

NORTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 16, 2009 – WORK SESSION

MINUTES

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

*Mr. Cunningham arrived at **7:08 p.m.**

Board Absent: None.

Students in Attendance: Ms. Curti – NASH; Mr. Radermacher - NAI

Also in Attendance: Dr. Green, Mr. Maiello (Solicitor), Mr. Botti,
Mr. Gaertner, Ms. Gaetano, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Ed,
Dr. Miller, Dr. Stropkaj, Dr. Wheat, Mrs. Ryan (Secretary)

Others in Attendance: None.

The Board of School Directors of the North Allegheny School District convened for a **Work Session** on **Wednesday, September 16, 2009** in the **Board Room** of the **Central Administrative Offices**.

SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

Mrs. Grosheider called the meeting to order at **7:01 p.m.** and all stood and recited *The Pledge of Allegiance*.

CALENDAR AND AGENDA

Mrs. Grosheider reviewed the Agenda for this meeting and the Calendar for September and October 2009. At this meeting, the Board will receive a semi-annual Human Resources Update. She also mentioned that the Board will be meeting in Executive Session at the conclusion of this meeting to discuss a personnel matter. At the conclusion of the meeting on August 26, 2009, the Board also met in Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. At next week's Regular Meeting, the Board will be presented with two reports: the Capital Funding Plan and the Enrollment and Facilities Report. At the October 21, 2009 Work Session, we will begin with Distinguished Achievement Awards. There are no reports scheduled for that meeting. On October 28, 2009, the Board will be presented with the Student Achievement Report. Mrs. Grosheider commented that the Board always looks forward to this report each year because the news has been so very good the past several years and they are proud of the District. She encouraged community members to attend this meeting to hear this report.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

No speakers.

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Dr. Green explained that twice a year the School District shares with the School Board the overview of the employees that we have within our School District.

Ms. Joy Gaetano, Human Resources Director, presented the report of the employee composition of the North Allegheny School District.

- Administrators - 37 (1 vacancy; 2 Administrators on sabbatical)
- Professional Employees - 636 (610 full-time; 26 part-time)
- Paraprofessionals - 199
- Confidentials - 36
- Facilities - 82
- Transportation - 112

- TOTAL - 1,102** (increase of 22 from last year)

Ms. Gaetano also mentioned that 60% of our Professional Staff have obtained their Masters Degrees, which is a high number. She also compared staff ratios among several school districts including Teacher-to-Student; Administrator-to-Student; Administrator-to-Teacher, and Total Student Enrollments. North Allegheny falls a little below mid-line on the chart.

Questions/Comments from the Board

Mrs. Boujoukos asked about the diversity initiative regarding newly-hired teachers.

Ms. Gaetano replied that we successfully hired one diversity candidate, an Asia-Pacific Islander, who was hired in our Special Education Department at NASH and who is certified in a number of core content areas.

Mrs. Grosheider thanked Ms. Gaetano for the report and said the Board will look forward to the next report at mid-year.

REVIEW OF BOARD FOLDER

The Board reviewed all items as contained in the Board Folder for the Regular Meeting on September 23, 2009. There was brief discussion.

During review of the **Student Activities Report**, Mrs. Grosheider asked the Students Representatives to share a little of their background with those in attendance.

Brian Radermacher is a Sophomore at NAI. He is involved with Student Council, Junior Classical League and he plays on the alternate Frisbee Team. He is also involved with the Orchestra and Boy Scouts.

Brenna Curti is a Senior at NASH. She is being kept busy with college applications. She plays Lacrosse for the school as well as all year long with a non-affiliated team. She has served on Student Council since 6th grade and is an Officer this year. She is in National Honor Society, French Club and she plays the violin, privately, since she cannot fit it in the school schedule.

Mrs. Grosheider thanked the students for their willingness to serve on the Board. She said it helps the Board to know what is going on in the school buildings around the District and to hear the students' opinions and perspectives on issues and to have them share their questions and comments on reports that the Board receives.

