

EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Administration Center
Wednesday, December 9, 2009

MINUTES

1. Call to Order – Ms. Graziano – 6:31 p.m.

MEETING BEGINS

2. Attendance

ATTENDANCE

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Mr. Angelo	x	
Ms. Curran		x
Ms. Dobert Burke	x	
Ms. Graziano	x	
Mr. Hammill	x (arrived at 6:37 p.m.)	
Ms. Hart	x	
Ms. LeClair	x	
Mr. Mann	x	
Ms. Taylor	x	

Also Attending

Dr. Nagle	x
Ms. Bowman	x
Mr. Edson	x
Ms. Summers	x

Student Council Representatives

Bridget Allen	x
Austin Maney	x

Motion by Ms. LeClair and seconded by Mr. Mann to go into executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION
BEGINS**

Vote: Ayes – 7, Nays – 0

Motion carried.

Time: 6:32 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Angelo and seconded by Mr. Hammill to return to regular session.

**MEETING
RESUMED**

Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0

Motion carried.

Time: 7:24 p.m.

Recess declared at 7:24 p.m.

**RECESS
DECLARED**

Meeting resumed at 7:33 p.m.

**MEETING
RESUMED**

3. Ex Officio Student Council Comments

**EX OFFICIO
COMMENTS**

Bridget Allen shared information on the student council decorating the auditorium and other clubs decorating the school. She spoke of the pajama drive coordinated by Ms. Schafer and Ms. Haigh. Bridget Allen said students would be singing at Colonie Center on December 10. She shared that Key Club would be singing carols at Hawthorne Ridge and a fund-raising drive to benefit Concerns U.

Austin Maney said students will be ringing bells at Wal-Mart on Saturday, December 12 to benefit the Salvation Army. The girls' field hockey team will be waiting tables at Applebee's on Saturday. Members of the student council and Interact will be reading stories to children at DP Sutherland and Bell Top during the holiday season. The main office is sponsoring sales of Make-A-Wish Angels. A number of needy families have also been adopted this holiday season. A calendar of activities was distributed to the Board.

4. Public Forum

PUBLIC FORUM

Ms. Dupont said she was a taxpayer, parent and employee in the school district. She expressed concern with the procedures leading to tenure appointments. Ms. Dupont felt that the performance reviews given to the employees were no longer the basis for tenure. She said that the number of absences holds more clout in the decision. Ms. Dupont said that some employees face family crises and surgery. She said that decisions based on attendance are heartless and do not reflect the intent of the days provided by the bargaining agreement.

5. Board Forum

BOARD FORUM

Ms. Taylor commended the staff and 8th grade students at Goff for their work on a pasta dinner before Thanksgiving. She thanked Mr. Graziano and Hannaford for their donations along with Prinzo's Bakery.

Mr. Hammill was recently involved with the Partners in Education meeting last week and appreciated the business leader involvement and interest in the school.

Ms. LeClair commended the student council for their efforts during the month of December and said that we are very proud of them.

Mr. Angelo also commended the ambitious schedule of community involvement which will lead to improvement in the quality of people's lives. He attended the Partners in Education meeting and was impressed by the quality and enthusiasm of the participants.

Ms. Burke congratulated the fall sports teams that achieved scholar-athlete award status. She acknowledged the success of Natalie Cullings on the cross country team.

Mr. Mann thanked the students at Columbia for their community fund-raising and appreciated the many efforts and hard work.

Ms. Graziano also commented on the impressive community event calendar and the efforts of the student council and student clubs. She said the Goff pasta dinner was wonderful, and the students did an outstanding job of serving. Ms. Graziano commended Mr. Taylor and the Goff community for their efforts and the organizations that donated food. She also participated in and enjoyed the recent Partners In Education meeting.

Dr. Nagle commented on the success of the first Partners in Education meeting. She thanked Mr. Hammill, Mr. Angelo, and Ms. Graziano for being part of the committee designed to merge ideas between educators and the community. Dr. Nagle said it was the last meeting of the 2009 calendar year and reflected on how much each of our schools do to support the community. She said that the students' work in our schools touch an entire community and continues to be outstanding and creative. The Superintendent presented NYSSBA Certificates of Achievement to Ms. Taylor, Ms. LeClair, Ms. Burke, and Mr. Angelo.

6. Minutes

MINUTES

Be it Resolved, that upon the recommendation of the District Clerk, the Board of Education approves the minutes of November 4, 2009.

