

NORTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

FEBRUARY 20, 2008 –SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

MINUTES

Board in Attendance: Mrs. Bishop, Mr. Hubert, Mrs. Boujoukos,
Mr. Cunningham, Mrs. Grosheider, Mrs. Ludwig,
Mr. Pagone, Mr. Schwartzmier, Mr. Shuckrow*

*Arrived at 8:12 p.m.

Board Absent: None.

Students in Attendance: Ms. Czerniewski; Mr. Hackett

Also in Attendance: Dr. Green, Mr. Lucas (Solicitor), Mr. Botti,
Mrs. Ed, Mr. Gaertner, Dr. Hirsch, Mr. Hopkins,
Dr. Steinhauer, Dr. Wheat, Mrs. Ryan (Secretary)

MST in Attendance: None.

The Board of School Directors of the North Allegheny School District convened for a **Special Meeting/Work Session** on **Wednesday, February 20, 2008** in the **Board Room** of the **Central Administrative Offices**.

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Prior to the meeting, the following students were honored for their achievements:

Miss Pennsylvania Teen USA, 2008
Elliot Griffin

2007 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards
Gold Key Region-at-Large, Self Portrait Drawing
and
Gold Key Region-at-Large, Sculpture
Anne Judkis

Fall 2007 Knowledge Master Open
Knowledge Master Open, Junior High Division, Fall 2007
3rd Place in the State and 8th Place in the Nation
Bryan Caswell
Steven Cunningham
Marina Fang

Rebecca Fritsch
 Richard Gayler
 Portia Isaac
 Kenneth Kraynik
 Adam Majewski
 Benjamin Peters
 Jonathan Timcheck

Knowledge Master Open, Middle School Division, Fall 2007

1st Place in the State and 8th Place in the Nation

Amanda Adams	Richard Kotermanski
Jake Adzema	Connor Phillips
Katerina Borisov	Kelly Pifer
Kaitlin Campbell	Jacob Plichta
Matthew Caswell	Benjamin Sauder
Elizabeth Furiga	Mehrgol Tiv
Benjamin Gibbs	Graham Walker
William Gingrich	Jacob Wessel
Avanti Gole	Benjamin Ziolkowski
Emma Gross	Joey Zou

Forensics Competitions

Montgomery Bell Academy

2008 Southern Bell Forum Extemporaneous Speaking Round Robin X

7th Place in the Nation

John (Jack) Grennan

Laird-Lewis Invitational

3rd Place in the Nation

Nazih El-Khatib

Claire Kairys

PIAA Class Cross Country Championships

3rd Place in the State

Christopher Aland	Timothy Crammond	Edward Grieser
William Appman	Forrest Crellin	Ian Hall
Luke Badaczewski	Domenic Del Nano	Christopher Haseleu
Eric Balaban	Samuel Dunlop	Douglas Healy
Michael Baldonieri	Everett Emery	Matthew Heckmann
J. Patrick Baum	Nicholas Evers	Michael Heckmann
Brian Bayer	Evan Farrell	Brian Hepfinger
Chase Broussard	Andrew Franze	Bryan Hogg
Jay Cadwallader	Peter Gayler	Jake Holdcroft
Nathan Carlin	Nicholas Gigliotti	Joshua Honhold
Jonathan Clendaniel	Ryan Gil	Adam Jacob
Quinn Conley	Andrew Goehring	Matthew Jacob

William Judkis	Daniel O'Brien	Thomas Senneway
Jackson Kernion	Daniel Ochs	Mark Silvester
Dylan Kielman	Kevin Ordons	Logan Smith
Aaron Libonati	Srikanth Palanisamy	Steven Smith
Maxwell Mellott	Shane Patterson	Michael Smolinski
Nicholas Minich	Benjamin Peters	Vincent Stypula
Ryan Mistick	Michael Porcelli	Justin Taylor
Patrick Morgan	Matthew Robertson	James Walton
Robert Nellis	Gregory Sauer	Edward Wu

SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

Mrs. Bishop called the meeting to order at **7:49 p.m.** and all stood and recited *The Pledge of Allegiance*. Mrs. Bishop announced that the Board presented Distinguished Achievement Awards prior to the meeting honoring approximately 100 students. She mentioned that prior to the awards, the Board met in Executive Session to interview a candidate for an Administrative position. She announced that the Board met in Executive Session at the conclusion of the meeting on January 23, 2008 to discuss potential litigation items. There will be no Executive Session after this meeting.

