

READINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
Holland Brook School - Board of Education Meeting Room
Special Meeting – 7:30 p.m.
May 1, 2013

MINUTES

1. Call to Order – Open Public Meetings Act – Roll Call – Flag Salute

President David Livingston called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and was open to the media and public. Notices were duly posted, and the meeting was advertised in the Hunterdon Democrat. Formal action may be taken.

The following Board members were present:

Barbara Dobozyński	Wayne Doran	William Goodwin	Vincent Panico
Laura Simon	Eric Zwerling	Cheryl Filler	David Livingston

Also present:

Barbara Sargent, Superintendent
Steffi-Jo DeCasas, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

2. Report from Communications Committee – Dress Code

Mrs. Simon introduced a statement developed by the Communications Committee as follows:

Concerns for the dress code for the upcoming 8th grade dance were brought to the Board's attention at the April 23 public meeting. The Superintendent and the Principal are responsible for enforcement. The Board supports that position and relies on the school administrators to apply these policies in a fair and equitable manner.

Our current policy states "Pupils may not wear clothing or engage in grooming practices that present a health or safety hazard to the individual pupil or to others".

Our primary concern is the overall protection of our students. It is the Board's position that the risk of a wardrobe mishap either, intentional or un-intentional, and the possibility of dissemination of such an occurrence through social media should be mitigated. Wardrobe malfunctions have been documented in other districts. The distress this may cause any student(s) is not a risk that this Board is willing to take.

The Board agrees with the compromise outlined by Mrs. Moffat that includes the addition of clear or spaghetti straps to reduce the risk of wardrobe malfunction.

The Board has carefully reviewed communications from the community. The Board recommends the formation of a committee to include students, parents, administrators and

Board members to review all policies related to this issue before the start of the new school year in September.

This Board values your thoughtful input and encourages the community to continue dialogue with us on all school matters.

3. Open to the Public (Limited to Items on the Agenda)

Six members of the public offered further comments regarding the process followed by the board, the media attention, and further comments with regard to the dress code.

4. Dress Code

Motion to approve a statement drafted by the Communications Committee regarding the district's dress code.

Motion: Doran Second: Dobozynski
Vote: 4 yes (Dobozynski, Doran, Panico, Simon)
 4 no (Filler, Goodwin, Livingston, Zwerling)
Motion failed to carry.

Motion to remove the ban on strapless dresses

Move: Livingston Second: Goodwin
Vote: 4 yes (Filler, Goodwin, Livingston, Zwerling)
 4 no (Dobozynski, Doran, Panico, Simon)
Motion failed to carry

The original motion to approve the statement drafted by the Communications Committee regarding the district's dress code was again introduced with the addition to support including a statement permitting the use of a single strap.

Move: Livingston Second: Simon
Vote: 7 yes
 1 no (Filler)

5. Recess

A motion was introduced for a five minute recess.

Move: Panico Second: Dobozynski Vote: carried

6. Ad Hoc Dress Code Policy Committee – appointment by President

President Livingston appointed Laura Simon to chair an ad hoc committee to review the dress code. Principal Sharon Moffat will also serve on the committee. He requested that others volunteer to serve on the committee, including teachers, parents and students. The committee will formulate policy by school opening for September. Mrs. Simon would like to survey the district in May and compile the results for review in June.

7. School Choice

Mr. Livingston opened the floor to questions by four public members concerning possible increased enrollments in special needs students and discipline issues. They requested that the

motion be tabled and decision be delayed for a year. The questions were addressed by Dr. Sargent.

Motion to affirm the Superintendent's School Choice applications submission to the State of New Jersey

Motion: Panico Second: Doran

Vote: 4 yes (Dobozynski, Doran, Livingston, Panico)

4 no (Filler, Goodwin, Simon, Zwerling)

Motion failed to carry.

Motion to affirm the Superintendent's School Choice application submission to the State of New Jersey provided the application is non-binding and can float the number of available seats and adequate parent communication before implementation as to the numbers included in the program

Move: Doran Second: Panico

Vote: 8 no

Motion failed to carry.

8. Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session 9:53 pm - 10:15 pm

Motion to adjourn to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes in accordance with the Sunshine Law, Ch. 321, P.L. 1975, to receive an update regarding the status of the police investigation pursuant to bylaw 1066. The matter discussed will be made public if and when the circumstances requiring confidentiality no longer exist; however, it is not presently known when such circumstances exist.

Motion: Panico

Second: Goodwin

Vote: Carried

9. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 10:15 p.m.

Motion: Goodwin

Second: Simon

Vote: Carried

Respectfully submitted,

**Steffi-Jo DeCasas
Business Administrator/Board Secretary**