

HARBORFIELDS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
GREENLAWN, NEW YORK

Kind of Meeting	-	Special Meeting
Date of Meeting	-	April 3, 2013
Place of Meeting	-	OMS Auditorium
Board Members Present	-	Mr. Giuliano, Dr. McDonagh, Ms. Boba, Mr. Mastroianni, Mr. Schoer, and Mr. Toles
Board Members Absent	-	Mr. Banks
Others Present	-	Ms. Todaro, Mr. Nimmo, Mr. Sallie, Ms. Whelan, and Community Members

Mr. Giuliano called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Mastroianni, seconded by Mr. Banks, and carried (6-0), the Board and district office administrators moved to Executive Session at 5:40 p.m. for the purpose of discussions on contract negotiations and to receive a security assessment report from Intralogic.

The Board returned to the special meeting at 7:08 p.m. Mr. Giuliano led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, and he instructed those in attendance where to exit the building in case of an emergency. He asked that all cell phones and beepers be silenced during the meeting.

BOARD RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The following students were recognized by the Board of Education for their achievements:

- Connor Madden, moving on to State Level of the National Geography Bee
- Rebecca Golub and Scott Oliveri, winning the 5th Annual AP Literature & Composition Shakespeare Recitation Contest, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts
- Dylan Kaufman, Christopher Berg, Kelly Moore, Sasha Moore, Jessica Schilling, Jose Villatoro, Benjamin Belfar, Jessica Guarino and Renee Buchholtz, for their success in the Suffolk County Regional DECA Competition
- Lian Giusto, Gymnastics team MVP, All League, and All County and his great success in the County and State Gymnastic Championships

- Luke Cowden, Boys' Swimming team MVP, All League, and All County and his great success at the NYS Championship Swim Meet

The following staff members were recognized by the Board of Education:

- Alison Matthews, for her dedication and support in helping her students achieve success in the Suffolk County Regional DECA Competition.
- Christine Brooks, coordinating the Pajama Project Event for the Little Flower Children and Family Services of New York.
- Janine Sena, recipient of the 2013 NYSCSS Outstanding Social Studies Elementary School Teacher Award.
- Daniel Barrett, Dan Bilawsky, Dafina Davis, Thomas Gellert, Gervaise Jordan, Jessica LaMantia, Alison Matthews, Jennifer Scott, and Jeffrey Shade, for supporting the Black History Month Program.

Mr. Giuliano called for a brief recess at 7:25 p.m. to allow for members of the community to continue to arrive. The meeting reconvened at 7:45 p.m. Mr. Giuliano stated that he was pleased to report that the New York State budget was finally approved, and the district will be receiving additional state aid money.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Todaro provided an update on the continuing development of the 2013-2014 school budget. She indicated that the district is slated to receive a projected \$441,916 in additional state aid funds, and she gave a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the impact these new funds will have on the budget. Ms. Todaro's presentation included highlights from the community forum on March 20, 2013, an overview of class size projections, and discussion on the original budget scenarios of 3.18% (tax cap limit) and 3.75% (exceeds tax cap limit). She then went on to present the adjusted budget scenario as a result of the increase in state aid. She explained that applying the \$441,916 in additional state aid money to the original 3.75% budget scenario would yield a 2.98% tax levy budget. She noted that the allowable tax levy cap remained at 3.18%; therefore, the difference between the 3.18% and 2.98% resulted in an additional \$119,000 available for use in the budget. She stated that the Board would be considering various options on how to best utilize these additional funds.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident indicated her support of the adjusted 3.18% budget presented this evening, encouraging the Board to put the additional monies towards programs and staff.

Two elementary school students addressed the Board encouraging them not to cut the LEAP Program at TJL.

A resident suggested looking into what other school districts in the area are doing in terms of their budgets; are they exceeding the cap or not?

A resident encouraged the Board to reconsider cuts to the PSAT and SAT programs.

Several residents spoke about class size, some spoke specifically about the 6th grade, stating that those cuts were unreasonable; this is not the year to make a cut in this grade level.

A resident stated that a large percentage of the community have indicated their willingness to support a budget that goes over the tax cap, and he believes it would in the best interests of the district to do so; future budgets will be predicated on what happens now. Several other residents who addressed the Board also concurred with this position; even with the additional state aid, consider presenting a budget that exceeds the tax cap.

A resident inquired about future predictions on the budget and also encouraged the Board to take steps toward finding alternate sources of revenue.

A resident expressed concern about what's coming down the pike. There are many big-ticket items (pensions, health insurance, etc.); does the Board have a long term view or are they going to go year by year?

A resident stated she was disappointed that the budget always seems to address cuts; can't we develop a budget that we can add programs to?

A resident encouraged the Board to use additional monies towards technology curriculum, stating that students will be at a disadvantage if the district doesn't improve the courses they offer in this area.

A resident stated that technology should be two-fold: teach technology to the students but also use technology as a teaching tool by offering online courses for students to take.

Mr. Giuliano thanked the community members for their feedback. He noted that districts have lobbied the State for years to get funding for two years at a time, but that never materialized. He noted that pension cost projections are limited, as they are released only once a year, and health insurance rates are not released until the fall for a January increase; therefore, it's difficult for districts to do the type of long term planning that some residents have suggested.

Ms. Todaro reported that due to the additional funds from state aid, the LEAP Program would not be removed from the 2013-2014 budget.

Ms. Todaro stated that her recommendation to the Board for use of the \$119,000 in additional funds was to reinstate a 6th grade classroom teacher at OMS and reinstate AIS staff.

The Board members made several comments regarding the budget:

- Must be mindful of the potential danger in breaching the tax cap; if budget fails on the first attempt it would absolutely have to pass the second time around or the result would be a zero increase in the tax levy.
- Look at projections on pension smoothing option; once specific details are known, it may prove to be something well worth considering for the district.
- Better future planning; look at instituting a community advisory committee on the budget.
- Explore revenue sources; consider fees for use of facilities.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Toles, seconded by Mr. Schoer, and carried (6-0), the Board and district office administrators moved to Executive Session at 9:20 p.m. for the purpose of collective bargaining discussions. Ms. Boba left the meeting at 9:30 p.m., and Mr. Toles left the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Schoer, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, and carried (4-0), the Board adjourned the special meeting of April 3, 2013 at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Whelan
District Clerk