

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC BOARD MEETING  
HELD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011, AT 7:00 P.M.  
IN THE ATRIUM OF THE GEORGE INNESS ANNEX  
141 PARK STREET, MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY

A. STATEMENTS

The meeting opened at 7:02 p.m.

Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been approved in the following manner:

1. On February, 10, 2011, notice of this meeting was faxed to the Montclair Times, the Herald News, and the Star Ledger. The time, date, and location of this meeting were accurately set forth therein.
2. On this same date a copy of said notice was filed with the Township Clerk and was posted at the public bulletin board in the first floor main hall of the Board of Education building, 22 Valley Road.
3. Copies have also been mailed to all persons who have requested same at no cost.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance occurred at 7:03 p.m.

C. ROLL CALL

	PRESENT	ABSENT
Angelica Allen-McMillan	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Shirley Grill	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Robert Kautz	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Robin Kulwin	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Leslie Larson	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Shelly Lombard	<u>    x    </u>	<u>          </u>
Deborah Wilson	<u>    x    </u> (Arrived at 7:10)	<u>          </u>

STAFF MEMBERS	<u>    6    </u>
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	<u>   150   </u>
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS	<u>    1    </u>

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**2011-2012 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

*Dr. Alvarez* stated that he is not recommending the additional cuts of \$2 million. He is providing a list to the Board as they had requested.

Dr. Alvarez discussed the school budget in more detail. He stated that the goal of the budget is to support the instructional program and to keep programs that will help close the achievement gap. The recommitment of the district to maintain a more inclusive practice is to provide more programs and bring out-of-district students back into the district. The small learning communities will be enhanced at the high school with the addition of two new small learning community programs added. He indicated that there will be some changes made within some of the schools but that he would recommend that all 11 schools remain open.

Dr. Alvarez indicated that new time lines have been received from the Department of Education which dictates that the budget is to be submitted to the Essex County Superintendent by March 4. For this reason, detailed figures about the budget will be presented this evening. He stated that Montclair's net valuation has dropped significantly which will impact the tax rate. As yet, no information about state aid has been received. If the district receives state aid, there will be a decrease in taxes. If no state aid is received then taxes will be increased. Regardless of the scenario, the district is \$5.7 million under CAP. He stated that the tax levy is going down by \$5.7 million.

Dr. Alvarez spoke about the \$1.7 million in savings to the district by outsourcing all aides above Kindergarten but maintaining all Kindergarten and special education aides. Outsourcing entails bringing back individuals who are performing effectively and would result in a number of aides losing their health benefits.

Dr. Alvarez spoke about the savings of approximately \$250,000 as a result of staff reductions and renegotiated contracts with the Developmental Learning Center.

Dr. Alvarez recommended to the Board that the courtesy busing in the district should be increased from 1 mile to 1.5 miles resulting in a savings of \$400,000.

Dr. Alvarez stated that the Board require that the Montclair Education Association (MFEE), the Montclair Education Association (MEA), and Adult School of Montclair (ASM) assume the responsibility of contributing to their pension and health benefits. This would result in approximately \$116,000 in savings.

Dr. Alvarez stated there was a group that investigated the Pay to Participate program and the Board would have to develop a policy if they agree to this program. It is expected that this program will generate approximately \$200,000 in revenue. He indicated that this program will only be implemented at Montclair High School and this will be a one time set fee for all students regardless of the activity. Students who are receiving free or reduced lunch will be excluded from participating in this fee.

Dr. Alvarez stated that at this point the total amount of staff that will be retiring as of July 1 is 20 and an \$800,000 savings is expected. He added that there are a number of reductions at Central Office totaling \$280,000 that include staff and supplies. There will be a 20% reduction in school supply account which represents \$120,000 and a reduction of \$100,000 in athletics and student activities which represents slightly less than 10% of their overall budget. These areas still need to be determined.

Dr. Alvarez introduced Mrs. Sullivan to present further information about the budget.

*Mrs. Sullivan* spoke about the highlights and details of the 20011-2012 budget in the attached presentation.

## E. COMMENTS

The Board allowed time for the members of the public to speak about agenda items.

## F. BOARD MEMBERS

*Dr. Allen-McMillan* agrees with the idea of examining resources and magnet school system.

*Ms. Larson* stated that the vision for the district must continue.

*Mr. Kautz* spoke about democracy at work. He reminded everyone that the district's cost per pupil is within average in Essex County and State and is not spending excessively. The Montclair Township need to work to revitalize tax base in Montclair since schools are cheerleaders for the town. It also needs to work to keep the school district strong as possible.

*Mrs. Wilson* stated that the answer to this budget is not to increase taxes.

*Mrs. Lombard* stated that she receives emails from people about reducing taxes. This is a delicate balance to maintain schools and keep taxes down. The Board will not approve any budget that does not have sustainability going forward.

## G. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Monday, February 28, 2011, and will open at 7:00 p.m. in public but will go immediately into executive session. The meeting will reconvene in public at approximately 7:30 p.m. in the Atrium of the George Inness Annex, 141 Park Street.

## H. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:34 p.m. *Ms. Larson* moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by *Mrs. Kulwin* and approved by a vote of 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Sullivan  
Board Secretary