

COATESVILLE

AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

AGENDA & ENCLOSURES



13 JANUARY 2015

Board Directors

Dean A. Snyder, President
Stuart C. N. Deets, Vice President
Diane M. Brownfield
James L. Fox
James Hills
Laurie C. Knecht
Michele S. Maffei
Deborah L. Thompson
Ann Wuertz

Administration

Dr. Cathy Taschner, Superintendent
Ronald Kabonick, Board Secretary
Karen Jackson, Recording Secretary

Solicitor

Michael I. Levin, Esquire

**COATESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING AGENDA
JANUARY 13, 2015 - 6:00 PM
9/10 Center Auditorium**

OPENING ACTIVITIES

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this meeting is for the signing of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission Agreement, and to take action on any other matters which may come before the School Board.

3. READING OF MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE COATESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, A LEARNING COMMUNITY RICH IN DIVERSITY AND COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE, IS TO EDUCATE ALL STUDENTS BY PROVIDING RIGOROUS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO BECOME RESPONSIBLE, PRODUCTIVE, LIFE-LONG LEARNERS IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY.

4. ADVISEMENT

By notice of the President, Board Members are advised that all votes shall be regarded as roll call votes. The minutes should also note that public notice was given for this meeting in accordance with Act 93 of 1998, Section 1. School Board meetings shall proceed in accordance with School Board policy.

5. ROLL CALL

Board of School Directors

Dean A. Snyder, President	<i>(Finance & Personnel Committee)</i>
Stuart C. N. Deets, Vice President	<i>(Operations and Finance & Personnel Committees)</i>
Diane M. Brownfield	<i>(Education Committee)</i>
James A. Fox	<i>(Policy Committee)</i>
James Hills	<i>(Education and Operations Committees)</i>
Laurie C. Knecht	<i>(Operations Committee)</i>
Michele S. Maffei	<i>(Finance & Personnel Committee)</i>
Deborah L. Thompson	<i>(Education and Policy Committees)</i>
Ann Wuertz	<i>(Policy Committee)</i>

Solicitor

Michael I. Levin, Esquire

Administration

Dr. Cathy Taschner, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Angelo Romaniello, Jr., Assistant to the Superintendent
Dr. Kimberly R. Donahue, Assistant to the Superintendent of Curriculum & Learning
Ronald G. Kabonick, Director of Business Administration & School Board Secretary
Erika Zeigler, Director of Human Resources
Abdallah Hawa, Director of Technology
John Reid, Director of Pupil Services, Data & Assessment
Dave Krakower, Director of High School & Curriculum Instruction - Special Education (6-12)
Dr. Teresa Powell, Director of Middle School Education & Curriculum Instruction
Jason Palaia, Director of Elementary Education (3-5) - Special Education (K-5)

6. **MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

The Board has requested all persons making comments on **agenda items** to list their name, address, telephone number and motion item(s) on the sheet provided. There is a three (3) minute limit per person. The Board does not take action or discuss items not appearing on the agenda. The Board values public comments and wishes to convey that although Board members cannot discuss items that are not on the agenda, they listen carefully and appreciate and value input from the public.

MOTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

1. **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** (*Deborah Thompson, Chair*)

- Plan of Action/Agreement Discussion

1) **Plan of Action/Agreement for Improving School-Community Relations**

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approve the Plan of Action Agreement for Improving School-Community Relations as endorsed by the Coatesville Area School District (CASD), the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Pennsylvania (NAACP-PA), and the Center for Safe Schools/Mid-Atlantic Equity Center. (*Enclosure 1*)

2. **FINANCE COMMITTEE** (*Stuart Deets, Chair*)

- Budget Presentation and Discussion

1) **Adopt Resolution Authorizing the Proposed Preliminary Budget Display and Advertising & Authorizing of Referendum Exceptions**

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approve the Resolution Authorizing the Proposed Preliminary Budget Display and Advertising and Authorizing of Referendum Exceptions. (*Enclosure 2*)

- Project Manager Resolution

1) **Resolution on “Project Manager” Position**

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approve the Resolution to eliminate the position known as “Project Manager” for reasons of economy, effective immediately, and that the employee in the position be furloughed at the close of business on Tuesday, January 13, 2015 and that the Administration shall provide notice to the employee. (*Enclosure 3*)

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board has requested that all persons making comments of public concern to list their name, address, telephone number and topic(s) on the sheet provided. There is a three (3) minute time limit per person.

ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS

INFORMATION ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Time: _____

*Notice of this public meeting was advertised in the Daily Local News on January 7, 2015.
Copies of the minutes will be maintained in the Office of the Board Secretary.*

Special Meeting

Enclosure #1



**PLAN OF ACTION / AGREEMENT
for Improving School-Community Relations
Coatesville Area School District,
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission,
National Association for the Advancement of
Colored People – PA, and Center for Safe Schools/Mid-
Atlantic Equity Center**

This Plan is the result of several earnest meetings among area service and community representatives that include the Coatesville Area School District, The PA Human Relations Commission (PHRC), The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Pennsylvania (NAACP-PA), and The Center for Safe School/The Mid-Atlantic Equity Center.

The express intent of the parties to this Agreement is to offer a means for improving the relationship between the Coatesville Area School District (CASD) and area residents. All parties have voluntarily agreed to participate in this Agreement in the spirit of community reconciliation and cooperation, requesting the services of the Department of Justice's Community Relations Services (CRS).

- I. Issues Identified
 - a. Understanding the harmful effect of events surrounding the texting scandal involving two former administrators in the CASD, PHRC, The Center for Safe Schools/The Mid-Atlantic Equity Center and other agreed upon support agencies will maintain a visible presence in the community and offer both the CASD and the community support in moving forward.
 - b. PHRC, NAACP, Center for Safe School will make every effort to attend community events related to the incidents, check in frequently with the district and/or its attorney by phone and/or e-mail, and ask for status updates. Applicable media reports, available from partners and through web search engine alerts, should be reviewed. Since rumors and fears invariably increase tensions when a school district is dealing with the aftermath of such an incident, open communication between the school district, the community and the partners is crucial. In the interest of open

communication, partners should seek the district's response to published reports.

II. Joint Solutions

- a. In response, the parties to this agreement shall take the following actions.
 - i. Promote transparency by keeping students, parents, and staff informed of the district's issues and activities. For example: administrative position changes and appointments, policy changes, significant incident updates, position openings.
 - ii. Provide information to students, parents and the community frequently. Press releases, automated telephone calls, newsletters and memoranda are examples of the methods that can be used for this purpose. The district should explore ways to harness social media for this purpose effectively and professionally.
 - iii. Designate a spokesperson to give interviews on behalf of the CASD when needed in order to maintain consistent messages and to aid in avoiding misquoting and misinterpretation in media reports.
 - iv. Make periodic announcements assuring students and staff that they can voice concerns regarding discrimination, inequity, bullying, or any other issue to a particular office either in their school or to district administration. These announcements can be made by school principals, assistant principals, school staff, or district administration.
 - v. Send letters/e-mail messages to parents to assure them that the district is taking all reasonable measures to treat all students and staff fairly and to provide a safe and respectful environment. This method may be particularly useful when situations such as the texting scandal arise.
 - vi. Post and exhibit prominently, as required by law, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission's (PHRC) fair practice notices for employers and educational institutions subject to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. The notices should be prominently posted in areas where both

students and employees have access and can see and read them.

- vii. Include a reference to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to its anti-discrimination policy statement wherever that statement appears, including CASD's website. Provide the PHRC's web address in all documentation where the aforementioned policy statements are located. The CASD shall maintain an anti-discrimination policy, in accordance with applicable law. The policy shall apply to the board, staff, teachers, administration, students and all vendors doing business with the CASD.
- viii. Following an assessment hearing, partners may provide civil rights clinics or trainings for the board, staff and/or students. Sample topics include an overview of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act's education provisions and Pennsylvania Fair Educational Opportunities Act; a discussion of the PHRC's Equal Educational Opportunity Guidelines for Public Schools; school safety; protected-class bullying.
- ix. Where possible, the CASD shall hold separate action planning days with the NAACP and other partners, which might include the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), US Department of Justice - Community Relations Service (DOJ/CRS), the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Center for Safe Schools/Mid Atlantic Equity Center and religious communities. Divide participants into groups of four to six members, each with a PHRC or partner facilitator, to accomplish the following: (a) identify and prioritize challenges; (b) brainstorm solutions to those challenges; (c) list concrete action plans; and (d) accept volunteers to carry out those plans.
- x. Arrange to train all CASD employees and its school board in cultural competency and in the right of all students and employees to be treated in a non-discriminatory manner and to be free from harassment, pursuant to the Pennsylvania

