ATTACHMENTS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

OF MEETING OF July 5, 2011

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V. PUBLIC BE HEARD

PLEASE NOTE: COPIES OF ATTACHMENTS SUBMITTED ARE GIVEN TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THEN KEPT WITH THE OFFICIAL MINUTES IN THE DISTRICT CLERK OFFICE. TAPES OF THE MEETINGARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE LEVITTOWN LIBRARY.

The guidelines pertaining to Public Be Heard were read. Dr. Sirois and/or Board members will respond to questions, after the last speaker is heard.

Esta Lachow

79 Periwinkle Road, Levittown, NY

Ms. Lachow, speaking as a community citizen, welcomed Frank Ward, the new Board Trustee, and Dr. Grossane, new Superintendent of Schools. She commented that she looked forward to working with these men and the Board on new challenges that lay ahead.

Colleen Napoli

523 Sandhill Road, Wantagh, NY

Ms. Napoli expressed her concern regarding class size. She was worried that the elementary classes would have a large increase in students which would be an adjustment for small children. She asked the Board to monitor these sections and possibly return more teachers. Ms. Napoli spoke about the positive effect small class size has on the developmental and educational process for young children. She encouraged the Superintendent to reevaluate the current budget to find a better solution.

Maria Xenios

2 Harrow Lane, Levittown, NY

Ms. Xenios welcomed Dr. Grosanne to the Levittown School District, congratulated Mr. Ward. and thanked the Board for their hard work and dedication. She addressed the Board on several issues. One concern is the large cuts in staff at the elementary level and was distressed by the class size in the self contained inclusion classes. She was worried about parents not wanting to mainstream their children. Another concern of Ms. Xenios is lead teachers, who were eliminated She wanted to know who would be in charge when the principal was away from the building. Her fear is that children who are bullied will have no one to go to. Ms. Zenios had a suggestion on how to save the lead teachers jobs.

Joanna Blinn Crehan

120 Swan Lane, Levittown, NY

Ms. Blinn Crehan requested an appeal to change her child's high school. She reported due to family matters, she had to move abruptly. Ms. Blinn Crehan noted she lives only 1½ blocks from the cut off. He daughter is very shy and it would be detrimental to her emotional and social development to attend a new school.

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Jane Finkelstein

848 Mayer Drive, Wantagh, NY

Ms. Finkelstein welcomed Dr. Grossane and Mr. Ward. She had questions regarding the unpaid lunch money. She asked if there was a policy implemented. Additionally, Ms. Finkelstein reported on the conditions of the track at MacArthur High School. She noted it is littered with bottles and filth, and she is offended that the community does not respect property. Ms. Finkelstein asked who is responsible for this upkeep and perhaps a policy is needed to address this issue.

Al Matousek

83 Anchor Lane, Levittown

Mr. Matousek, a parent of an autistic child, handed out a letter to the Board requesting them to reconsider the decision to eliminate new student placement at out-of-district vocational programs. He reported that his son was scheduled to attend the Animal Care Skills Course at Nassau BOCES. This placement would have fulfilled his son's personal goal to work with animals. It was determined by professionals and special education assessments, that this would be the most appropriate educational environment to provide essential and meaningful life skills in addition to establishing a foundation for a future career. Mr. Matousek remarked that success for his son depends on preparing him for life.

RESPONSES:

In response to the Ms. Lachow comments:

Mr. Powers thanked Ms. Lachow for a great job as Council President and noted he appreciated everything she did.

In response to the Ms. Finkelstein concerns:

Mr. Moran commented that the Board had discussions regarding the unclaimed funds of the lunch program and will try to implement a policy.

Mr. Pappas acknowledged that the problem lies with the outgoing seniors. Ms. Haas reported on the progress of her efforts and offered several suggestions. The Board discussed possible options to collect this money and also asked Dr. Chesterton to investigate such alternatives as a discounted yearly meal tickets and an automatic replenish system.

Dr. Grossane recommended surveying our surrounding districts to view their plans.

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In response to Ms. Crehan and Mr. Matousek request:

Dr. Grossane thanked these parents for bring their concerns to his attention and said these situations will be looked into. He noted he would speak to Central Office and the Special Education Department and get back to them shortly.

In response to the concerns regarding elementary class size:

Mr. Powers addressed this issue by stating that their concerns are a constant source of conversation with the Board. He noted that sections and enrollment is being watched constantly, and final decisions have not been made. Mr. Powers stressed that the Board knows how important this is to everyone. He commented that school is out but the Board is not.

Ms. Marenghi responded to Ms. Xenios by assuring her that she had her support. She noted that the Board is aware of how important it is for children in the self-contained classrooms to be mainstreamed as often as possible. Ms. Marenghi commented that those numbers need to be considered in the numbers when sections are reviewed. This will be investigated.

Mr. Pappas thanked Ms. Rhatigan for a good job managing class size under the restrictions placed upon her. He commented that classes were being monitored.

Dr. Grossane reported that he has been discussing their concerns with Central Office and looking at the numbers very closely. He commented that a recommendation will be presented to the Board and a good decision will be made. Ms. Rhatigan noted she is watching the classes in several schools and will keep him apprised of the situation.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Appelbaum, District Clerk