

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
BOARD MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 9, 2015  
REGULAR SESSION 6:00 P.M.  
EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:01 P.M.  
REGULAR SESSION 7:00 P.M.  
WILLIAM ANNIN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- I. **Regular Session – Call to Order – 6:00 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Conference Room – page 229**
- II. **Salute to the Flag – page 229**
- III. **Roll Call – page 229**
- IV. **Executive Session – 6:01 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Conference Room – page 229**
- V. **Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:00 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Auditorium – page 230**
- VI. **Statement of Public Notice – page 230**
- VII. **Superintendent’s Report**
  - 1) **Bernards Township Board of Education Affirms Receipt of HIB Report Dated February 9, 2015 – page 231**
- VIII. **Board Presentation**
  - 1) **Gifted & Talented Update – Director of Curriculum & Instruction Brian Heineman – page 231**
- IX. **Public Forum on Agenda Items – page 232**
- X. **Committee Reports**

**FINANCE**

- 1) **Approve List of Disbursements Dated February 9, 2015 – page 232**
- 2) **Approve Waiver of Requirements Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) 2015-16 School Year – page 232**

- 3) Approve **Professional Development Expenses** 2014-15 School Year –  
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- XIII. **Adjournment** – page 235

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
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FEBRUARY 9, 2015  
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WILLIAM ANNIN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President McKeon.

- I. **Regular Session – Call to Order – 6:00 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Conference Room**
  
- II. **Salute to the Flag**
  
- III. **Roll Call**

PRESENT: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Kusel, Ms. McKeon, Ms. Richman, Ms. Shah, Ms. Wooldridge, Mr. Markarian, Mr. Siet, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Croot Board Counsel

ABSENT: None

- IV. **Executive Session – 6:01 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Conference Room**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bernards Township Board of Education met in closed session to discuss: contract negotiations; confidential student matters; and further

BE IT RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public interest or without violation of the confidentiality of personnel.

On motion by Ms. Kusel, seconded by Ms. Cwerner, and approved by all present, the Board recessed into closed executive session at 6:01 p.m.

On motion by Ms. Cwerner, seconded by Ms. Richman, and approved by all present, the Board returned to public session at 6:55 p.m.

The Board reconvened the regular meeting in the William Annin Middle School Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

V. **Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:00 p.m. – William Annin Middle School Auditorium**

VI. **Statement of Public Notice**

This was a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, and you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. In order to run efficient meetings and to allow maximum opportunity for members of the public to speak, the Board reserves the right to set a time limit for individual comments and/or public comment portions of the agenda. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. Any Board responses to public comment will be addressed during Board Forum, or during committee reports.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action.

If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

## VII. Superintendent's Report

### BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby affirm receipt of the **HIB Report** dated February 9, 2015.

On motion by Ms. Gray, seconded by Ms. Cwerner, Item #1 was approved by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Kusel, Ms. Richman,  
Ms. Shah, Ms. Wooldridge, Ms. McKeon  
“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - None

Superintendent Markarian updated the Board on progress in regard to random drug testing and efforts to continue to develop deterrents. Plans are going forward to have a canine sweep at the high school during the current school year. The website enrollment page for voluntary random drug testing is being piloted prior to going live. Test kits have been purchased as well as the required equipment to adjust lavatories at the middle and high schools. Parents are required to make a yes/no selection on the enrollment page in order for their children to continue participation in extracurricular activities and privileges. Neither of these will be taken away from a student if their parent decides to not have them participate.

## VIII. Board Presentation

1) Gifted & Talented Update – Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
Brian Heineman

Dr. Heineman began his presentation by reviewing the fall program activities, criteria utilized for identifying students new to the program, and recent program activities.

The information highlighted by the long-range program plan included:

- Developing a cluster grouping model grades 3-5
- Hiring two additional G&T teachers
- Implementing program technology support resources
- Implementing telescoped G&T math curriculum grades 3-5
- Articulate G&T into grade 7 Algebra

Dr. Heineman reviewed the year one through five timeline, planned additions to the middle school program, the new 2014-15 G&T criteria based on the 2 Tier Method, the 2015-16 rubric format for identification, the CogAT abilities test, the MAP test, scales for

rating behavioral characteristics, and the new criteria for grade 2 identification. His presentation was completed with a detailed review of the math enrichment program selected by the district through Stanford University entitled Redbird.

Questions from the Board included an explanation of cluster grouping, the value of annually retesting students, varying numbers of cluster groups by school, the flexibility of admission to the program, monitoring students' at home usage, concern for the middle grouping of students, telescoping of curriculum and impact selection of high school math courses, the grade 6 program standards, testing of new students entering the district mid-term, and flexibility of students to move in and out of program depending on abilities.