Moved by: Mr. Angelo

Seconded by: Ms. LeClair

Vote: Ayes – 7, Nays – 0, Abstention – 1
(Ms. Hart)

Motion carried.

7. Regular Business

**REGULAR
BUSINESS**

Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities

Be it Resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the programs for resident children with disabilities as presented.

Moved by: Ms. Taylor

Seconded by: Mr. Mann

Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0

Motion carried.

8. Reports and Presentations – Superintendent of Schools

**REPORTS AND
PRESENTATIONS
SAFETY UPDATE**

B. Safety Update

Ms. Bowman said that she chairs the district-wide safety committee, which is attended by Board members Mr. Hammill, Ms. Curran, Mr. Angelo, and Ms. Taylor. She gave an overview of safety program

goals, the district-wide committee, building committees, K-12 coordinator responsibilities, work with outside agencies, drills and reporting, professional development, budget allocations, and recognition of the District's safety program. Ms. Bowman also presented some suggested areas of improvement. The Assistant Superintendent commented on the success of working with the East Greenbush Police and the use of table top exercises at the building level.

Ms. Belmont reviewed that the transportation safety committee is comprised of office staff, aides, drivers, and mechanics. She said that each individual assumes a different role in the crisis scenarios reviewed at each meeting. Ms. Belmont gave an overview of mandated bus drills and the annual emergency go home drill. She stated that a current focus of the committee is on facility safety.

Mr. McHugh stated that the elementary schools attempt to take a consistent approach to safety procedures. This approach includes new procedures for the recent installation of buzzer systems in K-8 buildings. Mr. McHugh explained the benefits of the buzzer system in custody cases and noted that parent response has been positive. He spoke of the connection between schools and municipalities relating to building walkthroughs. Mr. McHugh said that East Greenbush is well ahead of other schools with its safety program.

Mr. Groat stated that his emergency management team has met four times and looked at current procedures on a critical basis. The CPR/AED trained staff listing has been updated, and all drills conducted in the building have been well received and successful. The committee intends to conduct more intense drills at difficult times. Mr. Groat said the new buzzer system is working well and getting good feedback. The building has been refitted with new door locks that allow locking from the interior of a classroom. The committee continues to review PTO concerns about after hours entry.

Mr. Sawchuk commended his own building safety committee as outstanding and the assistance received from the K-12 coordinator who is located at the high school. He thanked Detective DeSeve for his efforts as school resource officer. The safety team is also looking at practicing drills during challenging times such as between classes or lunch periods. The team practiced a drill this year with a blocked stairwell with much success.

Mr. Mann suggested that administration check the NYS School Police Safety Guide regarding the installation of locks on

classroom doors that allow for interior locking. Mr. Edson said the installation was part of Phase II of the capital construction project.

Mr. Mann asked about the sheltering agreement with the Red Cross. Mr. Edson said that the Red Cross contacts the district every two years to update the agreement. The Assistant Superintendent is working with Mr. Bachman from the Red Cross and expects an updated agreement to be on the January 13 agenda for consideration.

Mr. Mann asked who was responsible for the maintenance of the buzzer systems. Ms. Bowman replied Mr. Daley's office.

Ms. LeClair questioned the dollar budget for Needham Consultants. Mr. Edson said it was an estimate and that Needham is paid based on an hourly rate for time expended.

Ms. Burke asked about the two-way radios. Ms. Bowman stated there was an adequate supply of radios available. Mr. McHugh noted that he had requested additional radios.

Ms. LeClair asked whether the buzzer system was adequate for Goff, which would remove the need for entrance reconstruction. Dr. Nagle reviewed the need for an exchange of identification prior to a visitor entering the building; this is not possible with the buzzer system. She said it would be a decision by the Board on the level of security needed. Dr. Nagle said the District is reviewing the acquisition of software for the purpose of printing photo visitor passes based on identification.

Mr. Hammill spoke of the need to have additional security procedures in place, not just the judgment of one person pressing the buzzer.

Dr. Nagle said that Mr. Edson would need some lead time to prepare information to be used for the vote propositions.

