh, Burlington County Freeholder stated that he is a public school teacher and served as a Burlington Township Board of Education member for 3 years. He said he understands and supports our fight for fair funding.

Mr. Minus-Vincent, Interim Executive County Superintendent was in attendance.

Mrs. Katz read a statement from Senator Stephen Sweeney regarding the fight for fair funding.

Discussion between both Boards:

Mrs. Hoggan stated she thinks we need to keep the communication open by keeping track of what is being done with a calendar that is assessable to all Board members and Township Committee members and eventually have the information go out to the public.

Mrs. Bond stated that we are one community not the old/new Chesterfield. I think it is important for that message to be sent. We need to move into the 21st century and have a twitter account set up by the Superintendent along with the Township Committee so anything that is posted can be seen; we need to keep this process transparent. Everyone's voice matters.

Mrs. Jablonski stated that she echoes what Mrs. Bond said and believes we need to communicate with the public. We need to look at what has worked in the past. Use the media, attend meetings. We have a wealth of talent between the two parties and we need to use it.

Dr. Brown stated that he would like a list of events and then we should delegate these items.

Mr. Liedtka stated that we need to keep the heat on Trenton.

Mrs. Katz stated that the additional \$401,000 we received last year was a direct result of keeping the heat on. There are 65 other districts in New Jersey that are underfunded, it is not just Chesterfield, and there is power in numbers. Social media is very powerful with legislators; we should make a #hashtag for Chesterfield fair funding, something like #the money follows the child.

Mrs. Koetas-Dale stated that she loves Mrs. Hoggan's idea to have one person coordinate the events on a calendar.

Mr. Davis feels the Board of Education is strong and can combat this funding issue.

Mrs. Katz stated that we need to be prepared during the hearing concerning those districts that will be losing money.

Dr. Brown stated that Mrs. Katz is correct. There is going to be tension, governing agencies do not want districts to lose money, but in reality the funding needs to be fair. NJSB is an association that thinks no district should lose money but it is important to fund the kids and districts that have changes in enrollment. Due to the cap on the tax levy we can only raise our taxes 2%. It will be unfortunate for other districts to lose money but we have tripled in size. The money has to follow the child.

Mrs. Jablonski stated that adjustment aid has to go. NJSB needs to stop talking about the losers and winners, if you are at 100% you are not a loser. Most legislators know the adjustment aid is not fair. She stated that stories matter, we need to speak in stories to make an impact. #Hashtag ideas: What is your child not getting in Chesterfield? My child is worth 100% not 19%.

Public Comment – Agenda Item Only

When you address the Board, please approach the podium, state your name and address and limit your comments to three minutes. Please refrain from comments that are likely to invade an individual's privacy rights or are not related to matters before the Board. They will not be permitted.

Jennifer Cavallaro from the Kingsway Fair Funding Action Committee and former Woolwich Township committeewoman stated that she was here because Kingsway and Woolwich Township have been in the same situation as Chesterfield for the past 10 years. She explained how they rallied together and partnered with their local township, they lined the state house halls and they got to the governor and legislators. Your students shouldn't be worth any less. Chesterfield is amazing and is known at the state house in Trenton. We do not know what the governor is going to do but we need to be ready to mobilize. She stated that Andrea Katz has been an amazing help to them. When everyone partners together we are stronger in power and force.

Chris from the Kingsway Fair Funding Action Committee stated that the uncapped aid is two billion dollars. He is not sure where the governor will find the money. He feels the governor should be reallocating the 700 million dollars in overfunded money from the schools that are being overfunded. We need to partner in this fight.

Vanessa Alfano stated that our fight has just begun and we need to fight for all the money owed to us. We need to do more. Get the new board members involved. Send things home with the children. I am not happy with what has been done so far.

Shelly Varias stated that Mrs. Jablonski said our kids are affected by the lack of funding. Shelly asked can you tell us what our children are lacking. Tell us what we are going to have to cut. Tell us what we could have if we had the money that is owed to us. We need your help to tell us what don't have so we can have a voice.

Jackie Halaw stated that she could answer that question. In Old Bridge they receive 117% of state funding and they approved 2 assemblies for \$5,000, and a 10 year license for their math program at \$800,000. Jackson Township receives 134% of state funding they just approved \$10,500 for two days of teacher professional development and the district also pays the full amount for field trips. Manalapan school district receives 299% of state funding and they have Chromebook for all students and just approved 18 staff members to attend a conference in Orlando, Florida at a cost of \$36,000.

Anita Dowlet stated that this was her first meeting and it is really emotional. I cannot believe I pay over \$13,000 in taxes and I had no idea this was going on. You need to tell us what we can do to help.

Stephanie Santoro asked if the meetings can be live streamed to get the message out. Can we use social media? What Jackie talked about really resonated with me. How can we quickly and tactfully get the message out to the community?

Shamita Kumar thanked the administrators in the room and thanked Mr. Heino for all the work he puts in for the district. She asked why it has taken someone from outside our community to thank Andrea Katz for all the work she has done, she is the only one we hear from. We don't hear from the board or see them at anything.

Jessica Wszolek stated that communication is an issue. We do not get anything home regarding fair funding, we need to see the paper coming home in the back pack. Anything we get about fair funding is coming from Mrs. Jablonski or Mrs. Katz.

Maggie Brittain thanked Andrea Katz for all she has done and said please look for our video "what about us" by Pink. This video needs to be shared.

School Funding Planning

Mr. Shah discusses the action that needs to be taken:
Legislative – meetings, letter writing, phone calls.
Communication – calendar
Community outreach – working with outside groups
Messaging – common message/hashtags

1. A motion was made by Ms. Hoggan and seconded by Dr. Brown to approve a joint calendar for informational purposes for the Board of Education and the Chesterfield Township Committee that will be overseen by Mr. Heino. A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

2. A motion was made by Mr. Shah and seconded by Ms. Hoggan to approve a legislative subcommittee consisting of two Chesterfield Board of Education Members and two Chesterfield Township Committee Members. A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

3. A motion was made by Ms. Hoggan and seconded by Mrs. Bond to approve a messaging/communication subcommittee. A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

4. A motion was made by Ms. Hoggan and seconded by Mrs. Jablonski to approve a community outreach subcommittee for Fair Funding. A call of the roll indicated an affirmative vote. All ayes. No nays. Motion carried.

Mr. Shah stated that the subcommittees will be in place until July 2018.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Hoggan at 9:26 p.m. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick Pisano
Business Administrator/Board Secretary