

**MINUTES OF BOARD RETREAT HELD  
February 13, 2017**

In accordance with the State’s Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by mailing a notice of the time, date, location and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting to the PRINCETON PACKET, THE TIMES, THE HOME NEWS TRIBUNE, AND WEST WINDSOR and PLAINSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARIES. Copies of the notice have also been posted in the board office and filed with Plainsboro’s and West Windsor’s township clerks and in each of the district schools.

The Board Retreat of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Board of Education was called to order by Board President Anthony Fleres at 6:37 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room at the District Administration Building. The following Board members were present:

Mr. Isaac Cheng	Ms. Carol Herts	Ms. Dana Krug
Mr. Anthony Fleres	Ms. Michele Kaish	Mr. Yingchao “YZ” Zhang
		Mr. Yu “Taylor” Zhong

Board Members Ho and Juliana were absent. Present also were: Dr. David Aderhold, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Larry Shanok, Assistant Superintendent for Finance/Board Secretary; Mr. Martin Smith, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction; and, Mr. Gerard Dalton, Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Services/Planning.

No members of the public were present.

**BOARD PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS**

Mr. Fleres welcomed everyone to the retreat and thanked them for participating during this busy time of the year.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS**

Dr. Aderhold also thanked everyone for participating. The main purpose of the retreat is to focus in on the primary elements of the 2017-2018 budget and explore some key topics that will impact this budget but also the next few budgets.

**Welcome/Review Purpose and Outcomes**

The Superintendent kicked-off the meeting with a video from Teachers College on teaching the student and not simply a subject. The Board discussed what resonated with them from the video.

**Subject Supervisors and Teacher Resource Specialists**

A key element in strengthening instruction and bringing curricular and instructional consistency throughout the district has been the utilization of subject supervisors and teacher resource specialists. Mr. Smith noted the common misapprehension that supervisors spend a few hours on teacher observations and evaluations and do little else. He covered in great detail the multifaceted roles both groups of professionals play in building on the strengths of the district.

Done effectively, observations require reflection and care and are far from being a process that can be done effectively in a brief or perfunctory manner. A typical subject supervisor has sixty observations to do. And each subject supervisor has extensive duties far beyond the observation process. Mr. Smith delineated these responsibilities in detail. All supervisors review lesson plans, are involved in curriculum development, hold departmental meetings and are heavily involved in hiring new staff – not an insignificant task given both retirements and leave replacement activities. In addition, each contributes to specific activities relating to their subject area. For example: the 6-12 Math Supervisor has duties relating to G&T program review, A&E testing, new textbooks & curriculum, re-sequencing of AP calculus & multivariable courses, homework professional development, and grading profile work.

A Teacher Resource Specialists bring high quality instructional elements to all professional staff. Fostering professional collaboration and interaction raises teaching standards by all teachers for all students. Mr. Smith noted during his discussion, that often, rather than being additions to total district staff, trade-offs were frequently made with other positions and resources that were deemed to be less effective for students

### **Staff Projections**

The Superintendent remarked that recent budgets had squeezed in one area or another. One result has been the pressure on the student: teacher ratio in the district, which is noticeably higher than say, the ratios in Princeton or Hopewell Valley districts. This budget has some room and several staff positions are contemplated in the budget to provide some small relief from this trend. Specifics will develop as student scheduling choices are made. Increased guidance-SAC and BCBA staffs are in the budget in addition to teaching staff. The district has a million dollars in musical instruments, but has always relied in individual building spending for replacement instruments as well as from help from PTAs/PTSAs. This budget will include \$50,000 for replacement of worn instruments on an approximately 20 year cycle basis.

The Superintendent filled the Board of Education in on the recent COAH court decision. This decision will place additional pressure on townships to provide lower cost housing and is likely to spur residential development in the near term. With the recent experience of new student generation with the Princeton Terrace development, it appears likely that new housing will generate a sizeable number of new students to the district. In addition, the students will likely be distributed throughout K-12 rather than simply being elementary. With the exception of some room for growth in enrollment at the high school level, sizable growth in enrollment will pressure class sizes K-8. The Board of Education will have to formulate effective and timely plans for such growth. An added dimension of flexibility in that process is the district's foresight in having capital reserve dollars. A document from the district architect compared likely timelines for capital reserve based construction versus referendum based construction. Even assuming referendum success, the referendum process takes about a year longer.

The Board of Education indicated support for the described budget. Several additional options were discussed. Two found Board of Education support. Small group instruction loads within the music programs of the district are high. An additional teacher will be added in this budget at the grade 4-5 level, another at the grade 6-8 level, and a third at the high school level to bring these ratios to a more reasonable level. In a similar fashion, technology break/fix loads have gotten high with the wide spread 1:1 initiative and an addition to the tech staff won support.

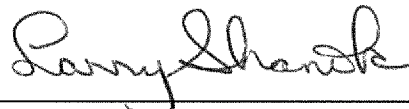
The Superintendent noted that the district will not hear anything about state aid until March 2, 2017. In addition, the July 1, 2017, prescription premium increases as well as the January 1, 2018, medical premium increases are not known at this time. Barring large surprises in these areas, the resulting draft budget will be within the cap regulation requirements.

**Closing and Next Steps**

The Superintendent and Mr. Fleres thanked everyone for their participation.

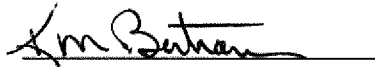
A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Zhong, seconded by Mr. Cheng. All Board members that were present voted in favor of adjourning the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:26 p.m.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Shanok, Board Secretary

Prepared by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen M. Bertram