Human Relations Act, regardless of their protected class.

b. The parties also agree in good faith to take the following actions to decrease the likelihood of similar incidents:

- i. It is understood that the hiring of an Equity professional is preferred. In light of budgetary concerns, the District may opt to enlist the local Intermediate Unit to assist with equity/diversity initiatives. The District will provide periodic updates on the work of the Intermediate Unit. Additionally, the District will agree to revisit its ability to hire an Equity Coordinator/Equity Director or consultant for the duration of this Action Plan no less frequently than annually.
- ii. Administer and tabulate the results of a school climate survey for students and staff. When the results have been tabulated, the CASD shall use the results to guide its equity efforts. Survey results will not be accessible to the public. If warranted, the CASD shall repeat this distribution of a school-wide climate survey, tabulation of results, and modification of procedures during the 2014-2015 academic years. This climate survey can be administered and tabulated by the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center at no cost to the CASD.
- iii. Provide an electronic tip-line, telephone helpline, or a centrally located physical mailbox/container through which students and staff, identified by name, or submitted anonymously, may have an opportunity to submit their concerns. For school-based reporting, principals and/or assistant principals or school counselors can monitor submissions. From a district perspective, the district's Director of Student Services or Assistant Superintendent can be charged with monitoring of individual schools to make sure that building representatives are following up on submissions in a timely manner.
- iv. Improve the school environment by, for example, offering extra-curricular activities that appeal to students of diverse backgrounds, offering a student unity group exercise such as that offered in the U. S. Department of Justice - Community

Relations Service's S.P.I.R.I.T. Program, or the Anti-Defamation League's "No Place for Hate" program, and holding student-driven multi-cultural celebrations and displaying student decorated diversity-themed bulletin boards throughout the school year.

- v. Foster strong community relations by developing strong and positive relationships with parents and diverse community members through reasonable measures and inviting positive media coverage. Suggested activities: district-wide community spirit days, cultural appreciation days inviting families and the greater Coatesville community; school sponsored events with multi-cultural emphasis.
- vi. Ask local newspapers to publish a column or an online blog for students of all backgrounds to write about their lives in Coatesville and their plans for the future.
- vii. Become an active, participating member of the Pennsylvania Interagency Task Force on Community Activities and Relations. PHRC can provide details on how the CASD can get involved with the Task Force.
- viii. Create a "Rumor Control Mechanism" to address concerns and educate community and police with available facts, programs, and services including sharing best practices with regard to reducing tension in the school population and between parents and school officials (i.e. teachers, staff, and *et. al.*)

III. Mutual Education Efforts

- a. The CASD, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, and the NAACP-PA will coordinate with the Center for Safe Schools/The Mid-Atlantic Equity Center and DOJ/CRS or like services to identify appropriate programs to benefit the school officials, students, and the community.
 - i. These include programs developed by the PA Human Relations Commission, the Department of Justice CRS or like services, NAACP-PA, the Community Responders Network, and/or Anti-

Defamation League; these include, but are not limited to, the following programs:

1. "Trauma as an Impediment to School Performance" (Dr. Joan Duvall-Flynn, NAACP-PA, 610-358-1582)
2. "Cultural Professionalism" (DOJ/CRS)
3. "PA Human Relations Act" and "Civil Rights Laws" (PHRC)
4. "Hate Crimes Training" and "Dealing with Hate Groups" (CRN-DOJ/CRS and ADL)
5. "Effects of Demographic Changes" (CRN)

IV. Support Resources

- a. The parties also agree to work collaboratively with each other and reach out to any other agreed upon resource that may also render assistance in identifying additional subject matter experts in providing school-community based training and support programs and other public and private entities that may offer additional program or grant assistance to Coatesville toward further advancing area school- community relations and support.

Voluntary Agreement and Ethics Disclaimer

This Plan is the result of voluntary discussion between the parties and is not a result of duress, coercion, or undue influence. Nothing in this Plan should be taken as an admission of wrongdoing by any party and the terms and conditions contained herein are non-contractual and create no independent contractual obligation and/or duties upon any of the parties hereto. No party to this Plan shall institute or prosecute any judicial or administrative proceedings of any kind or nature to enforce any of the terms and conditions herein.

