

**SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
HUNTINGTON U.F.S.D.**

**September 8, 2009**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Huntington Union Free School District was held on Tuesday, September 8, 2009 at Jack Abrams Intermediate School, Lowndes Avenue, Huntington Station, New York. The meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

There were present Board of Education Members: Dwyer, Rogan, Bené, Black, Brown, McGrath, Paci; Superintendent Finello, Mr. Grackin, Dr. Giani, Dr. Card and Mrs. Troffa.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Finello read a letter that was sent home to parents of students at Abrams Intermediate School about the shooting incident that occurred on Tuesday, September 1, 2009 on Tower Street outside of the Administration offices. The letter that was sent home explained the steps that the district has already taken. Mr. Finello read all the bulleted items in the letter and elaborated on each of them for those present.

Mr. Dwyer reported on a meeting that took place with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Police that was attended by himself, Mrs. Black and Mr. Paci. Also in attendance were Deputy Supervisor Laure Nolan and Director of Public Safety, Bruce Richards. The police were open to working with the school board to make the school a safer environment. Mr. Dwyer shared the results of that meeting. He indicated the steps that were to be taken, which included daily patrols and coordination with our own security during the school day. Mr. Dwyer also reported that he had a conversation with Supervisor Frank Petrone and Councilman Stuart Besen and they recommended and would try to work out the logistics for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct shift changes to be conducted at the Jack Abrams Intermediate School instead of Town Hall. This would bring additional police presence into the area. He had also been in contact with Legislator Jonathan Cooper's office and asked him to set up a town meeting. Mr. Dwyer invited Mrs. Black and Mr. Paci to add to his statement. Mrs. Black indicated they had brainstormed on how to make the school safe for the opening of school, but the need is to focus on things for the future, a long-range plan. Mrs. Black indicated that she believes we need to move the intermediate school out of the area. So as not to abandon the building, she suggested that we might switch with Town Hall.

Mr. Paci then commented that this is not the first time this issue has come up. There are so many shootings that are not reported. He said fire drills need to be coordinated with the police department. We need to protect these children.

Mr. Dwyer indicated that in the conversation with Mr. Petrone he informed them that additional cameras were installed within 48 hours.

On another topic, Mrs. Bené indicated that she attended the official opening of the Tri Community Center. The Center keeps children off the streets after school. Mrs. Bené invited anyone to stop by and see the Center. She indicated they are in need of furniture and would be happy to accept donations. Mrs. Bené also indicated that the mural downtown was the result of the efforts of this organization. Mrs. Rogan also attended the ribbon cutting ceremony as did the town board and various legislators. They all pledged their support to the children of the community and we must hold them to their word. Mrs. Rogan was very encouraged.

Mrs. Bené also spoke with Supervisor Petrone and he said he would work hand-in-hand with the board to work for the safety of our children and the community. She commented that Mr. Dwyer and Mr. Petrone have a good relationship and Mr. Petrone wants to help us. Mrs. Black concurred that Mr. Petrone was very concerned and felt that he would help.

Mrs. Brown indicated that the four cameras went up very quickly and that is an indication of the support that we are getting from the Town. When she visited Abrams Intermediate she saw a police presence, both in police cars and undercover cars. Mrs. Rogan indicated that she has a fourth grader starting at Abrams Intermediate and the school atmosphere is fantastic due to Mary Stokkers, Principal, and the PTA. The children are happy and it is a wonderful school. Mrs. Bené also indicated that her daughter teaches at Abrams Intermediate.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTARY**

At the portion of the meeting set aside for public commentary several residents and parents made the following comments:

A parent and resident indicated his wife is a graduate of Huntington High School and a life-long resident. He thanked Mr. Finello for the letter home to the parents and his attention to this matter. His concern is the safety of children and teachers. He feels strongly that the location of the school is not safe and the facility should no longer be in use. He indicated that the Board and the community have a responsibility for setting a timetable to accomplish this.