SPECIAL MEETING VOTING ITEM

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Green mentioned that there were close to 60 candidates for this position

I. Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education and Curriculum

On motion by Mrs. Boujoukos, seconded by Mrs. Grosheider, the Board approved the appointment of Dr. William P. Stropkaj to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education and Curriculum at an annual salary of \$98,900, prorated due to date of hire. The salary shall be adjusted annually as directed by the Administrative Compensation and Performance Plan. The effective date of hire shall be determined upon release of his present employer.

Dr. Stropkaj holds his B.S. in Secondary Physics and Math Education and his M.S. in Educational Administration from Duquesne University. He has his Ed.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Stropkaj taught Science and Math, first in the Sto-Rox School District, and then at Deer Lakes. For the past 12 years, he has been employed by the Montour School District as an Assistant Middle School Principal and, most recently, as an Elementary Principal. Dr. Stopkaj is certified in Physics, Math and as a Principal. He also holds the Pennsylvania Superintendent Letter of Eligibility.

Roll Call Vote. Results: 8-Yes; 0-No. Motion Carried.

Mrs. Bishop congratulated Dr. Stropkaj and said that we are all looking forward to working with him. On behalf of the Board and the community, Mrs. Bishop extended a warm welcome to Dr. Stropkaj and he received a round of applause.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

No Speakers.

AASA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Mrs. Bishop shared with the Board and the community a brief report of the recent opportunity that she, Mrs. Grosheider and Dr. Green attended and presented at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Conference on Education in Tampa over the past weekend. Their topic was "The Governance Mosaic" which addressed how a positive, collaborative relationship between the Superintendent and the Board has contributed to high student achievement at North Allegheny.

Mrs. Bishop said it was a valuable professional development experience and felt that it was a way to stay on the cutting edge and felt that it was just as important, if not more so, for Board Members who govern the District to have their finger on the pulse of the latest developments and trends of public education. She was impressed with the Keynote Speaker, Daniel Pink, who spoke about the conceptual age and the left brain skills and how necessary they are, as are the right brain skills of artistry, empathy and big-picture thinking. We need to stimulate curiosity and imagination. She was proud that North Allegheny has been selected as the Pennsylvania nominee for the 2008 Kennedy Center Alliance and NSBA National Award for Exemplary Arts Education in a public school district. We need to educate the whole child and to integrate the arts into the academic classes. Global learning was also a discussion that was invaluable to emphasize skills for living and staying connected in this world. Mrs. Bishop said these are all timely items as we look at our Strategic Plan and End Results.

Mrs. Grosheider also spoke of Daniel Pink, who was a dynamic speaker. Mrs. Grosheider focused on sessions that dealt with communication within a school environment. There was a panel discussion that was intriguing in which a large school district, Miami-Dade School District, and a small school district in Wisconsin, Hamilton School District, were featured. They both attributed communication and improved school achievement to being able to set up a strategic communication program.

Hamilton School District did a survey of their community members about their perceptions and expectations of the school district and were able to develop a very comprehensive strategic plan and began moving toward improved student achievement. They created a buy-in with the community. She felt that we have done the same here at North Allegheny and the Board and the Superintendent are united in terms of moving forward on student achievement. She said that our community expects and demands it.

Miami-Dade is a different kind of a school district with over 300,000 students, and yet one of the things they decided to do was create a comprehensive program of communication. The Superintendent meets with a number of CEO's on a monthly basis in the Miami-Dade area for the

same reason that Hamilton did...to get buy-in and support from the community for what needs to happen in the schools.

Another important session that Mrs. Grosheider attended was on *No Child Left Behind* and felt it was very compelling to hear from Superintendents from districts where there were high levels of poverty and to understand the difficulties that they encounter in trying to move achievement levels forward. There are many concerns. AASA wants to build its agenda around the following statement: "Given appropriate instruction and sufficient time to master material, all kids can succeed." When you give a high-stakes test that has to be taken in a certain grade level, it may not be appropriate for some kids; they may need to take it at a later time, and it is an interesting argument for districts that are struggling.

* Mr. Shuckrow arrived at this time at 8:12 p.m.

There were also sessions in which the environment was discussed and how students themselves have gotten involved in clean-up efforts.

