



# POTTSGROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting Held February 10, 2015

Summary of Key Discussion and Actions Taken:

The Pottsgrove School District Board of Directors held its twice monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at Pottsgrove Middle School.

## **During the Education Report the following was presented/discussed:**

Middle School Principal, Dr. Dave Ramage, Mrs. Christine Henry, and students presented DiLE - iPads in the Middle School Classroom. The presentation featured several apps students are using as tools for learning, student work in the development of iBooks, and tools for organization.

Board Member, Mr. Dave Faulkner, presented a STEM Grant to Technology Director Michael Wagman and faculty and student representatives of the Pottsgrove Middle and High School Robotics Teams. Participating employees of Bentley Systems, an engineering firm, funded the grant.

Superintendent Feola concluded the education report with a detailed review of the work of the District Grading Committee, transition from a 7 to 10 point grading scale in the secondary schools, development of a new elementary report card, and the differences between traditional grading practice and standards-aligned grading practice. Extensive discussion commenced.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Mr. Bill Parker spoke about his concern over the tax burden in the school district

In addition to the regular monthly reports and business, **the Board took action on the following:**

1. The Board approved all personnel items as presented in the agenda.
2. The Board approved budget transfers for January 2015.
3. The Board approved the Preliminary Budget for fiscal year 2015-2016.
4. The Board awarded the bid for the Pottsgrove Middle School Cooling Tower upgrade to Shannon A. Smith, Inc., the lowest responsible bidder, in the amount of \$131,491.00.
5. The Board authorized administration to enter into a sponsorship agreement with Exeter Orthodontics in the amount of \$6,000.
6. The Board approved the four Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Budgets for the 2015-2016 school year:
  - a. the General Administrative Services Budget
  - b. the Curriculum Instruction Professional Development Services
  - c. the Legislative Services and Grants Development Budget
  - d. the Technology and Information Services Budget
7. The Board approved the payment of the Pottsgrove High School Renovation Project invoices as presented.
8. The Board approved the conference attendance as presented.
9. The Board approved the mentors for 2014-2015 as presented.
10. The Board approved the High School Course Proposals for 2015-2016 as presented.
11. In a vote of 6-3, the Board authorized administration to enter into contract with Dr. Thomas Gusky to provide Professional Development for all professional staff on for April 1, 2015 in the amount of \$11,500 plus travel expenses (Funded by Federal Title II Grant Funds)
12. The Board approved the 2015-2016 Pottsgrove School District Calendar as submitted. The calendar will be posted on the district website.
13. The Board adopted the Resolution for Residency Hearings.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Bond Issue:** As approved by the Board at the Board's January 13, 2015 meeting, a bond sale was conducted on February 10, 2015. John Fey from PFM Asset Management addressed the Board and stated that Pottsgrove continues to maintain an excellent credit rating, saving the district significant financing costs (approx. \$1,000,000 over the life of the loan) for the second phase of the High School renovation project. The Board approved the bond resolution for \$9,535,000 at 2.07%.



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**Tax Abatement Request:** Mr. David Nester discussed a request for consideration of tax abatement from Upper Pottsgrove Township. The Township purchased a property for open space on or about June 7, 2012. The Township applied for and was granted a tax exemption for the property effective January 2, 2013. Due to the transaction date's proximity to the issuance of the 2012-2013 tax bills, the bill for this property and any future correspondence was sent to the prior owner. The tax remains unpaid at this point. The Township is seeking waiver of the penalty for late payment of \$127.37 and the fee charged by Portnoff Associates for notification of the delinquency in the amount of \$44.81. After some discussion, the Board denied the request.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Nester discussed the process of applying for eligible exceptions under Pennsylvania Act 1 as part of the school district budget planning process. The Board discussed whether the district should seek the exceptions that would provide more taxing flexibility for next school year. Seeking exceptions does not obligate the district to exercise the additional flexibility. The Board explored differing views on applying for the exceptions and voted 5-4 on a motion to NOT seek the exceptions.

In a vote of 8-1, the Board placed a one-year moratorium on non-emergency capital expenditures.

## **UPCOMING DATES:**

- 2/12/15-2/14/15 PMEA VI Band Festival @ Upper Merion HS
- 2/13/15 Staff Development, No Students
- 2/16/15 Presidents Day, District Closed
- 2/17/15 Key Communicators Meeting at 7:30 p.m. @ District Office
- 2/24/15 Board Workshop at 6:30 p.m. @ District Office

View the Comprehensive Calendar of District events at <http://www.pgsd.org/Page/2>

Visit the Board website at <http://www.pgsd.org/board>

For Renovation information, visit <http://www.pgsd.org/facilities>

Board meetings are now recorded for viewing on PCTV twice weekly, Wed., at 6:30 PM, Sun., at 6:00 PM and on demand from the District website.