

**WORK STUDY MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2016-MINUTES**

**HEMPSTEAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WORK STUDY MEETING  
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The work study meeting of the Hempstead Public Schools board of Education was held in the high school auditorium, 201 President Street, Hempstead, New York 11550. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. moved by Trustee Figueroa and seconded by Trustee Gates. Trustee Johnson arrived at 7:09 P.M. The items for discussion were the scholarship fund, transportation, forensic audit, text books and the Superintendent's final remarks. This was a working meeting no formal action was taken by the Board of Education. There was no public participation.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Maribel Touré	President
Melissa Figueroa	Trustee
David B. Gates	Trustee
LaMont E. Johnson	Trustee

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Gwendolyn Jackson	Vice President
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**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Fadhilika Atiba-Weza	Interim Superintendent of Schools
Calvin Wilson	Business Consultant
Gene Levenstien	Interim Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations
Dr. Rodney Gilmore	Associate Superintendent for Human Resources
James Clark	Assistant Superintendent for Secondary C & I
Regina Armstrong	Assistant Superintendent for Elementary C & I
Patricia Wright	District Clerk

The first item of discussion:

**Scholarship Fund**

No students have presented awardee letters; no records that state the Village Clerk is overseeing the scholarship on behalf of the village. The district did provide scholarships from this fund during the 2011-2012 school year. District Administrators or Official have not received email or any other form of correspondence from parents. Trustee Jackson stated a student in her neighborhood previously received a scholarship. Various Board Members have received inquiries from individuals in the community who contributed the fund. Verbal inquiries only, but nothing in writing stating that they want the district to return monies. No correspondence has been received in district requesting to return monies. Question from Trustee Figueroa: Has the village requested for the district to

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use in any other manner? Response was: Received a letter from the village clerk in June 2016, constructing a resolve on behalf of the district as to what they feel should be done with the money. Along with two resolutions prepared by the village clerk. The District did not honor or take any action on the village clerk's resolutions. The board of Education suggested to start a committee to determine criteria for the students to receive the scholarship monies. Should monies be held until the end of the year? Trustee Figueroa suggested the committee should determine how and when the monies should be used and/or how it will be distributed. Trustee Gates stated that he was in agreement to establish a committee due to past actions that did not dictate how monies were supposed to be given; he also stated that he feels strongly to have the students who are expecting the monies receive it. He does not want to penalize the students because the process was flawed. Trustee Touré stated the issue with this is because the students cannot provide proof that they were the actual students awarded the scholarships. The specifics of the scholarship states it is supposed to be given to graduating students. Trustee Gates stated the policy states when there is an inquiry, the district must do their due diligence in investigating the situation. Trustee Touré said that according to the attorneys it stipulates the students must be a graduating student. The process must be done in accordance to law. The Business consultant Mr. Wilson stated no one has contacted him or submitted paperwork to attest they were awarded the scholarship monies, although the district has made this request of them. Trustee Gates inquired to establish a date for the students to respond. Trustee Touré stated not pass Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> because the district has to obtain the paperwork. Trustee Gates said this date is amenable. All of the Trustees agreed to extend the deadline. A community member present wants to know how will people be informed? Dr Atiba Weza responded the district may need to propose it next week; publicize on website and send letter to village informing them of the deadline; can also solicit a list of awardees so district will be aware of who is entitled to the monies. Deadline is extended to Sept. 30, 2016.

Suggestions for committee: Trustee Touré suggested 2 guidance counsellors; Trustee Gates suggested non-partisan should be on committee to be fair in the vetting process. Other suggestions: student, social worker; extend an invitation to a member of the village (Trustee Toure stated she did not feel that this is a good idea; we need to stick to those who know the students). Trustee Gates and the Superintendent both suggested to use the committee already in place in the high school, but create the criteria that the committee will be used for this function. Trustee Gates inquired for clarity is the district going to explore using the HS committee? Trustee Figueroa suggested that the District look in to committee that already exist that to deal with scholarship. Dr. Atiba Weza will speak to the high school principal regarding the names of those who serve on the HS committee. Dr. Atiba stated board should start thinking about what type of students should receive the funds, in order for the chosen students reflect the boards wishes. Trustee Figueroa inquired an approximate timeframe for responding to criteria? Trustee Gates responded and suggested the timeframe of most scholarships applications should be submitted; and stated besides academics, the district should look at community service work as well.

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Grades; Community Service is all go but Trustee Figueroa stated the board should spend time thinking about this prior to establishing categories. Trustee Touré state the GPA should be at least 75. Trustee Gates suggested to come up with 2-3 different scholarships to tap into students who may not necessarily be eligible to receive a scholarship based on grades.

Trustee Figueroa asked for all committees in the district and the members. She still has not received them. Wants to know all committees that exist in the district. Trustee Gates stated that each category should be weighed and add up the scores to determine the winner. Trustee Figueroa asked how many scholarships do we award?

**Transportation Crisis**

How is mileage determined? The District needs to make sure they are following the State guidelines. Mileage requirement is dictated by SED law. What software did the use to determine mileage? Mr. Wilson stated that Map Quest is the dominant means the district is using to determine mileage.

Trustee Figueroa stated that all students receiving transportation now should receive it for as long as they are at the same school. Trustee Touré stated we cannot break the law; so unfortunately, if they do not meet the criteria, we cannot continue to provide the service.

The question was posed; what is the deadline for filing for transportation? Dr. Atiba - The law is April 1; however, the rule is if there are seats on the bus you are permitted to make allowances. Place links on website as to the transportation requirements and send letters to all parents as to the guidelines regarding transportation. (Now and between April 1<sup>st</sup>, we must put the word out, so come next April there will be no surprises.)

Parents requested that the district to put information online and be able to upload it back to the district. Should also be placed on the district calendar. Start blast on website in December. Mass mail drop with final notice.

Trustee gates wants an analysis of whether or not there has been an increase or decrease of students receiving transportation. Mr. Wilson responded he will not be able to obtain that information because there is no data base with this information.

**Forensic Audit**

Trustee Figueroa introduce a resolution to undertake a forensic audit starting back with the year of 2006. She also is asking the Board to consider adopting the resolution at the next business meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Trustee Johnson stated the he had previously suggested a forensic audit and the Board was advised by counsel that it was not necessary. Seeking a RFPs in order for Board of Education to collaboratively agree

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on selecting a CPA team. Trustee Gates inquired what did the district do with the last Comptroller's report and steps taken to address it.

**Superintendent's final remarks**

Will put system in place to address these issues:

Transportation – need someone to handle this matter during the peak times

Textbooks – has a system to put in place; overtime was needed in this area; need additional staff plus part-timers during peak time

Need to start prioritizing his time to address the major issues that are happening in the district; this keeps him from immediately responding to the Board's request.

High School – Met 10 out of the 11 indicators; Middle School is still under watchful eye; reported HS graduation rate as 51%.

Horizontal and vertical alignment across the schools

Draft of Core Value and Beliefs – he will send this information to the Board and his goal is to establish trust and transparency with the he community

Will provide a breakdown of the 2012 Cohort data; will also give the Board goals to be met for this year by high school.

**Trustee Figueroa moved, seconded by Trustee Gate to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 P.M.**

**MOTION**  
Meeting adjourned

**YES 4**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted:

Patricia Wright  
District Clerk