Dr. Green said that the presentation that they gave began a year ago when Superintendents were asked for topics that would be of interest to a national audience. Dr. Green submitted a proposal on the relationship of the Board and the Superintendent and she was proud that they were chosen. Their topic was "The Governance Mosaic: How A Highly Effective Superintendent/School Board Relationship Fostered National Recognition and Top Achievement in an Era of No Child Left Behind." Their presentation was compelling and Dr. Green was proud of the Board Members and their perspective of their relationship with the Superintendent, which is a close and positive relationship. They developed a checklist that would be beneficial to other districts and the audience sensed something uniquely special that has taken place at North Allegheny.

All felt that the conference was very worthwhile and they hope they will be able to share it someday with the rest of the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENT ON BEEF RECALL

Mr. Botti gave the following statement on the concerns of the recent beef recall:

As you know by now, the USDA has recalled over 143,000,000 pounds of beef that was produced by a company in California.

The USDA supplied approximately 25% of that beef to the national school lunch program. Across the country, the beef was placed on hold on February 1, 2008, and then the government recalled it last weekend.

Our District has approximately 230 cases of that beef to be returned. We are holding it in storage awaiting instructions from the government regarding how to properly return it. The District has been using an alternate supplier of ground beef since we were informed of this situation at the beginning of February 2008.

Although the media is covering this story heavily, there have been no reported health concerns related to this recall. The situation is being handled in an appropriate and controlled manner.

STRATEGIC PLAN END RESULTS

Dr. Green introduced the report briefly, which was delivered by members of the Executive Council. This report specifically addressed a review of the overall process used in developing the Strategic Plan End Results for 2007-2013, which have been identified as measurable statements that will enable the six Strategies to be accomplished. It then detailed the six to ten End Results that were identified for each Strategy.

Presenters were: Dr. Arleen Wheat, Dr. Timothy Steinhauer, Mr. Robert Devlin, Mrs. Joy Ed, Mr. Roger Botti, and Dr. Alice Hirsch. North Allegheny goes beyond the requirements of the state in terms of the development of the Strategic Plan. The End Results will be staggered over the next three years so that we can implement them successfully. At the end of those three years, a new set of End Results will be developed for the remaining years of the new Strategic Plan.

The Six Strategies are:

1. We will enhance the sense of community District-wide.
2. We will deliver and continuously improve a comprehensive, sequential and challenging curriculum that meets the needs of all students enhanced by a full range of co-curricular and extra curricular activities.
3. We will implement evolving best practices and ensure accountability in all aspects of District operations.
4. We will foster a safe, caring, and positive environment that encourages responsible decision-making.
5. We will focus on being one of the top 100 school districts in the nation.
6. We will integrate advanced technology into all areas of the School District where appropriate.

Mrs. Bishop asked for a round of applause for the presenters and said it very gratifying to see how the strategies are being brought to life. It is a living, breathing document and the core of everything that we do at North Allegheny.

Questions/Comments from the Board

Several Board members made suggestions regarding issues they would like to see addressed when the Action Plans corresponding to these End Results are developed.

Mr. Shuckrow suggested with respect to Curriculum that we look at Foreign Languages at a younger level. He read a statistic recently that said by the year 2050, 30% of our Country will be speaking Spanish, and he thinks this is something we need to address.

Mr. Shuckrow also commented on Strategy #3 and Best Practices, and pre-K and full-day Kindergarten. According to a chart that the Board received, he said that we were looking at

establishing a team to look at this in 2009-2010 and he thinks we should establish a team in 2008-2009 for possible implementation in 2009-2010.

With respect to Strategy #4, a Safe, Caring and Positive Environment, **Mr. Shuckrow** said that he did not see anything about looking at examining drug and alcohol issues, as well as security issues. He said we are already doing things in those areas, but he thinks that these are important issues where more work can be done.

Mrs. Bishop said the Strategies and End Results are written in a very broad fashion. In Curriculum, we have an End Result that deals with Globalization into all subject areas including Elementary World Language, if that is what we choose to do.

With respect to drug and alcohol issues and security issues, **Mrs. Bishop** said that is already being addressed in a broad manner in some of the End Results in Strategy #4, like promoting mental health and well-being in the school community, and the continuing of training of District personnel in crisis preparedness. There are groups already in place.

Dr. Green said it is part of fostering responsible decision-making skills for students. Teams crafted broad End Results that would be able to have topics that would come under these concepts. So the topics that Mr. Shuckrow suggested would be incorporated into the Work Plan itself.

Mr. Shuckrow said that Dr. Hirsch explained that the End Results were supposed to be specific, and he is not saying that we are not doing some of these things; however, he wanted to talk about specific things that are important and wanted to make suggestions as to when they are going to be done.

