

The Conference Meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Nutley, New Jersey was held in the Nutley High School Teachers' Cafeteria, 300 Franklin Avenue, on Wednesday, August 4, 1999 at 6:05 p.m. with Mr. Alfred R. Restaino, Jr., Vice-President, presiding.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

Mr. Restaino read the following:

"According to the provisions of the 'Open Public Meetings Act' (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975), proper notice of this Conference Meeting was provided on July 27, 1999. Said Notice was:

1. Posted at the entrance of the Board Office.
2. Mailed to The Nutley Sun, the Star Ledger, the North Jersey Herald & News and the Nutley Journal.
3. Mailed to the Nutley Township Clerk."

CALL OF ROLL:

The members present at roll call were: Mrs. Michele Fleitell, Mr. Joseph C. Pelaia, Mrs. Agnes Roncaglio, Mrs. Maria Russo and Mr. Alfred R. Restaino, Jr. Absent: Mr. John Cafone, Mr. Vincent A. Moscaritola and Mr. Steven P. Picciano. Late: Dr. Philip T. Casale. Also in attendance were Mr. Lloyd Rosenberg, Mr. John Scheckel, Mr. Bob Bauer of DMR and Mr. Michael Goodman, consulting engineer affiliated with DMR.

1. Mr. Rosenberg stressed that the report that had been provided to the Board should be viewed as a preliminary draft and a working document. Mr. Sincaglia stated that he felt it was important that the Board look at the report in the context of how we would consider the enrollment issues that are confronting us.

Mrs. Russo said that she felt the Superintendent should state what approach the district should follow, in other words, which option would she favor. Dr. Serafino stated that the concept of moving the sixth grade to the middle school is something we are looking at and considering. She noted that many districts do follow the model of K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. She wanted to talk to other administrators where this concept has been in place. She also stated that she felt you can provide much more educationally if you have a "true" middle school. She also said that she felt it necessary that we provide additional space at the elementary schools and some of the additional things the Facilities Committee and other Board members felt were needed at the other schools.

Mrs. Russo asked Dr. Serafino if she would be recommending that option and the Superintendent replied that she would with the support of the community and the Board.

Mrs. Fleitell said that we had to discuss what the concept of the middle school was because she felt what we were running now was simply an old-fashioned junior high school.

Mr. Pelaia stated he felt the Superintendent was leaning toward the 6, 7, 8 concept but was not prepared to make a definitive statement at this time. Dr. Serafino said she wanted to look at both options insofar as the report was concerned and then look at the educational aspects of both.

Mr. Rosenberg reminded the Board that DMR had considered both options. Mr. Scheckel noted that DMR had looked at the enrollment trends and the Board's stated desires and had tried to incorporate the following items: (a) maintain current class size, (b) parity among the elementary schools, (c) separate art and music rooms, (d) adequate lunch facilities, (e) adequate play space and (f) general physical conditions.

He noted that Yantacaw School was certainly short on space and Lincoln School appeared to have adequate space, however, that was somewhat of an illusion since the capacity was influenced by special education classes currently there.

Dr. Casale entered

Mr. Scheckel further stated that DMR assumed the worst-case scenario with respect to the number of children from Cambridge Heights. He noted that if the Board were to maintain the current K-6 approach, each school would require some addition or renovation to accomplish goals the Board has set so far.

He explained the concept of upgrading "core facilities." He noted that the administration felt that a new cafeteria and media center is almost a general rule in all schools. He further emphasized that all the plans were only possibilities and nothing represented a final recommendation. He further stressed that the Board must define what were the most important issues as far as the Board was concerned and asked the Board to consider how important parity was. He said that doing something at each school would probably be a good idea.

He also said that they looked at each school and tried to evaluate the existing conditions and how the schools would respond both now and in the future given their age. He stated that the schools are in excellent condition especially considering the fact that they are 50-100 years old. With respect to the heating plant, he said that the Board may want to consider replacing some boilers now or doing something in the future but stressed the importance of considering infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Goodman said that his firm tried to look at the utility systems and commented that all schools were well maintained. He stated that it was not their intent to replace the boilers right now but was concerned about efficiency and operation of all aspects of the HVAC systems due to the fact that they were all relatively old. He was especially concerned about proper ventilation and the kind of things we will need for the next 30-40 years.

Mr. Scheckel said that we need to keep in mind that as our enrollment grows, in order to maintain our class size, we must be prepared to give up something (i.e. art and music rooms) in order to keep our classes small unless we were to add space or make other modifications.