Terms of Agreement

All of the aforementioned tenets of this Plan shall be reviewed after every year from the date of signing. Signatory parties of this Plan at that time may choose to amend, extend or dissolve the Plan based on evidence of good faith, mutual compliance and benefits to the residents and community of Coatesville, PA resulting from this relationship.

The parties of this Plan agree to work in earnest and convene themselves regularly during the term specified to uphold the tenets of the Plan as described herein.

Dispute Resolution

In the event that the parties to this Plan cannot reach agreement on issues before it, neutral informal dispute resolution will be sought to resolve their differences. The services of the U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service might be sought in this regard.

Party and Third Party Rights

Nothing in this Plan is intended to create, nor shall anything in it be construed as creating any rights in any third party entity or person that would not exist independently of this Plan/Agreement.

Consummation and Ratification

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed and delivered this Plan/Agreement as of this 13th day January of 2015 and the signatories hereto personally represent that this Plan/Agreement is executed pursuant to legal authorization by the organizations on behalf of which they are signing:

Coatesville Area School District

PA Human Relations Commission

Cathy Taschner, Superintendent

JoAnn Edwards, Executive
Director of PHRC

National Association for the Advancement for Colored People - PA

Dr. Joan Duvall-Flynn, Education Committee Chair

Center for Safe Schools/Mid-Atlantic Equity Center

Michelle Nutter, Program Director

Witnessed By:

Knight Sor, Conciliation Specialist
U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service

This Plan of Action (Plan/Agreement) is consistent with the United States Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS) congressional mandate as detailed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §2000g). CRS provides assistance to communities and persons therein in resolving disputes, disagreements or difficulties related to conflicts and tensions based on race, color, and national origin. CRS also works with these parties to help communities prevent and respond more effectively to violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

Special Meeting

Enclosure #2

COATESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Resolution Authorizing Proposed Preliminary Budget Display and Advertising and Authorizing Referendum Exception

RESOLVED, by the Board of School Directors of Coatesville Area School District, as follows:

1. The School District shall make the Proposed Preliminary Budget available for public inspection at least 20 days before the date scheduled for adoption of the Preliminary Budget.
2. At least 10 days before the date scheduled for adoption of the Preliminary Budget, the Secretary shall advertise a **Preliminary Budget Notice** in substantially the form as presented to the School Board. The notice shall be advertised once in a newspaper of general circulation and shall be posted conspicuously at the School District offices.
3. The Act 1 index applicable to the School District as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education is 2.4%. The Preliminary Budget Proposal assumes that the School District will receive approval for use of one or more Act 1 real estate tax referendum exceptions. The School District shall take all steps required to obtain approval for the referendum exceptions contemplated in the Preliminary Budget Proposal, including advertising once in a newspaper of general circulation and placing on the School District internet website **Act 1 Referendum Exception Notice** in substantially the form as presented to the School Board.

COATESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Act 1 Referendum Exception Notice

Pursuant to Act 1, the Pennsylvania Department of Education publishes an index % applicable to the School District. The school district real estate tax increase for the next fiscal year is limited to the index % unless the proposed tax rate is approved by voters pursuant to a referendum or the School District qualifies for an Act 1 exception. As a result of special circumstances covered by an Act 1 referendum exception, a tax rate % increase above the index might be required to balance the School District budget for the next fiscal year. The tax to be levied is required to provide a quality education program as reflected in the School District Preliminary Budget.

The School District intends to seek approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education as required by Act 1 for an exception allowing increase of the real estate tax as reflected in the School District Preliminary Budget. The Preliminary Budget is available for public inspection at the School District offices, 3030 C. G. Zinn Road, Thorndale, Pennsylvania. On written request by any School District resident or taxpayer, the School District will provide a copy of the referendum exception application.

Ronald Kabonick
Board Secretary

Special Meeting

Enclosure #3

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the school district has a position known as the "Project Manager"; and

WHEREAS, in a review of the needs of the school district, it has been determined that the position of Project Manager is not needed; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of the job as Project Manager would save money for the school district; and

NOW, THEREFORE, *be it resolved*, that:

1. the position of Project Manager is hereby eliminated for reasons of economy effective immediately;
2. the employee in this position is being furloughed effective at the close of business on Tuesday, January 13, 2015; and
3. the administration shall provide the employee with notice of his furlough from employment.

This concludes
the
Special Meeting Packet
for
Tuesday
January 13, 2015