A. Mentoring Update

Ms. Bowman said the committee is very excited to present the mentoring blueprint to the Board. She reviewed highlights of the blueprint including:

- 1) Mentoring program goals
- 2) Statement of confidentiality
- 3) Statement of joint planning
- 4) Mentor program facilitator position
- 5) Suggested mentor-mentee activities
- 6) Mandatory requirements for mentor and mentee
- 7) Expectations of the parties

MENTORING UPDATE

- 8) Program evaluation
- 9) Future program recommendations

Ms. Bowman reviewed the future program recommendations in detail, including mentoring experience for the entire untenured period, team mentoring, and participation in the evaluative process. She spoke of model programs in the Kenmore and Toledo, Ohio school districts. The Assistant Superintendent said the team mentoring approach is being piloted in the science department this year.

Ms. Shaughnessy commended the time and effort expended to create the document. She said the purpose of mentoring is to attract, train, and retain highly qualified teachers who can provide the best education to students.

Ms. Romer spoke of the mentoring approach that teachers take by nature. She said the committee went beyond what is established in mentoring programs. Ms. Romer felt that future legislation is a possibility in this area. She liked the three-year period for mentoring new teachers despite the increased cost. The EGTA President talked about exploring the evaluative process and the training needed in certain areas.

Ms. Barker reviewed the benefits of mentoring from teachers in multiple disciplines.

Mr. Groat said it was exciting to be part of the conversation to improve the mentoring program. He said the committee explored new concepts that can be implemented in the District.

Ms. Kaminski spoke of the benefits to the mentor for acting as a mentor in reflecting on teaching methods and styles. She promoted additional professional development for the mentors.

Mr. McHugh stated the meetings were beneficial and productive in order to fulfill the mandate. He also said the discussions reflected on the teacher observation process. Mr. McHugh said that mentees would benefit from seeing different teaching styles and approaches. He said the committee was thinking outside of the box to improve the program.

Mr. DiDonato liked the team evaluative approach. He said that it might work well in a department, such as the math department, that has collaborative staff.

Ms. Smith said the meetings were a wonderful experience as the District moves to a more collegial environment and explores the recommendations of the committee.

Ms. Decker shared it was a pleasure to serve on the mentoring committee. She said that training is a critical part of the program to keep the most qualified teachers.

Mr. Angelo said that the presentation gives the Board the idea of the quality of teachers that currently exists in the District. He was very impressed by the willingness of the committee members to think outside of the box. Mr. Angelo mentioned that ideas were discussed in great depth during committee meetings. He promoted the team mentoring process and the link to the evaluative process. Mr. Angelo spoke of the critical nature of the blueprint and how exciting it was for the future of East Greenbush.

Dr. Nagle was supportive of professional learning committees. She reflected that the blueprint carries an extraordinary expense to expand mentoring to the entire untenured period. Dr. Nagle said the plan must be considered in light of the cost to implement. The Superintendent promoted the implementation of a mentor-facilitator to coordinate the program as opposed to Central Office. She said the idea might be able to be explored in the short-term timeframe. Dr. Nagle said that grants are declining for mentoring activities, and that mentoring is like many other mandates that are unfunded.

Mr. Angelo said that the benefits of implementing the recommendations should be compared to the cost. He stated the District should attempt to provide exposure to the best possible talent. Mr. Angelo reflected on the cost not to retain the best individuals as part of staff. He requested a review by the Board to implement a full-time grant writer position.

Mr. Mann asked if the Board accepted the blueprint, was it also approving the cost. Dr. Nagle replied no, that the Board was only approving the concept.

Motion by Ms. LeClair and seconded by Mr. Mann to accept the mentoring blueprint as presented.

Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0

Motion carried.

C. Fall Sports Update

Mr. Leonard stated that 623 athletes participated in the fall sports season. He congratulated seven teams that were designated as scholar-athlete teams by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association. Mr. Leonard also noted that the girls cross country team received the Section II Sportsmanship Award.

**FALL SPORTS
UPDATE**

Mr. Leonard presented highlights from the fall season for the following sports: cheerleading, cross country, field hockey, football, golf, soccer, tennis, and volleyball.

The Athletic Director reviewed plans and strategies for improvements in the athletic program, particularly introduction of the Bigger, Faster, and Stronger Program. He said that a comprehensive weight training and conditioning program would improve the competition of the District teams. Mr. Leonard also said that an athletic coaches manual is in development.

Ms. Hart thanked Mr. Leonard for the presentation. She asked about the hours of operation of the weight room. Mr. Leonard replied that the room is open during the day from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., although it is not open during class times due to insufficient staff.