Mr. Pelaia said he felt that we would all desire classrooms for art and music but must determine at what cost. He felt that was at the very core of the issue.

Mr. Rosenberg said that DMR approached the study with the assumption that special subjects are part of the program and with their own space.

Mr. Pelaia was concerned that we might not be able to sell a referendum to simply preserve extra rooms for special subjects.

Dr. Casale asked if we were going to go to a K-5 approach at the elementary schools because he had heard some parents were apprehensive about sixth graders mixed with eighth graders. Mr. Rosenberg said that we have not made a decision on that now and DMR has not taken a position on that.

Mrs. Fleitell said that we need to get a better idea of what the options will cost and other implications. Dr. Serafino reminded that Board that there were some things that would have to occur no matter what approach was chosen.

Mrs. Russo asked if we are talking about the auditoriums because she felt that had not been addressed at all. She felt that auditorium space could solve some of our space issues. Mr. Rosenberg said that normally auditoriums are not high on a priority list. It would be necessary to look at what the impact would be if we were to consider renovating but noted that the Board would have to provide direction if it was the district's desire to eliminate the auditoriums.

Mr. Restaino felt there was a need for the Board to have a dollar figure for possible changes and commented that a high figure would have no chance of passage, in his opinion. Mr. Rosenberg said we don't have a dollar amount at this time.

Dr. Casale asked about the possibility of grade 8 at the high school.

Mrs. Roncaglio left the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

The Board then, with Mr. Rosenberg's and Mr. Scheckel's assistance, viewed the drawings that were in the report. Mr. Rosenberg emphasized that there were innumerable ways to look at these possibilities, however, he thought the Board must first decide on the big issue facing them and then the process could continue.

RECESS MEETING:

In response to a request, Mr. Restaino declared a recess at 7:56 p.m.

RESUME MEETING:

The meeting resumed at 8:04 p.m.

Mr. Pelaia said he was deeply concerned about the concentration of special education children at Lincoln School and their actual location in that facility. He stated he could not support any project without a change in this arrangement.

Mrs. Russo said she was concerned about issues relating to the HVAC systems as well as security and safety. She also expressed her concern about having parking spaces so that parents could quickly pick up a child if they were ill. She further stated that the library media centers should be more accessible in other parts of the building.

Mr. Restaino said that he felt the Board needed to tackle certain issues and tell DMR what we want done so they can better guide us to the ultimate solution to the problems.

Mr. Pelaia said he felt we needed some gross, "ball park," dollar amounts.

Mr. Rosenberg said it was DMR's idea to give the Board a "Chinese menu" so the Board could see what some of their options were and look at things in the "must do" category, the "maybe" category and the "doubtful" category. He said DMR would need about three weeks for this. He further stated that the Board needs to think about the issue of K-5 and what becomes of the elementary auditoriums.

Mr. Restaino thanked DMR for their report and presentation and indicated we looked forward to hearing from them in the near future.

2. Dr. Casale mentioned a concern about a new sound system for the high school auditorium. Mr. Sincaglia noted he had been provided with a tentative proposal and also noted it was indicated that the system could be mobile in the sense of being able to be used for performances at Franklin School as well as out of doors.

Mr. Pelaia suggested that additional proposals be sought on the sound system.
3. Dr. Casale said he was also concerned about the lack of air conditioning in the high school auditorium and thinks this should be explored and perhaps could be financed through fund raising activities.
4. There was also a discussion about the possibility of a night football game during the 1999 season and there was consensus that Mr. Affinito should not be approaching the booster clubs to solicit their financial help although we would not discourage it should they choose to offer it.

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Restaino asked Mr. Sincaglia to read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Board of Education will be discussing matters exempt from public discussion pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12,

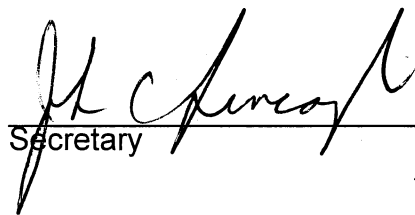
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education adjourn to closed executive session at this time to discuss legal matters and matters concerning a student, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the results of the discussions will be made public by inclusion on the agenda of a subsequent meeting of the Board of Education or when the reasons for discussing such matters in closed session no longer exist.

Mrs. Fleitell moved that the resolution be approved, seconded by Dr. Casale and unanimously approved by the Board.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.


Secretary

8 / 20 / 99
Date