Another parent with one student in Abrams Intermediate and one who will be coming to the school in the future commented that he appreciates everything the Board is trying to do. He moved his children from St. Patrick's because the public schools have so much to offer; however this location is not safe. He said we need both short-term and long-term goals. In the short term there should be a constant police presence.

Another parent of a child at Abrams Intermediate and one on the way thanked the Board for getting security here, but this is no place for a school. He said we need a permanent police presence here. He also wanted more information about the security patrols.

A mother of a daughter in the school was here representing many parents. She read an article about incidents that had occurred in 2003 that are the same as the incidents that are occurring now. She shared an idea about asking Avalon Bay to build in the area around the school instead of the planned location.

Another parent of a daughter was here in 2003 when the same things were happening. He indicated this is not a school district problem but an immigration problem and a gang problem. The public should talk to our Congressmen. He also commented about the baseball field and indicated he sent an e-mail to Mr. Dwyer indicating some problems that need to be resolved.

**PERSONNEL**

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent the following changes in personnel occurred:

A MOTION was made by Mrs. Brown and seconded by Mrs. Rogan to approve the following items:

- H.1 through H.3
- H.5, and H.6

MOTION carried.

A MOTION was made by Mrs. Brown and seconded by Mrs. Bené to approve the following items:

- H.4, Items 1, 3, and 4

MOTION carried.

A MOTION was made by Mrs. Brown and seconded by Mrs. Rogan to approve the following:

- H.4 Item 2

AYES:	6	Mrs. Black
		Mrs. Brown
		Mr. Dwyer
		Mr. McGrath
		Mr. Paci
		Mrs. Rogan

NOES: 0  
 RECUSE: Mrs. Bené

Mrs. Bené recused herself from voting because this is her daughter.

MOTION carried.

Dr. Giani announced Mr. Ron Wilson as Dean at Huntington High School.

### H. 1 Approve Resignations / Leaves of Absence/Retirement

Retirement					
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Date	Reason
1.1	AMA	Stephany Moore	HS	9/30/09	Medical
Resignations					
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Date	Reason
1.2	CU	Amy Pechar	Teacher Center	9/1/09	Family
1.3	SEC	Christopher Bamfo	HS	9/1/09	Education
Leave of Absence					
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Dates	Reason
1.4	ATH	Ronald Wilson	Elem/JA	9/9/09 – 6/30/10	Moved to Dean/HS
1.5	ATH	Susan Curtin	Elem/WH	10/2/09 – 1/4/10	Child Care
Return from Leave of Absence					
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Dates	Reason
1.6	ATH	Adrienne DiMaggio	Elem/FH	9/11/09	End Child Care

*A. DiMaggio to return from LOA in the event an additional (5<sup>th</sup>) kindergarten class opens at FH*

### H. 2 Approve Non-Instructional New Hires

Full-time						
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Date	Salary	Replacing
2.1	SEC	Steven Muller	Guard/HS	9/9/09	\$26,687.	C. Bamfo
2.2	AMA	Doreatha Bailey	Aide/7 hr	9/8/09	14.01/hr	Recalled/ S. Moore
Part-time						
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Date	Salary	Replacing
2.3	AMA	Annie Bastien	Aide/3 hr	9/8/09	14.01/hr	Recalled/Vacant

### H. 3 Approve Instructional New Hires

Probationary							
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Certification	Effective Dates	Salary	Replacing
3.1	ATH	Ronald Wilson	Dean/HS	Attendance	9/9/09 - 9/9/11	Sch IV, Step 9 \$71,720.	New
Part-time							
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Certification	Effective Dates	Salary	Replacing
3.2	ATH	Deidre Mayer	FL/HS (.6)	Perm/TESOL Perm/Fr. 7-12 Perm/Latin 7-12	9/9/09	Sch. VIII, Step 12 \$54,579.	Self

*D. Mayer was previously appointed fulltime, and has requested a part-time appointment.*