Mrs. Boujoukos agreed that the Strategic Plan is a living, breathing document and we follow through on the Strategies. She also mentioned Foreign Languages and said it is not listed for Curriculum Review. She has not seen Foreign Language Review since she has been on the Board, which has been six years. She asked when we can expect to see it.

Dr. Hirsch said it will follow 2010-2011. Foreign Languages at the lower levels was suggested to the members of the Strategy teams and issues such as scheduling at the elementary level and the fact that there would be a Curriculum Review around World Languages were some of the reasons that they did not want to put those into a direct End Result statement. They can come out in the Action Steps that relate to an End Result as it is implemented. Even though it is not stated, it does not preclude the fact that it can happen.

Mrs. Boujoukos hopes that we can bring Foreign Languages to the elementary level because children will learn it better than older adolescents and she hopes that we look at different languages and the possibility of distant learning and online learning, which could be a very exciting possibility and very relevant in the global world today.

Dr. Green said that is part of the Wide Area Network that we would like to do.

Mrs. Boujoukos was surprised to see in Strategy #2 an End Result that stated “to provide additional extra curricular and/or co-curricular opportunity to connect our students to the school community.”

She said the more connected they are to the school, the less likely they are to get into some of the other problems like drug and alcohol. She asked, however, what more can we do and wondered about that discussion.

Dr. Hirsch said that there are students who just are not connected to the school and team members felt it was very important to engage these students and to motivate every single student.

Dr. Green said part of their discussion was prompted by a statement that Mrs. Boujoukos had made earlier about youngsters who are not involved in any activities and the fear that we are losing some of them. It was a significant question, and it needs to be studied.

Mrs. Boujoukos said she was excited to see in Strategy #3 “to explore operations that would enhance environmental awareness.” This is something important for the students to learn for their future.

Mr. Devlin responded that the Action Team would set the specifics, but there are so many activities already going on in the District that center on environmental awareness and a lot of them came from student-interest. We as a District have to take a look at our own green practices and how we operate.

Mrs. Grosheider commented that one way to be more environmentally friendly is to go with paperless School Board meetings. There has to be a better way to do this for the students and the staff.

Mr. Pagone commented on Strategy #4 and would like to see the District expand on the drug and alcohol awareness programs, similar to the DARE Programs, as well as look at a School Resource Officer like those who exist in other districts. He thinks we can do a better job than what we are currently doing.

Mrs. Bishop said overall the Strategies and End Results will provide us with an excellent road map for us to follow over the next several years. She thanked the presenters and hoped that the feedback from the Board would add to the components as we move forward to the Action Steps.

The presenters received a round of applause and Mrs. Bishop thanked Dr. Green for coordinating the process.

CALENDAR AND AGENDA

Mrs. Bishop reviewed the Agenda for this meeting and the Calendar for February and March 2008. At this meeting, the Board will have a presentation on the Strategic Plan End Results. At the February 27, 2008 meeting, the report will be the Army Reserve Property presentation. On March 19, 2008, the report will be the Diversity Report and no reports are scheduled for the Regular Meeting on March 26, 2008.

REVIEW BOARD FOLDER

The Board reviewed all items as contained in the Board Folder for February 27, 2008

Discussion

During review of the **Curriculum Report**, it was noted that the Business, Computer, and Information Technology Curriculum - Grades 6-12 will be offered for approval by the Board. There were comments about the Keyboarding class that will be offered in 6th grade and how it will be implemented. It was suggested that a Course Progression Chart be added at some point to the Program of Studies so that students who are interested in a certain area can have a pathway to follow. It was also suggested that some of the wonderful courses that are offered be counted as graduation requirements to make these courses more available to the students and their goal objectives.

During review of the **Property and Supplies Report**, the Board will also vote next week on a proposal from a consultant to oversee Newman Stadium turf replacement and track repair. Both Mr. Gaertner and Mr. Bob Bozzuto, Athletic Director, were available to make a presentation and answer questions on this topic in terms of the heavy usage of the Stadium, the current problems with the existing turf, and why the use of a consultant is necessary. The turf and track have to be done at the same time and Mr. Gaertner reviewed recent pictures of the field and the wear that has taken place. Real grass is the best surface but it does not hold up to the intense usage that our stadium gets. A consultant is necessary because of the knowledge that they would bring to the project and we need the very best advice that we can get for this investment. There is money in our NASH Construction Fund and it would not impact our current budget.

