

**Mansfield Township Board of Education
Minutes Regular Meeting
December 11, 2008**

Call to Order

Mr. Young opened the December 11, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Mansfield Township Board of Education at 7:40 p.m. with the following statement:

In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, the time, date, and location of this meeting was sent to the Star-Gazette and Express-Times, April 26, 2008 was posted in the municipal building and the school lobby, and is on file with the Township Clerk.

Roll Call

| | | | |
|----------|--|---------|------------------|
| Present: | Mr. John Bell | Absent: | Ms. Kari Reyes |
| | Ms. Barbara Curto | | Mr. Jeff Stabile |
| | Ms. Tracey Janowski | | |
| | Ms. Diane Margolin (left at 9:24 p.m.) | | |
| | Mr. Kenneth Polakowski | | |
| | Mr. Russell Uhrig | | |
| | Mr. Richard Young | | |

Mr. Kemp, Mr. Melitsky, Ms. Roszkowski and seven community and/or staff members were present.

**Special Presentation
William Colantano, Jr., CPA**

Mr. Colantano complimented the Board and Administration for “finding a perfect balance of providing a quality education while keeping the taxes reasonable as compared to other school districts.” A 10-year analysis of taxes shows that Mansfield School District taxes went up approximately 36% compared to other districts in the state whose taxes went up by as much as 150%.

Fund balances at year end were discussed. Approximately \$21,000 was given back to taxpayers in tax relief in this year’s budget and approximately \$75,000 will be given back in the next budget cycle. The value of giving back to the taxpayer is inconsequential when broken down by household, according to Mr. Colantano.

An overview of the various funds’ revenues and expenses was given. The definition of free fund balance was given. Two audit recommendations were discussed.

There were no questions.

Communications

Ms. Roszkowski read the following correspondence:

- November 23, 2008 letter from Bret “Chip” Castner thanking the Board, “Superintendent Ed Kemp and Principal John Melitsky for a great work environment at Mansfield Township Elementary School” who made him “feel welcome as a valued and respected employee.”
- November 30, 2008 letter from the First Presbyterian Church of Washington thanking the district for a “very generous donation for the Community Food Pantry which will help to make this Thanksgiving a lot better for many local families.” (Note: Ellyn Corcoran, Food Service Manager, initiated and orchestrated the food drive.)

Thank You for the Opportunity – Chip Castner

Thank You for Donation to Food Pantry

Administrative Report

1. Mr. Kemp thanked Mr. Colantano for his presentation on the audit and thanked the Business Administrator for a fine job on budget management.
2. The following was sent to the Board members:
 - Legal updates were sent to the Board members on ethics as an “FYI.”
 - Miscellaneous newspaper articles.
 - Information regarding the Honeywell system.
3. Mr. Kemp reported on a “free” program (which is being used successfully in Hackettstown) which he will be utilizing in the district. “Success Maker” will be piloted in the district and will benefit struggling learners. We will see if it is worthwhile and will report back to you.

Thank You

Board Member Information

Success Maker Program

REPORT ON VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM – MR. KEMP

“This evening I am delivering the annual Violence and Vandalism Report for the Mansfield Township School District in compliance with the state requirement that this report be shared with the community and Board of Education yearly. I’ll begin by sharing the measures that we are employing to keep our school community safe. We have continued our high expectations for school conduct and discipline. Our code of conduct is followed and understood by everyone. Students are taught respect for themselves and others. They are taught to respect our school building by having jobs that keep our school clean and tidy. Students and faculty members alike

are rewarded with “Caught You Being Good” certificates whenever they are observed doing something above and beyond that may be helpful or respectful. Our DARE program has been effective for many years and will continue to address the need for drug resistance with a fifth grade program again this year. In addition to the DARE program, we work closely with local law enforcement through the Memorandum of Agreement and through meeting as necessary to address and improve any violence, vandalism, or safety concerns. The Mansfield Police also provide a regular visual presence by conducting building walk-throughs. Mr. Kemp also attended the Mandatory Gang Awareness Training Seminar in May of 2008. Administration and Guidance work closely together to address any disciplinary concerns before they become large problems. Our peer mediation uses trained mediators to help students cordially solve disagreements. This year Mrs. Favreau has launched our “Ride with Character Program” promoting positive bus conduct and safety. Our proactive approach has resulted in a safe school that is free of vandalism and violence. I am proud to report that there were no instances of violence or vandalism last year.”