Mr. Sawchuk added that staff is assigned to hallways during non-teaching times. Mr. Leonard hoped the weight room could be open more hours in the summer.

Mr. Angelo was concerned with the overall win-loss record of the teams at 23%. He said there was only one winning team on the varsity level. Mr. Angelo said that good sportsmanship should be expected from athletes and not honored. He appreciated the honors provided for teams with good academic records. Mr. Angelo questioned why the District did not have better win records, especially in light of some very outstanding individual performances. He said he would also enjoy being proud of a winning tradition, although he noted that his opinion might not be shared by other members of the Board. Mr. Angelo recalled meeting with the coaches last year, but was unsure of what to do to solve this problem.

Mr. Leonard said that his communication with the coaches has produced the proposal for the strength training program to increase competitiveness of teams. He also stressed the importance of encouraging individual athletes to participate in multiple and different sports.

Ms. Taylor understood the importance of winning, but also shared that students pick up other valuable experiences on the team other than winning.

Mr. Mann felt the District had a phenomenal sports program, advised that winning is not everything, and the District should do the best it can in this area.

Mr. Leonard requested that the athletic subcommittee meet in the future.

Ms. Hart reflected on a student's individual right to play the sport of his or her choice. Mr. Leonard said that sometimes those choices may be different with other guidance and encouragement. He stated that students choosing to specialize in one sport may hurt the participation in other sports.

Motion by Ms. LeClair and seconded by Mr. Angelo to go into executive session to discuss the employment history of particular persons and contracts.
Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0
Motion carried.
Time: 9:44 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

Meeting resumed at 10:13 p.m.

**MEETING
RESUMED**

9. Tabled Motions
None at this time.

TABLED MOTIONS

10. Old Business
None at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

11. Consent Agenda
A. Financial Reports
1. Warrants - #63, 64, 68
2. Activity Report – Columbia High School (October 2009),
Goff School (October 2009)

**CONSENT AGENDA
FINANCIAL
REPORTS**

B. Personnel
1. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel #539 as
Recommended by Superintendent
2. Non-Instructional Support Personnel #539 as Recommended
by Superintendent

PERSONNEL

C. Approval of Achievement Stipend – Superintendent of Schools

**ACHIEVEMENT
STIPEND-SUPT
OF SCHOOLS**

D. Bid – Administration Center Exterior Sign

**BID-
ADMINISTRATION
EXTERIOR SIGN**

E. Agreement with Lunch Byte Systems

**AGREEMENT-
LUNCH BYTE
SYSTEMS**

F.	Approval of 403b Retirement Plan Document Amendment	403B RETIREMENT PLAN AMENDMENT
G.	Acceptance of Gifts and Authorization to Increase the 2009-2010 Budget	ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS, INCREASE BUDGET
H.	Agreement for Scanning Consultant Services	AGREEMENT FOR SCANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES
I.	Resolution Authorizing Return of Unpaid Taxes and Resolution Approving Tax Collector's Report for Fall 2009	RETURN OF UNPAID TAXES, APPROVING TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT
J.	Pepsi Fund Distribution 2009-2010 School Year	PEPSI FUND DISTRIBUTION

Ms. Burke questioned the amendment to the 403(b) plan. Mr. Edson said that the changes in IRS regulations require universal availability. The plan administrator, Omni, has suggested that access to the plan be provided to all employees, including substitutes on a per diem occasional basis.

Mr. Mann asked for clarification of the convenience fee charge for the Lunch Byte system. Mr. Edson responded that the charge was \$1.75 for parents to complete online transactions, but no charge if they presented check or cash directly to the school.

Ms. Taylor asked if balances on the Lunch Byte system carry over from year to year. Mr. Edson said he would research the answer.

Ms. LeClair questioned the distribution of Pepsi funds, the intent of the contract, and the reason for the allocation to the Foundation. Mr. Edson explained that the pouring rights contract was more lucrative in the past and provided overall funding of \$100,000 per year in the first 5 years, and \$70,000 to \$80,000 annually in the second 5-year period. He said the \$6,500 amount to the Foundation had been fixed during the time period and was linked to a Board of Education policy. Mr. Edson said the shares in recent years were 75% to buildings and school projects, 16% to the cafeteria, and 8-9% to the Foundation.

Ms. LeClair suggested that the Board review the future distribution of Pepsi funds.