Mrs. Bishop thanked Mr. Bozzuto for coming to the meeting to answer the questions, as well as Mr. Gaertner.

During review of the **Student Activities Report**, Ms. Czerneiowski said that next week students will go to the DECA Conference in Hershey, PA, for which she is a participant. The Board wished her luck. Last Saturday was the MORP dance and it was successful. The girls had the option of buying artificial boutonnieres, instead of real flowers, and it benefited the charity, Invisible Children. Mr. Hackett said the Dance-a-Thon was successful and they raised nearly \$6000, which amounted to two wishes for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The Key Club has 15 members going to the State Convention at the end of February and they usually bring back many rewards.

Mr. Shuckrow highlighted Mrs. Boujoukos who was featured in the *North Hills Community Outreach Newsletter* and said that she and another individual were in charge of the holiday toy shop, and the Board congratulated her for her involvement.

During review of the **School Board Report**, there was also some ongoing conversation about the A.W. Beattie Construction project regarding a resolution that is being presented for consideration next week. The Board is still waiting for the answers to some outstanding questions regarding the bond issuance and they are hoping for an opinion from the Beattie Solicitor that would arrive prior to the vote.

During review of the **Superintendent's Report**, Mrs. Boujoukos commented on a recent visit she took to Ingomar Elementary School since there were seminars that were in the Board Folder pertaining to the Accountability Block Grant. Mrs. Boujoukos was invited by Dr. Chmara to visit a first grade classroom at IES in January and she observed the students working on "Word Building." She said the students were incredibly enthusiastic and it was clearly a very effective methodology. She appreciated the opportunity to see the Accountability Block Grant funds in action.

Dr. Green gave her Good News Report, as follows:

- ★ **Mr. Brian Miller, Principal of CMS**, has been awarded the 2007-2008 Outstanding Administrator Award by the Pennsylvania Middle School Association (PMSA). His award will be presented at the PMSA Professional Development Institute in State College on March 16, 2008. PMSA established the Outstanding Administrator Award in 2004 to honor Administrators who value, understand and support effective middle level education that promotes learning for young adolescents. Mr. Miller was nominated for this award by District colleague, Mrs. Tammy Andreyko. The application packet included a resume, essay, and reference letters from various stakeholders, including the Superintendent, a Carson teacher, a student, and a parent.

In addition, **Mr. Miller** has been selected as the recipient of the **2008 Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals (PAESSP) Middle Level Principal of the Year**. As a result, he will now represent the state of Pennsylvania in the 2008 National Middle Level Principal of the Year competition. The PAESSP/MetLife/NASSP Principal of the Year program began in 1993 as a means to recognize outstanding middle level and high school principals. Mr. Miller was also nominated for this award by Mrs. Andreyko. The three categories of criteria for selection are Collaborative Leadership, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and Personalization.

- ★ **Mrs. Judy Braden, School Counselor at MMS**, was recently named one of 56 semi-finalists selected out of a group of 300 nominees from across the nation in the American School Counselor Association's School Counselor of the Year program. Mrs. Braden is one of only four semifinalists from Pennsylvania. This program recognizes the best-of-the-best School Counselors who are running a topnotch, comprehensive school counseling program at the elementary, middle, or high school level.
- ★ **Mrs. Joy Ed, Manager of Communications and Public Relations**, has been invited to present at the **National School Public Relations Association Seminar**, which will be held in Washington, D.C. this summer. More than 700 school public relations/communications professionals, school superintendents, principals and school board members from across the country, from Canada, and from overseas schools attend this conference for four days of professional development sessions. The theme of this year's conference is "**The Power of Transparency and Integrity in Communication.**" Mrs. Ed's session will focus on project and message management for communications professionals and will be titled "**Become a Master Juggler: You've Got Multiple Projects, Events, Media, Audiences, Messages and You CAN Make It All Work!**"

Mrs. Ed received a round of applause for the work that she did on this proposal and for the work that she does all the time as our PR person.

Mrs. Bishop added a note of accomplishment regarding Dr. Green to conclude the meeting. Dr. Green has been invited to become a member of a 20-person Advisory Panel for “Arts in Our Schools,” a study being conducted by students in the Master of Arts Management Program of Carnegie Mellon University’s H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management. The Board congratulated her on this excellent opportunity.

SPEAKERS

No Speakers.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Bishop adjourned the meeting at *10:37 p.m.* The Board did not meet in Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Mary Ryan, Secretary
North Allegheny School Board