Are there any questions?”

Public Participation

1. Mr. Watters remarked that he was glad to hear about the fine job being done with the school budget. He was also glad to hear Mr. Castner’s positive remarks regarding the school district.

**Budget &
Mr. Castner**

2. Mr. Watters inquired whether the tests have been changed to be more difficult, did test scores drop, and are the teachers teaching to the test?

**Tests & Test
Scores**

Mr. Kemp addressed the questions presented by Mr. Watters. The test has been changed because the state felt the test standards were too low. The tests did get harder. As a result, the test scores dropped slightly. We have worked to grow year to year. Our biggest change came in language arts where we saw the numbers change from 17% partially proficient to 30% using the new standards. Under the old stats, everyone showed growth. The State is changing the tests for grades 3 and 4. All tests will be administered by one company. Our teachers are teaching to the test because the way it is set up. We have to teach to the standards. Those standards are reflected in the tests.

Consent Agenda

1. **MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by majority vote that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the following meeting:

**Minutes
Approval**

November 13, 2008, Regular Meeting [Abstain: Mr. Young].

**Approval Agenda
Personnel**

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Heather Alfano as a substitute teacher (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent. | H. ALFANO SUB ROSTER |
| 2. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Kelly Ford as a substitute teacher (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent. | K. FORD SUB ROSTER |
| 3. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Christine Prestipino as a substitute teacher (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent. | C. PRESTIPINO SUB ROSTER |
| 4. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Aimee Voss as a substitute teacher (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent. | A. VOSS SUB ROSTER |
| 5. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Yamir Vitale as a substitute aide (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent. | Y. VITALE SUB ROSTER |
| 6. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Lauren Vasco as a student teacher from January 20 through May 16, 2009, (cooperating teacher – Pam Scheisel) as recommended by the Superintendent. | L. VASCO STUDENT TEACHER |
| 7. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Maria Vallone as a Practicum student from January 20 through May 16, 2009, (cooperating teacher – Robin Iaione) as recommended by the Superintendent. | M. VALLONE PRACTICUM STUDENT |
| 8. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Nicole Penque as a Practicum student from January 20 through May 16, 2009, (cooperating teacher – Laura Baggerly) as recommended by the Superintendent. | N. PENQUE PRACTICUM STUDENT |
| 9. MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Michelle Stone as a Practicum student from January 20 through May 16, 2009, (cooperating teacher – Diane Hogan) as recommended by the Superintendent. | M. STONE PRACTICUM STUDENT |

- 10. **MOTION by Mr. Bell, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve Robyn Cawood as a substitute teacher (criminal history check completed), as recommended by the Superintendent.

**R. CAWOOD
SUB ROSTER**

**Approval Agenda
Curriculum/Policy/Facilities**

- 1. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the Violence and Vandalism Report and any submissions to required agencies.
- 2. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the following for the Affirmative Action Committee: Marc Tyson, Michele Zappulla, Dawn Drescher, and Colleen Hurley.
- 3. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve all curriculums.
- 4. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve/adopt the following revised mission statement:

**Violence &
Vandalism
Report**

**Affirmative
Action
Committee**

**Curriculum
Approved**

**Mission
Statement
Adoption**

The Mansfield Township Elementary School District partners with the community to provide a meaningful and rigorous education that instills the value of lifelong learning and empowers all students to reach their full potential and become productive citizens, in accordance with the comprehensive standards of our state.

(Previous Mission Statement - The Mansfield Township School District provides an environment conducive to the development of the whole child in preparation for his/her pursuit of a productive and responsible role in society. The development of our children is a joint venture involving the student, the family, the school, and the community.)