During review of the **Superintendent's Report**, Dr. Green gave her Good News Report, as follows:

- The North Allegheny School District has been honored as a recipient of the '**Partners Against Leukemia & Lymphoma Award**' by the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS)**. The award will be presented to the District on October 21, 2009 immediately preceding the DAA ceremony. Representatives of the Society, including Ms. Kira Foley, who is Campaign Manager for the LLS, will make the presentation. The award recognizes the ongoing financial support and enduring commitment of organizations whose history with LLS is in excess of 10 years. Last year, students and staff in schools across the North Allegheny School District raised a combined total of more than \$19,700 for leukemia and lymphoma research.
- The North Allegheny School District also received an honorable mention in the '**School Wellness: Excellence in Leadership Awards Program**' from the **Mid Atlantic Dairy Association (MDA)**. On September 2, 2009 Mr. Roger Botti, Mrs. Jaimie Nichols, Mr. Bill Moore, Ms. Christie Leininger, and Ms. Jennifer Reiser formally accepted a check in the amount of \$2,000 on behalf of the District from Ms. Betty Brdar, School Marketing Manager for the MDA. The grant application process for this program required the provision of documentation that the District is currently conducting wellness programs promoting milk to students in our cafeterias. NA included documentation of promotions such as the "Importance of Breakfast" (a nutrition education class taught by Ms. Jennifer Reiser, RD, LDN), students sampling "Make Your Own Fruit and Yogurt Parfaits," and monthly Wellness Education Corners featuring various nutrition topics. The grant money will be used for additional marketing programs to help encourage NA students to drink milk. The award also provided seven \$100 gift cards from Dick's Sporting Goods to enhance our wellness promotions.

SPEAKERS

Gina Makal – spoke on the topic of President's Obama's speech and the District's decision not to air it live on the day he delivered the speech to students. She felt that the decision was in opposition to the Mission Statement of the District and said it was disrespectful to the President. She also felt that it was a biased and ill-conceived decision for a District that claims to be a leader in providing a top-

notch education to our students as well as one that tries to promote diversity and acceptance for all. She felt that the decision has harmed the image of North Allegheny, but more importantly, she is saddened by the message that was sent to our children.

Meghan King – spoke on the same topic and expressed the same opinion. She has accepted the technological and timing issues related to the live airing as explained to her by the Administration. She thinks that we need to move on and hopes that the District will learn from this situation. She thinks that the Administration and Board were ambushed by a group of individuals with a political agenda and does not think that we did the right thing. The students deserved the respect to hear what our President had to say, which was inspirational and motivating. She hopes that we will supply a place in the curriculum for this to be shown, even after-the- fact, because it is important. She hopes a policy will be developed to prevent this from happening again.

Mark Matera – spoke on the same topic and has also corresponded twice with the Board on this subject. He is in agreement with the two previous speakers. He also feels that it is not too late to show this speech in school and it would provide a wonderful class opportunity for discussion. He feels it is not enough to see it at home or in random opportunities online. He believes the classroom experience is a powerful one with an important message for children. He said the School District owes this opportunity to our students at all levels.

Response

Mrs. Grosheider assured the Speakers that they will hear from the Board in writing. She also let them know the Board appreciates the courtesy and respect with which they addressed this difficult issue. She assured them that their comments will be taken into consideration because it has been a very contentious issue. She reminded them that the Board and the Superintendent try to do the very best that they can for kids every single day and sometimes decisions have to be made in real time. Mrs. Grosheider said this was not a politically-motivated decision and was made with the best of intentions with the time-restraints involved.

Dr. Green said this was her decision and not the Board's. She made the decision in consultation with the other Northern Area Superintendents based on information, misinformation, timing and issues with the U.S. Department of Education with communications available on the Friday before the Labor Day weekend. It was not an easy decision but it was the best that they could do. Again, Dr. Green stressed, this was the Superintendent's decision.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Grosheider adjourned the meeting at **7:49 p.m.** The Board met in Executive Session at the conclusion of the meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Mary Ryan, Secretary
North Allegheny School Board