

BOARD OF EDUCATION

03/30/11

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Margaretville Central School District was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 in the Board Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barbara Funck, Agnes Laub, Robbie Martin and Randy Moore.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Moskowitz

OTHERS PRESENT: Tony Albanese (Superintendent), Karen Dietrich (Treasurer) and Teresa Goodchild (Clerk).

At 6:30PM, President Moore called the Special Meeting to order.

Mr. Albanese gave a presentation on the new Middle School proposal to move Grade 6 upstairs with grades 7 and 8. Concepts of importance: meeting needs of all students, declining enrollment, deflated economy and educational affordability, provide a range of educational options. Items to Address: NYS budget deficit, \$591,000 adjustment to MCS, health/dental/fuel increases, MESPA and MTA contract negotiations, Federal stimulus dollars end in 2011, Race to the Top/Final Scope of Work, NYS common core standards, and a long list of unfunded mandates.

Some of the advantages: content teachers to work with students, allows for true middle school model of education, deals with lower enrollment issues, maximizes instruction time for teachers and students avoiding the potential of part time positions, retirements would be dealt with through attrition, would move 2 LTA positions to grade 6 (1 for each section) to handle transition, MTA support. There would be no teacher layoffs with this plan, faculty would be assigned through attrition, and the district would save approximately \$402,818. Mr. Albanese explained that it is cost efficient and cost effective given the economic climate. If the 6th grade remained in elementary, the district would save \$124,246; at least 2 positions would be reduced to part time; and it would increase the number of faculty by 2.9 overall.

Ms. Taylor presented information on the proposed schedules. The 6th graders would have a guided study hall each day and would have a reader's workshop class, a writer's workshop, and intro to computers for 10 weeks each. They would also have three years with content special teachers.

Mr. Moore opened it up for parent questions/comments:

Tammy Rieder asked about 6th grade graduation. Mr. Albanese suggested that the administration would sit down with parents and make plans so that this year's 5th grade would not lose out on anything. She also asked if the students would move from room to room or if the teachers would come into their classroom. The students would move from room to room; however, it was explained that they currently move for PE and specials. The middle school students are in a specific area/wing for most classes.

Tracy Reither (parent and teacher) commented that the 5th and 6th graders currently walk to her classroom for health and that they are very prepared and not a problem.

Sue Allen questioned where the savings figures came from. Mr. Albanese explained that it was salaries/fringe benefits with retirees. She also questioned the future of Reading Recovery. It is being replaced by new literacy program we are currently using.

Norika Zellner asked if the students were ready for this and would the district prepare them. Mr. Albanese explained that once the district knew the direction they were going, they would spend time with the students and they would have an LTA to help with the changing of classrooms.

Another parent expressed appreciation for the administration to utilize a teacher full time rather than hire part time teachers. She feels it supports a quality education.

Diane Oles questioned the structure of the guided study halls. Ms. Taylor explained that they would have outlines and make sure students utilize the time wisely. The students would also have an LTA in the study hall to assist them with homework issues, etc.

Mr. Albanese explained that he wants parents to be part of the process and he feels that this one would build skills at the middle school level and keep the high school strong. He thanked Linda, Gary and Nancy for all of their hard work in coming up with the schedules. Tina Greene questioned the next step. Mr. Moore explained that the Board will discuss it and make a decision in the near future.

Madeline Minervini commented that her son was shown a knife by a 7th grader on March 14th and questioned whether the district holds random knife checks. Mr. Albanese asked her to meet with him after the meeting to discuss the incident further.

The Board then held a discussion regarding EXCEL Money options. There is currently \$75,194 of EXCEL Money available. To maximize the aid, if the District spends \$235,000 on qualifying projects, it would actually cost \$17,000 (which would come from the Capital Reserve Account). (EXCEL Aid of \$75,194 / 47.2% = \$159,309 + \$75,194 = approximately \$235,000). It also would not cause an increase in the tax levy.

ROLL CALL**CALL TO ORDER****DISCUSSION****MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR GRADES 6, 7 & 8****EXCEL PROJECT OPTIONS**

The Board then discussed the originally proposed projects and their budget estimates: Security entrance/door to main entrance \$77,000, Auditorium stage refurbishing \$47,900, Locker room drain \$63,100, Locker room lockers \$86,800, Electromagnetic lock sets \$11,700, Additional security cameras \$2,500, Cracks in locker room walls \$??, New computer lab \$??, Replace existing gym light fixtures \$49,900, 2nd floor ventilation \$15,000, Public view monitors \$4,000, Outside electronic sign \$40,000, Entrance signs \$500.

After much discussion, the Board recommended the following: 1) Drain in locker room (\$63,100), 2) 2nd floor ventilation (\$15,000), 3) Computer lab (\$100,000). This would leave approximately \$56,900 to discuss/debate with Mr. Moskowitz for the electronic sign. Mr. Albanese explained that the referendum for the projects would not take place until after the budget vote. The Board will vote at a later date as to the date for the referendum.

DISCUSSION
EXCEL Project Options
(Continued)

Barbara Taylor, 6th Grade teacher, presented the BOE with some letters from her students.

IT WAS MOVED by Mrs. Funck, seconded by Mr. Moore to move into Executive Session at 7:58PM to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

With no action taken, the Regular Meeting resumed at 9:55PM.

IT WAS MOVED by Ms. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Laub to adjourn the meeting at 9:55PM. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Approved: 4/27/11 Clerk: Teresa K. Soodheid