- 5. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve revisions to the following policies:
 - 1330 Use of School Facilities
 - 1330R Use of School Facilities
 - 5131 Conduct and Discipline

**Policy
Revisions**

6. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve a job description for Policy Specialist as per attached.

**Job
Description**

(Note: This is an updated job description for an as-needed/on call position currently held – it is not a new job.)

7. **MOTION by Ms. Janowski, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board adopt a NonERISA 403(b) Plan Document as required by the IRS, effective January 1, 2009, with the following approved vendors authorized to receive ongoing contributions:

**403(b) Plan
Document**

- AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company
- Siracusa
- Lincoln Investment Planning
- Oppenheimer

Note: Hold Harmless Agreements are on file for each of the above-referenced approved vendors. At this time, it is being recommended that a 3rd Party Administrator not be appointed.

**Approval Agenda
Finance**

1. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the following bills list:

Bills List

- November 16 to 30, 2008, bills list in the amount of \$350,748.06.
- December 1, 2008 to 11, 2008, bills list in the amount of \$137,479.19.
- Approve non-check number N0926, dated September 26, 2008, in the amount of \$75,000. (Note: This is a bookkeeping entry for the required movement/withdrawal of \$75,000 from a Fund 12 account to the Capital Projects account/Fund 30 that the BOE/voters approved for the windows project.)

2. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the following Treasurer’s and Secretary’s monthly financial reports for the months ended September 30, 2008 with a balance of \$1,259,513.32 and October 31, 2008 with a balance of \$1,206,619.55.

**Secretary &
Treasurer’s
Reports**

3. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board resolve that after review of the Secretary’s Monthly Financial Report (appropriations section) and consultation of the appropriate district officials, this Board of Education certifies that no major

Certification

account or fund has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23-2.11(a) for the months of September 30, 2008 with a balance of \$1,259,513.32 and October 31, 2008 with a balance of 1,206,619.55.

4. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the December 11, 2008, Travel Report. **Travel**

5. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve a Joint Transportation Agreement with Warren Hills Regional for the following routes for the 2008/2009 school year: **Joint Transportation**

- Multi Route WH40/Wa: 56 Warren Hills students with Warren Hills reimbursing Mansfield Township District \$22,802.40 (total cost of Jointer = \$45,604.80);
- Route WH29/I: 44 Warren Hills students with Warren Hills reimbursing Mansfield Township District \$28,890.00 (total cost of Jointer = \$41,733).

(Note: This contract was previously approved – the County Office requested more detail in the motion.)

6. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board accept the following gifts/donations from the PTA: **Honeywell Instant Alert System**

- Six interactive white boards and miscellaneous equipment to make each fully functional in the classrooms.
- 2008/2009 payment for the Honeywell Instant Alert System.

7. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve the submission of the Five-Year Plan and 2009/2010 Pre-School Initiative Budget to the State. **Pre-School Initiative**

8. **MOTION by Ms. Margolin, second by Ms. Curto** and carried by unanimous vote that the Board approve payment #3, final payment, to Panoramic Windows in the amount of \$39,705 contingent upon the receipt of the Architect’s Certificate for Payment. **Panoramic Windows**

Public Participation

1. Mr. Watters inquired as to whether the Board was interested in joining the consortium for participation in an energy audit. **Energy Audit**

The Board shared its position that the funds are tight and that, at this

time, the Board would not be able to participate. The town's chief financial officer would be informed of the Board's position.

2. Ms. Janowski asked when Market Day would begin. Mr. Kemp said that it was scheduled for a February start date.

Market Day

3. Ms. Kearney expressed her concerns for building security and its handling.

Building

4. Ms. Margolin stated that in light of so many district needs not covered by the budget, it was time to start an Educational Foundation. She shared that Carol Burns had given her a book several years ago as to starting one. Ms. Margolin offered to "dust the book" off and get things going if every one were in agreement.

**Educational
Foundation**

Discussion

None

Adjournment

MOTION by Ms. Curto, seconded by Mr. Bell and carried by all ayes that the December 11, 2008 Regular Meeting be adjourned.

(9:28 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Roszkowski
SBA/Board Secretary

Rich Young
Vice President