**H. 4 Approve Long-Term Substitutes**

Full-time						
No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Dates	Salary	Replacing
4.1	ATH	Danielle Reminick	Elem/WH	9/8/09 – 1/4/10	Sch IV, Step 1.5 \$54,160.	S. Curtin
4.2	ATH	Brooke Bene	Elem/JA	9/9/09 – 6/30/10	Sch I, Step 1.5 \$47,200.	R. Wilson
<i>B. Bene was previously approved on the 8/3/09 agenda as LTS for V. Creighton 9/1/09 to 1/29/10</i>						
4.3	ATH	Megan Jost	Elem/JA	9/9/09 - 1/29/10 approx.	Sch I, Step 1 \$46,415.	V. Creighton
4.4	ATH	Catherine Alexander	Elem/FH	9/8/09 - TBD	1-20 days/\$90. 21-30 days/\$105. 31+ days/\$334.12 Sch. VI, Step 5 \$66,825.	L. Cuthbertson

**H. 5 Approve Recall of Staff**

No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Date
5.1	AMA	Doreatha Bailey	Aide/7 hr	9/8/09
5.2	AMA	Annie Bastien	Aide/3 hr	9/8/09

**H. 6 Approve Substitutes**

No.	Unit	Name	Assignment	Effective Dates	Rate of Pay
6.1	SEC	Walter Wilson	Security	2009-2010	\$11.45/hr

**LEGEND**

Schools/Buildings

HS = Huntington High School  
 MS = Finley Middle School  
 JA = Jack Abrams Intermediate  
 WH = Woodhull Intermediate  
 FH = Flower Hill Primary  
 SD = Southdown Primary  
 JE = Jefferson Primary  
 WA = Washington Primary  
 DW = District-wide  
 CO = Central Office  
 NC = Non Contractual  
 STU = Student Worker

Units

ATH = Teachers  
 AMA = Aides and Monitors  
 DSPA = District Supervisors and Principals Assoc.  
 HCA = Chairpersons  
 SHHA = Study Hall and Hallway Assistants  
 B & G = Buildings & Grounds  
 FSW = Food Service Workers  
 SEC = Security  
 NUR = Nurses  
 CU = Clerical

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY**

A parent of three children in the district indicated that the safety and security issue at Abrams Intermediate School was a districtwide concern, but the posting of the meeting on the website did not indicate what was being discussed at tonight’s meeting. She felt many more parents would have attended and shared their views if the posting was more specific. She also felt many parents did not know of the incident. The ones who knew were the parents of students at Abrams Intermediate who received the letter from Mr. Finello. She requested that the agendas of Special Board meeting postings be more specific. She also said she moved out from Brooklyn so that she could raise her family in a safe environment but this environment is not safe. She implored the Board to tell the public what they need to do.

Another parent said we need short-term and long-term goals and we need to get our children out of this area.

Another parent addressed Mrs. Stokkers, asking her what happened to the community group who wanted to improve things in this area. Mrs. Stokkers responded that the Lowndes Avenue Task Force meets monthly and answered his questions.

**CLOSING REMARKS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Paci had some questions about space issues at Washington and Flower Hill Primary Schools. Dr. Giani responded. A decision about a new section at Flower Hill would be made very shortly, probably by Friday. If that occurred, Art and Music would be on a cart. Dr. Giani updated Mr. Paci on all the elementary schools. Mr. Finello indicated any changes would be made at the next board meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Paci also had questions about contingent positions. Dr. Giani responded.

Mrs. Brown asked when Abrams Intermediate School was opened. Mr. Finello responded.

Mr. Dwyer indicated we share the same concerns. Board members spent much time this week on the phone with the authorities to get the results that were achieved. He implored parents to write letters to Supervisor Petrone and Jon Cooper and to attend Town of Huntington meetings. There is only so much the board can do. Parent involvement is critical.

Mrs. Bené agreed. She said the board is doing everything they can do. The board needs support from the public. Please write to our congressmen.

Mr. Paci asked about the Neighborhood Watch that was talked about in the past. One person attended that meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A MOTION was made by Mrs. Bené and seconded by Mrs. Rogan to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION carried.

At 8:40 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Troffa  
District Clerk