Dr. Heineman offered additional explanations on student scheduling, the identification process, and additional resources for grade 6.

For complete presentation click [here](#).

#### **IX. Public Forum on Agenda Items**

Comments were made thanking the Board, administration, and teachers who have been involved in the design and implementation of the gifted and talented program. Parents stated the program is exactly what they had hoped for, and praised the success of the cluster grouping model. A question was asked regarding gender equity discrepancy within the G&T program, monitoring criteria for admission to the program, revising the 6<sup>th</sup> grade program, and annual retesting of students.

#### **X. Committee Reports**

##### **FINANCE**

##### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve a list of disbursements dated February 9, 2015 consisting of warrants in the amount of \$3,158,819.38.
- 2) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby authorize the Superintendent to apply for a **Waiver of Requirements for the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI)** program for the 2015-16 school year.

3) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve professional development expenses in accordance with P.L. 2007 An Act Concerning School District Accountability and annual Board resolution for the 2014-15 school year:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Name of Conference:</u>	<u>Cost:</u>	<u>Date(s):</u>
K. Richman	Highlights of Workshop 2014	\$200	3/21/2015
K. Gray	Highlights of Workshop 2014	\$200	3/21/2015

On motion by Ms. Kusel, seconded by Ms. Gray, Items #1 through #3 were approved by the following roll call vote:

- “Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Kusel, Ms. Richman, Ms. Shah, Ms. Wooldridge, Ms. McKeon
- “Noes” - None
- “Abstain” - None

**PERSONNEL**

Chairperson Bev Cwerner stated the committee is having its initial negotiation’s meeting with the BTAA on Tuesday, February 10.

**CURRICULUM**

Chairperson Linda Wooldridge stated the committee is meeting on Friday, February 13.

**POLICY**

Chairperson Priti Shah stated the committee met on Monday, February 9. A report to the full Board will be made at its February 23 meeting.

**ADVOCACY**

Chairperson Karen Richman reported on the February 2 meeting with the PTO Advisory Board. Items discussed included the process for delayed openings and school closures, an update of the January 29 Board meeting, PARCC, list of upcoming PTO meetings, Dr. Heineman’s technology presentation being held at the Liberty Corner School PTO meeting on April 30 at 9:00 a.m., and the recent letter sent to all parents regarding materials students need on testing dates.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

No report.

## **XI. Public Forum on Other Than Agenda Items**

Comments were made regarding PARCC testing and the refusal process, the number of districts who have adopted a no punitive resolution in regard to student refusal, how the district plans to accommodate the students who do not sit for the test, and the impact of the testing results on student education.

## **XII. Board Forum**

Board President Robin McKeon and Vice President Elaine Kusel recapped the conference call with the Commissioner Hesper and Assistant Commissioner Bari Erlichson of the Dept. of Education, and State Board of Education President Biedron. Information the Board learned included: there is no legal mechanism for accepting a refusal, no advance refusals may be accepted, a district must meet the 95% participation rate in order to meet state proficiency and benchmarking requirements, if a district does not meet the required participation a district action plan will be required, as NCLB is a federal program, district funding could be impacted, and a Board of Education is required to uphold the law.

The waiver process under NCLB does not apply to the state not being allowed to test students. The waiver is in regard to a district not having a 100% passing rate, and the process to be followed to show improvement in following years to meet the passing requirement.

Comments from the Board included meeting the needs of the students and satisfying the requirement of the law, student refusal, maintaining the integrity of the testing environment, the implementation of Common Core standards, and the confusion and misinformation being circulated. The Board discussed alternate ways in which the public can protest PARCC testing rather than having their children not test.

Mr. Markarian spoke on the possibility of potential repercussions to the district if falling below the required participation percentage, the message being sent to children regarding commitment, maintaining fairness and equity among all students, the district's need to meet all responsibilities of the test, and the importance of maintaining the relationship between parents, the administration, and the Board of Education to ensure students receive the best education possible.

Ms. McKeon commented on the commitment the Board of Education has to the students and the district, and the need to work together to maintain the quality of education and the standards of the district.

If a student is refusing the test, a note must be brought prior to each test; the district will be required to file a report as to why the student is not taking the test. If a student does

not come to school at all during the testing period, a note explaining the absence is required when the student returns to school. "Recreational reading" materials are to be brought to school on testing days. Each principal will manage the location and students who have refused.

**XIII. Adjournment**

On motion by Ms. Cwerner, seconded by Ms. Richman, and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod McLaughlin  
Board Secretary