Ms. Graziano clarified that the money going to the Foundation was for the purpose of awarding scholarships to students.

Ms. LeClair stated she was on the Board when the pouring rights agreement was approved and how the money was intended to be distributed. She said that now that the pool has shrunk significantly, the future distribution of funds needs to be revisited. Ms. LeClair stated that the cafeteria is taking a serious reduction in funds and does not agree with the current proposal to distribute funds.

Mr. Angelo said that the use of percentages was not proper since the Foundation amount was fixed. He said that the scholarships were established in five areas and recognized students who excel in the social sciences, physical sciences, and other subjects. Mr. Angelo noted that some of the money is used to promote students who are not college bound. He said that the money allocated to the Foundation for scholarships is money that is well spent. Mr. Angelo offered a suggestion for the Board to further discuss the distribution.

Ms. LeClair agreed that the matter should be further discussed by the Board.

Be it Resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Consent Agenda, with addendums to Item #11-B-1, and Item #11-B-2, and without Item #11-J, be approved as presented.

Moved by: Mr. Angelo
Seconded by: Ms. LeClair
Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0
Motion carried.

Motion by Ms. LeClair and seconded by Mr. Mann to table Item #11-J, Pepsi Fund Distribution 2009-2010 School Year.

Moved by: Ms. LeClair
Seconded by: Mr. Mann
Vote: Ayes – 6, Nays – 1 (Mr. Angelo),
Abstention – 1 (Mr. Mann)
Motion carried.

12. Resolution to Terminate Employment

It is resolved, that Pursuant to Subdivision 4 of Section 3020a of the Education Law, the Board of Education hereby adopts and implements the decision of the State Education Department

**RESOLUTION-
TERMINATE
EMPLOYMENT**

Hearing Officer in 3020a Case No. 12,697, dated November 19, 2009, which was received by the District on December 1, 2009, and hereby terminates the employment of tenured teacher Bernard Watt, effective immediately on December 9, 2009.

Moved by: Mr. Angelo
Seconded by: Ms. LeClair
Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0
Motion carried.

13. New Business

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

14. Committee Reports

Dr. Summers said the Education Committee met in November regarding the ELA initiative, renaming Genet Elementary School, distance learning, course schedules, and the enrichment program review. She said members of the Genet shared decision making team have referred the school name issue back to the Education Committee.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

Mr. Mann questioned the lack of response from the shared decision making team on the school name issue. Mr. Angelo said the response was lukewarm and that they offered a compromise. He stated that the Education Committee will continue to review and bring a comprehensive study back to the Board.

Ms. Bowman shared information on the Safety Committee meeting in November regarding buzzer system protocols, H1N1 clinics, and main entrance security software.

Mr. Edson advised that four policy updates have been received from NYSSBA and will be forwarded to Policy Committee members for review. He said that BRAC met with Robert Pasinella, IDA Executive Director, on November 30 regarding the status of developments in Rensselaer County.

15. Public Forum

Mr. Romanowski shared that the work of the athletic subcommittee last year left the coaches hoping for potential change in the program. He said no one has greater expectations for students than the coaches. Mr. Romanowski stated that coaches continue to be reflective and concerned with the losing records of the teams. The football coach noted that there has been a significant change in coaching staff, and time is needed to allow for improvement.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Romanowski requested an opportunity to meet with the subcommittee and members of the board, if interested, prior to interviewing for a coaching position next year. He said that not all information or work of the coaches can be shared in the fall

sports report. The football coach stated that one of the program weaknesses is student use and access to the weight room facilities.

Mr. Angelo clarified that his comments were not directed at the coaches. He wanted to further understand the problem. Mr. Angelo said that a common theme in the report was the weight training issue and physical preparation of the student athletes. He suggested a meeting with coaches after January 1 to collectively solve the problem.

Dr. Nagle thanked Mr. Romanowski for his comments. She suggested that Mr. Leonard be given an opportunity to write information concerning the coaching dialogue and ways to solve the problem. The Superintendent reminded everyone that the district has received over \$800,000 for equipment and training as part of a 3-year federal grant. She suggested that the facts be presented in a document so that Board discussion will be more productive.

16. Board Forum

Dr. Nagle wished everyone a very happy holiday season and new year.

BOARD FORUM

17. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. LeClair and seconded by Ms. Taylor to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Ayes – 8, Nays – 0

Motion carried.

Time: 10:40 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Mead
District Clerk